

# *Book Two*



OF THE DISCUSSION WHICH  
RAPHAEL HYTHLODAY HELD  
CONCERNING THE BEST STATE  
OF A COMMONWEALTH, BY  
WAY OF THOMAS MORE,  
CITIZEN AND UNDERSHERIFF  
OF LONDON





**T**HE ISLAND OF Utopia is in the middle two hundred miles broad, and holds almost at the same breadth over a great part of it, but it grows narrower towards both ends. Its figure is not unlike a crescent. Between its horns the sea comes in eleven miles broad, and spreads itself into a great bay, which is environed with land to the compass of about five hundred miles, and is well secured from winds. In this bay there is no great current; the whole coast is, as it were, one continued harbor, which gives all that live in the island great convenience for mutual commerce. But the entry into the bay, occasioned by rocks on the one hand and shallows on the other, is very dangerous. In the middle of it there is one single rock which appears above water, and may, therefore, easily be avoided; and on the top of it there is a tower, in which a garrison is kept; the other rocks lie under water, and are very dangerous. The channel is known only to the natives; so that if any stranger should enter into the bay without one of their pilots he would run great danger of shipwreck. For even they themselves could not pass it safe if some marks that are on the coast did not direct their way; and if these should be but a little shifted, any fleet that might come against them, how great soever it were, would be certainly lost.

On the other side of the island there are likewise many harbors; and the coast is so fortified, both by nature and

*The topography and form of the new island of Utopia*

*A place protected by nature needs only a single garrison*

*A stratagem based on the movement of landmarks*

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*The island, after  
the general Utopus,  
was called Utopia*

*This deed was  
greater than  
channeling the  
Isthmus†*

*That which is  
common to all is  
easily borne*

*The cities of the  
island of Utopia*

*Uniformity creates  
harmony*

art, that a small number of men can hinder the descent of a great army. But they report (and there remains good marks of it to make it credible) that this was no island at first, but a part of the continent. Utopus, that conquered it (whose name it still carries, for Abraxa was its first name),\* brought the rude and uncivilised inhabitants into such a good government, and to that measure of politeness, that they now far excel all the rest of mankind. Having soon subdued them, he designed to separate them from the continent, and to bring the sea quite round them. To accomplish this he ordered a deep channel to be dug, fifteen miles long; and that the natives might not think he treated them like slaves, he not only forced the inhabitants, but also his own soldiers, to labor in carrying it on. As he set a vast number of men to work, he, beyond all men's expectations, brought it to a speedy conclusion. And his neighbors, who at first laughed at the folly of the undertaking, no sooner saw it brought to perfection than they were struck with admiration and terror.

There are fifty-four cities‡ in the island, all large and well built, the manners, customs, and laws of which are the same, and they are all contrived as near in the same

\* Abraxa likely refers to *Abraxas*, the highest of 365 heavens described by the second-century Greek Gnostic Basilides.

† The Isthmus referred to is that of Corinth, joining the Peloponnesian peninsula to the rest of Greece, where many—failed—attempts were made to build a canal.

‡ The fifty-four cities of Utopia parallel the fifty-three counties that made up England and Wales in More's time, plus one for London.

manner as the ground on which they stand will allow. The nearest lie at least twenty-four miles' distance from one another, and the most remote are not so far distant but that a man can go on foot in one day from it to that which lies next it.

*A moderate distance between cities*

Every city sends three of their wisest senators once a year to Amaurot,\* to consult about their common concerns; for that is the chief town of the island, being situated near the center of it, so that it is the most convenient place for their assemblies. The jurisdiction of every city extends at least twenty miles,† and, where the towns lie wider, they have much more ground. No town desires to enlarge its bounds, for the people consider themselves rather as tenants than landlords. They have built, over all the country, farmhouses for husbandmen, which are well contrived, and furnished with all things necessary for country labor. Inhabitants are sent, by turns, from the cities to dwell in them; no country family has fewer than forty men and women in it, besides two slaves. There is a master and a mistress set over every family, and over thirty families there is a magistrate. Every year twenty of this family come

*The distribution of lands*

*Yet today, it is this desire to expand that plagues all commonwealths*

*Agriculture is the primary concern*

\* The name of Utopia's major city, Amaurot, is a play on the Greek word *amauroton*, meaning dim or obscure. See also More's second letter to Giles, where he hints he has named the city "a phantom."

† Other translations put the span of each city's jurisdiction at 12 miles on every side. (Surtz/Hexter) For good reason too: the jurisdiction of 20 miles described here, as well as in Robynson's translation, does not correspond with the description of the distance between cities offered in the preceding paragraph.

back to the town after they have stayed two years in the country, and in their stead there are another twenty sent from the town, that they may learn country work from those that have been already one year in the country, as they must teach those that come to them the next from the town. By this means such as dwell in those country farms are never ignorant of agriculture, and so commit no errors which might otherwise be fatal and bring them under a scarcity of corn. But though there is every year such a shifting of the husbandmen to prevent any man being forced against his will to follow that hard course of life too long, yet many among them take such pleasure in it that they desire leave to continue in it many years.

*The duties of farmers*

*An extraordinary method of hatching eggs*

These husbandmen till the ground, breed cattle, hew wood, and convey it to the towns either by land or water, as is most convenient. They breed an infinite multitude of chickens in a very curious manner; for the hens do not sit and hatch them, but a vast number of eggs are laid in a gentle and equal heat in order to be hatched, and they are no sooner out of the shell, and able to stir about, but they seem to consider those that feed them as their mothers, and follow them as other chickens do the hen that hatched them.\*

\* Although artificial incubation was not practiced in Europe in More's time, he may have read about the practice in either Pliny and Bacon, both of whom mention it. What matters, however, is the use to which More puts this practice in the text—that is, as a humorous example of socialization.

They breed very few horses, but those they have are full of mettle, and are kept only for exercising their youth in the art of sitting and riding them; for they do not put them to any work, either of plowing or carriage, in which they employ oxen. For though their horses are stronger, yet they find oxen can hold out longer; and as they are not subject to so many diseases, so they are kept upon a less charge and with less trouble. And even when they are so worn out that they are no more fit for labor, they are good meat at last.

*The use of horses*

*The use of oxen*

They sow no corn but that which is to be their bread; for they drink either wine, cider or perry,\* and often water, sometimes boiled with honey or liquorice, with which they abound; and though they know exactly how much corn will serve every town and all that tract of country which belongs to it, yet they sow much more and breed more cattle than are necessary for their consumption, and they give that surplus of which they make no use to their neighbors. When they want anything in the country which it does not produce, they fetch that from the town, without carrying anything in exchange for it. And the magistrates of the town take care to see it given them; for they meet generally in the town once a month, upon a festival day. When the time of harvest comes, the magistrates in the country send to those in the towns and let them know how many hands they

*Food and drink*

*The method of sowing*

\* Perry is a cider made from pears.

*The strength of  
cooperative labor*

will need for reaping the harvest; and the number they call for being sent to them, they commonly dispatch it all in one day.

*Their Cities, Particularly of Amaurot*

He that knows one of their towns knows them all—they are so like one another, except where the situation makes some difference. I shall therefore describe one of them, and none is so proper as Amaurot; for as none is more eminent (all the rest yielding in precedence to this, because it is the seat of their supreme council), so there was none of them better known to me, I having lived five years all together in it.

*The description  
of Amaurot, the  
capital city of the  
Utopians*

It lies upon the side of a hill, or, rather, a rising ground. Its figure is almost square, for from the one side of it, which shoots up almost to the top of the hill, it runs down, in a descent for two miles, to the river Anyder;\* but it is a little broader the other way that runs along by the bank of that river. The Anyder rises about eighty miles above Amaurot, in a small spring at first. But other brooks falling into it, of which two are more considerable than the rest, as it runs by Amaurot it is grown half a mile broad;† but, it still grows larger and

*The description of  
the River Anyder*

\* Another pun of More's. "Anyder" derives from the Greek word *anydros*, meaning "without water." See also More's second letter to Giles.

† Other translations describe the river as 500 yards or paces wide at this point (Logan/Adams); it is also measured as such in More's first letter to Giles.

larger, till, after sixty miles' course below it, it is lost in the ocean. Between the town and the sea, and for some miles above the town, it ebbs and flows every six hours with a strong current. The tide comes up about thirty miles so full that there is nothing but salt water in the river, the fresh water being driven back with its force; and above that, for some miles, the water is brackish; but a little higher, as it runs by the town, it is quite fresh; and when the tide ebbs, it continues fresh all along to the sea. There is a bridge cast over the river, not of timber, but of fair stone, consisting of many stately arches; it lies at that part of the town which is farthest from the sea, so that the ships, without any hindrance, lie all along the side of the town. There is, likewise, another river that runs by it, which, though it is not great, yet it runs pleasantly, for it rises out of the same hill on which the town stands, and so runs down through it and falls into the Anyder.

The inhabitants have fortified the fountain-head of this river, which springs a little without the towns; that so, if they should happen to be besieged, the enemy might not be able to stop or divert the course of the water, nor poison it; from thence it is carried, in earthen pipes, to the lower streets. And for those places of the town to which the water of that small river cannot be conveyed, they have great cisterns for receiving the rain-water, which supplies the want of the other. The town is compassed with a high and thick wall, in which there are many towers and forts; there is also a broad and deep dry ditch,

*The same thing happens in England on the River Thames*

*In this, London is also consistent with Amaurot*

*The use of drinking water*

*The fortifications of the city*

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*The kinds of streets*

*The buildings*

*The gardens  
adjoining the  
houses*

*These things  
smack of Plato's  
community*

*The utility of  
gardens, also  
praised by Virgil*

set thick with thorns, cast round three sides of the town, and the river is instead of a ditch on the fourth side. The streets are very convenient for all carriage, and are well sheltered from the winds. Their buildings are good, and are so uniform that a whole side of a street looks like one house. The streets are twenty feet broad; there lie gardens behind all their houses. These are large, but enclosed with buildings, that on all hands face the streets, so that every house has both a door to the street and a back door to the garden. Their doors have all two leaves, which, as they are easily opened, so they shut of their own accord; and, there being no property among them, every man may freely enter into any house whatsoever. At every ten years' end they shift their houses by lots.

They cultivate their gardens with great care, so that they have both vines, fruits, herbs, and flowers in them; and all is so well ordered and so finely kept that I never saw gardens anywhere that were both so fruitful and so beautiful as theirs. And this humor of ordering their gardens so well is not only kept up by the pleasure they find in it, but also by an emulation between the inhabitants of the several streets, who vie with each other. And there is, indeed, nothing belonging to the whole town that is both more useful and more pleasant. So that he who founded the town seems to have taken care of nothing more than of their gardens.

They say the whole scheme of the town was designed at first by Utopus, but he left all that belonged to the

ornament and improvement of it to be added by those that should come after him, that being too much for one man to bring to perfection. Their records, that contain the history of their town and State, are preserved with an exact care, and run backwards seventeen hundred and sixty years.\* From these it appears that their houses were at first low and mean, like cottages, made of any sort of timber, and were built with mud walls and thatched with straw.

But now their houses are three stories high, the fronts of them are faced either with stone, plastering, or brick, and between the facings of their walls they throw in their rubbish. Their roofs are flat, and on them they lay a sort of plaster, which costs very little, and yet is so tempered that it is not apt to take fire, and yet resists the weather more than lead. They have great quantities of glass among them, with which they glaze their windows; they use also in their windows a thin linen cloth, that is so oiled or gummed that it both keeps out the wind and gives free admission to the light.

*Windows of glass or  
clothed in linen*

### *Their Magistrates*

Thirty families choose every year a magistrate, who was anciently called the Syphogrant, but is now called

\* A playful reference: 1,760 years before the first publication of *Utopia*, in 244 BC, Agis IV was crowned king of Sparta. Like Utopus, Agis IV was recognized for his egalitarian ideals and proposals for reform, though in the case of Agis this utopian impulse resulted in his rapid removal from power and summary execution.

*Tranibore, in the language of the Utopians, designates a head official*

*An extraordinary method of electing magistrates*

*Tyranny, hateful to the well-ordered commonwealth*

*Quickly settling disputes, which established practice now prolongs endlessly*

the Philarch; and over every ten Syphogrants, with the families subject to them, there is another magistrate, who was anciently called the Tranibore, but of late the Archphilarch.\* All the Syphogrants, who are in number two hundred, choose the Prince† out of a list of four who are named by the people of the four divisions of the city; but they take an oath, before they proceed to an election, that they will choose him whom they think most fit for the office: they give him their voices secretly, so that it is not known for whom every one gives his suffrage. The Prince is for life, unless he is removed upon suspicion of some design to enslave the people. The Tranibors are new chosen every year, but yet they are, for the most part, continued; all their other magistrates are only annual.

The Tranibors meet every third day, and oftener if necessary, and consult with the Prince either concerning the affairs of the State in general, or such private

\* All these terms are neologisms composed by More from Greek roots. "Syphogrant" draws upon the words for "wise" (*sophos*) and "old men," although other translators suggest the reference may be to *syphos*, or "of the sty"—not necessarily referring to pigs, but a pun on "steward." "Philarch," or "Phylarch" as it is often translated, is a bit more straightforward, meaning "head of the tribe." "Tranibore" is again more difficult to puzzle out, with the word assembled from the Greek for "clear or distinct" and "gluttonous or devouring," and sometimes strung together as "master-eater"—that is: the person who presides over the dinner table. Like steward, master-eater may be a reference to the position occupied by senior lawyers in the law inns of London with which More was familiar. Finally, "Archphilarch" means simply the head Philarch.

† In the original Latin the word is *princeps*, or merely "first leader."

differences as may arise sometimes among the people, though that falls out but seldom. There are always two Syphogrants called into the council chamber, and these are changed every day. It is a fundamental rule of their government, that no conclusion can be made in anything that relates to the public till it has been first debated three days in their council. It is death for any to meet and consult concerning the State, unless it be either in their ordinary council, or in the assembly of the whole body of the people.

*Nothing hastily  
decided*

These things have been so provided among them that the Prince and the Tranibors may not conspire together to change the government and enslave the people; and therefore when anything of great importance is set on foot, it is sent to the Syphogrants, who, after they have communicated it to the families that belong to their divisions, and have considered it among themselves, make report to the senate; and, upon great occasions, the matter is referred to the council of the whole island. One rule observed in their council is, never to debate a thing on the same day in which it is first proposed; for that is always referred to the next meeting, that so men may not rashly and in the heat of discourse engage themselves too soon, which might bias them so much that, instead of consulting the good of the public, they might rather study to support their first opinions, and by a perverse and preposterous sort of shame hazard their country rather than endanger

*If only the same  
thing would happen  
in our councils!*

*“To sleep on a decision,” as the old proverb is meant to be understood*

their own reputation, or venture the being suspected to have wanted foresight in the expedients that they at first proposed; and therefore, to prevent this, they take care that they may rather be deliberate than sudden in their motions.

### *Their Occupations*

*Agriculture, which we now cast upon a few contemptible men, is shared among all*

Agriculture is that which is so universally understood among them that no person, either man or woman, is ignorant of it; they are instructed in it from their childhood, partly by what they learn at school, and partly by practice, they being led out often into the fields about the town, where they not only see others at work but are likewise exercised in it themselves.

*Trades that are learned for necessity, not luxury*

Besides agriculture, which is so common to them all, every man has some peculiar trade to which he applies himself; such as the manufacture of wool or flax, masonry, smith’s work, or carpenter’s work; for there is no sort of trade that is in great esteem among them.

*Similarity in clothing*

Throughout the island they wear the same sort of clothes, without any other distinction except what is necessary to distinguish the two sexes and the married and unmarried. The fashion never alters, and as it is neither disagreeable nor uneasy, so it is suited to the climate, and calculated both for their summers and winters. Every family makes their own clothes.

