

¶ The Tragidie of Ferrex
and Porrex,
fet forth without addition or alte=
ration but altogether as the same was shewed on
stage before the Queenes Maiestie,
about nine yeares past, vz. the
xviij. day of Ianuarie. 1561.
by the gentlemen of the
Inner Temple.

Seen and allowed. &c.

✂ Imprinted at London by
Iohn Daye, dwelling ouer
Aldersgate.

¶ The argument of the Tragedie.

Gorboduc king of Brittain, diuided his realme
in his life time to his sonnes , Ferrex and Porrex.
The sonnes fell to discention. The yonger killed the
elder . The mother that more dearely loued the el= 5
der, for reuenge killed the younger . The people mo=
ued with the crueltie of the fact, rose in rebellion and
flew both father and mother . The nobilitie affem=
bled and most terribly destroyed the rebels . And af=
terwardes for want of issue of the prince whereby
the succeffion of the crowne became vncertaine, they 10
fell to ciuill warre, in which both they and many of
of their issues were slaine , and the land for a long time
almost defolate and miserably wafted.

<A.i.v>

¶ *The P. to the Reader.*

W Here this Tragedie was for furniture of part
of the grand Chriftmasse in the Inner Temple
firft written about nine yeares agoe by the right
honourable Thomas now Lorde Buckherft ,
and by T. Norton , and after shewed before her 5
Maieftie, and neuer intended by the authors therof to be publi=
shed : yet one W. G. getting a copie therof at some yongmans
hand that lacked a little money and much difcretion, in the last
great plague. an. 1565. about v. yeares past , while the said Lord
was out of England, and T. Norton farre out of London, 10
and neither of them both made priuie , put it forth exceedingly
corrupted : euen as if by meanes of a broker for hire, he should
haue enticed into his house a faire maide and done her villanie,
and after all to bescratched her face, torne her apparell, berayed
and diffigured her , and then thrust her out of doores dishonestly. 15
In such plight after long wandring she came at length home to
the sight of her frendes who scant knew her but by a few to=
kens and markes remaining . They , the authors I meane,
though they were very much displeased that she so ranne abroad
without leaue, whereby she caught her shame , as many wan= 20
tons do, yet feing the case as it is remediable, haue for common
honestie and shamefastnesse new apparelled, trimmed, and atti=
red her in such forme as she was before. In which better forme
since she hath come to me, I haue harbored her for her frendes
sake and her owne, and I do not doubt her parentes the authors 25
will not now be discontent that she goe abroad among you good
readers, so it be in honest companie . For she is by my encou=
ragement and others somewhat lesse ashamed of the dishonestie
done to her because it was by fraude and force . If she be wel=
come among you and gently entertained, in fauor of the house 30
from whence she is descended, and of her owne nature courte=
ously disposed to offend no man, her frendes will thanke you
for it. If not, but that she shall be still reproched with her for=
mer missehap, or quarelled at by enuious persons, she poore
gentlewoman wil surely play Lucreces part, & of her self die for 35
shame, and I shall wishe that she had taried still at home with
me, where she was welcome : for she did neuer put me to more
charge, but this one poore blacke gowne lined with white that
I haue now geuen her to goe abroad among you withall.

A.ij.<r>

¶ *The*

¶ *The names of the speakers.*

Gorboduc, King of great Brittain.	
Videna, Queene and wife to king Gorboduc.	
Ferrex, elder fonne to king Gorboduc.	
Porrex, yonger fonne to king Gorboduc.	
Cloyton, Duke of Cornewall.	
Fergus, Duke of Albanye.	
Mandud, Duke of Loegris.	
Gwenard, Duke of Cumberland.	
Eubulus, Secretarie to the king.	5
Aroftus, a counfellow to the king.	
Dordan, a counfellow assigned by the king to his eldest fonne Ferrex.	
Philander, a counfellow assigned by the king to his yongest fonne Porrex.	10
Both being of the olde kinges counsell before.	
Hermon, a parafite remaining with Ferrex.	
Tyndar, a parafite remaining with Porrex,	
Nuntius, a meffenger of the elder brothers death.	
Nuntius, a meffenger of Duke Fergus rifing in armes.	15
Marcella, a lady of the Queenes priuie chamber.	
Chorus, four auncient and sage men of Brittain.	
	20

<A.ii.v>

**¶ The order of the domme fhew
before the firft act, and the fig=
fignification therof.**

¶ Firft the Muficke of Violenze began to play , during which
came in vpon the ftage fixe wilde men clothed in leaues.
Of whom the firft bare in his necke a fagot of fmall ftickes,
which they all both feuerally and together affayed with all
their ftrenghes to breake , but it could not be broken by 5
them . At the length one of them plucked out one of the
ftickes and brake it : And the reft plucking out all the other
ftickes one after an other did eafely breake them, the fame
being feuered : which being conioyned they had before at=
tempted in vaine . After they had this done, they departed 10
the ftage , and the Muficke ceafed . Hereby was fignified,
that a ftate knit in vnitie doth continue ftiong againft all
force . But being diuided, is eafely deftroyed . As befell
vpon Duke Gorboduc diuiding his land to his two fonnes
which he before held in Monarchie . And vpon the difcenti= 15
on of the brethren to whom it was diuided.

A.iiij.<r>

Actus

Actus primus. Scena prima.

Viden. Ferrex.

V Iden. The filent night, that bringes
the quiet pawfe,
From painefull trauailes of the
wearie day,
Prolonges my carefull thoughtes,
and makes me blame
The flowe Aurore, that fo for loue or fhame
Doth long delay to fhewe her blufhing face, 5
And now the day renewes my grieffull plaint.

Ferrex. My gracious lady and my mother deare,
Pardon my grieve for your fo griued minde,
To afke what caufe tormenteth fo your hart.

Viden. So great a wrong, and fo vniuft defpite, 10
Without all caufe, againft all courfe of kinde !

Ferrex. Such caufeleft wrong and fo vniuft defpite,
May haue redrefse, or at the leaft, reuenge.

Viden. Neither, my fonne : fuch is the froward will,
The perfon fuch, fuch my miffehappe and thine. 15

Ferrex. Mine know I none, but grief for your diftreffe.

Viden. Yes : mine for thine my fonne: A father ? no:
In kinde a father , not in kindlineffe.

Ferrex. My father ? why ? I know nothing at all,
Wherein I haue mifdone vnto his grace. 20

Viden. Therefore, the more vnkinde to thee and mee.
For, knowing well (my fonne) the tender loue
<A.iii.v> That

That I haue euer borne and beare to thee,
 He greued thereat, is not content alone,
 To spoile thee of my fight my chieft ioye, 25
 But thee, of thy birthright and heritage
 Causeleffe, vnkindly, and in wrongfull wife,
 Against all lawe and right, he will bereaue
 Halfe of his kingdome he will geue away.

Ferrex. To whom? 30

Viden. Euen to Porrex his yonger sonne,
 Whose growing pride I do fo fore suspect
 That being raifed to equall rule with thee,
 Mee thinkes I fee his enuious hart to swell,
 Filled with difdaine and with ambitious hope,
 The end the Goddes do know, whose altars I 35
 Full oft haue made in vaine, of cattell flaine
 To fend the facred fmoke to heauens throne,
 For thee my sonne, if thinges do fo succede,
 As now my ielous minde mifdemeth fore.

Ferrex. Madame, leaue care & carefull plaint for me, 40
 Iuft hath my father bene to euery wight:
 His first vniuftice he will not extend
 To me I truft, that geue no caufe therof:
 My brotherf pride fhall hurt him felfe, not me.

Viden. So graunt the Goddes: But yet thy father fo 45
 Hath firmly fixed his vnmoued minde,
 That plaintes and prayers can no whit auaille,
 For thofe haue I affaied, but euen this day,
 He will endeuour to procure affent
 Of all his counfell to his fonde deuife. 50

Ferrex. Their anceftors from race to race haue borne
 True fayth to my forefathers and their feede:
 I truft they eke will beare the like to me.

A.iiii.<r>

Viden.

Viden. There refteth all. But if they faile thereof,
 And if the end bring forth an ill fucceffe: 55
 On them and theirs the mifchiefe fhall befall,
 And fo I pray the Goddes requite it them,
 And fo they will, for fo is wont to be.
 When lordes, and truſted rulers vnder kinges,
 To pleaſe the preſent fancie of the prince, 60
 With wrong tranſpoſe the courſe of gouernance,
 Murders, mifchiefe, or ciuill ſword at length,
 Or mutuall treafon, or a iuſt reuenge,
 When right ſucceeding line returnes againe,
 By Ioues iuſt iudgement and deferued wrath, 65
 Bringes them to cruell and reprochfull death,
 And rootes their names and kindredes from the earth.

Ferrex. Mother, content you, you ſhall ſee the end.

Viden. The end? thy end I feare, Ioue end me firſt.

Actus primus. Scena ſecunda.

Gorboduc. Aroftus. Philander. Eubulus.