*No citizen lacks a trade*

All among them, women as well as men, learn one or other of the trades formerly mentioned. Women, for

the most part, deal in wool and flax, which suit best with their weakness, leaving the ruder trades to the men. The same trade generally passes down from father to son, inclinations often following descent: but if any man's genius lies another way he is, by adoption, translated into a family that deals in the trade to which he is inclined; and when that is to be done, care is taken, not only by his father, but by the magistrate, that he may be put to a discreet and good man: and if, after a person has learned one trade, he desires to acquire another, that is also allowed, and is managed in the same manner as the former. When he has learned both, he follows that which he likes best, unless the public has more occasion for the other.

*Let each man learn that art to which he is assigned by his nature*

The chief, and almost the only, business of the Syphogrants is to take care that no man may live idle, but that every one may follow his trade diligently; yet they do not wear themselves out with perpetual toil from morning to night, as if they were beasts of burden, which as it is indeed a heavy slavery, so it is everywhere the common course of life amongst all mechanics except the Utopians: but they, dividing the day and night into twenty-four hours, appoint six of these for work, three of which are before dinner and three after; they then sup, and at eight o'clock, counting from noon, go to bed and sleep eight hours.

*Idle men must be driven from the Commonwealth*

*The toil of the workers must be kept within reason*

The rest of their time, besides that taken up in work, eating, and sleeping, is left to every man's discretion;

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yet they are not to abuse that interval to luxury and idleness, but must employ it in some proper exercise, according to their various inclinations, which is, for the most part, reading. It is ordinary to have public lectures every morning before daybreak, at which none are obliged to appear but those who are marked out for literature; yet a great many, both men and women, of all ranks, go to hear lectures of one sort or other, according to their inclinations: but if others that are not made for contemplation, choose rather to employ themselves at that time in their trades, as many of them do, they are not hindered, but are rather commended, as men that take care to serve their country.

*An eagerness for learning*

After supper they spend an hour in some diversion, in summer in their gardens, and in winter in the halls where they eat, where they entertain each other either with music or discourse. They do not so much as know dice, or any such foolish and mischievous games. They have, however, two sorts of games not unlike our chess; the one is between several numbers, in which one number, as it were, consumes another; the other resembles a battle between the virtues and the vices, in which the enmity in the vices among themselves, and their agreement against virtue, is not unpleasantly represented; together with the special opposition between the particular virtues and vices; as also the methods by which vice either openly assaults or secretly undermines virtue; and virtue, on the other hand, resists it.

*Entertainment at supper*

*Yet now dice is the game of princes*

*Games are also beneficial*

But the time appointed for labor is to be narrowly examined, otherwise you may imagine that since there are only six hours appointed for work, they may fall under a scarcity of necessary provisions: but it is so far from being true that this time is not sufficient for supplying them with plenty of all things, either necessary or convenient, that it is rather too much; and this you will easily apprehend if you consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who are the half of mankind; and if some few women are diligent, their husbands are idle: then consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their retainers, made up of idle persons, that are kept more for show than use; add to these all those strong and lusty beggars that go about pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and upon the whole account you will find that the number of those by whose labors mankind is supplied is much less than you perhaps imagined.

*Types of idle people*

*Spear-bearers of noblemen*

*Said most knowingly*

Then consider how few of those that work are employed in labors that are of real service, for we, who measure all things by money, give rise to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and serve only to support riot and luxury: for if those who work were employed only in such things as the conveniences of life require, there would be such an abundance of them

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that the prices of them would so sink that tradesmen could not be maintained by their gains; if all those who labor about useless things were set to more profitable employments, and if all they that languish out their lives in sloth and idleness (every one of whom consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work) were forced to labor, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind, especially while pleasure is kept within its due bounds.

This appears very plainly in Utopia; for there, in a great city, and in all the territory that lies round it, you can scarce find five hundred, either men or women, by their age and strength capable of labor, that are not engaged in it. Even the Syphogrants, though excused by the law, yet do not excuse themselves, but work, that by their examples they may excite the industry of the rest of the people; the like exemption is allowed to those who, being recommended to the people by the priests, are, by the secret suffrages of the Syphogrants, privileged from labor, that they may apply themselves wholly to study; and if any of these fall short of those hopes that they seemed at first to give, they are obliged to return to work; and sometimes a mechanic that so employs his leisure hours as to make a considerable advancement in learning is eased from being a tradesman and ranked among their learned men. Out of these they choose their ambassadors, their priests, their Tranibors, and

*Not even the  
magistrates hold  
back from work*

*Only the learned  
are called to official  
posts*

the Prince himself, anciently called their Barzenes, but is called of late their Ademus.\*

And thus from the great numbers among them that are neither suffered to be idle nor to be employed in any fruitless labor, you may easily make the estimate how much may be done in those few hours in which they are obliged to labor. But, besides all that has been already said, it is to be considered that the needful arts among them are managed with less labor than anywhere else. The building or the repairing of houses among us employ many hands, because often a thriftless heir suffers a house that his father built to fall into decay, so that his successor must, at a great cost, repair that which he might have kept up with a small charge; it frequently happens that the same house which one person built at a vast expense is neglected by another, who thinks he has a more delicate sense of the beauties of architecture, and he, suffering it to fall to ruin, builds another at no less charge. But among the Utopians all things are so regulated that men very seldom build upon a new piece of ground, and are not only very quick in repairing their houses, but show their foresight in preventing their decay, so that their buildings are preserved very long with but very little labor, and thus the builders, to whom that care belongs, are often without employment, except

*O in what manner  
could the costs  
in buildings be  
avoided!*

\* “Barzanes,” or Son of Zeus, is from the Hebrew for son and a poetic Greek derivative of Zeus. “Ademus” is a bit more clever: a-*demos*, meaning “people-less,” or “a prince without a people” as More slyly refers to the leader of Utopia in his second letter to Giles.

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the hewing of timber and the squaring of stones, that the materials may be in readiness for raising a building very suddenly when there is any occasion for it.

As to their clothes, observe how little work is spent in them; while they are at labor they are clothed with leather and skins, cut carelessly about them, which will last seven years, and when they appear in public they put on an upper garment which hides the other; and these are all of one color, and that is the natural color of the wool. As they need less woollen cloth than is used anywhere else, so that which they make use of is much less costly; they use linen cloth more, but that is prepared with less labor, and they value cloth only by the whiteness of the linen or the cleanness of the wool, without much regard to the fineness of the thread. While in other places four or five upper garments of woollen cloth of different colours, and as many vests of silk, will scarce serve one man, and while those that are nicer think ten too few, every man there is content with one, which very often serves him two years; nor is there anything that can tempt a man to desire more, for if he had them he would neither be the warmer nor would he make one jot the better appearance for it.

And thus, since they are all employed in some useful labor, and since they content themselves with fewer things, it falls out that there is a great abundance of all things among them; so that it frequently happens that,

*O in what manner  
could the costs in  
clothing be avoided!*

for want of other work, vast numbers are sent out to mend the highways; but when no public undertaking is to be performed, the hours of working are lessened. The magistrates never engage the people in unnecessary labor, since the chief end of the constitution is to regulate labor by the necessities of the public, and to allow the people as much time as is necessary for the improvement of their minds, in which they think the happiness of life consists.

### *Their Social Relations*

But it is now time to explain to you the mutual intercourse of this people, their commerce, and the rules by which all things are distributed among them.

As their cities are composed of families, so their families are made up of those that are nearly related to one another. Their women, when they grow up, are married out, but all the males, both children and grand-children, live still in the same house, in great obedience to their common parent, unless age has weakened his understanding, and in that case he that is next to him in age comes in his room; but lest any city should become either too great, or by any accident be dispeopled, provision is made that none of their cities may contain above six thousand families, besides those of the country around it. No family may have less than ten and more than sixteen persons in it, but there can be no determined number for the children under age;

*The number of  
citizens*

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this rule is easily observed by removing some of the children of a more fruitful couple to any other family that does not abound so much in them.

By the same rule they supply cities that do not increase so fast from others that breed faster; and if there is any increase over the whole island, then they draw out a number of their citizens out of the several towns and send them over to the neighboring continent, where, if they find that the inhabitants have more soil than they can well cultivate, they fix a colony, taking the inhabitants into their society if they are willing to live with them; and where they do that of their own accord, they quickly enter into their method of life and conform to their rules, and this proves a happiness to both nations; for, according to their constitution, such care is taken of the soil that it becomes fruitful enough for both, though it might be otherwise too narrow and barren for any one of them.

But if the natives refuse to conform themselves to their laws they drive them out of those bounds which they mark out for themselves, and use force if they resist, for they account it a very just cause of war for a nation to hinder others from possessing a part of that soil of which they make no use, but which is suffered to lie idle and uncultivated, since every man has, by the law of nature, a right to such a waste portion of the earth as is necessary for his subsistence. If an accident has so lessened the number of the inhabitants of

any of their towns that it cannot be made up from the other towns of the island without diminishing them too much (which is said to have fallen out but twice since they were first a people, when great numbers were carried off by the plague), the loss is then supplied by recalling as many as are wanted from their colonies, for they will abandon these rather than suffer the towns in the island to sink too low.

But to return to their manner of living in society: the oldest man of every family, as has been already said, is its governor; wives serve their husbands, and children their parents, and always the younger serves the elder.

*Thus, the idle mob  
of servants could be  
removed*

Every city is divided into four equal parts, and in the middle of each there is a market-place. What is brought thither, and manufactured by the several families, is carried from thence to houses appointed for that purpose, in which all things of a sort are laid by themselves; and thither every father goes, and takes whatsoever he or his family stand in need of, without either paying for it or leaving anything in exchange. There is no reason for giving a denial to any person, since there is such plenty of everything among them; and there is no danger of a man's asking for more than he needs; they have no inducements to do this, since they are sure they shall always be supplied: it is the fear of want that makes any of the whole race of animals either greedy or ravenous; but, besides fear, there is in man a pride that makes him fancy it a particular

*The origin of Greed*

glory to excel others in pomp and excess; but by the laws of the Utopians, there is no room for this.

Near these markets there are others for all sorts of provisions, where there are not only herbs, fruits, and bread, but also fish, fowl, and cattle. There are also, outside their towns, places appointed near some running water for killing their beasts and for washing away their filth, which is done by their slaves; for they suffer none of their citizens to kill their cattle, because they think that pity and good-nature, which are among the best of those affections that are born with us, are much impaired by the butchering of animals; nor do they suffer anything that is foul or unclean to be brought within their towns, lest the air should be infected by ill-smells, which might prejudice their health.

In every street there are great halls, that lie at an equal distance from each other, distinguished by particular names. The Syphogrants dwell in those that are set over thirty families, fifteen lying on one side of it, and as many on the other. In these halls they all meet and have their repasts; the stewards of every one of them come to the market-place at an appointed hour, and according to the number of those that belong to the hall they carry home provisions.

But they take more care of their sick than of any others; these are lodged and provided for in public hospitals. They have belonging to every town four hospitals, that are built outside their walls, and are so large that

*Decay and filth  
bring pestilence  
upon the citizen  
body*

*From the butchery  
of livestock, we  
learn to cut the  
throats even of men*

*The care of the sick*

they may pass for little towns; by this means, if they had ever such a number of sick persons, they could lodge them conveniently, and at such a distance that such of them as are sick of infectious diseases may be kept so far from the rest that there can be no danger of contagion. The hospitals are furnished and stored with all things that are convenient for the ease and recovery of the sick; and those that are put in them are looked after with such tender and watchful care, and are so constantly attended by their skillful physicians, that as none is sent to them against their will, so there is scarce one in a whole town that, if he should fall ill, would not choose rather to go thither than lie sick at home.

After the steward of the hospitals has taken for the sick whatsoever the physician prescribes, then the best things that are left in the market are distributed equally among the halls in proportion to their numbers; only, in the first place, they serve the Prince, the Chief Priest, the Tranibors, the Ambassadors, and strangers, if there are any, which, indeed, falls out but seldom, and for whom there are houses, well furnished, particularly appointed for their reception when they come among them. At the hours of dinner and supper the whole Syphogranty being called together by sound of trumpet, they meet and eat together, except only such as are in the hospitals or lie sick at home. Yet, after the halls are served, no man is hindered to carry provisions home from the market-place, for they know that none

*The banquets  
common, and  
enjoyed by all  
equally*

*O how the principle  
of liberty is held in  
every quarter, so  
that nothing is done  
by compulsion!*

does that but for some good reason; for though any that will may eat at home, yet none does it willingly, since it is both ridiculous and foolish for any to give themselves the trouble to make ready an ill dinner at home when there is a much more plentiful one made ready for him so near hand. All the uneasy and sordid services about these halls are performed by their slaves; but the dressing and cooking their meat, and the ordering their tables, belong only to the women, all those of every family taking it by turns.

*Women are  
the servants at  
banquets*

They sit at three or more tables, according to their number; the men sit towards the wall, and the women sit on the other side, that if any of them should be taken suddenly ill, which is no uncommon case amongst women with child, she may, without disturbing the rest, rise and go to the nurses' room (who are there with the suckling children), where there is always clean water at hand and cradles, in which they may lay the young children if there is occasion for it, and a fire, that they may shift and dress them before it. Every child is nursed by its own mother if death or sickness does not intervene; and in that case the Syphogrants' wives find out a nurse quickly, which is no hard matter, for any one that can do it offers herself cheerfully; for as they are much inclined to that piece of mercy, so the child whom they nurse considers the nurse as its mother. All the children under five years old sit among the nurses; the rest of the younger sort of both sexes, till they are fit for marriage, either serve

*Through praise  
and moral duty,  
citizens are most  
fittingly invited to  
act rightly*

*The education of  
offspring*

those that sit at table, or, if they are not strong enough for that, stand by them in great silence and eat what is given them; nor have they any other formality of dining.

In the middle of the first table, which stands across the upper end of the hall, sit the Syphogrant and his wife, for that is the chief and most conspicuous place; next to him sit two of the most ancient, for there go always four to a mess. If there is a temple within the Syphogranty, the Priest and his wife sit with the Syphogrant above all the rest; next to them there is a mixture of old and young, who are so placed that as the young are set near others, so they are mixed with the more ancient; which, they say, was appointed on this account: that the gravity of the old people, and the reverence that is due to them, might restrain the younger from all indecent words and gestures. Dishes are not served up to the whole table at first, but the best are first set before the old, whose seats are distinguished from the young, and, after them, all the rest are served alike. The old men distribute to the younger any curious meats that happen to be set before them, if there is not such an abundance of them that the whole company may be served alike. Thus old men are honored with a particular respect, yet all the rest fare as well as they.

Both dinner and supper are begun with some lecture of morality that is read to them; but it is so short that it is not tedious nor uneasy to them to hear it. From hence the old men take occasion to entertain those about them

*The priest is placed above the prince, but nowadays even bishops serve royalty!*

*The younger are mixed with the older*

*Special consideration of the old*

*Nowadays the monks scarcely observe this*

## UTOPIA

*Discussions at the table*

with some useful and pleasant enlargements; but they do not engross the whole discourse so to themselves during their meals that the younger may not put in for a share; on the contrary, they engage them to talk, that so they may, in that free way of conversation, find out the force of every one's spirit and observe his temper.

*Now doctors condemn this*

They dispatch their dinners quickly, but sit long at supper, because they go to work after the one, and are to sleep after the other, during which they think the stomach carries on the concoction more vigorously. They never sup without music, and there is always fruit served up after meat; while they are at table some burn perfumes and sprinkle about fragrant ointments and sweet waters—in short, they want nothing that may cheer up their spirits; they give themselves a large allowance that way, and indulge themselves in all such pleasures as are attended with no inconvenience.

*Music at banquets*

*Harmless pleasure must not be spurned\**

Thus do those that are in the towns live together; but in the country, where they live at a great distance, every one eats at home, and no family wants any necessary sort of provision, for it is from them that provisions are sent unto those that live in the towns.