G Orb. My lords, whoſe graue aduife & faithful aide,
 Haue long vpheld my honour and my realme,
 And brought me to this age from tender yeres,
 Guidyng fo great eſtate with great renowme:
 Nowe more importeth mee, than erft, to vſe 5
 Your fayth and wifedome, whereby yet I reigne:
 That when by death my life and rule fhall ceaſe,
 The kingdome yet may with vnbroken courſe,
 Haue certayne prince, by whoſe vndoubted right,
 Your wealth and peace may ſtand in quiet ſtay, 10
 And eke that they whome nature hath preparde,
 In time to take my place in princely feate,

<A.4.v>

While

While in their fathers tyme their pliant youth
 Yeldes to the frame of skilfull gouernance,
 Maye fo be taught and trayned in noble artes, 15
 As what their fathers which haue reigned before
 Haue with great fame deriued downe to them,
 With honour they may leaue vnto their feede:
 And not be thought for their vnworthy life,
 And for their lawleffe fwaruyng out of kinde, 20
 Worthy to lofe what lawe and kind them gaue:
 But that they may preferue the common peace,
 The caufe that firft began and still mainteines
 The lyneall courfe of kinges inheritance.
 For me,for myne,for you,and for the ftate, 25
 Where of both I and you haue charge and care,
 Thus do I meane to vse your wonted fayth
 To me and myne,and to your natiue lande.
 My lordes be playne without all wrie respect
 Or poyfonous craft to fpeake in pleafyng wife, 30
 Left as the blame of yll fuccedyng thinges
 Shall light on you,fo light the harmes alfo.

Aroftus. Your good acceptance fo(moft noble king)
 Of fuche our faithfulneffe as heretofore
 We haue employed in dueties to your grace, 35
 And to this realme whose worthy head you are,
 Well proues that neyther you miftrufte at all,
 Nor we fhall neede in boafing wife to fhewe,
 Our trueth to you,nor yet our wakefull care
 For you,for yours,and for our natiue lande. 40
 Wherefore(O kyng) I fpeake as one for all,
 Sithe all as one do beare you egall faith:
 Doubt not to vse our counfells and our aides,
 Whose honours,goods and lyues are whole auowed
 To ferue,to ayde,and to defende your grace. 45

Gorb. My lordes, I thanke you all.This is the cafe.

B.j.<r>

Ye

Ye know,the Gods, who haue the foueraigne care
 For kings,for kingdomes,and for common weales,
 Gaue me two fonnes in my more lusty age.
 Who nowe in my decayeng yeres are growen 50
 Well towards ryper ftate of minde and strength,
 To take in hande fome greater princely charge.
 As yet they lyue and fpende hopefull daies,
 With me and with their mother here in courte.
 Their age nowe asketh other place and trade, 55
 And myne also doth afke an other chaunge:
 Theirs to more trauaile,myne to greater eafe.
 Whan fatall death fhall ende my mortall life,
 My purpofe if to leaue vnto them twaine
 The realme diuided into two fondry partes: 60
 The one Ferrex myne elder fonne fhall haue,
 The other fhall the yonger Porrex rule.
 That both my purpofe may more firmly ftande,
 And eke that they may better rule their charge,
 I meane forthwith to place them in the fame: 65
 That in my life they may both learne to rule,
 And I may ioy to fee their ruling well.
 This is in fumme,what I woulde haue ye wey:
 Firft whether ye allowe my whole deuife,
 And thinke it good for me,for them, for you, 70
 And for our countrey, mother of vs all:
 And if ye lyke it,and allowe it well,
 Then for their guydinge and their gouernaunce,
 Shew forth fuch meanes of circumftance,
 As ye thinke meete to be both knowne and kept. 75
 Loe,this is all,now tell me your aduife.

Aros. And this is much,and afketh great aduife,
 But for my part,my foueraigne lord and kyng,
 This do I thinke. Your maieftie doth know,
 How vnder you in iuftice and in peace, 80
 Great wealth and honour,long we haue enioyed,

So

<B.i.v>

So as we can not feeme with gredie mindes	
To wiffhe for change of Prince or gouernaunce:	
But if we lyke your purpofe and deuife,	
Our lyking muft be deemed to proceede	85
Of rightfull reafon, and of heedefull care,	
Not for our felues, but for the common ftate,	
Sithe our owne ftate doth neede no better change:	
I thinke in all as erft your Grace hath faide.	
Firfte when you fhall vnloode your aged mynde	90
Of heuye care and troubles manifolde,	
And laye the fame vpon my Lordes your fonnes,	
Whofe growing yeres may beare the burden long,	
And long I pray the Goddes to graunt it fo,	
And in your life while you fhall fo beholde	95
Their rule,their vertues,and their noble deedes,	
Suche as their kinde behighteth to vs all,	
Great be the profites that fhall growe therof,	
Your age in quiet fhall the longer laft.	
Your lafting age fhallbe their longer ftay,	100
For cares of kynges,that rule as you haue ruled,	
For publique wealth and not for priuate ioye,	
Do waft mannes lyfe,and haften crooked age,	
With furrowed face and with enfeebled lymmes,	
To draw on creepying death a fwifter pace.	105
They two yet yong fhall beare the parted reigne	
With greater eafe,than one,nowe olde,alone,	
Can welde the whole, for whom mucche harder is	
With leffened ftrengh the double weight to beare.	
Your eye,your counfell,and the graue regarde	110
Of Father,yea of fuch a fathers name,	
Nowe at beginning of their fondred reigne,	
When is the hazarde of their whole fucceffe,	
Shall bridle fo their force of youthfull heates,	
And fo reftreine the rage of infolence,	115
Whiche moft affailes the yonge and noble minds,	
B.ii.<r>	And

And so shall guide and traine in tempred stay
 Their yet greene bending wittes with reuerent awe,
 As now inured with vertues at the first,
 Custome(O King) shall bring delightfulnesse. 120
 By vse of vertue, vice shall growe in hate,
 But if you so dispose it, that the daye,
 Which endes your life, shall first begin their reigne,
 Great is the perill what will be the ende,
 When such beginning of such liberties 125
 Voide of such stayes as in your life do lye,
 Shall leaue them free to randon of their will,
 An open praie to traiterous flatterie,
 The greatest pestilence of noble youthe.
 Whiche perill shall be past, if in your life, 130
 Their tempred youthe with aged fathers awe,
 Be brought in vse of full stayednesse.
 And in your life their liues disposed so,
 Shall length your noble life in ioyfulnesse.
 Thus thinke I that your grace hath wisely thought, 135
 And that your tender care of common weale,
 Hath bred this thought, so to diuide your lande,
 And plant your sonnes to beare the present rule,
 While you yet liue to see their rulling well,
 That you may longer liue by ioy therein. 140
 What further meanes behouefull are and meete
 At greater leifure may your grace deuise,
 When all haue said, and when we be agreed
 If this be best to part the realme in twaine,
 And place your sonnes in present gouernement. 145
 Whereof as I haue plainly said my mynde,
 So woulde I here the rest of all my Lordes.

Philand. In part I thinke as hath bene said before,
 In parte agayne my minde is otherwise.
 As for diuiding of this realme in twaine, 150
 And lotting out the same in egall partes,

<B.ii.v>

To

To either of my lordes your graces fonnes,
 That thinke I beft for this your realmes behofe,
 For profite and aduauncement of your fonnes,
 And for your comforte and your honour eke. 155
 But fo to place them, while your life do laft,
 To yelde to them your royall gouernaunce,
 To be aboue them onely in the name
 Of father,not in kingly ftate alfo,
 I thinke not good for you,for them, nor vs. 160
 This kingdome fince the bloudie ciuill field
 Where Morgan flaine did yeld his conquered parte
 Vnto his cofins fworde in Camberland,
 Conteineth all that whilome did fuffice
 Three noble fonnes of your forefather Brute. 165
 So your two fonnes, it maye fuffice alfo.
 The moe,the ftronger,if they gree in one.
 The fmaller compaffe that the realme doth holde,
 The eafier is the fwey thereof to welde,
 The nearer iuftice to the wronged poore, 170
 The fmaller charge, and yet ynoughe for one.
 And whan the region is diuided fo,
 That brethren be the lordes of either parte,
 Such ftrengh doth nature knit betwene them both,
 In fondrie bodies by conioyned loue, 175
 That not as two, but one of doubled force,
 Eche is to other as a fure defence.
 The nobleneffe and glory of the one
 Doth fharpe the courage of the others mynde,
 With vertuous enuie to contende for praife. 180
 And fuche an egalneffe hath nature made,
 Betwene the brethren of one fathers feede,
 As an vnkindly wrong it feemes to bee,
 To throwe the brother fubiect vnder fe^ete
 Of him, whose peere he is by courfe of kinde, 185
 And nature that did make this egalneffe,
 B.iiij.<.r> Ofte

Ofte fo repineth at fo great a wrong,
 That ofte fhe rayfeth vp a grudginge griefe,
 In yonger brethren at the elders ftate:
 Werby both townes and kingdomes haue ben rafed, 190
 And famous stockes of royall bloud deftroied:
 The brother,that fhoulde be the brothers aide,
 And haue a wakefull care for his defence,
 Gapes for his death, and blames the lyngering yeres
 That draw not forth his ende with faster courfe: 195
 And oft impacient of fo longe delayes,
 With hatefull flaughter he preuentes the fates,
 And heapes a iuft rewarde for brothers bloode,
 With endleffe vengeance on his stocke for aye.
 Suche mifchiefes here are wifely mette withall, 200
 If egall ftate maye nourifhe egall loue,
 Where none hath caufe to grudge at others good.
 But nowe the head to ftoupe beneth them bothe,
 Ne kinde,ne reafon,ne good ordre beares.
 And oft it hath ben feene, where natures courfe 205
 Hath ben peruerted in difordered wife,
 When fathers ceafe to know that they fhould rule,
 The children ceafe to know they fhould obey.
 And often ouerkindly tenderneffe
 Is mother of vnkindly ftubborneneffe. 210
 I fpeake not this in enuie or reproche,
 As if I grudged the glorie of your fonnes,
 Whofe honour I befech the Goddes encreafe:
 Nor yet as if I thought there did remaine,
 So filthie cankers in their noble breftes, 215
 Whom I efteeme(which is their greateft praife)
 Vndoubted children of fo good a kyng.
 Onelie I meane to fhewe by certeine rules,
 Whiche kinde hath graft within the mind of man,
 That nature hath her ordre and her courfe, 220
 Which (being broken) doth corrupt the ftate
 <B.iii.v> Of