### *Their Travel*

If any man has a mind to visit his friends that live in some other town, or desires to travel and see the rest

\* A more prurient reading of the Latin word for “pleasure” here—*voluptas*—might imply sexual intercourse.

of the country, he obtains leave very easily from the Syphogrant and Tranibors, when there is no particular occasion for him at home. Such as travel carry with them a passport from the Prince, which both certifies the license that is granted for traveling, and limits the time of their return. They are furnished with a wagon and a slave, who drives the oxen and looks after them; but, unless there are women in the company, the wagon is sent back at the end of the journey as a needless encumbrance. While they are on the road they carry no provisions with them, yet they want for nothing, but are everywhere treated as if they were at home. If they stay in any place longer than a night, every one follows his proper occupation, and is very well used by those of his own trade.

If any man goes out of the city to which he belongs without leave, and is found rambling without a passport, he is severely treated, he is punished as a fugitive, and sent home disgracefully; and, if he falls again into the like fault, is condemned to slavery. If any man has a mind to travel only over the precinct of his own city, he may freely do it, with his father's permission and his wife's consent; but when he comes into any of the country houses, if he expects to be entertained by them, he must labor with them and conform to their rules; and if he does this, he may freely go over the whole precinct, being then as useful to the city to which he belongs as if he were still within it.

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*O holy  
Commonwealth,  
worthy of imitation  
even by Christians!*

*Equal distribution  
makes it so there  
is enough for  
everyone*

*The Common-  
wealth is nothing  
other than a kind of  
big family*

*The exports of the  
Utopians*

Thus you see that there are no idle persons among them, nor pretenses of excusing any from labor. There are no taverns, no ale-houses, nor stews\* among them, nor any other occasions of corrupting each other, of getting into corners, or forming themselves into parties; all men live in full view, so that all are obliged both to perform their ordinary task and to employ themselves well in their spare hours; and it is certain that a people thus ordered must live in great abundance of all things, and these being equally distributed among them, no man can want or be obliged to beg.

In their great council at Amaurot, to which there are three sent from every town once a year, they examine what towns abound in provisions and what are under any scarcity, that so the one may be furnished from the other; and this is done freely, without any sort of exchange; for, according to their plenty or scarcity, they supply or are supplied from one another, so that indeed the whole island is, as it were, one family.

### *[Their Wealth]*

When they have thus taken care of their whole country, and laid up stores for two years (which they do to prevent the ill consequences of an unfavorable season), they order an exportation of the surplus, both of corn, honey, wool, flax, wood, wax, tallow, leather, and cattle,

\* A “stew” is a bathhouse (where one literally stews oneself in hot water), and commonly doubled as a brothel.

which they send out, commonly in great quantities, to other nations. They order a seventh part of all these goods to be freely given to the poor of the countries to which they send them, and sell the rest at moderate rates; and by this exchange they not only bring back those few things that they need at home (for, indeed, they scarce need anything but iron), but likewise a great deal of gold and silver; and by their driving this trade so long, it is not to be imagined how vast a treasure they have got among them, so that now they do not much care whether they sell off their merchandise for money in hand or upon trust.

A great part of their treasure is now in bonds; but in all their contracts no private man stands bound, but the writing runs in the name of the town; and the towns that owe them money raise it from those private hands that owe it to them, lay it up in their public chamber, or enjoy the profit of it till the Utopians call for it; and they choose rather to let the greatest part of it lie in their hands, who make advantage by it, than to call for it themselves; but if they see that any of their other neighbors stand more in need of it, then they call it in and lend it to them.

Whenever they are engaged in war, which is the only occasion in which their treasure can be usefully employed, they make use of it themselves;

*O how they are  
nowhere not  
mindful of their  
own community!*

*A method by  
which money could  
become worthless*

*It is better to avoid  
war through money  
or artifice, than  
to wage war with  
an abundance  
of human blood  
spilled*

*O you clever man!*

*Gold is baser than  
iron, as pertains to  
its use*

in great extremities or sudden accidents they employ it in hiring foreign troops, whom they more willingly expose to danger than their own people; they give them great pay, knowing well that this will work even on their enemies; that it will engage them either to betray their own side, or, at least, to desert it; and that it is the best means of raising mutual jealousies among them.

For this end they have an incredible treasure; but they do not keep it as a treasure, but in such a manner as I am almost afraid to tell, lest you think it so extravagant as to be hardly credible. This I have the more reason to apprehend because, if I had not seen it myself, I could not have been easily persuaded to have believed it upon any man's report. It is certain that all things appear incredible to us in proportion as they differ from known customs; but one who can judge aright will not wonder to find that, since their constitution differs so much from ours, their value of gold and silver should be measured by a very different standard; for since they have no use for money among themselves, but keep it as a provision against events which seldom happen, and between which there are generally long intervening intervals, they value it no farther than it deserves—that is, in proportion to its use. So that it is plain they must prefer iron either to gold or silver, for men can no more live without iron than without fire or water; but Nature has marked out no use for the other metals so essential as not easily to be dispensed with. The folly of men has

enhanced the value of gold and silver because of their scarcity; whereas, on the contrary, it is their opinion that Nature, as an indulgent parent, has freely given us all the best things in great abundance, such as water and earth, but has laid up and hid from us the things that are vain and useless.

If these metals were laid up in any tower in the kingdom it would raise a jealousy of the Prince and Senate, and give birth to that foolish mistrust into which the people are apt to fall—a jealousy of their intending to sacrifice the interest of the public to their own private advantage. If they should work it into vessels, or any sort of plate, they fear that the people might grow too fond of it, and so be unwilling to let the plate be run down, if a war made it necessary, to employ it in paying their soldiers. To prevent all these inconveniences they have fallen upon an expedient which, as it agrees with their other policy, so is it very different from ours, and will scarce gain belief among us who value gold so much, and lay it up so carefully. They eat and drink out of vessels of earth or glass, which make an agreeable appearance, though formed of brittle materials; while they make their chamber-pots and close-stools\* of gold and silver, and that not only in their public halls but in their private houses. Of the same metals they likewise make chains and fetters for their slaves, to some

*O magnificent  
debasement of gold!*

\* A close-stool is a sort of rudimentary toilet holding a chamber-pot.

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*Gold, the ornament  
of the infamous*

of which, as a badge of infamy, they hang an earring of gold, and make others wear a chain or a coronet of the same metal; and thus they take care by all possible means to render gold and silver of no esteem; and from hence it is that while other nations part with their gold and silver as unwillingly as if one tore out their bowels, those of Utopia would look on their giving in all they possess of those metals (when there were any use for them) but as the parting with a trifle, or as we would esteem the loss of a penny!

*Gems, the toys of  
children*

They find pearls on their coasts, and diamonds and carbuncles on their rocks; they do not look after them, but, if they find them by chance, they polish them, and with them they adorn their children, who are delighted with them, and glory in them during their childhood; but when they grow to years, and see that none but children use such baubles, they of their own accord, without being bid by their parents, lay them aside, and would be as much ashamed to use them afterwards as children among us, when they come to years, are of their puppets and other toys.

*A choice tale*

I never saw a clearer instance of the opposite impressions that different customs make on people than I observed in the ambassadors of the Anemolians,\* who came to Amaurot when I was there. As they came to treat of affairs of great consequence, the deputies from

\* "Anemolian" derives from the Greek word for "windy," as in "full of hot air."

several towns met together to wait for their coming. The ambassadors of the nations that lie near Utopia, knowing their customs, and that fine clothes are in no esteem among them, that silk is despised, and gold is a badge of infamy, used to come very modestly clothed; but the Anemolians, lying more remote, and having had little commerce with them, understanding that they were coarsely clothed, and all in the same manner, took it for granted that they had none of those fine things among them of which they made no use; and they, being a vainglorious rather than a wise people, resolved to set themselves out with so much pomp that they should look like gods, and strike the eyes of the poor Utopians with their splendor.

Thus three ambassadors made their entry with a hundred attendants, all clad in garments of different colors, and the greater part in silk; the ambassadors themselves, who were of the nobility of their country, were in cloth-of-gold, and adorned with massy chains, earrings and rings of gold; their caps were covered with bracelets set full of pearls and other gems—in a word, they were set out with all those things that among the Utopians were either the badges of slavery, the marks of infamy, or the playthings of children. It was not unpleasant to see, on the one side, how they looked big, when they compared their rich habits with the plain clothes of the Utopians, who were come out in great numbers to see them make their entry; and,

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on the other, to observe how much they were mistaken in the impression which they hoped this pomp would have made on them. It appeared so ridiculous a show to all that had never stirred out of their country, and had not seen the customs of other nations, that though they paid some reverence to those that were the most meanly clad, as if they had been the ambassadors, yet when they saw the ambassadors themselves so full of gold and chains, they looked upon them as slaves, and forbore to treat them with reverence.

You might have seen the children who were grown big enough to despise their playthings, and who had thrown away their jewels, call to their mothers, push them gently, and cry out, "See that great fool, that wears pearls and gems as if he were yet a child!" While their mothers very innocently replied, "Hold your peace! This, I believe, is one of the ambassadors' fools." Others censured the fashion of their chains, and observed, "That they were of no use, for they were too slight to bind their slaves, who could easily break them; and, besides, hung so loose about them that they thought it easy to throw them away, and so get from them."

But after the ambassadors had stayed a day among them, and saw so vast a quantity of gold in their houses (which was as much despised by them as it was esteemed in other nations), and beheld more gold and silver in the

*O you clever man!\**

\* Repeat of an earlier note, but this time rendered in Greek instead of Latin.

chains and fetters of one slave than all their ornaments amounted to, their plumes fell, and they were ashamed of all that glory for which they had formed valued themselves, and accordingly laid it aside—a resolution that they immediately took when, on their engaging in some free discourse with the Utopians, they discovered their sense of such things and their other customs.

The Utopians wonder how any man should be so much taken with the glaring doubtful luster of a jewel or a stone, that can look up to a star or to the sun himself; or how any should value himself because his cloth is made of a finer thread; for, how fine soever that thread may be, it was once no better than the fleece of a sheep, and that sheep, was a sheep still, for all its wearing it. They wonder much to hear that gold, which in itself is so useless a thing, should be everywhere so much esteemed that even man, for whom it was made, and by whom it has its value, should yet be thought of less value than this metal; that a blockhead, who has no more sense than a log of wood, and is as bad as he is foolish, should have many wise and good men to serve him, only because he has a great heap of that metal; and that if it should happen that by some accident or trick of law (which, sometimes produces as great changes as chance itself) all this wealth should pass from the master to the meanest varlet of his whole family, he himself would very soon become one of his servants, as if he were a thing that belonged to his wealth, and so were bound to follow its fortune! But they

*He said "doubtful" on account of the gems being imitation or at any rate because their luster was scanty and dim.*

*How true, and how apt!*

*How much more  
sensible are the  
Utopians than the  
common lot of  
Christians!*

much more wonder at and detest the folly of those who, when they see a rich man, though they neither owe him anything, nor are in any sort dependent on his bounty, yet, merely because he is rich, give him little less than divine honors, even though they know him to be so covetous and base-minded that, notwithstanding all his wealth, he will not part with one farthing of it to them as long as he lives!

*[Their Philosophies]*

These and such like notions have that people imbibed, partly from their education, being bred in a country whose customs and laws are opposite to all such foolish maxims, and partly from their learning and studies—for though there are but few in any town that are so wholly excused from labor as to give themselves entirely up to their studies (these being only such persons as discover from their childhood an extraordinary capacity and disposition for letters), yet their children and a great part of the nation, both men and women, are taught to spend those hours in which they are not obliged to work in reading; and this they do through the whole progress of life.

*The interests and  
education of the  
Utopians*

They have all their learning in their own tongue,\* which is both a copious and pleasant language, and in

\* “[L]earning in their own tongue” contrasts with the common practice of More’s Europe, where the language of learning—and the language in which *Utopia* was written—was the scholarly and ecclesiastical language of Latin.

which a man can fully express his mind; it runs over a great tract of many countries, but it is not equally pure in all places.

They had never so much as heard of the names of any of those philosophers that are so famous in these parts of the world, before we went among them; and yet they had made the same discoveries as the Greeks, both in music, logic, arithmetic, and geometry. But as they are almost in everything equal to the ancient philosophers, so they far exceed our modern logicians for they have never yet fallen upon the barbarous niceties that our youth are forced to learn in those trifling logical schools that are among us. They are so far from minding chimeras and fantastical images made in the mind that none of them could comprehend what we meant when we talked to them of a man in the abstract as common to all men in particular (so that though we spoke of him as a thing that we could point at with our fingers, yet none of them could perceive him) and yet distinct from every one, as if he were some monstrous Colossus or giant; yet, for all this ignorance of these empty notions, they knew astronomy, and were perfectly acquainted with the motions of the heavenly bodies; and have many instruments, well contrived and divided, by which they very accurately compute the course and positions of the sun, moon, and stars. But for the cheat of divining by the stars, by their oppositions or conjunctions, it has not so much as entered into their thoughts. They have a

*Music. Dialectic.  
Arithmetic*

*At this point he  
seems to be on the  
edge of satire*

*Study of the stars*

*Yet such astrologers  
rule as kings among  
Christians today*

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particular sagacity, founded upon much observation, in judging of the weather, by which they know when they may look for rain, wind, or other alterations in the air; but as to the philosophy of these things, the cause of the saltness of the sea, of its ebbing and flowing, and of the original and nature both of the heavens and the earth, they dispute of them partly as our ancient philosophers have done, and partly upon some new hypothesis, in which, as they differ from them, so they do not in all things agree among themselves.

*Physics, the most uncertain of all studies*

*Ethics*

As to moral philosophy, they have the same disputes among them as we have here. They examine what are properly good, both for the body and the mind; and whether any outward thing can be called truly *good*, or if that term belong only to the endowments of the soul. They inquire, likewise, into the nature of virtue and pleasure. But their chief dispute is concerning the happiness of a man, and wherein it consists—whether in some one thing or in a great many. They seem, indeed, more inclinable to that opinion that places, if not the whole, yet the chief part, of a man's happiness in pleasure; and, what may seem more strange, they make use of arguments even from religion, notwithstanding its severity and roughness, for the support of that opinion so indulgent to pleasure; for they never dispute concerning happiness without fetching some arguments from the principles of religion as well as from natural reason, since without the former they

*The hierarchy of "goods"*

*The limits of "goods"*

*The Utopians measure happiness by honorable pleasure*

*The principles of philosophy ought to be taken from religion*

reckon that all our inquiries after happiness must be but conjectural and defective.

These are their religious principles: That the soul of man is immortal, and that God of His goodness has designed that it should be happy; and that He has, therefore, appointed rewards for good and virtuous actions, and punishments for vice, to be distributed after this life. Though these principles of religion are conveyed down among them by tradition, they think that even reason itself determines a man to believe and acknowledge them; and freely confess that if these were taken away, no man would be so insensible as not to seek after pleasure by all possible means, lawful or unlawful, using only this caution—that a lesser pleasure might not stand in the way of a greater, and that no pleasure ought to be pursued that should draw a great deal of pain after it; for they think it the maddest thing in the world to pursue virtue, that is a sour and difficult thing, and not only to renounce the pleasures of life, but willingly to undergo much pain and trouble, if a man has no prospect of a reward. And what reward can there be for one that has passed his whole life, not only without pleasure, but in pain, if there is nothing to be expected after death? Yet they do not place happiness in all sorts of pleasures, but only in those that in themselves are good and honest.