Of myndes and thinges, euen in the best of all.
 My lordes your fonnes may learne to rule of you.
 Your owne example in your noble courte
 Is fitteft guyder of their youthfull yeares. 225
 If you defire to fee some prefent ioie
 By fight of their well rulyng in your lyfe,
 See them obey, fo fhall you fee them rule,
 Who fo obeyeth not with humbleneffe
 Will rule with outrage and with infolence. 230
 Longe maye they rule I do befeche the Goddes,
 But longe may they learne, ere they begyn to rule.
 If kinde and fates woulde fuffre, I would wiffhe
 Them aged princes, and immortall kinges.
 Wherfore moft noble kynge I well affent, 235
 Betwene your fonnes that you diuide your realme,
 And as in kinde, fo match them in degree.
 But while the Goddes prolong your royall life,
 Prolong your reigne: for therto lyue you here,
 And therefore haue the Goddes fo long forborne 240
 To ioine you to them felues, that ftill you might
 Be prince and father of our common weale.
 They when they fee your children ripe to rule,
 Will make them rouse, and will remoue you hence,
 That yours in right enfuyng of your life 245
 Maye rightly honour your immortall name.

Eub. Your wonted true regarde of faithfull hartes,
 Makes me (O kinge) the bolder to prefume,
 To fpeake what I conceiue within my breft,
 Although the fame do not agree at all 250
 With that which other here my lordes haue faid,
 Nor which your felfe haue feemed best to lyke.
 Pardon I craue, and that my wordes be demed
 To flowe from hartie zeale vnto your grace,
 And to the fafetie of your common weale. 255
 To parte your realme vnto my lordes your fonnes,

B.iiij.<r> I

I thinke not good for you,ne yet for them,
 But worfte of all for this our natie lande,
 Within one land,one fingle rule is beft:
 Diuided reignes do make diuided hartes. 260
 But peace preferues the countrey and the prince.
 Suche is in man the gredy minde to reigne,
 So great is his defire to climbe alofte,
 In worldly ftage the statelieft partes to beare,
 That faith and iuftice and all kindly loue, 265
 Do yelde vnto defire of foueraignitie,
 Where egall ftate doth raife an egall hope
 To winne the thing that either wold attaine.
 Your grace remembreth how in paffed yeres
 The mightie Brute, firft prince of all this lande, 270
 Poffeffed the fame and ruled it well in one,
 He thinking that the compaffe did fuffice,
 For his three fonnes three kingdoms eke to make,
 Cut it in three,as you would now in twaine.
 But how much Brittifh bloud hath fince bene fpilt, 275
 To ioyne againe the fondred vnitie?
 What princes flaine before their timely houre?
 What waft of townes and people in the lande?
 What treafons heaped on murders and on fpoiles?
 Whose iuft reuenge euen yet is fcarcely ceafed, 280
 Ruthefull remembraunce if yet rawe in minde.
 The Gods forbyd the like to chaunce againe:
 And you(O king) geue not the caufe therof.
 My Lord Ferrex your elder fonne,perhappes
 Whome kinde and custome geues a rightfull hope 285
 To be your heire and to fuccede your reigne,
 Shall thinke that he doth fuffre greater wrong
 Than he perchaunce will beare,if power ferue.
 Porrex the younger fo vpraifed in ftate,
 Perhappes in courage will be rayfed alfo. 290
 If flatterie then, which fayles not to affaile

<B.iv.v>

The

The tendre mindes of yet vnfkilfull youth,
 In one fhall kindle and encrease difdaine,
 And enuie in the others harte enflame,
 This fire fhall wafte their loue, their liues,their land, 295
 And ruthefull ruine fhall deftroy them both.
 I wifhe not this(O kyng) fo to befall,
 But feare the thing,that I do moft abhorre.
 Geue no beginning to fo dreadfull ende.
 Kepe them in order and obedience: 300
 And let them both by now obeying you,
 Learne fuch behauiour as befeemes their ftate,
 The elder,myldeneffe in his gouernaunce,
 The yonger,a yelding contentedneffe.
 And kepe them neare vnto your prefence ftill, 305
 That they reftreyned by the awe of you,
 May liue in compaffe of well tempred ftaye,
 And paffe the perilles of their youthfull yeares.
 Your aged life drawes on to febler tyme,
 Wherin you fhall leffe able be to beare 310
 The trauailes that in youth you haue fufteyned,
 Both in your perfones and your realmes defence.
 If planting now your fonnes in further partes,
 You fende them further from your prefent reach,
 Leffe fhall you know how they them felues demeane: 315
 Traiterous corrupters of their plyant youth,
 Shall haue vnfpied a muche more free acceffe,
 And if ambition and inflamed difdaine
 Shall arme the one,the other, or them both,
 To ciuill warre, or to vfurping pride, 320
 Late fhall you rue,that you ne recked before.
 Good is I graunt of all to hope the beft,
 But not to liue ftill dreadleffe of the worft.
 So trufte the one, that the other be forfene.
 Arme not vnfkilfulneffe with princely power. 325
 But you that long haue wifely ruled the reignes
 C.i. <r> Of

Of royaltie within your noble realme,
 So holde them, while the Gods for our auayles
 Shall stretch the thred of your prolonged daies.
 To foone he clambe into the flaming carre, 330
 Whose want of f kill did fet the earth on fire.
 Time and example of your noble grace,
 Shall teach your fonnes both to obey and rule,
 When time hath taught them,time fhall make thē place,
 The place that now is full: and fo I pray 335
 Long it remaine,to comforte of vs all.

Gorboduc. I take your faithful harts in thankful part.
 But fithe I fee no caufe to draw my minde,
 To feare the nature of my louing fonnes,
 Or to misdeme that enuie or dif daine, 340
 Can there worke hate, where nature planteth loue:
 In one felfe purpofe do I ftill abide.
 My loue extendeth egally to both,
 My lande fuffifeth for them both alfo.
 Humber fhall parte the marches of theyr realmes: 345
 The Sotherne part the elder fhall poffeffe:
 The Notherne fhall Porrex the yonger rule:
 In quiet I will paffe mine aged dayes,
 Free from the trauaile and the painefull cares,
 That haften age vpon the worthieft kinges. 350
 But left the fraude,that ye do feeme to feare,
 Of flattering tongues, corrupt their tender youth,
 And wrythe them to the wayes of youthfull luft,
 To climyng pride,or to reuenging hate,
 Or to neglecting of their carefull charge, 355
 Lewdely to lyue in wanton recklefneffe,
 Or to oppreffing of the rightfull caufe,
 Or not to wreke the wronges done to the poore,
 To treade downe truth, or fauour falfe deceite:
 I meane to ioyne to eyther of my fonnes 360
 Some one of thofe, whose long approued faith

<C.i.v>

And

And wifdome tryed, may well affure my harte:
 That mynyng fraude fhall finde no way to crepe
 Into their fenfed eares with graue adiuſe.
 This is the ende, and fo I pray you all
 To beare my fonnes the loue and loyaltie
 That I haue founde within your faithfull breſtes.

365

Aroftus. You, nor your fonnes, our foueraign lord fhall
 Our faith and ſeruice while our liues do laſt. (want,

Chorus. When ſettled ſtay doth holde the royall throne
 In ſtedfaſt place, by knowne and doubtles right,
 And chiefly when diſcent on one alone
 Makes ſingle and vnparted reigne to light:
 Eche chaunge of courſe vnioynt the whole eſtate,
 And yeldes it thrall to ruyne by debate.
 The ſtrength that knit by faſte accorde in one,
 Againſt all forrein power of mightie foes,
 Could of it ſelfe defende it ſelfe alone,
 Diſioyned once, the former force doth loſe.
 The ſtickes, that fondred brake ſo ſoone in twaine,
 In faggot bounde attempted were in vaine.
 Oft tender minde that leades the parciall eye
 Of erring parentes in their childrens loue,
 Destroyes the wrongly loued childe therby.
 This doth the proude ſonne of Apollo proue,
 Who raffhely ſet in chariot of his fire,
 Inflamed the parched earth with heauens fire.
 And this great king, that doth deuide his land,
 And chaunge the courſe of his diſcending crowne,
 And yeldes the reigne into his childrens hande,
 From bliffull ſtate of ioye and great renowne,
 A myrrour ſhall become to Princes all,
 To learne to ſhunne the cauſe of ſuche a fall.

5

10

15

20

C.ii.<r> ¶ The

¶ The order and signification of the domme shew before the fe= cond acte.

¶ Firft the Muficke of Cornettes began to playe , during
which came in vpon the ftage a King accompanied with a
nombre of his nobilitie and gentlemen. And after he had pla=
ced him felf in a chaire of eftate prepared for him: there came 5
and kneled before him a graue and aged gentelman and of=
fred vp a cuppe vnto him of wyne in a glaffe , which the
the King refused. After him commes a braue and luftie
yong gentleman and prefentes the King with a cup of golde
filled with poyfon , which the King accepted , and drinking 10
the fame, immediatly fell downe dead vpon the the ftage, and
fo was carried thence away by his Lordes and gentelman,
and then the Muficke ceafed. Hereby was signified, that as
glaffe by nature holdeth no poyfon , but is clere and may ea=
fely be feen through, ne boweth by any arte: So a faythfull
counfellour holdeth no treafon , but is playne and open , ne 15
yeldeth to any vndifcrete affection, but geueth holfome coun=
fell , which the yll aduifed Prince refufeth. Thé delightfull
golde filled with poyfon betokeneth flattery , which vnder
faire feeming of pleafaunt wordes beareth deadly poyfon,
which destroyed the Prince that receyueth it. As befell in 20
the two brethren Ferrex and Porrex, who refufing the hol=
fome aduife of graue counfellours , credited thefe yong Pa=
racites , and brought to them felues death and destruction
therby.

Actus fecundus. Scena prima.

Ferrex. Hermon. Dordan.

F Errex. I meruaile much what reafon ledde the king
My Father, thus without all my defert,
To reue me halfe the kingdome, which by courfe

<B.ii.v>

Of

Of law and nature should remayne to me.

Hermon. If you with ftubborne and vntamed pryde 5
Had stood againft him in rebelling wife,
Or if with grudging minde you had enuied
So flow a flidyng of his aged yeres,
Or fought before your time to hafte the courfe
Of fatall death vpon his royall head, 10
Or ftained your stocke with murder of your kyn:
Some face of reafon might perhaps haue feemed,
To yelde fome likely caufe to fpoyle ye thus.

Ferrex. The wrekeful Gods powre on my curfed head 15
Eternall plagues and neuer dying woes,
The hellifh prince,adiudge my dampned ghoft
To Tantaless thirfte,or proude Ixions wheele,
Or cruell gripe to gnaw my growing harte,
To during tormentes and vnquenched flames,
If euer I conceyued fo foule a thought, 20
To wiffhe his ende of life,or yet of reigne.

Dordan. Ne yet your father (O moft noble Prince)
Did euer thinke fo fowle a thing of you.
For he, with more than fathers tendre loue,
While yet the fates do lende him life to rule, 25
(Who long might lyue to fee your ruling well)
To you my Lorde, and to his other fonne:
Lo he refignes his realme and royaltie:
Which neuer would fo wife a Prince haue done,
If he had once mifdemed that in your harte 30
There euer lodged fo vnkinde a thought.
But tendre loue(my Lorde)and fetled trufte
Of your good nature,and your noble minde,
Made him to place you thus in royall throne,
And now to geue you half his realme to guide, 35
Yea and that halfe which in abounding ftore

C.iiij. <r> Of

Of things that ferue to make a welthy realme,
 In ftately cities, and in frutefull foyle,
 In temperate breathing of the milder heauen,
 In thinges of nedefull vfe, which frendly fea, 40
 Tranfportes by traffike from the forreine partes,
 In flowing wealth, in honour and in force,
 Doth paffe the double value of the parte,
 That Porrex hath allotted to his reigne.
 Such is your cafe, fuch is your fathers loue. 45

(loues.

Ferrex. Ah loue, my frendes? loue wrongs not whō he

Dordan. Ne yet he wrongeth you, that geueth you
 So large a reigne, ere that the courfe of time
 Bring you to kingdome by difcended right,
 Which time perhaps might end your time before. 50

Ferrex. Is this no wrong, fay you, to reauē from me
 My natie right of halfe fo great a realme?
 And thus to matche his yonger fonne with me
 In egall power, and in as great degree?
 Yea and what fonne? the fonne whose fwelling pride 55
 Woulde neuer yelde one point of reuerence,
 Whan I the elder and apparaunt heire
 Stood in the likelihode to poffeffe the whole,
 Yea and that fonne which from his childifh age
 Enuieth myne honour and doth hate my life. 60
 What will he now do, when his pride, his rage,
 The mindefull malice of his grudging harte,
 Is armed with force, with wealth, and kingly ftate?

Hermon. Was this not wrong, yea yll aduifed wrong,
 To giue fo mad a man fo fharpe a fworde, 65
 To fo great perill of fo great miffehappe,
 Wide open thus to fet fo large a waye?

Dordan. Alas my Lord, what griefull thing is this,

<C.iii.v>

That

That of your brother you can thinke fo ill?
 I neuer faw him vtter likelie figne, 70
 Whereby a man might see or once misdeme
 Such hate of you, ne fuch vnyelding pride.
 Ill is their counsell, fhamefull be their ende,
 That rayfing fuch miftruftfull feare in you,
 Sowing the feede of fuch vnkindly hate, 75
 Trauaile by treason to deftroy you both.
 Wife if your brother, and of noble hope,
 Worthie to welde a large and mightie realme.
 So much a ftronger frende haue you therby,
 Whose ftrength is your ftrength, if you gree in one. 80

Hermon. If nature and the Goddes had pinched fo
 Their flowing bountie, and their noble giftes
 Of princelie qualities, from you my Lorde,
 And powrde them all at ones in waftfull wife
 Vpon your fathers yonger fonne alone: 85
 Perhappes there be that in your preiudice
 Would fay that birth fhould yeld to worthineffe.
 But fithe in eche good gift and princelie arte
 Ye are his matche, and in the chiefe of all
 In mildeneffe and in fobre gouernaunce 90
 Ye farre furmount: And fith there is in you
 Sufficing skill and hopefull towardneffe
 To weld the whole, and match your elders prayfe:
 I fee no caufe why ye fhould loofe the halfe.
 Ne would I wiffhe you yelde to fuch a loffe: 95
 Left your milde fufferaunce of fo great a wronge,
 Be deemed cowardifhe and fimple dreade:
 Which fhall geue courage to the fierie head
 Of your yonge brother to inuade the whole.
 While yet therfore ftickes in the peoples minde 100
 The lothed wrong of your difheritaunce,
 And ere your brother haue by fettled power,

<C.iv.r>

By

By guile full cloke of an alluring howe,
 Got him some force and fauour in the realme,
 And while the noble Queene your mother lyues, 105
 To worke and practife all for your auaile,
 Attempt redrefe by armes, and wreake your self
 Vpon his life, that gayneth by your loffe,
 Who nowe to shame of you, and grieve of vs,
 In your owne kingdome triumphes ouer you. 110
 Shew now your courage meete for kingly ftate,
 That they which haue auowed to spend theyr goods,
 Their landes, their liues and honours in your caufe,
 May be the bolder to mainteyne your parte,
 When they do see that cowarde feare in you, 115
 Shall not betray ne faile their faithfull hartes.
 If once the death of Porrex ende the strife,
 And pay the price of his vfurped reigne,
 Your mother shall perfwade the angry kyng,
 The Lords your frends eke shall appease his rage. 120
 For they be wife, and well they can forsee,
 That ere longe time your aged fathers death
 Will bryng a time when you shall well requite
 Their frendlie fauour, or their hatefull spite,
 Yea, or their slackeneffe to auaunce your caufe.
 „ Wife men do not so hang on paffing ftate 125
 „ Of prefent Princes, chiefly in their age,
 „ But they will further caft their reaching eye,
 „ To viewe and weye the times and reignes to come.
 Ne is it likely, though the kyng be wrothe,
 That he yet will, or that the realme will beare, 130
 Extreme reuenge vpon his onely fonne.
 Or if he woulde, what one is he that dare
 Be minifter to fuch an enterprife?
 And here you be now placed in your owne,
 Amyd your frendes, your vaffalles and your ftrength. 135
 We shall defende and kepe your perfon fafe,

<C.iv.v>

Till

Till either counfell turne his tender minde,
 Or age,or forrow end his werie dayes.
 But if the feare of Goddes, and fecret grudge 140
 Of natures law, repining at the fact,
 Withholde your courage from fo great attempt:
 Know ye, that luft of kingdomes hath no law.
 The Goddes do beare and well allow in kinges,
 The thinges they abhorre in rafcall routes. 145
 , When kinges on flender quarrells runne to warres,
 , And then in cruell and vnkindely wife,
 , Commaund theftes,rapes,murders of innocentes,
 , The spoile of townes, ruines of mighty realmes:
 , Thinke you fuch princes do fuppose them felues 150
 , Subiect to lawes of kinde,and feare of Gods?
 Murders and violent theftes in priuate men,
 Are hainous crimes and full of foule reproch,
 Yet none offence, but deckt with glorious name
 Of noble conquestes, in the handes of kinges. 155
 But if you like not yet fo hote deuife,
 Ne lift to take fuch vantage of the time,
 But though with perill of your owne eftate,
 You will not be the firft that fhall inuade:
 Affemble yet your force for your defence, 160
 And for your fafetie ftand vpon your garde.

Dordan. O heauen was there euer heard or knowen,
 So wicked counfell to a noble prince ?
 Let me (my Lorde) difclofe vnto your grace
 This hainous tale, what mifchiefe it containes, 165
 Your fathers death, your brothers and your owne,
 Your prefent murder and eternall fhame.
 Heare me (O King) and fuffer not to finke
 So high a treason in your princely breft.