There is a party among them who place happiness in bare virtue; others think that our natures are conducted by virtue to happiness, as that which is the chief good of

*The theology of the Utopians*

*The immortality of souls, about which today not a few have doubts, even Christians*

*Just as not every pleasure ought to be sought after, so too pain ought not to be pursued, except for the sake of virtue*

*This is not far from  
the Stoics*

man. They define virtue thus—that it is a living according to Nature, and think that we are made by God for that end; they believe that a man then follows the dictates of Nature when he pursues or avoids things according to the direction of reason. They say that the first dictate of reason is the kindling in us a love and reverence for the Divine Majesty, to whom we owe both all that we have and, all that we can ever hope for. In the next place, reason directs us to keep our minds as free from passion and as cheerful as we can, and that we should consider ourselves as bound by the ties of good-nature and humanity to use our utmost endeavors to help forward the happiness of all other persons; for there never was any man such a morose and severe pursuer of virtue, such an enemy to pleasure, that though he set hard rules for men to undergo, much pain, many watchings, and other rigors, yet did not at the same time advise them to do all they could in order to relieve and ease the miserable, and who did not represent gentleness and good-nature as amiable dispositions. And from thence they infer that if a man ought to advance the welfare and comfort of the rest of mankind (there being no virtue more proper and peculiar to our nature than to ease the miseries of others, to free from trouble and anxiety, in furnishing them with the comforts of life, in which pleasure consists)

Nature much more vigorously leads them to do all this for himself. A life of pleasure is either a real evil, and in that case we ought not to assist others in their

pursuit of it, but, on the contrary, to keep them from it all we can, as from that which is most hurtful and deadly; or if it is a good thing, so that we not only may but ought to help others to it, why, then, ought not a man to begin with himself? Since no man can be more bound to look after the good of another than after his own; for Nature cannot direct us to be good and kind to others, and yet at the same time to be unmerciful and cruel to ourselves. Thus as they define virtue to be living according to Nature, so they imagine that Nature prompts all people on to seek after pleasure as the end of all they do.

They also observe that in order to our supporting the pleasures of life, Nature inclines us to enter into society; for there is no man so much raised above the rest of mankind as to be the only favorite of Nature, who, on the contrary, seems to have placed on a level all those that belong to the same species. Upon this they infer that no man ought to seek his own conveniences so eagerly as to prejudice others; and therefore they think that not only all agreements between private persons ought to be observed, but likewise that all those laws ought to be kept which either a good prince has published in due form, or to which a people that is neither oppressed with tyranny nor circumvented by fraud has consented, for distributing those conveniences of life which afford us all our pleasures. They think it is an evidence of true wisdom for a man to pursue his own

*But now, some people welcome sorrows as though religion were dependent upon them, when they would be more gladly borne if they were to befall someone striving for the observance of piety or if they happened due to the inevitability of nature*

*Pacts and laws*

advantage as far as the laws allow it, they account it piety to prefer the public good to one's private concerns, but they think it unjust for a man to seek for pleasure by snatching another man's pleasures from him; and, on the contrary, they think it a sign of a gentle and good soul for a man to dispense with his own advantage for the good of others, and that by this means a good man finds as much pleasure one way as he parts with another; for as he may expect the like from others when he may come to need it, so, if that should fail him, yet the sense of a good action, and the reflections that he makes on the love and gratitude of those whom he has so obliged, gives the mind more pleasure than the body could have found in that from which it had restrained itself. They are also persuaded that God will make up the loss of those small pleasures with a vast and endless joy, of which religion easily convinces a good soul.

*Mutual services*

Thus, upon an inquiry into the whole matter, they reckon that all our actions, and even all our virtues, terminate in pleasure, as in our chief end and greatest happiness; and they call every motion or state, either of body or mind, in which Nature teaches us to delight, a pleasure. Thus they cautiously limit pleasure only to those appetites to which Nature leads us; for they say that Nature leads us only to those delights to which reason, as well as sense, carries us, and by which we neither injure any other person nor lose the possession of greater pleasures, and of such as draw no troubles after

*The definition of pleasure*

them. But they look upon those delights which men by a foolish, though common, mistake call pleasure, as if they could change as easily the nature of things as the use of words, as things that greatly obstruct their real happiness, instead of advancing it, because they so entirely possess the minds of those that are once captivated by them with a false notion of pleasure that there is no room left for pleasures of a truer or purer kind.

*False pleasures*

There are many things that in themselves have nothing that is truly delightful; on the contrary, they have a good deal of bitterness in them; and yet, from our perverse appetites after forbidden objects, are not only ranked among the pleasures, but are made even the greatest designs, of life. Among those who pursue these sophisticated pleasures they reckon such as I mentioned before, who think themselves really the better for having fine clothes; in which they think they are doubly mistaken, both in the opinion they have of their clothes, and in that they have of themselves. For if you consider the use of clothes, why should a fine thread be thought better than a coarse one? And yet these men, as if they had some real advantages beyond others, and did not owe them wholly to their mistakes, look big, seem to fancy themselves to be more valuable, and imagine that a respect is due to them for the sake of a rich garment, to which they would not have pretended if they had been more meanly clothed, and even resent it as an affront if that respect is not paid them.

*The error of those who think highly of themselves because of their clothing*

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*Foolish honors*

It is also a great folly to be taken with outward marks of respect, which signify nothing; for what true or real pleasure can one man find in another's standing bare or making legs to him? Will the bending another man's knees give ease to yours? And will the head's being bare cure the madness of yours? And yet it is wonderful to see how this false notion of pleasure bewitches many who delight themselves with the fancy of their nobility, and are pleased with this conceit—that they are descended from ancestors who have been held for some successions rich, and who have had great possessions; for this is all that makes nobility at present. Yet they do not think themselves a whit the less noble, though their immediate parents have left none of this wealth to them, or though they themselves have squandered it away.

*Pretend nobility*

*The most foolish  
pleasure derived  
from gems*

The Utopians have no better opinion of those who are much taken with gems and precious stones, and who account it a degree of happiness next to a divine one if they can purchase one that is very extraordinary, especially if it be of that sort of stones that is then in greatest request, for the same sort is not at all times universally of the same value, nor will men buy it unless it be dismantled and taken out of the gold. The jeweler is then made to give good security, and required solemnly to swear that the stone is true, that, by such an exact caution, a false one might not be bought instead of a true; though, if you were to

*The opinion of men  
adds value to gems,  
or takes it away*

examine it, your eye could find no difference between the counterfeit and that which is true; so that they are all one to you, as much as if you were blind. Or can it be thought that they who heap up a useless mass of wealth, not for any use that it is to bring them, but merely to please themselves with the contemplation of it, enjoy any true pleasure in it? The delight they find is only a false shadow of joy. Those are no better whose error is somewhat different from the former, and who hide it out of their fear of losing it; for what other name can fit the hiding it in the earth, or, rather, the restoring it to it again, it being thus cut off from being useful either to its owner or to the rest of mankind? And yet the owner, having hid it carefully, is glad, because he thinks he is now sure of it. If it should be stole, the owner, though he might live perhaps ten years after the theft, of which he knew nothing, would find no difference between his having or losing it, for both ways it was equally useless to him.

*An extraordinary  
and most suitable  
fiction*

Among those foolish pursuers of pleasure they reckon all that delight in hunting, in fowling, or gaming, of whose madness they have only heard, for they have no such things among them. But they have asked us, "What sort of pleasure is it that men can find in throwing the dice?" (for if there were any pleasure in it, they think the doing it so often should give one a surfeit of it); "and what pleasure can one find in hearing the barking and howling of dogs, which seem rather odious

*Dicing*

*Hunting*

than pleasant sounds?" Nor can they comprehend the pleasure of seeing dogs run after a hare, more than of seeing one dog run after another; for if the seeing them run is that which gives the pleasure, you have the same entertainment to the eye on both these occasions, since that is the same in both cases. But if the pleasure lies in seeing the hare killed and torn by the dogs, this ought rather to stir pity, that a weak, harmless, and fearful hare should be devoured by strong, fierce, and cruel dogs. Therefore all this business of hunting is, among the Utopians, turned over to their butchers, and those, as has been already said, are all slaves, and they look on hunting as one of the basest parts of a butcher's work, for they account it both more profitable and more decent to kill those beasts that are more necessary and useful to mankind, whereas the killing and tearing of so small and miserable an animal can only attract the huntsman with a false show of pleasure, from which he can reap but small advantage. They look on the desire of the bloodshed, even of beasts, as a mark of a mind that is already corrupted with cruelty, or that at least, by too frequent returns of so brutal a pleasure, must degenerate into it.

Thus though the rabble of mankind look upon these, and on innumerable other things of the same nature, as pleasures, the Utopians, on the contrary, observing that there is nothing in them truly pleasant, conclude that they are not to be reckoned among pleasures; for

*Yet nowadays this  
is the art of the  
gods of the royal  
courts*

though these things may create some tickling in the senses (which seems to be a true notion of pleasure), yet they imagine that this does not arise from the thing itself, but from a depraved custom, which may so vitiate a man's taste that bitter things may pass for sweet, as women with child think pitch or tallow taste sweeter than honey; but as a man's sense, when corrupted either by a disease or some ill habit, does not change the nature of other things, so neither can it change the nature of pleasure.

*A particular disorder of pregnant women*

They reckon up several sorts of pleasures, which they call true ones; some belong to the body, and others to the mind. The pleasures of the mind lie in knowledge, and in that delight which the contemplation of truth carries with it; to which they add the joyful reflections on a well-spent life, and the assured hopes of a future happiness. They divide the pleasures of the body into two sorts—the one is that which gives our senses some real delight, and is performed either by recruiting Nature and supplying those parts which feed the internal heat of life by eating and drinking, or when Nature is eased of any surcharge that oppresses it, when we are relieved from sudden pain, or that which arises from satisfying the appetite which Nature has wisely given to lead us to the propagation of the species. There is another kind of pleasure that arises neither from our receiving what the body requires, nor its being relieved when overcharged, and yet, by a secret unseen virtue,

*The kinds of true pleasure*

*Pleasure of the body*

affects the senses, raises the passions, and strikes the mind with generous impressions—this is, the pleasure that arises from music. Another kind of bodily pleasure is that which results from an undisturbed and vigorous constitution of body, when life and active spirits seem to actuate every part. This lively health, when entirely free from all mixture of pain, of itself gives an inward pleasure, independent of all external objects of delight; and though this pleasure does not so powerfully affect us, nor act so strongly on the senses as some of the others, yet it may be esteemed as the greatest of all pleasures; and almost all the Utopians reckon it the foundation and basis of all the other joys of life, since this alone makes the state of life easy and desirable, and when this is wanting, a man is really capable of no other pleasure. They look upon freedom from pain, if it does not rise from perfect health, to be a state of stupidity rather than of pleasure. This subject has been very narrowly canvassed among them, and it has been debated whether a firm and entire health could be called a pleasure or not.

*The possessor ought  
to be healthy*

Some have thought that there was no pleasure but what was “excited” by some sensible motion in the body. But this opinion has been long ago excluded from among them; so that now they almost universally agree that health is the greatest of all bodily pleasures; and that as there is a pain in sickness which is as opposite in its nature to pleasure as sickness itself

is to health, so they hold that health is accompanied with pleasure. And if any should say that sickness is not really pain, but that it only carries pain along with it, they look upon that as a fetch of subtlety that does not much alter the matter. It is all one, in their opinion, whether it be said that health is in itself a pleasure, or that it begets a pleasure, as fire gives heat, so it be granted that all those whose health is entire have a true pleasure in the enjoyment of it. And they reason thus: "What is the pleasure of eating, but that a man's health, which had been weakened, does, with the assistance of food, drive away hunger, and so recruiting itself, recovers its former vigor? And being thus refreshed it finds a pleasure in that conflict; and if the conflict is pleasure, the victory must yet breed a greater pleasure, except we fancy that it becomes stupid as soon as it has obtained that which it pursued, and so neither knows nor rejoices in its own welfare." If it is said that health cannot be felt, they absolutely deny it; for what man is in health, that does not perceive it when he is awake? Is there any man that is so dull and stupid as not to acknowledge that he feels a delight in health? And what is delight but another name for pleasure?

But, of all pleasures, they esteem those to be most valuable that lie in the mind, the chief of which arise out of true virtue and the witness of a good conscience. They account health the chief pleasure that belongs to

the body; for they think that the pleasure of eating and drinking, and all the other delights of sense, are only so far desirable as they give or maintain health; but they are not pleasant in themselves otherwise than as they resist those impressions that our natural infirmities are still making upon us. For as a wise man desires rather to avoid diseases than to take physic, and to be freed from pain rather than to find ease by remedies, so it is more desirable not to need this sort of pleasure than to be obliged to indulge it.

If any man imagines that there is a real happiness in these enjoyments, he must then confess that he would be the happiest of all men if he were to lead his life in perpetual hunger, thirst, and itching, and, by consequence, in perpetual eating, drinking, and scratching himself; which any one may easily see would be not only a base, but a miserable, state of a life. These are, indeed, the lowest of pleasures, and the least pure, for we can never relish them but when they are mixed with the contrary pains. The pain of hunger must give us the pleasure of eating, and here the pain out-balances the pleasure. And as the pain is more vehement, so it lasts much longer; for as it begins before the pleasure, so it does not cease but with the pleasure that extinguishes it, and both expire together. They think, therefore, none of those pleasures are to be valued any further than as they are necessary; yet they rejoice in them, and with due gratitude acknowledge

the tenderness of the great Author of Nature, who has planted in us appetites, by which those things that are necessary for our preservation are likewise made pleasant to us. For how miserable a thing would life be if those daily diseases of hunger and thirst were to be carried off by such bitter drugs as we must use for those diseases that return seldomer upon us! And thus these pleasant, as well as proper, gifts of Nature maintain the strength and the sprightliness of our bodies.

They also entertain themselves with the other delights let in at their eyes, their ears, and their nostrils as the pleasant relishes and seasoning of life, which Nature seems to have marked out peculiarly for man, since no other sort of animals contemplates the figure and beauty of the universe, nor is delighted with smells any further than as they distinguish meats by them; nor do they apprehend the concords or discords of sound. Yet, in all pleasures whatsoever, they take care that a lesser joy does not hinder a greater, and that pleasure may never breed pain, which they think always follows dishonest pleasures. But they think it madness for a man to wear out the beauty of his face or the force of his natural strength, to corrupt the sprightliness of his body by sloth and laziness, or to waste it by fasting; that it is madness to weaken the strength of his constitution and reject the other delights of life, unless by renouncing his own satisfaction he can either serve the public or

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promote the happiness of others, for which he expects a greater recompense from God.\* So that they look on such a course of life as the mark of a mind that is both cruel to itself and ungrateful to the Author of Nature, as if we would not be beholden to Him for His favors, and therefore rejects all His blessings; as one who should afflict himself for the empty shadow of virtue, or for no better end than to render himself capable of bearing those misfortunes which possibly will never happen.

*This point should  
be carefully noted*

This is their notion of virtue and of pleasure: they think that no man's reason can carry him to a truer idea of them unless some discovery from heaven should inspire him with sublimer notions. I have not now the leisure to examine whether they think right or wrong in this matter; nor do I judge it necessary, for I have only undertaken to give you an account of their constitution, but not to defend all their principles. I am sure that whatever may be said of their notions, there is not in the whole world either a better people or a happier government. Their bodies are vigorous and lively; and though they are but of a middle stature, and have neither the fruitfulest soil nor the purest air in the world; yet they fortify themselves so well, by their temperate course of life, against the

*The happiness of  
the Utopians and a  
description of them*

\* This is not advice that More followed himself, practicing, as he did, mild forms of mortification of the flesh much of his life. As a young man contemplating the priesthood he frequently fasted, and as an adult he wore a hair shirt (deeding the uncomfortable garment to his daughter, Margaret Roper, the day before his execution).

unhealthiness of their air, and by their industry they so cultivate their soil, that there is nowhere to be seen a greater increase, both of corn and cattle, nor are there anywhere healthier men and freer from diseases; for one may there see reduced to practice not only all the art that the husbandman employs in manuring and improving an ill soil, but whole woods plucked up by the roots, and in other places new ones planted, where there were none before. Their principal motive for this is the convenience of carriage, that their timber may be either near their towns or growing on the banks of the sea, or of some rivers, so as to be floated to them; for it is a harder work to carry wood at any distance over land than corn. The people are industrious, apt to learn, as well as cheerful and pleasant, and none can endure more labor when it is necessary; but, except in that case, they love their ease.

*[Their Learning]*

They are unwearied pursuers of knowledge; for when we had given them some hints of the learning and discipline of the Greeks, concerning whom we only instructed them (for we know that there was nothing among the Romans, except their historians and their poets, that they would value much), it was strange to see how eagerly they were set on learning that language: we began to read a little of it to them, rather in compliance with their importunity than out of any hopes of their reaping from it any great

*The usefulness of  
the Greek language*

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*The extraordinary  
teachability of the  
Utopians*

*Yet nowadays  
loggerheads and  
blockheads are  
called scholars,  
while the more  
talented are  
corrupted by  
pleasure*

advantage: but, after a very short trial, we found they made such progress, that we saw our labor was like to be more successful than we could have expected: they learned to write their characters and to pronounce their language so exactly, had so quick an apprehension, they remembered it so faithfully, and became so ready and correct in the use of it, that it would have looked like a miracle if the greater part of those whom we taught had not been men both of extraordinary capacity and of a fit age for instruction: they were, for the greatest part, chosen from among their learned men by their chief council, though some studied it of their own accord. In three years' time they became masters of the whole language, so that they read the best of the Greek authors very exactly. I am, indeed, apt to think that they learned that language the more easily from its having some relation to their own. I believe that they were a colony of the Greeks; for though their language comes nearer the Persian, yet they retain many names, both for their towns and magistrates, that are of Greek derivation.\*

I happened to carry a great many books with me, instead of merchandise, when I sailed my fourth voyage; for I was so far from thinking of soon coming back, that I rather thought never to have returned at all, and I gave them all my books, among which were many of Plato's

\* The Utopian language, presented in the original printings of *Utopia* in the form of an alphabet and brief poem, is an imaginative mix of Greek and Latin (with some nearly unpronounceable words thrown in to humor the learned).

and some of Aristotle's works: I had also Theophrastus on Plants, which, to my great regret, was imperfect; for having laid it carelessly by, while we were at sea, a monkey had seized upon it, and in many places torn out the leaves.\* They have no books of grammar but Lascars, for I did not carry Theodorus with me; nor have they any dictionaries but Hesichius and Dioscerides.† They esteem Plutarch highly, and were much taken with Lucian's wit and with his pleasant way of writing. As for the poets, they have Aristophanes, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles of Aldus's edition; and for historians, Thucydides, Herodotus, and Herodian.‡

One of my companions, Tricius Apinatus, happened to carry with him some of Hippocrates's works and Galen's *Microtechné*, which they hold in great estimation;§ for though there is no nation in the world that needs

\* Theophrastus was a student of Aristotle's whose book of botany was still used in the Renaissance; the page-tearing incident may possibly recollect some book-destroying propensities of More's own pet monkey.

† Costantinus Lascars and Theodorus Gaza were authors of popular Greek grammars of More's time, while Hesichius and Dioscerides lived and wrote in the fifth and first centuries, respectively.

‡ A list of Greek authors as familiar to a learned Humanist in More's time as it is in ours. As for Aldus: More's friend Erasmus lived and worked in the famous print house of Aldus Manutius, who, in addition to modernizing book design, inventing italic, and pioneering the semicolon, produced an edition of Sophocles.

§ Hippocrates and Galen are the Greek fathers of Western medicine. Tricius Apinatus, however, is a creation of More's and another one of his learned in-jokes; the name points to the *apinae tricaeque* of the Latin poet Martial, referring to "trifles and toys."

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*Medicine, the most  
useful subject*

physic so little as they do, yet there is not any that honors it so much; they reckon the knowledge of it one of the pleasantest and most profitable parts of philosophy, by which, as they search into the secrets of nature, so they not only find this study highly agreeable, but think that such inquiries are very acceptable to the Author of nature; and imagine, that as He, like the inventors of curious engines amongst mankind, has exposed this great machine of the universe to the view of the only creatures capable of contemplating it, so an exact and curious observer, who admires His workmanship, is much more acceptable to Him than one of the herd, who, like a beast incapable of reason, looks on this glorious scene with the eyes of a dull and unconcerned spectator.

*The contemplation  
of nature*

The minds of the Utopians, when fenced with a love for learning, are very ingenious in discovering all such arts as are necessary to carry it to perfection. Two things they owe to us, the manufacture of paper and the art of printing; yet they are not so entirely indebted to us for these discoveries but that a great part of the invention was their own. We showed them some books printed by Aldus, we explained to them the way of making paper and the mystery of printing; but, as we had never practiced these arts, we described them in a crude and superficial manner. They seized the hints we gave them; and though at first they could not arrive at perfection, yet by making many essays they at last found out and corrected all their errors and conquered every difficulty.

Before this they only wrote on parchment, on reeds, or on the barks of trees; but now they have established the manufactures of paper and set up printing presses, so that, if they had but a good number of Greek authors, they would be quickly supplied with many copies of them: at present, though they have no more than those I have mentioned, yet, by several impressions, they have multiplied them into many thousands.

If any man was to go among them that had some extraordinary talent, or that by much travelling had observed the customs of many nations (which made us to be so well received), he would receive a hearty welcome, for they are very desirous to know the state of the whole world. Very few go among them on the account of traffic; for what can a man carry to them but iron, or gold, or silver? Which merchants desire rather to export than import to a strange country: and as for their exportation, they think it better to manage that themselves than to leave it to foreigners, for by this means, as they understand the state of the neighbouring countries better, so they keep up the art of navigation which cannot be maintained but by much practice.

### *Their Slaves*

They do not make slaves of prisoners of war, except those that are taken in battle, nor of the sons of their slaves, nor of those of other nations: the slaves among them are only such as are condemned to that state of life for

*The extraordinary  
fairness of this  
people*

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the commission of some crime, or, which is more common, such as their merchants find condemned to die in those parts to which they trade, whom they sometimes redeem at low rates, and in other places have them for nothing. They are kept at perpetual labor, and are always chained, but with this difference, that their own natives are treated much worse than others: they are considered as more profligate than the rest, and since they could not be restrained by the advantages of so excellent an education, are judged worthy of harder usage. Another sort of slaves are the poor of the neighboring countries, who offer of their own accord to come and serve them: they treat these better, and use them in all other respects as well as their own countrymen, except their imposing more labor upon them, which is no hard task to those that have been accustomed to it; and if any of these have a mind to go back to their own country, which, indeed, falls out but seldom, as they do not force them to stay, so they do not send them away empty-handed.

### *[Their Death]*

*Concerning the sick*

I have already told you with what care they look after their sick, so that nothing is left undone that can contribute either to their case or health; and for those who are taken with fixed and incurable diseases, they use all possible ways to cherish them and to make their lives as comfortable as possible. They visit them often and take great pains to make their time pass off easily; but when

any is taken with a torturing and lingering pain, so that there is no hope either of recovery or ease, the priests and magistrates come and exhort them, that, since they are now unable to go on with the business of life, are become a burden to themselves and to all about them, and they have really out-lived themselves, they should no longer nourish such a rooted distemper, but choose rather to die since they cannot live but in much misery; being assured that if they thus deliver themselves from torture, or are willing that others should do it, they shall be happy after death: since, by their acting thus, they lose none of the pleasures, but only the troubles of life, they think they behave not only reasonably but in a manner consistent with religion and piety; because they follow the advice given them by their priests, who are the expounders of the will of God. Such as are wrought on by these persuasions either starve themselves of their own accord, or take opium, and by that means die without pain.

*Voluntary death*

But no man is forced on this way of ending his life; and if they cannot be persuaded to it, this does not induce them to fail in their attendance and care of them: but as they believe that a voluntary death, when it is chosen upon such an authority, is very honorable, so if any man takes away his own life without the approbation of the priests and the senate, they give him none of the honors of a decent funeral, but throw his body into a ditch.

*[Their Marriage]*

*Concerning  
marriages*

Their women are not married before eighteen nor their men before two-and-twenty, and if any of them run into forbidden embraces before marriage they are severely punished, and the privilege of marriage is denied them unless they can obtain a special warrant from the Prince. Such disorders cast a great reproach upon the master and mistress of the family in which they happen, for it is supposed that they have failed in their duty. The reason of punishing this so severely is, because they think that if they were not strictly restrained from all vagrant appetites, very few would engage in a state in which they venture the quiet of their whole lives, by being confined to one person, and are obliged to endure all the inconveniences with which it is accompanied.

*And if it seems  
not modest,  
nevertheless it is  
most cautious*

In choosing their wives they use a method that would appear to us very absurd and ridiculous, but it is constantly observed among them, and is accounted perfectly consistent with wisdom. Before marriage some grave matron presents the bride, naked, whether she is a virgin or a widow, to the bridegroom, and after that some grave man presents the bridegroom, naked, to the bride. We, indeed, both laughed at this, and condemned it as very indecent. But they, on the other hand, wondered at the folly of the men of all other nations, who, if they are but to buy a horse of a small value, are so cautious that they will see every part of him, and take off both his saddle and all his other tackle, that there may be no secret ulcer

hid under any of them, and that yet in the choice of a wife, on which depends the happiness or unhappiness of the rest of his life, a man should venture upon trust, and only see about a handsbreadth of the face, all the rest of the body being covered, under which may lie hid what may be contagious as well as loathsome. All men are not so wise as to choose a woman only for her good qualities, and even wise men consider the body as that which adds not a little to the mind, and it is certain there may be some such deformity covered with clothes as may totally alienate a man from his wife, when it is too late to part with her; if such a thing is discovered after marriage a man has no remedy but patience; they, therefore, think it is reasonable that there should be good provision made against such mischievous frauds.

There was so much the more reason for them to make a regulation in this matter, because they are the only people of those parts that neither allow of polygamy nor of divorces, except in the case of adultery or insufferable perverseness, for in these cases the Senate dissolves the marriage and grants the injured person leave to marry again; but the guilty are made infamous and are never allowed the privilege of a second marriage. None are suffered to put away their wives against their wills, from any great calamity that may have fallen on their persons, for they look on it as the height of cruelty and treachery to abandon either of the married persons when they need most the tender care

*Divorce*

of their consort, and that chiefly in the case of old age, which, as it carries many diseases along with it, so it is a disease of itself.

But it frequently falls out that when a married couple do not well agree, they, by mutual consent, separate, and find out other persons with whom they hope they may live more happily; yet this is not done without obtaining leave of the Senate, which never admits of a divorce but upon a strict inquiry made, both by the senators and their wives, into the grounds upon which it is desired, and even when they are satisfied concerning the reasons of it they go on but slowly, for they imagine that too great easiness in granting leave for new marriages would very much shake the kindness of married people.

They punish severely those that defile the marriage bed; if both parties are married they are divorced, and the injured persons may marry one another, or whom they please, but the adulterer and the adulteress are condemned to slavery, yet if either of the injured persons cannot shake off the love of the married person they may live with them still in that state, but they must follow them to that labor to which the slaves are condemned, and sometimes the repentance of the condemned, together with the unshaken kindness of the innocent and injured person, has prevailed so far with the Prince that he has taken off the sentence; but those that relapse after they are once pardoned are punished with death.

*[Their Laws and Punishments]*

Their law does not determine the punishment for other crimes, but that is left to the Senate, to temper it according to the circumstances of the fact. Husbands have power to correct their wives and parents to chastise their children, unless the fault is so great that a public punishment is thought necessary for striking terror into others. For the most part slavery is the punishment even of the greatest crimes, for as that is no less terrible to the criminals themselves than death, so they think the preserving them in a state of servitude is more for the interest of the commonwealth than killing them, since, as their labor is a greater benefit to the public than their death could be, so the sight of their misery is a more lasting terror to other men than that which would be given by their death. If their slaves rebel, and will not bear their yoke and submit to the labor that is enjoined them, they are treated as wild beasts that cannot be kept in order, neither by a prison nor by their chains, and are at last put to death. But those who bear their punishment patiently, and are so much wrought on by that pressure that lies so hard on them, that it appears they are really more troubled for the crimes they have committed than for the miseries they suffer, are not out of hope, but that, at last, either the Prince will, by his prerogative, or the people, by their intercession, restore them again to their liberty, or, at least, very much mitigate their slavery.

*The determination of the punishment rests with the magistrates*

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*The punishment of  
one who induces  
another to disgrace*

He that tempts a married woman to adultery is no less severely punished than he that commits it, for they believe that a deliberate design to commit a crime is equal to the fact itself, since its not taking effect does not make the person that miscarried in his attempt at all the less guilty.

*Pleasure derived  
from fools*

They take great pleasure in fools, and as it is thought a base and unbecoming thing to use them ill, so they do not think it amiss for people to divert themselves with their folly; and, in their opinion, this is a great advantage to the fools themselves; for if men were so sullen and severe as not at all to please themselves with their ridiculous behavior and foolish sayings, which is all that they can do to recommend themselves to others, it could not be expected that they would be so well provided for nor so tenderly used as they must otherwise be.

*Painted beauty*

If any man should reproach another for his being misshaped or imperfect in any part of his body, it would not at all be thought a reflection on the person so treated, but it would be accounted scandalous in him that had upbraided another with what he could not help. It is thought a sign of a sluggish and sordid mind not to preserve carefully one's natural beauty; but it is likewise infamous among them to use paint. They all see that no beauty recommends a wife so much to her husband as the probity of her life and her obedience; for as some few are caught and held only by beauty, so all are attracted by the other excellences which charm all the world.

As they fright men from committing crimes by punishments, so they invite them to the love of virtue by public honors; therefore they erect statues to the memories of such worthy men as have deserved well of their country, and set these in their market-places, both to perpetuate the remembrance of their actions and to be an incitement to their posterity to follow their example.

*Citizens ought to be summoned to duty by rewards*

If any man aspires to any office he is sure never to compass it. They all live easily together, for none of the magistrates are either insolent or cruel to the people; they affect rather to be called fathers, and, by being really so, they well deserve the name; and the people pay them all the marks of honor the more freely because none are exacted from them. The Prince himself has no distinction, either of garments or of a crown; but is only distinguished by a sheaf of corn carried before him; as the High Priest is also known by his being preceded by a person carrying a wax light.

*Canvassing for office is condemned*

*The honor of magistrates*

*The dignity of the Prince*

They have but few laws, and such is their constitution that they need not many. They very much condemn other nations whose laws, together with the commentaries on them, swell up to so many volumes; for they think it an unreasonable thing to oblige men to obey a body of laws that are both of such a bulk, and so dark as not to be read and understood by every one of the subjects.

*Few laws*

They have no lawyers among them, for they consider them as a sort of people whose profession it is to disguise matters and to wrest the laws, and, therefore, they think

*The useless mob of lawyers*

it is much better that every man should plead his own cause, and trust it to the judge, as in other places the client trusts it to a counselor; by this means they both cut off many delays and find out truth more certainly; for after the parties have laid open the merits of the cause, without those artifices which lawyers are apt to suggest, the judge examines the whole matter, and supports the simplicity of such well-meaning persons, whom otherwise crafty men would be sure to run down; and thus they avoid those evils which appear very remarkably among all those nations that labor under a vast load of laws.

Every one of them is skilled in their law; for, as it is a very short study, so the plainest meaning of which words are capable is always the sense of their laws; and they argue thus: all laws are promulgated for this end, that every man may know his duty; and, therefore, the plainest and most obvious sense of the words is that which ought to be put upon them, since a more refined exposition cannot be easily comprehended, and would only serve to make the laws become useless to the greater part of mankind, and especially to those who need most the direction of them; for it is all one not to make a law at all or to couch it in such terms that, without a quick apprehension and much study, a man cannot find out the true meaning of it, since the generality of mankind are both so dull, and so much employed in their several trades, that they have neither the leisure nor the capacity requisite for such an inquiry.