Ferrex. The mightie Goddes forbid that euer I 170
 Should once conceaue fuch mifchiefe in my hart.
 D.i.<r> Although

Although my brother hath bereft my realme, And beare perhappes to me an hatefull minde: Shall I reuenge it, with his death therefore? Or fhall I fo defstroy my fathers life	175
That gaue me life ? the Gods forbid, I fay. Ceafe you to fpeake fo any more to me. Ne you my frend with anfwere once repeate So foule a tale . In filence let it die.	
What lord or fubiect fhall haue hope at all, That vnder me they fafely fhall enioye Their goods, their honours,landes and liberties, With whom, neither one onely brother deare, Ne father dearer, could enioye their liues?	180
But fith, I feare my yonger brothers rage, And fith perhappes fome other man may geue Some like aduife, to moue his grudging head At mine eftate, which counfell may perchaunce Take greater force with him, than this with me, I will in fecret fo prepare my felfe,	185
As if his malice or his luft to reigne Breake forth in armes or fodeine violence, I may withftand his rage and keepe mine owne.	190
 Dordan. I feare the fatall time now draweth on, When ciuil hate fhall end the noble line Of famous Brute and of his royall feede. Great loue defend the mifchiefes now at hand. O that the Secretaries wife aduife Had erft bene heard when he befought the king Not to diuide his land, nor fend his fonnes To further partes from prefence of his court, Ne yet to yelde to them his gouernaunce. Lo fuch are they now in the royall throne As was rafhe Phaeton in Phebus carre. Ne then the fiery ftedes did draw the flame	195 200 205
<D.i.v>	With

With wilder randon through the kindled skies,
 Than traitorous counfell now will whirle about
 The youthfull heades of these vnf kilfull kinges.
 But I hereof their father will enforme.
 The reuerence of him perhappes shall ftay 210
 The growing mischiefes, while they yet are greene.
 If this helpe not, then woe vnto them felues,
 The prince,the people,the diuided land.

Actus fecundus. Scena fecunda.

Porrex. Tyndar. Philander.

P Orrex. And is it thus ? And doth he fo prepare,
 Against his brother as his mortall foe?
 And now while yet his aged father liues?
 Neither regards he him ? nor feares he me?
 Warre would he haue ? and he shall haue it fo. 5

Tyndar. I faw my felfe the great prepared store
 Of horfe, of armour, and of weapon there,
 Ne bring I to my lorde reported tales
 Without the ground of feen and feareded trouth.
 Loe secrete quarrels runne about his court, 10
 To bring the name of you my lorde in hate.
 Ech man almost can now debate the cause,
 And af ke a reafon of fo great a wrong,
 Why he fo noble and fo wife a prince,
 Is as vnworthy reft his heritage? 15
 And why the king, miffelledde by craftie meanes,
 Diuided thus his land from courfe of right?
 The wifer fort holde downe their griefull heades.
 Eche man withdrawes from talke and company,
 Of thofe that haue bene knowne to fauour you. 20

D.ij.<r> To

To hide the mischief of their meaning there,
 Rumours are spread of your preparing here.
 The rascal numbers of vnf kilfull fort
 Are filled with monstrous tales of you and yours.
 In secrete I was counsell'd by my frendes, 25
 To haft me thence, and brought you as you know
 Letters from those, that both can truly tell,
 And would not write vnlesse they knew it well.

Philand. My lord, yet ere you moue vnkindly warre,
 Send to your brother to demaund the cause. 30
 Perhappes some traitorous tales haue filled his eares
 With false reportes against your noble grace:
 Which once disclosed, shall end the growing strife,
 That els not stay'd with wife foresight in time
 Shall hazarde both your kingdomes and your liues. 35
 Send to your father eke, he shall appease
 Your kindled mindes, and rid you of this feare.

Porrex. Ridde me of feare ? I feare him not at all:
 Ne will to him, ne to my father fend.
 If danger were for one to tary there, 40
 Thinke ye it safetie to returne againe?
 In mischiefes, such as Ferrex now intendes,
 The wonted courteous lawes to messengers
 Are not obserued, which in iust warre they vse.
 Shall I so hazard any one of mine? 45
 Shall I betray my trusty frendes to him,
 That haue disclosed his treason vnto me?
 Let him entreate that feares, I feare him not.
 Or shall I to the king my father fend?
 Yea and fend now, while such a mother liues, 50
 That loues my brother, and that hateth me?
 Shall I geue leasure, by my fonde delayes,
 To Ferrex to oppresse me all vnware?
 I will not, but I will inuade his realme,

<D.ii.v>

And

And feeke the traitour prince within his court. 55
 Mifchiefe for mifchiefe is a due reward.
 His wretched head fhall pay the worthy price
 Of this his treafon and his hate to me.
 Shall I abide, and treate, and fend and pray,
 And holde my yelden throate to traitours knife? 60
 While I with valiant minde and conquering force,
 Might rid my felfe of foes : and winne a realme?
 Yet rather, when I haue the wretches head,
 Then to the king my father will I fend.
 The booteleffe cafe may yet appeafe his wrath: 65
 If not, I will defend me as I may.

Philand. Lo here the end of thefe two youthful kings,
 The fathers death, the ruine of their realmes.
 „ O moft vnhappy ftate of counfellers,
 „ That light on fo vnhappy lordes and times, 70
 „ That neither can their good aduife be heard,
 „ Yet muft they beare the blames of ill fucceffe.
 But I will to the king their father hafte,
 Ere this mifchiefe come to the likely end,
 That if the mindfull wrath of wrekefull Gods, 75
 Since mightie Ilions fall not yet appeafed
 With thefe poore remnantes of the Troian name,
 Haue not determind by vnmoued fate
 Out of this realme to rafe the Brittifhe line,
 By good aduife, by awe of fathers name, 80
 By force of wifer lordes, this kindled hate
 May yet be quentched, ere it confume vs all.

Chorus. When youth not bridled with a guiding ftay
 Is left to randon of their owne delight,
 And welds whole realmes, by force of foueraign fway,
 Great is the daunger of vnmaiftred might,

D.iiij.<r> Left

Left skilleffe rage throwe downe with headlong fall 5
 Their lands,their states,their liues,them felues & al.
 When growing pride doth fill the swelling breft,
 And gredy luft doth rayfe the climbing minde,
 Oh hardlie maye the perill be reпреft,
 Ne feare of angrie Goddes, ne lawes kinde. 10
 Ne countries care can fiered hartes reftrayne,
 Whan force hath armed enuie and difdaine.
 When kinges of fore'ette will neglect the rede
 Of beft aduife,and yelde to pleafing tales,
 That do their fanfies noyfome humour feede, 15
 Ne reason,nor regarde of right auailles.
 Succeding heapes of plagues fhall teach to late,
 To learne the mifchiefes of mifguided ftate.
 Fow'le fall the traitour falfe,that vndermines
 The loue of brethren to deftroie them both. 20
 Wo to the prince, that pliant eare enclynies,
 And yeldes his mind to poyfonous tale, that floweth
 From flattering mouth.And woe to wretched land
 That waftes it felfe with ciuil fworde in hand.
 Loe,thus it is,poyfon in golde to take, 25
 And holfome drinke in homely cuppe forfake.

¶ The order and fignification of the domme fhewe before the thirde act.

¶ Firfte the muficke of flutes began to playe,during which
 came in vpon the ftage a company of mourners all clad in
 blacke betokening death and forowe to enfue vpon the ill ad=
 uifed mifgouernement and difcention of bretherne, as befell 5
 vpon the murderer of Ferrex by his yonger brother . Af=
 ter the mourners had paffed thryfe about the ftage, they de=
 parted,and than the muficke ceafed.

<D.iiij.v>

Actus

Actus tertius. Scena prima.

Gorboduc.Eubulus.Aroftus.Philander.Nuntius.

G Orb: **O cruel fates,O mindful wrath of Goddes,
Whofe vengeance neither Simois stayned streames
Flowing with bloud of Troian princes flaine,
Nor Phrygian fieldes made ranck with corpfes dead
Of Afian kynges and lordes,can yet appeafe,** 5
**Ne flaughter of vnhappy Pryams race,
Nor Ilions fall made leuell with the foile.
Can yet suffice:but still continued rage
Purfues our lynes,and from the fartheft seas
Doth chafe the iffues of destroyed Troye.** 10
**„ Oh no man happy,till his ende be feene.
If any flowing wealth and feemyng ioye
In present yeres might make a happy wight,
Happy was Hecuba the wofullest wretch
That euer lyued to make a myrrour of,** 15
**And happy Pryam with his noble fonnes.
And happy I,till nowe alas I fee
And feele my moft vnhappye wretchedneffe.
Beholde my lordes,read ye this letter here.
Loe it conteins the ruine of our realme,** 20
**If timelie speede prouide not haftie helpe.
Yet(O ye Goddes)if euer wofull kyng
Might moue ye kings of kinges,wreke it on me
And on my fonnes,not on this gittleffe realme.
Send down your wafting flames frō wrathful fkies,** 25
**To reue me and my fonnes the hatefull breath.
Read,read my lordes: this if the matter why
I called ye nowe to haue your good aduyfe.**

D.iiij.<r> ¶ The

¶ The letter from Dordan the Coun= fellow of the elder prince.

Eubulus readeth the letter.

M Y foueraigne lord,what I am loth to write,
 But loth I am to see,that I am forced 30
 By letters nowe to make you vnderstande.
 My lord Ferrex your eldest sonne misfledde
 By traitorous fraude of yong vntempred wittes,
 Affsembleth force agaynst your yonger sonne,
 Ne can my counsell yet withdrawe the heate 35
 And furyous pangues of hys enflamed head.
 Disdaine(fayth he)of his disheritance
 Armes him to wreke the great pretended wrong,
 With ciuill sword vpon his brothers life.
 If present helpe do not restraine this rage, 40
 This flame will waite your sonnes,your land,& you.