*[Their Foreign Policies]*

Some of their neighbors, who are masters of their own liberties (having long ago, by the assistance of the Utopians, shaken off the yoke of tyranny, and being much taken with those virtues which they observe among them), have come to desire that they would send magistrates to govern them, some changing them every year, and others every five years; at the end of their government they bring them back to Utopia, with great expressions of honor and esteem, and carry away others to govern in their stead. In this they seem to have fallen upon a very good expedient for their own happiness and safety; for since the good or ill condition of a nation depends so much upon their magistrates, they could not have made a better choice than by pitching on men whom no advantages can bias; for wealth is of no use to them, since they must so soon go back to their own country, and they, being strangers among them, are not engaged in any of their heats or animosities; and it is certain that when public judicatories are swayed, either by avarice or partial affections, there must follow a dissolution of justice, the chief sinew of society.

The Utopians call those nations that come and ask magistrates from them Neighbors; but those to whom they have been of more particular service, Friends; and as all other nations are perpetually either making leagues or breaking them, they never enter into an alliance with any state. They think leagues are useless

*Concerning treaties*

things, and believe that if the common ties of humanity do not knit men together, the faith of promises will have no great effect; and they are the more confirmed in this by what they see among the nations round about them, who are no strict observers of leagues and treaties.

We know how religiously they are observed in Europe, more particularly where the Christian doctrine is received, among whom they are sacred and inviolable! Which is partly owing to the justice and goodness of the princes themselves, and partly to the reverence they pay to the popes, who, as they are the most religious observers of their own promises, so they exhort all other princes to perform theirs, and, when fainter methods do not prevail, they compel them to it by the severity of the pastoral censure, and think that it would be the most indecent thing possible if men who are particularly distinguished by the title of “The Faithful” should not religiously keep the faith of their treaties.\*

But in that new-found world, which is not more distant from us in situation than the people are in their manners and course of life, there is no trusting to leagues, even though they were made with all the pomp of the most sacred ceremonies; on the contrary,

\* Another one of More’s ironic jokes. Princes and popes were frequently far from just and good, and were rarely revered, while treaties were routinely violated. Near the same time More was writing *Utopia*, his Italian contemporary, Niccolò Machiavelli, was describing (and advocating) the perfidy of princes and popes in *The Prince*, written in 1513 though not published until 1532.

they are on this account the sooner broken, some slight pretense being found in the words of the treaties, which are purposely couched in such ambiguous terms that they can never be so strictly bound but they will always find some loophole to escape at, and thus they break both their leagues and their faith; and this is done with such impudence, that those very men who value themselves on having suggested these expedients to their princes would, with a haughty scorn, declaim against such craft; or, to speak plainer, such fraud and deceit, if they found private men make use of it in their bargains, and would readily say that they deserved to be hanged.

By this means it is that all sort of justice passes in the world for a low-spirited and vulgar virtue, far below the dignity of royal greatness—or at least there are set up two sorts of justice; the one is mean and creeps on the ground, and, therefore, becomes none but the lower part of mankind, and so must be kept in severely by many restraints, that it may not break out beyond the bounds that are set to it; the other is the peculiar virtue of princes, which, as it is more majestic than that which becomes the rabble, so takes a freer compass, and thus lawful and unlawful are only measured by pleasure and interest. These practices of the princes that lie about Utopia, who make so little account of their faith, seem to be the reasons that determine them to engage in no confederacy. Perhaps they would change their mind if they lived among us; but yet, though treaties were more

religiously observed, they would still dislike the custom of making them, since the world has taken up a false maxim upon it, as if there were no tie of nature uniting one nation to another, only separated perhaps by a mountain or a river, and that all were born in a state of hostility, and so might lawfully do all that mischief to their neighbors against which there is no provision made by treaties; and that when treaties are made they do not cut off the enmity or restrain the license of preying upon each other, if, by the unskillfulness of wording them, there are not effectual provisions made against them; they, on the other hand, judge that no man is to be esteemed our enemy that has never injured us, and that the partnership of human nature is instead of a league; and that kindness and good nature unite men more effectually and with greater strength than any agreements whatsoever, since thereby the engagements of men's hearts become stronger than the bond and obligation of words.

*Their Military Affairs*

They detest war as a very brutal thing, and which, to the reproach of human nature, is more practiced by men than by any sort of beasts. They, in opposition to the sentiments of almost all other nations, think that there is nothing more inglorious than that glory that is gained by war; and therefore, though they accustom themselves daily to military exercises and the discipline of war, in

which not only their men, but their women likewise, are trained up, that, in cases of necessity, they may not be quite useless, yet they do not rashly engage in war, unless it be either to defend themselves or their friends from any unjust aggressors, or, out of good nature or in compassion, assist an oppressed nation in shaking off the yoke of tyranny. They, indeed, help their friends not only in defensive but also in offensive wars; but they never do that unless they had been consulted before the breach was made, and, being satisfied with the grounds on which they went, they had found that all demands of reparation were rejected, so that a war was unavoidable.

This they think to be not only just when one neighbor makes an inroad on another by public order, and carries away the spoils, but when the merchants of one country are oppressed in another, either under pretense of some unjust laws, or by the perverse wresting of good ones. This they count a juster cause of war than the other, because those injuries are done under some color of laws.

This was the only ground of that war in which they engaged with the Nephelogetes against the Aleopolitanes,\* a little before our time; for the merchants of the former having, as they thought, met with great injustice among the latter, which (whether it was in

\* More More-isms: "Nephelogetes" are "people from the clouds," and "Aleopolitanes" are "people of a people-less land." Both are derived from Greek.

itself right or wrong) drew on a terrible war, in which many of their neighbors were engaged; and their keenness in carrying it on being supported by their strength in maintaining it, it not only shook some very flourishing states and very much afflicted others, but, after a series of much mischief ended in the entire conquest and slavery of the Aleopolitanes, who, though before the war they were in all respects much superior to the Nephelotes, were yet subdued; but, though the Utopians had assisted them in the war, yet they pretended to no share of the spoil.

But, though they so vigorously assist their friends in obtaining reparation for the injuries they have received in affairs of this nature, yet, if any such frauds were committed against themselves, provided no violence was done to their persons, they would only, on their being refused satisfaction, forbear trading with such a people. This is not because they consider their neighbors more than their own citizens; but, since their neighbors trade every one upon his own stock, fraud is a more sensible injury to them than it is to the Utopians, among whom the public, in such a case, only suffers, as they expect no thing in return for the merchandise they export but that in which they so much abound, and is of little use to them, the loss does not much affect them. They think, therefore, it would be too severe to revenge a loss attended with so little inconvenience, either to their lives or their subsistence, with the death

of many persons; but if any of their people are either killed or wounded wrongfully, whether it be done by public authority, or only by private men, as soon as they hear of it they send ambassadors, and demand that the guilty persons may be delivered up to them, and if that is denied, they declare war; but if it be complied with, the offenders are condemned either to death or slavery.

They would be both troubled and ashamed of a bloody victory over their enemies; and think it would be as foolish a purchase as to buy the most valuable goods at too high a rate. And in no victory do they glory so much as in that which is gained by dexterity and good conduct without bloodshed. In such cases they appoint public triumphs, and erect trophies to the honor of those who have succeeded; for then do they reckon that a man acts suitably to his nature, when he conquers his enemy in such a way as that no other creature but a man could be capable of, and that is by the strength of his understanding. Bears, lions, boars, wolves, and dogs, and all other animals, employ their bodily force one against another, in which, as many of them are superior to men, both in strength and fierceness, so they are all subdued by his reason and understanding.

The only design of the Utopians in war is to obtain that by force which, if it had been granted them in time, would have prevented the war; or, if that cannot be done, to take so severe a revenge on those that have injured them that they may be terrified from doing the

*Victory dearly  
bought*

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like for the time to come. By these ends they measure all their designs, and manage them so, that it is visible that the appetite of fame or vainglory does not work so much on there as a just care of their own security.

As soon as they declare war, they take care to have a great many placards, that are marked with their common seal, affixed in the most conspicuous places of their enemies' country. This is carried secretly, and done in many places all at once. In these they promise great rewards to such as shall kill the prince, and lesser in proportion to such as shall kill any other persons who are those on whom, next to the prince himself, they cast the chief balance of the war. And they double the sum to him that, instead of killing the person so marked out, shall take him alive, and put him in their hands. They offer not only indemnity, but rewards, to such of the persons themselves that are so marked, if they will act against their countrymen. By this means those that are named in their proclamations become not only distrustful of their fellow-citizens, but are jealous of one another, and are much distracted by fear and danger; for it has often fallen out that many of them, and even the prince himself, have been betrayed, by those in whom they have trusted most; for the rewards that the Utopians offer are so immeasurably great, that there is no sort of crime to which men cannot be drawn by them. They consider the risk that those run who undertake such services, and offer a recompense

proportioned to the danger—not only a vast deal of gold, but great revenues in lands, that lie among other nations that are their friends, where they may go and enjoy them very securely; and they observe the promises they make of their kind most religiously.

They very much approve of this way of corrupting their enemies, though it appears to others to be base and cruel; but they look on it as a wise course, to make an end of what would be otherwise a long war, without so much as hazarding one battle to decide it. They think it likewise an act of mercy and love to mankind to prevent the great slaughter of those that must otherwise be killed in the progress of the war, both on their own side and on that of their enemies, by the death of a few that are most guilty; and that in so doing they are kind even to their enemies, and pity them no less than their own people, as knowing that the greater part of them do not engage in the war of their own accord, but are driven into it by the passions of their prince.

If this method does not succeed with them, then they sow seeds of contention among their enemies, and animate the prince's brother, or some of the nobility, to aspire to the crown. If they cannot disunite them by domestic broils, then they engage their neighbors against them, and make them set on foot some old pretensions, which are never wanting to princes when they have occasion for them. These they plentifully supply with money, though but very

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sparingly with any auxiliary troops; for they are so tender of their own people that they would not willingly exchange one of them, even with the prince of their enemies' country.

But as they keep their gold and silver only for such an occasion, so, when that offers itself, they easily part with it; since it would be no convenience to them, though they should reserve nothing of it to themselves. For besides the wealth that they have among them at home, they have a vast treasure abroad; many nations round about them being deep in their debt: so that they hire soldiers from all places for carrying on their wars; but chiefly from the Zapolets,\* who live five hundred miles east of Utopia. They are a rude, wild, and fierce nation, who delight in the woods and rocks, among which they were born and bred up. They are hardened both against heat, cold, and labor, and know nothing of the delicacies of life. They do not apply themselves to agriculture, nor do they care either for their houses or their clothes: cattle is all that they look after; and for the greatest part they live either by hunting or upon rapine; and are made, as it were, only for war.

*A people not  
unlike the Swiss†*

\* "Zapolets" comes from the Greek for "busy sellers" or, in other translations, "ready sellers" (of themselves). The marginalia at this point make reference to the Swiss who, as well as being known for their pecuniary interest, provided many of the mercenaries used in Europe in More's time. Even today, the pope has his Swiss Guards and Switzerland is famous for its banks.

† This marginal note, disparaging the Swiss, was removed in the 1518 editions by the (Swiss) publisher, Johann Froben.

They watch all opportunities of engaging in it, and very readily embrace such as are offered them. Great numbers of them will frequently go out, and offer themselves for a very low pay, to serve any that will employ them: they know none of the arts of life, but those that lead to the taking it away; they serve those that hire them, both with much courage and great fidelity; but will not engage to serve for any determined time, and agree upon such terms, that the next day they may go over to the enemies of those whom they serve if they offer them a greater encouragement; and will, perhaps, return to them the day after that upon a higher advance of their pay. There are few wars in which they make not a considerable part of the armies of both sides: so it often falls out that they who are related, and were hired in the same country, and so have lived long and familiarly together, forgetting both their relations and former friendship, kill one another upon no other consideration than that of being hired to it for a little money by princes of different interests; and such a regard have they for money that they are easily wrought on by the difference of one penny a day to change sides. So entirely does their avarice influence them; and yet this money, which they value so highly, is of little use to them; for what they purchase thus with their blood they quickly waste on luxury, which among them is but of a poor and miserable form.

This nation serves the Utopians against all people whatsoever, for they pay higher than any other. The Utopians hold this for a maxim, that as they seek out the best

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sort of men for their own use at home, so they make use of this worst sort of men for the consumption of war; and therefore they hire them with the offers of vast rewards to expose themselves to all sorts of hazards, out of which the greater part never returns to claim their promises; yet they make them good most religiously to such as escape. This animates them to adventure again, whenever there is occasion for it; for the Utopians are not at all troubled how many of these happen to be killed, and reckon it a service done to mankind if they could be a means to deliver the world from such a lewd and vicious sort of people, that seem to have run together, as to the drain of human nature.

Next to these, they are served in their wars with those upon whose account they undertake them, and with the auxiliary troops of their other friends, to whom they join a few of their own people, and send some man of eminent and approved virtue to command in chief. There are two sent with him, who, during his command, are but private men, but the first is to succeed him if he should happen to be either killed or taken; and, in case of the like misfortune to him, the third comes in his place; and thus they provide against all events, that such accidents as may befall their generals may not endanger their armies.

When they draw out troops of their own people, they take such out of every city as freely offer themselves, for none are forced to go against their wills, since they think that if any man is pressed that wants courage, he will not

only act faintly, but by his cowardice dishearten others. But if an invasion is made on their country, they make use of such men, if they have good bodies, though they are not brave; and either put them aboard their ships, or place them on the walls of their towns, that being so posted, they may find no opportunity of flying away; and thus either shame, the heat of action, or the impossibility of flying, bears down their cowardice; they often make a virtue of necessity, and behave themselves well, because nothing else is left them.

But as they force no man to go into any foreign war against his will, so they do not hinder those women who are willing to go along with their husbands; on the contrary, they encourage and praise them, and they stand often next their husbands in the front of the army. They also place together those who are related, parents, and children, kindred, and those that are mutually allied, near one another; that those whom nature has inspired with the greatest zeal for assisting one another may be the nearest and readiest to do it; and it is matter of great reproach if husband or wife survive one another, or if a child survives his parent, and therefore when they come to be engaged in action, they continue to fight to the last man.

If their enemies stand before them: and as they use all prudent methods to avoid the endangering their own men, and if it is possible let all the action and danger fall upon the troops that they hire, so if it becomes necessary

for themselves to engage, they then charge with as much courage as they avoided it before with prudence: nor is it a fierce charge at first, but it increases by degrees; and as they continue in action, they grow more obstinate, and press harder upon the enemy, insomuch that they will much sooner die than give ground; for the certainty that their children will be well looked after when they are dead frees them from all that anxiety concerning them which often masters men of great courage; and thus they are animated by a noble and invincible resolution. Their skill in military affairs increases their courage: and the wise sentiments which, according to the laws of their country, are instilled into them in their education, give additional vigor to their minds: for as they do not undervalue life so as prodigally to throw it away, they are not so indecently fond of it as to preserve it by base and unbecoming methods.

*The general in particular ought to be attacked so that the war might be ended more quickly*

In the greatest heat of action the bravest of their youth, who have devoted themselves to that service, single out the general of their enemies and set on him either openly or by ambush; pursue him everywhere, and when spent and wearied out, are relieved by others, who never give over the pursuit, either attacking him with close weapons when they can get near him, or with those which wound at a distance, when others get in between them. So that, unless he secures himself by flight, they seldom fail at last to kill or to take him prisoner.

When they have obtained a victory, they kill as few as possible, and are much more bent on taking many prisoners than on killing those that fly before them. Nor do they ever let their men so loose in the pursuit of their enemies as not to retain an entire body still in order; so that if they have been forced to engage the last of their battalions before they could gain the day, they will rather let their enemies all escape than pursue them when their own army is in disorder; remembering well what has often fallen out to themselves, that when the main body of their army has been quite defeated and broken, when their enemies, imagining the victory obtained, have let themselves loose into an irregular pursuit, a few of them that lay for a reserve, waiting a fit opportunity, have fallen on them in their chase, and when straggling in disorder, and apprehensive of no danger, but counting the day their own, have turned the whole action, and, wresting out of their hands a victory that seemed certain and undoubted, while the vanquished have suddenly become victorious.

It is hard to tell whether they are more dexterous in laying or avoiding ambushes. They sometimes seem to fly when it is far from their thoughts; and when they intend to give ground, they do it so that it is very hard to find out their design. If they see they are ill posted, or are like to be overpowered by numbers, they then either march off in the night with

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great silence, or by some stratagem delude their enemies. If they retire in the daytime, they do it in such order that it is no less dangerous to fall upon them in a retreat than in a march. They fortify their camps with a deep and large trench; and throw up the earth that is dug out of it for a wall; nor do they employ only their slaves in this, but the whole army works at it, except those that are then upon the guard; so that when so many hands are at work, a great line and a strong fortification is finished in so short a time that it is scarce credible.

*The types of  
weapons*

Their armor is very strong for defense, and yet is not so heavy as to make them uneasy in their marches; they can even swim with it. All that are trained up to war practice swimming. Both horse and foot make great use of arrows, and are very expert. They have no swords, but fight with a pole-axe that is both sharp and heavy, by which they thrust or strike down an enemy. They are very good at finding out warlike machines, and disguise them so well that the enemy does not perceive them till he feels the use of them; so that he cannot prepare such a defense as would render them useless; the chief consideration had in the making them is that they may be easily carried and managed.

*Concerning truces*

If they agree to a truce, they observe it so religiously that no provocations will make them break it. They never lay their enemies' country waste nor burn their corn, and even in their marches they take all possible care that neither horse nor foot may tread it down, for they do not know but that they may have use for it themselves. They hurt no

man whom they find disarmed, unless he is a spy. When a town is surrendered to them, they take it into their protection; and when they carry a place by storm they never plunder it, but put those only to the sword that oppose the rendering of it up, and make the rest of the garrison slaves, but for the other inhabitants, they do them no hurt; and if any of them had advised a surrender, they give them good rewards out of the estates of those that they condemn, and distribute the rest among their auxiliary troops, but they themselves take no share of the spoil.

When a war is ended, they do not oblige their friends to reimburse their expenses; but they obtain them of the conquered, either in money, which they keep for the next occasion, or in lands, out of which a constant revenue is to be paid them; by many increases the revenue which they draw out from several countries on such occasions is now risen to above 700,000 ducats\* a year. They send some of their own people to receive these revenues, who have orders to live magnificently and like princes, by which means they consume much of it upon the place; and either bring over the rest to Utopia or lend it to that nation in which it lies. This they most commonly do, unless some great occasion, which falls out but very seldom, should oblige them to call for it all. It is out of these lands that they assign rewards to such as they encourage to adventure on desperate attempts. If any prince that engages in war with them is making

*Yet today the victors pay the greatest part*

\* A ducat was a gold coin used throughout Europe until the beginning of the twentieth century.

preparations for invading their country, they prevent him, and make his country the seat of the war; for they do not willingly suffer any war to break in upon their island; and if that should happen, they would only defend themselves by their own people; but would not call for auxiliary troops to their assistance.

### *Their Religions*

There are several sorts of religions, not only in different parts of the island, but even in every town; some worshipping the sun, others the moon or one of the planets. Some worship such men as have been eminent in former times for virtue or glory, not only as ordinary deities, but as the supreme god. Yet the greater and wiser sort of them worship none of these, but adore one eternal, invisible, infinite, and incomprehensible Deity; as a Being that is far above all our apprehensions, that is spread over the whole universe, not by His bulk, but by His power and virtue; Him they call the Father of All, and acknowledge that the beginnings, the increase, the progress, the vicissitudes, and the end of all things come only from Him; nor do they offer divine honors to any but to Him alone.

And, indeed, though they differ concerning other things, yet all agree in this: that they think there is one Supreme Being that made and governs the world, whom they call, in the language of their country, Mithras.\* They

\* Mithras was the spirit of light, or sun god, first worshiped by the Zoroastrians of ancient Persia and then adopted by Greek and Roman sects.

differ in this: that one thinks the god whom he worships is this Supreme Being, and another thinks that his idol is that god; but they all agree in one principle, that whoever is this Supreme Being, He is also that great essence to whose glory and majesty all honors are ascribed by the consent of all nations.

By degrees they fall off from the various superstitions that are among them, and grow up to that one religion that is the best and most in request; and there is no doubt to be made, but that all the others had vanished long ago, if some of those who advised them to lay aside their superstitions had not met with some unhappy accidents, which, being considered as inflicted by heaven, made them afraid that the god whose worship had like to have been abandoned had interposed and revenged themselves on those who despised their authority.

After they had heard from us an account of the doctrine, the course of life, and the miracles of Christ, and of the wonderful constancy of so many martyrs, whose blood, so willingly offered up by them, was the chief occasion of spreading their religion over a vast number of nations, it is not to be imagined how inclined they were to receive it. I shall not determine whether this proceeded from any secret inspiration of God, or whether it was because it seemed so favorable to that community of goods, which is an opinion so particular as well as so dear to them; since they perceived that Christ and His followers lived by that rule, and that it was still kept up in some communities

*Monasteries*

among the sincerest sort of Christians. From whichever of these motives it might be, true it is, that many of them came over to our religion, and were initiated into it by baptism. But as two of our number were dead, so none of the four that survived were in priests' orders, we, therefore, could only baptize them, so that, to our great regret, they could not partake of the other sacraments, that can only be administered by priests, but they are instructed concerning them and long most vehemently for them. They have had great disputes among themselves, whether one chosen by them to be a priest would not be thereby qualified to do all the things that belong to that character, even though he had no authority derived from the Pope, and they seemed to be resolved to choose some for that employment, but they had not done it when I left them.

Those among them that have not received our religion do not fright any from it, and use none ill that goes over to it, so that all the while I was there one man was only punished on this occasion. He being newly baptized did, notwithstanding all that we could say to the contrary, dispute publicly concerning the Christian religion, with more zeal than discretion, and with so much heat, that he not only preferred our worship to theirs, but condemned all their rites as profane, and cried out against all that adhered to them as impious and sacrilegious persons, that were to be damned to everlasting burnings. Upon his having frequently preached in this manner he was seized, and after trial he was condemned to banishment, not for having

*Men ought to be  
drawn to religion  
by praise*

disparaged their religion, but for his inflaming the people to sedition; for this is one of their most ancient laws, that no man ought to be punished for his religion.\*

At the first constitution of their government, Utopus having understood that before his coming among them the old inhabitants had been engaged in great quarrels concerning religion, by which they were so divided among themselves, that he found it an easy thing to conquer them, since, instead of uniting their forces against him, every different party in religion fought by themselves. After he had subdued them he made a law that every man might be of what religion he pleased, and might endeavor to draw others to it by the force of argument and by amicable and modest ways, but without bitterness against those of other opinions; but that he ought to use no other force but that of persuasion, and was neither to mix with it reproaches nor violence; and such as did otherwise were to be condemned to banishment or slavery.

This law was made by Utopus, not only for preserving the public peace, which he saw suffered much by daily contentions and irreconcilable heats, but because he thought the interest of religion itself required it. He judged it not fit to determine anything rashly; and seemed to doubt whether those different forms of religion might not all come from God, who might inspire man in a different manner, and be pleased with this variety; he therefore thought it indecent

\* More, as Lord Chancellor later in life, fiercely punished religious dissidents, presiding over the execution of six Protestant "heretics," all of whom were burned at the stake.

and foolish for any man to threaten and terrify another to make him believe what did not appear to him to be true. And supposing that only one religion was really true, and the rest false, he imagined that the native force of truth would at last break forth and shine bright, if supported only by the strength of argument, and attended to with a gentle and unprejudiced mind; while, on the other hand, if such debates were carried on with violence and tumults, as the most wicked are always the most obstinate, so the best and most holy religion might be choked with superstition, as corn is with briars and thorns; he therefore left men wholly to their liberty, that they might be free to believe as they should see cause; only he made a solemn and severe law against such as should so far degenerate from the dignity of human nature, as to think that our souls died with our bodies, or that the world was governed by chance, without a wise overruling Providence: for they all formerly believed that there was a state of rewards and punishments to the good and bad after this life; and they now look on those that think otherwise as scarce fit to be counted men, since they degrade so noble a being as the soul, and reckon it no better than a beast's.

Thus they are far from looking on such men as fit for human society, or to be citizens of a well-ordered commonwealth; since a man of such principles must needs, as oft as he dares do it, despise all their laws and customs: for there is no doubt to be made, that a man who is afraid of nothing but the law, and apprehends nothing

after death, will not scruple to break through all the laws of his country, either by fraud or force, when by this means he may satisfy his appetites. They never raise any that hold these maxims, either to honors or offices, nor employ them in any public trust, but despise them, as men of base and sordid minds. Yet they do not punish them, because they lay this down as a maxim, that a man cannot make himself believe anything he pleases; nor do they drive any to dissemble their thoughts by threatenings, so that men are not tempted to lie or disguise their opinions; which being a sort of fraud, is abhorred by the Utopians: they take care indeed to prevent their disputing in defense of these opinions, especially before the common people: but they suffer, and even encourage them to dispute concerning them in private with their priest, and other grave men, being confident that they will be cured of those mad opinions by having reason laid before them. There are many among them that run far to the other extreme, though it is neither thought an ill nor unreasonable opinion, and therefore is not at all discouraged. They think that the souls of beasts are immortal, though far inferior to the dignity of the human soul, and not capable of so great a happiness.

*An extraordinary opinion concerning the souls of brute animals*

They are almost all of them very firmly persuaded that good men will be infinitely happy in another state: so that though they are compassionate to all that are sick, yet they lament no man's death, except they see him loath

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to part with life; for they look on this as a very ill presage, as if the soul, conscious to itself of guilt, and quite hopeless, was afraid to leave the body, from some secret hints of approaching misery. They think that such a man's appearance before God cannot be acceptable to Him, who being called on, does not go out cheerfully, but is backward and unwilling, and is as it were dragged to it. They are struck with horror when they see any die in this manner, and carry them out in silence and with sorrow, and praying God that He would be merciful to the errors of the departed soul, they lay the body in the ground: but when any die cheerfully, and full of hope, they do not mourn for them, but sing hymns when they carry out their bodies, and commending their souls very earnestly to God: their whole behavior is then rather grave than sad, they burn the body, and set up a pillar where the pile was made, with an inscription to the honor of the deceased. When they come from the funeral, they discourse of his good life, and worthy actions, but speak of nothing oftener and with more pleasure than of his serenity at the hour of death.

They think such respect paid to the memory of good men is both the greatest incitement to engage others to follow their example, and the most acceptable worship that can be offered them; for they believe that though by the imperfection of human sight they are invisible to us, yet they are present among us, and hear those discourses that pass concerning themselves. They believe

it inconsistent with the happiness of departed souls not to be at liberty to be where they will: and do not imagine them capable of the ingratitude of not desiring to see those friends with whom they lived on earth in the strictest bonds of love and kindness: besides, they are persuaded that good men, after death, have these affections; and all other good dispositions increased rather than diminished, and therefore conclude that they are still among the living, and observe all they say or do. From hence they engage in all their affairs with the greater confidence of success, as trusting to their protection; while this opinion of the presence of their ancestors is a restraint that prevents their engaging in ill designs.

They despise and laugh at auguries, and the other vain and superstitious ways of divination, so much observed among other nations; but have great reverence for such miracles as cannot flow from any of the powers of nature, and look on them as effects and indications of the presence of the Supreme Being, of which they say many instances have occurred among them; and that sometimes their public prayers, which upon great and dangerous occasions they have solemnly put up to God, with assured confidence of being heard, have been answered in a miraculous manner. They think contemplating God in His works, and adoring Him for them, is a very acceptable piece of worship to Him.

There are many among them that upon a motive of religion neglect learning, and apply themselves to

no sort of study; nor do they allow themselves any leisure time, but are perpetually employed, believing that by the good things that a man does he secures to himself that happiness that comes after death. Some of these visit the sick; others mend highways, cleanse ditches, repair bridges, or dig turf, gravel, or stone. Others fell and cleave timber, and bring wood, corn, and other necessaries, on carts, into their towns; nor do these only serve the public, but they serve even private men, more than the slaves themselves do: for if there is anywhere a rough, hard, and sordid piece of work to be done, from which many are frightened by the labor and loathsomeness of it, if not the despair of accomplishing it, they cheerfully, and of their own accord, take that to their share; and by that means, as they ease others very much, so they afflict themselves, and spend their whole life in hard labor: and yet they do not value themselves upon this, nor lessen other people's credit to raise their own; but by their stooping to such servile employments they are so far from being despised, that they are so much the more esteemed by the whole nation.

Of these there are two sorts: some live unmarried and chaste, and abstain from eating any sort of flesh; and thus weaning themselves from all the pleasures of the present life, which they account hurtful, they pursue, even by the hardest and painfulest methods possible, that blessedness which they hope for hereafter;

and the nearer they approach to it, they are the more cheerful and earnest in their endeavors after it. Another sort of them is less willing to put themselves to much toil, and therefore prefer a married state to a single one; and as they do not deny themselves the pleasure of it, so they think the begetting of children is a debt which they owe to human nature, and to their country; nor do they avoid any pleasure that does not hinder labor; and therefore eat flesh so much the more willingly, as they find that by this means they are the more able to work: the Utopians look upon these as the wiser sect, but they esteem the others as the most holy. They would indeed laugh at any man who, from the principles of reason, would prefer an unmarried state to a married, or a life of labor to an easy life: but they reverence and admire such as do it from the motives of religion. There is nothing in which they are more cautious than in giving their opinion positively concerning any sort of religion. The men that lead those severe lives are called in the language of their country *Buthrescas*,\* which answers to those we call Religious Orders.

Their priests are men of eminent piety, and therefore they are but few, for there are only thirteen in every town, one for every temple; but when they go to war, seven of these go out with their forces, and seven others are chosen to supply their room in their absence; but

\* Seemingly no pun here: “*Buthrescas*,” from the Greek, means what it implies in the text: “extra-ordinarily religious.”

these enter again upon their employments when they return; and those who served in their absence, attend upon the high priest, till vacancies fall by death; for there is one set over the rest. They are chosen by the people as the other magistrates are, by suffrages given in secret, for preventing of factions: and when they are chosen, they are consecrated by the college of priests.

The care of all sacred things, the worship of God, and an inspection into the manners of the people, are committed to them. It is a reproach to a man to be sent for by any of them, or for them to speak to him in secret, for that always gives some suspicion: all that is incumbent on them is only to exhort and admonish the people; for the power of correcting and punishing ill men belongs wholly to the Prince, and to the other magistrates: the severest thing that the priest does is the excluding those that are desperately wicked from joining in their worship: there is not any sort of punishment more dreaded by them than this, for as it loads them with infamy, so it fills them with secret horrors, such is their reverence to their religion; nor will their bodies be long exempted from their share of trouble; for if they do not very quickly satisfy the priests of the truth of their repentance, they are seized on by the Senate, and punished for their impiety.

The education of youth belongs to the priests, yet they do not take so much care of instructing them in letters, as in forming their minds and manners aright; they

use all possible methods to infuse, very early, into the tender and flexible minds of children, such opinions as are both good in themselves and will be useful to their country, for when deep impressions of these things are made at that age, they follow men through the whole course of their lives, and conduce much to preserve the peace of the government, which suffers by nothing more than by vices that rise out of ill opinions.

The wives of their priests are the most extraordinary women of the whole country; sometimes the women themselves are made priests, though that falls out but seldom, nor are any but ancient widows chosen into that order.