Your maiesties faithfull and moft
 humble subiect Dordan.

A Roftus. O king, appease your griefe and stay your
 Great is the matter,and a wofull case. (plaint. 45
 But timely knowledge may bring timely helpe.
 Sende for them both vnto your presence here.
 The reuerence of your honourage,and state,
 Your graue aduice,the awe of fathers name,
 Shall quicklie knit agayne this broken peace. 50
 And if in either of my lordes your sonnes,
 Be fuche vntamed and vnyelding pride,
 As will not bende vnto your noble heftes:
 If Ferrex the elder sonne can beare no peere,
 Or Porrex not content,aspire to more 55

<D.iv.v>

Then

**Than you him gaue aboue his natiue right:
Ioyne with the iufter fide,fo fhall you force
Them to agree,and holde the lande in ftay.**

**Eub. What meaneth this?Loe yonder comes in haft
Philander from my lord your yonger fonne.** 60

Gorb. The Goddes fende ioyfull newes.

**Phil. The mightie Ioue
Preferue your maieftie,O noble king.**

Gorb. Philander,welcome:but how doth my fonne?

**Phil. Your fonne,fir,lyues,and healthie I him left.
But yet(O king)the want of luftfull health
Could not be halfe fo griefefull to your grace,
As thefe moft wretched tidynges that I bryng.** 65

Gorb. O heauens,yet more?not ende of woes to me?

**Phil. Tyndar,O king,came lately from the court
Of Ferrex,to my lord your yonger fonne,
And made reporte of great prepared ftore
For warre,and fayth that it is wholly ment
Agaynft Porrex,for high difdayne that he
Lyues now a king and egall in degree
With him, that claimeth to fuccede the whole,
As by due title of difcending right.** 70 75

**Porrex is nowe fo fet on flaming fire,
Partely with kindled rage of cruell wrath,
Partely with hope to gaine a realme thereby,
That he in haft prepareth to inuade
His brothers land,and with vnkindely warre
Threatens the murder of your elder fonne,
Ne could I him perfwade that firft he fhould
Send to his brother to demaunde the caufe,
Nor yet to you to ftatie this hatefull ftrife.** 80 85

E.j.<r> Wherefore

Wherefore fithe there no more I can be hearde,
 I come my felfe now to enforme your grace,
 And to befeche you,as you loue the life
 And fafetie of your children and your realme,
 Now to employ your wifdome and your force 90
 To ftay this mifchiefe ere it be to late.

Gorb. Are they in armes? would he not fende to me?
 Is this the honour of a fathers name?
 In vaine we trauaile to affwage their mindes,
 As if their hartes, whome neither brothers loue, 95
 Nor fathers awe,nor kingdomes cares,can moue,
 Our counfels could withdraw from raging heat.
 Ioue flay them both,and end the curfed line.
 For though perhappes feare of fuch mightie force
 As I my lordes,ioyned with your noble aides, 100
 Maye yet raife,fhall repreffe their prefent heate,
 The fecret grudge and malice will remayne,
 The fire not quenched,but kept in clofe reftraint,
 Fedde ftill within,breakes forth with double flame.
 Their death and myne muft peaze the angrie Gods 105

Phil. Yelde not,O king,fo much to weake difpeire.
 Your fonnes yet lyue,and long I truſt,they fhall.
 If fates had taken you from earthly life,
 Before beginning of this ciuyll ftrife:
 Perhaps your fonnes in their vnmaftered youth, 110
 Loofe from regarde of any lyuing wight,
 Would runne on headlong, with vnbridled race,
 To their owne death and ruine of this realme.
 But fith the Gods,that haue the care for kinges,
 Of thinges and times difpoſe the order fo, 115
 That in your life this kindled flame breakes forth,
 While yet your lyfe,your wifdome,and your power.
 May ftay the growing mifchiefe,and repreffe
 The fierie blaze of their inkindled heate:

<E.i.v>

It

It feemes, and fo ye ought to deeme thereof,	120
That louyng loue hath tempred fo the time	
Of this debate to happen in your dayes,	
That you yet lyuing may the fame appeaze,	
And adde it to the glory of your latter age,	
And they our fonnes may learne to liue in peace.	125
Beware(O king)the greateft harme of all,	
Left by your waylefull plaints your haftened death	
Yelde larger rounge vnto their growing rage.	
Preferue your life, the onely hope of ftay.	
And if your highnes herein lift to vfe	130
Wifdome or force, counfell or knightly aide:	
Loe we, our perfons, powers and lyues are yours,	
Vfe vs tyll death, O king, we are your owne.	
Eub. Loe here the perill that was erft forefene,	
When you, (O king) did firft deuide your lande,	135
And yelde your prefent reigne vnto your fonnes,	
But now(O noble prince) now is no time	
To waile and plaine, and waft your wofull life.	
Now is the time for prefent good aduife.	
Sorow doth darke the iudgement of the wytte.	140
„ The hart vnbroken and the courage free	
„ From feble faintneffe of booteleffe defpeire,	
„ Doth either ryfe to fafetie or renowne	
„ By noble valure of vnuanquifht minde,	
„ Or yet doth perifhe in more happy fort.	145
Your grace may fend to either of your fonnes	
Some one both wife and noble perfonage,	
Which with good counfell and with weightie name,	
Of father, fhall prefent before their eyes	
Your heft, your life, your fafetie and their owne,	150
The prefent mifchiefe of their deadly ftrife.	
And in the while, affemble you the force	
Which your commaundement and the fpedy haft	
E.ij.<r>	Of

Of all my lordes here present can prepare.
 The terrour of your mightie power shall stay
 The rage of both,or yet of one at left. 155

Nun. O king the greatest griefe that euer prince dyd
 That euer wofull meffenger did tell, (heare,
 That euer wretched lande hath fene before,
 I bryng to you. Porrex your yonger sonne
 With foden force,inuaded hath the lande 160
 That you to Ferrex did allotte to rule,
 And with his owne most bloudy hand he hath
 His brother slaine,and doth possesse his realme.

Gorb. O heauens send down the flames of your re=
 Destroy I say with flash of wrekefull fier (uenge, 165
 The traitour sonne,and then the wretched fire.
 But let vs go,that yet perhappes I may
 Die with reuenge,and peaze the hatefull gods.

Chor. The luft of kingdome knowes no sacred faith,
 No rule of reason,no regarde of right,
 No kindly loue,no feare of heauens wrath:
 But with contempt of Goddes,and mans despite,
 Through blodie slaughter,doth prepare the waies 5
 To fatall scepter and accursed reigne.
 The sonne so lothes the fathers lingering daies,
 Ne dreads his hand in brothers blode to staine.
 O wretched prince,ne doest thou yet recorde
 The yet fresh murders done within the lande 10
 Of thy forefathers,when the cruell sword
 Bereft Morgan his life with cofyns hand?
 Thus fatall plagues pursue the gilty race,
 Whose murderous hand imbrued with gilty blood
 Askes vengeance still before the heauens face, 15
 With endlesse mischiefs on the cursed broode.

<E.ii.v> The

The wicked childe thus bringes to wofull fire
 The mournfull plaintes, to waite his very life.
 Thus do the cruell flames of ciuill fier
 Destroy the parted reigne with hatefull strife. 20
 And hence doth spring the well from which doth flow
 The dead black streames of mourning, plaints & woe.

¶ The order and signification of the domme shew before the fourth act.

¶ Firft the mufick of Howboies begā to plaie, during which
 there came from vnder the ftage, as though out of hell three
 furies. Alecto, Megera, and Ctefiphone, clad in black gar=
 mentes fprinkled with bloud and flames, their bodies girt
 with fnakes, their heds fpred with ferpentes in ftead of 5
 heare, the one bearing in her hand a Snake, the other a
 Whip, and the third a burning Firebrand: ech driuing before
 them a king and a queene, which moued by furies vnnatu=
 rally had flaine their owne children. The names of the kings
 and queenes were thefe. Tantalus, Medea, Athamas, Ino, 10
 Cambifes, Althea, after that the furies and thefe had paf=
 fed about the ftage thrife, they departed and than the mu=
 ficke ceafed: hereby was fignified the vnnaturall murders to
 follow, that is to fay. Porrex flaine by his owne mother. And
 of king Gorboduc and queene Viden, killed by their owne 15
 fubiectes.

Actus quartus. Scena prima.

Viden fola.

V Id. Why fhould I lyue, and liuger forth my time
 In longer life to double my diftreffe?
 O me moft wofull wight, whom no mifhappe
 E.iiij.<r> Long

Long ere this day could haue bereued hence.
 Mought not thefe handes by fortune,or by fate, 5
 Haue perft this breft,and life with iron reft?
 Or in this palace here,where I fo long
 Haue fpent my daies,could not that happie houre
 Once , once haue hapt in which thefe hugie frames
 With death by fall might haue oppreffed me? 10
 Or fhould not this moft hard and cruell foile,
 So oft where I haue preft my wretched fteps,
 Sometime had ruthe of myne accurfed life,
 To rende in twayne fwallow me therin?
 So had my bones poffeffed now in peace 15
 Their happie graue within the clofed grounde,
 And greadie wormes had gnawen this pyned hart
 Without my feeling payne:fo fhould not now
 This lyuing breft remayne the ruthefull tombe,
 Wherein my hart yelden to death is graued: 20
 Nor driery thoughtf with panges of pining grieve
 My dolefull minde had not afflicted thus.
 O my beloued fonne:O my fwete childe,
 My deare Ferrex,my ioye,my lyues delyght.
 Is my beloued fonne,is my fweete childe, 25
 My deare Ferrex,my ioye,my lyues delight.
 Murdered with cruell death ? O hatefull wretch,
 O heynous traitour both to heauen and earth.
 Thou Porrex, thou this damned dede haft wrought,
 Thou Porrex, thou fhalt dearely bye the fame. 30
 Traitour to kinne and kinde, to fire and me,
 To thine owne flefhe,and traitour to thy felfe.
 The Gods on thee in hell fhall wreke their wrath,
 And here in earth this hand fhall take reuenge,
 On thee Porrex, thou falfe and caitife wight. 35
 If after bloud, fo eigre were thy thirft,
 And murderous minde had fo poffeffed thee,
 If fuch hard hart of rocke and ftonie flint

<E.iii.v>

Liued

Liued in thy breft, that nothing els could like
 Thy cruell tyrantes thought but death and bloud: 40
 Wilde fauage beafts, mought not their flaughter ferue
 To fede thy gredie will, and in the middeft
 Of their entrailes to ftaine thy deadly handes
 With bloud deferued, and drinke thereof thy fill?
 Or if nought els but death and bloud of man 45
 Mought please thy luft, could none in Brittain land,
 Whose hart betorne out of his panting breft
 With thine owne hand, or worke what death thou
 Suffice to make a facrifice to peaze (wouldest,
 That deadly minde and murderous thought in thee? 50
 But he who in the felfe fame wombe was wrapped,
 Where thou in difmall hower receiuedft life?
 Or if nedes, nedes, thy hand muft flaughter make,
 Moughteft thou not haue reached a mortall wound,
 And with thy fword haue pearfed this curfed wombe, 55
 That the accursed Porrex brought to light,
 And geuen me a iuft reward therefore?
 So Ferrex yet fweete life mought haue enioyed,
 And to his aged father comfort brought,
 With fome yong fonne in whom they both might liue. 60
 But whereunto wafte I this ruthfull fpeche,
 To thee that haft thy brothers bloud thus fhed?
 Shall I ftill thinke that from this wombe thou fprong?
 That I thee bare ? or take thee for my fonne?
 No traitour, no : I thee refufe for mine, 65
 Murderer I thee renounce, thou art not mine.
 Neuer, O wretch, this wombe conceiued thee,
 Nor neuer bode I painfull throwes for thee.
 Changeling to me thou art, and not my childe,
 Nor to no wight, that fparke of pitie knew. 70
 Rutheleffe, vnkinde, monfter of natures worke,
 Thou neuer fuckt the milke of womans breft,
 But from thy birth the cruell Tigers teates

E.iiij.<r>

Haue

Haue nurfed thee, nor yet of fleshe and bloud
 Formde is thy hart, but of hard iron wrought, 75
 And wilde and defert woods bredde thee to life.
 But canst thou hope to scape my iuft reuenge?
 Or that these handes will not be wrooke on thee?
 Doeft thou not know that Ferrex mother liues
 That loued him more dearly than her felfe? 80
 And doth she liue, and is not venged on thee?

Actus quartus. Scena fecunda.

Gorboduc. Aroftus. Eubulus. Porrex. Marcella.

G Orb. We maruell much wherto this lingring ftay
 Falles out fo long : Porrex vnto our court
 By order of our letters is returned,
 And Eubulus receaued from vs by heft
 At his arriuall here to geue him charge 5
 Before our prefence ftraight to make repaire,
 And yet we haue no worde whereof he ftayes.

Aroftus. Lo where he commes & Eubulus with him.

Eubulus. According to your highneffe heft to me,
 Here haue I Porrex brought euen in fuch fort 10
 As from his weried horfe he did alight,
 For that your grace did will fuch haft therein.

Gorboduc. We like and praife this fpedy will in you,
 To worke the thing that to your charge we gaue.
 Porrex, if we fo farre fhould fwarue from kinde, 15
 And from thofe boundes which lawe of nature fets,
 As thou haft done by vile and wretched deede,
 In cruell murder of thy brothers life,
 Our prefent hand could ftay no longer time,
 But ftraight fhould bathe this blade in bloud of thee 20

<C.iv.v> As

As iuft reuenge of thy detefted crime.	
No : we fhould not offend the lawe of kinde,	
If now this fworde of ours did flay thee here:	
For thou haft murdered him, whofe heinous death	
Euen natures force doth moue vs to reuenge	25
By bloud againe : and iuftice forceth vs	
To meafure death for death, thy due defert.	
Yet fithens thou art our childe, and fith as yet	
In this hard cafe what worde thou canft alledge	
For thy defence, by vs hath not bene heard,	30
We are content to ftaye our will for that	
Which iuftice biddes vs prefently to worke,	
And geue thee leaue to vfe thy fpeche at full	
If ought thou haue to lay for thine excufe.	
 Porrex. Neither O king, I can or will denie	35
But that this hand from Ferrex life hath reft:	
Which fact how much my dolefull hart doth waile,	
Oh would it mought as full appeare to fight	
As inward griefe doth poure it forth to me.	
So yet perhappes if euer ruthefull hart	40
Melting in teares within a manly breft,	
Through depe repentance of his bloody fact,	
If euer griefe, if euer wofull man	
Might moue regreite with forrowe of his fault,	
I thinke the torment of my mournfull cafe	45
Knownen to your grace, as I do feele the fame,	
Would force euen wrath her felfe to pitie me.	
But as the water troubled with the mudde	
Shewes not the face which els the eye fhould fee.	
Euen fo your irefull minde with ftirred thought,	50
Can not fo perfectly difcerne my caufe.	
But this vnhappe, amongeft fo many heapes,	
I muft content me with, moft wretched man,	
That to my felfe I muft referue my woe	
F.j.<r>	In

In pining thoughtes of mine accurfed fact, 55
 Since I may not shewe here my smallest grieve
 Such as it is, and as my breft endures,
 Which I esteeme the greatest miserie
 Of all misfephappes that fortune now can fend,
 Not that I rest in hope with plaint and teares 60
 To purchase life : for to the Goddess I clepe
 For true recorde of this my faithfull speche,
 Neuer this hart shall haue the thoughtfull dread
 To die the death that by your graces dome
 By iust desert, shall be pronounced to me: 65
 Nor neuer shall this tongue once spend the speche
 Pardon to craue, or seeke by fute to liue.
 I meane not this, as though I were not touchde
 With care of dreadfull death, or that I helde
 Life in contempt : but that I know, the minde 70
 Stoupes to no dread, although the fleshe be fraile,
 And for my guilt, I yelde the fame so great
 As in my selfe I finde a feare to fue
 For graunt of life.

Gorboduc. In vaine, O wretch, thou shewest
 A wofull hart, Ferrex now lies in graue, 75
 Slaine by thy hand.

Porrex. Yet this, O father, heare:
 And then I end. Your maiestie well knowes,
 That when my brother Ferrex and my selfe
 By your owne heft were ioyned in gouernance
 Of this your graces realme of Brittain land, 80
 I neuer fought nor trauailed for the fame,
 Nor by my selfe, nor by no frend I wrought,
 But from your highnesse will alone it sprong,
 Of your most gracious goodnesse bent to me.
 But how my brothers hart euen then repined 85
 With fwollen disdaine against mine egall rule,

<C.v.v>

Seing

Seing that realme, which by difcent fould grow
 Wholly to him, allotted halfe to me?
 Euen in your highneffe court he now remaines,
 And with my brother then in neareft place, 90
 Who can recorde, what prooffe thereof was fhewde,
 And how my brothers enuious hart appearde.
 Yet I that iudged it my part to feeke
 His fauour and good will, and loth to make
 Your highneffe know, the thing which fould haue 95
 Grief to your grace,& your offence to him, (brought
 Hoping my earneft fute fould foone haue wonne
 A louing hart within a brothers breft,
 Wrought in that fort that for a pledge of loue
 And faithfull hart, he gaue to me his hand. 100
 This made me thinke, that he had banifht quite
 All rancour from his thought and bare to me
 Such hartie loue, as I did owe to him.
 But after once we left your graces court,
 And from your highneffe prefence liued apart, 105
 This egall rule ftill, ftill, did grudge him fo
 That now thofe enuious fparkes which erft lay raked
 In liuing cinders of diffembling breft,
 Kindled fo farre within his hart difdaine,
 That longer could he not refraine from prooffe 110
 Of fecret practife to depriue me life
 By poyfons force, and had bereft me fo,
 If mine owne feruant hired to this fact
 And moued by trouth with hate to worke the fame,
 In time had not bewrayed it vnto me. 115
 Whan thus I fawe the knot of loue vnknitte,
 All honeft league and faithfull promife broke,
 The law of kinde and trouth thus rent in twaine,
 His hart on mifchiefe fet, and in his breft
 Blacke treafon hid, then, then did I defpeire 120
 That euer time could winne him frend to me.
 F.ij.<r> Then

Then faw I how he fmiLED with flaying knife
 Wrapped vnder cloke, then faw I depe deceite
 Lurke in his face and death prepared for me:
 Euen nature moued me than to holde my life 125
 More deare to me than his, and bad this hand,
 Since by his life my death muft nedes enfue,
 And by his death my life to be preferued,
 To fhed his bloud, and feeke my fafetie fo.
 And wifedome willed me without protract 130
 In fpedie wife to put the fame in vre.
 Thus haue I tolde the caufe that moued me
 To worke my brothers death and fo I yeld
 My life, my death, to iudgement of your grace.