*Women as priests*

None of the magistrates have greater honor paid them than is paid the priests; and if they should happen to commit any crime, they would not be questioned for it; their punishment is left to God, and to their own consciences; for they do not think it lawful to lay hands on any man, how wicked soever he is, that has been in a peculiar manner dedicated to God; nor do they find any great inconvenience in this, both because they have so few priests, and because these are chosen with much caution, so that it must be a very unusual thing to find one who, merely out of regard to his virtue, and for his being esteemed a singularly good man, was raised up to so great a dignity,

*Excommunication\**

\* Excommunication is actually discussed three paragraphs previously, but all four original editions place the note here. Perhaps the author had something in mind putting it in this place, or perhaps it was simply an error repeated.

degenerate into corruption and vice; and if such a thing should fall out, for man is a changeable creature, yet, there being few priests, and these having no authority but what rises out of the respect that is paid them, nothing of great consequence to the public can proceed from the indemnity that the priests enjoy. They have, indeed, very few of them, lest greater numbers sharing in the same honor might make the dignity of that order, which they esteem so highly, to sink in its reputation; they also think it difficult to find out many of such an exalted pitch of goodness as to be equal to that dignity, which demands the exercise of more than ordinary virtues.

*But among us what  
a great mob there  
is!*

Nor are the priests in greater veneration among them than they are among their neighboring nations, as you may imagine by that which I think gives occasion for it. When the Utopians engage in battle, the priests who accompany them to the war, apparelled in their sacred vestments, kneel down during the action (in a place not far from the field), and, lifting up their hands to heaven, pray, first for peace, and then for victory to their own side, and particularly that it may be gained without the effusion of much blood on either side; and when the victory turns to their side, they run in among their own men to restrain their fury; and if any of their enemies see them or call to them, they are preserved by that means; and such as can come so near them as to touch their garments have not only their lives, but their fortunes secured to them; it is upon this account that all the nations round about consider them so much, and

*O priests far more  
holy than our own!*

treat them with such reverence, that they have been often no less able to preserve their own people from the fury of their enemies than to save their enemies from their rage; for it has sometimes fallen out, that when their armies have been in disorder and forced to fly, so that their enemies were running upon the slaughter and spoil, the priests by interposing have separated them from one another, and stopped the effusion of more blood; so that, by their mediation, a peace has been concluded on very reasonable terms; nor is there any nation about them so fierce, cruel, or barbarous, as not to look upon their persons as sacred and inviolable.

The first and the last day of the month, and of the year, is a festival; they measure their months by the course of the moon, and their years by the course of the sun: the first days are called in their language the Cynemernes, and the last the Trapemernes, which answers in our language, to the festival that begins or ends the season.\*

They have magnificent temples, that are not only nobly built, but extremely spacious, which is the more necessary as they have so few of them; they are a little dark within, which proceeds not from any error in the architecture, but is done with design; for their priests think that too much light dissipates the thoughts, and that a more moderate degree of it both recollects the mind and raises devotion.

*The observance of  
feast days among  
the Utopians*

*Temples of such a  
sort*

\* “Cynemernes” is Greek for “dog day,” and “Trapemernes” means “turning day.” Here, again, More does not seem to be punning with his lexical creations.

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Though there are many different forms of religion among them, yet all these, how various soever, agree in the main point, which is the worshipping the Divine Essence; and, therefore, there is nothing to be seen or heard in their temples in which the several persuasions among them may not agree; for every sect performs those rites that are peculiar to it in their private houses, nor is there anything in the public worship that contradicts the particular ways of those different sects. There are no images for God in their temples, so that every one may represent Him to his thoughts according to the way of his religion; nor do they call this one God by any other name but that of Mithras, which is the common name by which they all express the Divine Essence, whatsoever otherwise they think it to be; nor are there any prayers among them but such as every one of them may use without prejudice to his own opinion.

They meet in their temples on the evening of the festival that concludes a season, and not having yet broke their fast, they thank God for their good success during that year or month which is then at an end; and the next day, being that which begins the new season, they meet early in their temples, to pray for the happy progress of all their affairs during that period upon which they then enter. In the festival which concludes the period, before they go to the temple, both wives and children fall on their knees before their husbands or parents and confess everything in which they have either erred or

*The confessions of  
the Utopians*

failed in their duty, and beg pardon for it. Thus all little discontents in families are removed, that they may offer up their devotions with a pure and serene mind; for they hold it a great impiety to enter upon them with disturbed thoughts, or with a consciousness of their bearing hatred or anger in their hearts to any person whatsoever; and think that they should become liable to severe punishments if they presumed to offer sacrifices without cleansing their hearts, and reconciling all their differences.

*But among us,  
those who are most  
corrupt strain to be  
closest to the altar*

In the temples the two sexes are separated, the men go to the right hand, and the women to the left; and the males and females all place themselves before the head and master or mistress of the family to which they belong, so that those who have the government of them at home may see their deportment in public. And they intermingle them so, that the younger and the older may be set by one another; for if the younger sort were all set together, they would, perhaps, trifle away that time too much in which they ought to beget in themselves that religious dread of the Supreme Being which is the greatest and almost the only incitement to virtue.

They offer up no living creature in sacrifice, nor do they think it suitable to the Divine Being, from whose bounty it is that these creatures have derived their lives, to take pleasure in their deaths, or the offering up their blood. They burn incense and other sweet odors, and have a great number of wax lights during their worship, not out of any imagination that such oblations can add

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anything to the divine nature (which even prayers cannot do), but as it is a harmless and pure way of worshipping God; so they think those sweet savors and lights, together with some other ceremonies, by a secret and unaccountable virtue, elevate men's souls, and inflame them with greater energy and cheerfulness during the divine worship.

All the people appear in the temples in white garments; but the priest's vestments are parti-colored, and both the work and colors are wonderful. They are made of no rich materials, for they are neither embroidered nor set with precious stones; but are composed of the plumes of several birds, laid together with so much art, and so neatly, that the true value of them is far beyond the costliest materials. They say, that in the ordering and placing those plumes some dark mysteries are represented, which pass down among their priests in a secret tradition concerning them; and that they are as hieroglyphics, putting them in mind of the blessing that they have received from God, and of their duties, both to Him and to their neighbors.

As soon as the priest appears in those ornaments, they all fall prostrate on the ground, with so much reverence and so deep a silence, that such as look on cannot but be struck with it, as if it were the effect of the appearance of a deity. After they have been for some time in this posture, they all stand up, upon a sign given by the priest, and sing hymns to the honor of God, some musical instruments playing all the while. These are quite of another form than

*The music of the  
Utopians*

those used among us; but, as many of them are much sweeter than ours, so others are made use of by us. Yet in one thing they very much exceed us: all their music, both vocal and instrumental, is adapted to imitate and express the passions, and is so happily suited to every occasion, that, whether the subject of the hymn be cheerful, or formed to soothe or trouble the mind, or to express grief or remorse, the music takes the impression of whatever is represented, affects and kindles the passions, and works the sentiments deep into the hearts of the hearers.

When this is done, both priests and people offer up very solemn prayers to God in a set form of words; and these are so composed, that whatsoever is pronounced by the whole assembly may be likewise applied by every man in particular to his own condition. In these they acknowledge God to be the author and governor of the world, and the fountain of all the good they receive, and therefore offer up to him their thanksgiving; and, in particular, bless him for His goodness in ordering it so, that they are born under the happiest government in the world, and are of a religion which they hope is the truest of all others; but, if they are mistaken, and if there is either a better government, or a religion more acceptable to God, they implore His goodness to let them know it, vowing that they resolve to follow him whithersoever he leads them; but if their government is the best, and their religion the truest, then they pray that He may fortify them in it, and bring all the world both to the same rules of life, and to

the same opinions concerning Himself, unless, according to the unsearchableness of His mind, He is pleased with a variety of religions.

Then they pray that God may give them an easy passage at last to Himself, not presuming to set limits to Him, how early or late it should be; but, if it may be wished for without derogating from His supreme authority, they desire to be quickly delivered, and to be taken to Himself, though by the most terrible kind of death, rather than to be detained long from seeing Him by the most prosperous course of life. When this prayer is ended, they all fall down again upon the ground; and, after a little while, they rise up, go home to dinner, and spend the rest of the day in diversion or military exercises.

*[Their True Commonwealth]*

Thus have I described to you, as particularly as I could, the constitution of that commonwealth, which I do not only think the best in the world, but indeed the only commonwealth that truly deserves that name.

In all other places it is visible that, while people talk of a commonwealth, every man only seeks his own wealth; but there, where no man has any property, all men zealously pursue the good of the public, and, indeed, it is no wonder to see men act so differently, for in other commonwealths every man knows that, unless he provides for himself, how flourishing soever the commonwealth

may be, he must die of hunger, so that he sees the necessity of preferring his own concerns to the public; but in Utopia, where every man has a right to everything, they all know that if care is taken to keep the public stores full no private man can want anything; for among them there is no unequal distribution, so that no man is poor, none in necessity, and though no man has any thing, yet they are all rich.

For what can make a man so rich as to lead a serene and cheerful life, free from anxieties; neither apprehending want himself, nor vexed with the endless complaints of his wife? He is not afraid of the misery of his children, nor is he contriving how to raise a portion for his daughters; but is secure in this, that both he and his wife, his children and grand-children, to as many generations as he can fancy, will all live both plentifully and happily; since, among them, there is no less care taken of those who were once engaged in labor, but grow afterwards unable to follow it, than there is, elsewhere, of these that continue still employed.

I would gladly hear any man compare the justice that is among them with that of all other nations; among whom, may I perish, if I see anything that looks either like justice or equity; for what justice is there in this: that a nobleman, a goldsmith, a banker, or any other man, that either does nothing at all, or, at best, is employed in things that are of no use to the public, should live in great luxury and splendor upon what is so ill acquired, and a mean man,

a carter, a smith, or a plowman, that works harder even than the beasts themselves, and is employed in labors so necessary, that no commonwealth could hold out a year without them, can only earn so poor a livelihood and must lead so miserable a life, that the condition of the beasts is much better than theirs? For as the beasts do not work so constantly, so they feed almost as well, and with more pleasure, and have no anxiety about what is to come, while these men are depressed by a barren and fruitless employment, and tormented with the apprehensions of want in their old age; since that which they get by their daily labor does but maintain them at present, and is consumed as fast as it comes in, there is no surplus left to lay up for old age.

Is not that government both unjust and ungrateful, that is so prodigal of its favors to those that are called gentlemen, or goldsmiths, or such others who are idle, or live either by flattery or by contriving the arts of vain pleasure, and, on the other hand, takes no care of those of a meaner sort, such as plowmen, colliers, and smiths, without whom it could not subsist? But after the public has reaped all the advantage of their service, and they come to be oppressed with age, sickness, and want, all their labors and the good they have done is forgotten, and all the recompense given them is that they are left to die in great misery. The richer sort are often endeavoring to bring the hire of laborers lower, not only by their fraudulent practices, but by the laws which they

procure to be made to that effect, so that though it is a thing most unjust in itself to give such small rewards to those who deserve so well of the public, yet they have given those hardships the name and color of justice, by procuring laws to be made for regulating them.

Therefore I must say that, as I hope for mercy, I can have no other notion of all the other governments that I see or know, than that they are a conspiracy of the rich, who, on pretense of managing the public, only pursue their private ends, and devise all the ways and arts they can find out; first, that they may, without danger, preserve all that they have so ill-acquired, and then, that they may engage the poor to toil and labor for them at as low rates as possible, and oppress them as much as they please; and if they can but prevail to get these contrivances established by the show of public authority, which is considered as the representative of the whole people, then they are accounted laws.

*Reader, take note!*

Yet these wicked men, after they have, by a most insatiable covetousness, divided that among themselves with which all the rest might have been well supplied, are far from that happiness that is enjoyed among the Utopians; for the use as well as the desire of money being extinguished, much anxiety and great occasions of mischief is cut off with it, and who does not see that the frauds, thefts, robberies, quarrels, tumults, contentions, seditions, murders, treacheries, and witchcrafts, which are, indeed, rather punished than restrained by the severities of law, would all fall off, if

money were not any more valued by the world? Men's fears, solitudes, cares, labors, and watchings would all perish in the same moment with the value of money; even poverty itself, for the relief of which money seems most necessary, would fall. But, in order to the apprehending this aright, take one instance:

Consider any year, that has been so unfruitful that many thousands have died of hunger; and yet if, at the end of that year, a survey was made of the granaries of all the rich men that have hoarded up the corn, it would be found that there was enough among them to have prevented all that consumption of men that perished in misery; and that, if it had been distributed among them, none would have felt the terrible effects of that scarcity: so easy a thing would it be to supply all the necessities of life, if that blessed thing called money, which is pretended to be invented for procuring them was not really the only thing that obstructed their being procured!

I do not doubt but rich men are sensible of this, and that they well know how much a greater happiness it is to want nothing necessary, than to abound in many superfluities; and to be rescued out of so much misery, than to abound with so much wealth: and I cannot think but the sense of every man's interest, added to the authority of Christ's commands, who, as He was infinitely wise, knew what was best, and was not less good in discovering it to us, would have drawn all the world over to the laws of the Utopians, if pride, that plague of human nature, that

source of so much misery, did not hinder it; for this vice does not measure happiness so much by its own conveniences, as by the miseries of others; and would not be satisfied with being thought a goddess, if none were left that were miserable, over whom she might insult. Pride thinks its own happiness shines the brighter, by comparing it with the misfortunes of other persons; that by displaying its own wealth they may feel their poverty the more sensibly. This is that infernal serpent that creeps into the breasts of mortals, and possesses them too much to be easily drawn out.

*Marvelously said!*

Therefore, I am glad that the Utopians have fallen upon this form of government, in which I wish that all the world could be so wise as to imitate them; for they have, indeed, laid down such a scheme and foundation of policy, that as men live happily under it, so it is like to be of great continuance; for they having rooted out of the minds of their people all the seeds, both of ambition and faction, there is no danger of any commotions at home; which alone has been the ruin of many states that seemed otherwise to be well secured; but as long as they live in peace at home, and are governed by such good laws, the envy of all their neighboring princes, who have often, though in vain, attempted their ruin, will never be able to put their state into any commotion or disorder.



**T**hen Raphael had thus made an end of speaking, though many things occurred to me, both concerning the manners and laws of that people, that seemed very absurd, as well in their way of making war, as in their notions of religion and divine matters—together with several other particulars, but chiefly what seemed the foundation of all the rest, their living in common, without the use of money, by which all nobility, magnificence, splendor, and majesty, which, according to the common opinion, are the true ornaments of a nation, would be quite taken away—yet since I perceived that Raphael was weary, and was not sure whether he could easily bear contradiction, remembering that he had taken notice of some, who seemed to think they were bound in honor to support the credit of their own wisdom, by finding out something to censure in all other men's inventions, besides their own, I only commended their constitution, and the account he had given of it in general.

And so, taking him by the hand, I carried him to supper, and told him I would find out some other time for examining this subject more particularly, and for discoursing more copiously upon it. And, indeed, I shall be glad to embrace an opportunity of doing it. In the meanwhile, though it must be confessed that he is both a very learned man and a person who has obtained a great knowledge of the world, I cannot perfectly agree to everything he has related. However, there are many things in the commonwealth of Utopia that I rather wish, than hope, to see followed in our governments.

THE END OF BOOK TWO



THE END OF THE AFTERNOON  
DISCOURSE OF RAPHAEL  
HYTHLODAY ON THE LAWS  
AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE  
ISLAND OF UTOPIA, HITHERTO  
KNOWN BUT TO FEW, AS  
REPORTED BY THE MOST  
DISTINGUISHED AND  
MOST LEARNED MAN,  
MR THOMAS MORE,  
CITIZEN AND UNDERSHERIFF  
OF LONDON



*FINIS*