Gorb. Oh cruell wight, fhould any caufe preuaile 135
 To make thee ftaine thy hands with brothers bloud?
 But what of thee we will refolue to doe,
 Shall yet remaine vnknown: Thou in the meane
 Shalt from our royall prefence banifht be,
 Vntill our princely pleafure furdur fhall 140
 To thee be fhewed. Depart therefore our fight
 Accurfed childe. What cruell deftenie,
 What froward fate hath fortred vs this chaunce,
 That euen in thofe where we fhould comfort find,
 Where our delight now in our aged dayes 145
 Sould reft and be, euen there our onely grieve
 And depeft forrowes to abridge our life,
 Moft pyning cares and deadly thoughts do grow?

Aros. Your grace fhould now in thefe graue yeres of
 Haue found ere this ye price of mortall ioyes, (yours 150
 How fhort they be, how fading here in earth,
 How full of chaunge, how brittle our eftate,
 Of nothing fure, faue onely of the death,
 To whom both man and all the world doth owe
 Their end at laft, neither fhould natures power 155

<F.ii.v>

In

**In other fort againft your hart preuaile,
Than as the naked hand whose ftroke affayes
The armed breft where force doth light in vaine.**

Gorbod. Many can yelde right fage and graue aduife
Of pacient fprite to others wrapped in woe, 160
**And can in fpeche both rule and conquere kinde,
Who if by prooffe they might feele natures force,
Would fhew them felues men as they are in dede,
Which now wil nedes be gods. But what doth meane
The fory chere of her that here doth come?** 165

Marcella. Oh where is ruth? or where is pitie now?
**Whether is gentle hart and mercy fled?
Are they exiled out of our ftony breftes,
Neuer to make returne ? is all the world
Drowned in bloud, and foncke in crueltie?** 170
**If not in women mercy may be found,
If not (alas) within the motherf breft,
To her owne childe, to her owne flefhe and bloud,
If ruthe be banifhed thence, if pitie there
May haue no place, if there no gentle hart** 175
Do liue and dwell, where fhould we feeke it then?

Gorb. Madame(alas)what meanes your woful tale?

Marcella. O fillie woman I, why to this houre
Haue kinde and fortune thus deferred my breath,
That I fhould liue to fee this dolefull day? 180
**Will euer wight beleue that fuch hard hart
Could reft within the cruell mothers breft,
With her owne hand to flay her onely fonne?
But out (alas) thefe eyes behelde the fame,
They faw the driery fight, and are becomē** 185
**Moft ruthfull recordes of the bloody fact.
Porrex (alas) is by his mother flaine,
And with her hand, a wofull thing to tell,**

F.iiij.<r>

While

While flumbring on his carefull bed he reftes
His hart stabde in with knife is reft of life. 190

Gorboduc. O Eubulus, oh draw this fword of ours,
And pearce this hart with speed. O hatefull light,
O lothfome life, O fweete and welcome death.
Deare Eubulus worke this we thee befech.

Eubulus. Pacient your grace,perhappes he liueth yet. 195
With wound receaued, but not of certaine death.

Gorboduc. O let vs then repayre vnto the place,
And fee if Porrex liue, or thus be flaine.

Marcella. Alas he liueth not, it is to true,
That with thefe eyes of him a pereleffe prince, 200
Sonne to a king,and in the flower of youth,
Euen with a twinke a fenfeleffe stocke I faw.

Aroftus. O damned deede.

Marcella. But heare hys ruthefull end.
The noble prince, pearft with the fodeine wound,
Out of his wretched flumber haftely ftart, 205
Whofe ftrength now fayling ftraight he ouerthrew,
When in the fall his eyes euen new vnclofed
Behelde the Queene, and cryed to her for helpe.
We then, alas, the ladies which that time
Did there attend, feing that heynous deede, 210
And hearing him oft call the wretched name
Of mother, and to crye to her for aide,
Whofe direfull hand gaue him the mortall wound,
Pitying (alas) for nought els could we do)
His ruthefull end, ranne to the wofull bedde, 215
Dispoyled ftraight his breft, and all we might
Wiped in vaine with napkins next at hand,
The fodeine ftreames of bloud that flufhed faft
Out of the gaping wound. O what a looke,

<F.iii.v>

O what

O what a ruthefull stedfast eye me thought 220
 He fixt vpon my face, which to my death
 Will neuer part fro me, when with a braide
 A deepe fet figh he gaue, and therewithall
 Claspig his handes, to heauen he cast his fight.
 And straight pale death preffing within his face 225
 The flying ghofte his mortall corpes forfooke.

Aroftus. Neuer did age bring forth so vile a fact.

Marcella. O hard and cruell happe, that thus assigned
 Vnto so worthy a wight so wretched end:
 But most hard cruell hart, that could consent 230
 To lend the hatefull destenies that hand,
 By which, alas, so heynous crime was wrought.
 O Queene of adamant, O marble breft.
 If not the fauour of his comely face,
 If not his princely chere and countenance, 235
 His valiant actiue armes, his manly breft,
 If not his faire and seemely personage,
 His noble limmes in such proportion cast
 As would haue wrapt a fillie womans thought,
 If this mought not haue moued thy bloody hart. 240
 And that most cruell hand the wretched weapon
 Euen to let fall, and kifte him in the face,
 With teares for ruthe to reauue such one by death:
 Should nature yet consent to flay her sonne?
 O mother, thou to murder thus thy childe? 245
 Euen loue with iustice must with lightning flames
 Fro heauen fend downe some strange reuenge on thee.
 Ah noble prince, how oft haue I behelde
 Thee mounted on thy fierce and traumpling stede,
 Shining in armour bright before the tilt, 250
 And with thy mistresse fleue tied on thy helme,
 And charge thy staffe to please thy ladies eye,
 That bowed the head peece of thy frendly foe?

<F.iv.r>

How

How oft in armes on horfe to bend the mace?
 How oft in armes on foote to breake the fworde, 255
 Which neuer now thefe eyes may fee againe.

Aroftus, Madame, alas, in vaine thefe plaints are fhed,
 Rather with me depart, and helpe to fwage,
 The thoughtfull griefes that in the aged king
 Muft needes by nature growe, by death of this 260
 His onely fonne, whom he did holde fo deare.

Marcella. What wight is that which faw **ye** I did fee,
 And could refraine to waile with plaint and teares?
 Not I, alas, that hart is not in me.
 But let vs goe, for I am greued anew, 265
 To call to minde the wretched fathers woe.

Chorus. Whan greedy luft in royall feate to reigne
 Hath reft all care of Goddes and eke of men,
 And cruell hart, wrath, treason, and difdaine
 Within ambitious breft are lodged, then
 Beholde how mifchiefe wide her felfe difplayes, 5
 And with the brothers hand the brother flayes.
 When bloud thus fhed, doth ftaine the heauens face,
 Crying to Ioue for vengeance of the deede,
 The mightie God euen moueth from his place,
 With wrath to wreke: then fendes he forth with fpede 10
 The dreadfull furies, daughters of the night,
 With ferpentes girt, carying the whip of ire,
 With heare of ftinging Snakes, and fhining bright
 With flames and bloud, and with a brand of fire.
 Thefe for reuenge of wretched murder done , 15
 Do make the mother kill her onely fonne.
 Blood af keth blood, and death muft death requite.
 Ioue by his iuft and euerlafting dome
 Iuftly hath euer fo requited it.

<F.iv.v>

The

The times before recorde, and times to come 20
 Shall finde it true, and fo doth present proofe
 Present before our eyes for our behoofe.
 O happy wight that suffres not the snare
 Of murderous minde to tangle him in blood.
 And happy he that can in time beware 25
 By others harmes and turne it to his good.
 But wo to him that fearing not to offend
 Doth ferue his luft, and will not fee the end,

? The order and signification of the domme shew before the fifth act.

? Firft the drommes & fluites, began to found , during which
 there came forth vpon the stage a company of Hargabuffers
 and of Armed men all in order of battaile . These after their
 peeces discharged , and that the armed men had three times
 marched about the stage, departed, and then the drommes and 5
 fluits did cease. Hereby was signified tumults, rebellions,
 armes and ciuill warres to follow , as fell in the realme of
 great Brittain , which by the space of fiftie yeares & more
 continued in ciuill warre betwene the nobilitie after the death
 of king Gorboduc, and of his issues, for want of certayne li= 10
 mitacion in succeffion of the crowne, till the time of Dunwal=
 lo Molmutius, who reduced the land to monarchie.

Actus quintus. Scena prima.

Clotyn. Mandud. Gwenard. Fergus. Eubulus.

C Lot. Did euer age bring forth such tirants harts?
 The brother hath bereft the brothers life,
 The mother she hath died her cruell handes
 In blood of her owne sonne, and now at last
 The people loe forgetting trouth and loue, 5
G.j.<r> Con=

Contemning quite both law and loyall hart,
Euen they haue flaine their foueraigne lord & queene.

Mand. Shall this their traitorous crime vnpunished
Euen yet they ceafe not,caryed on with rage, (reft?
In their rebellious routes,to threaten ftill 10
A new blood fhed vnto the princes kinne,
To flay them all,and to vproote the race
Both of the king and queene,fo are they moued
With Porrex death,wherin they falſely charge
The giltleſſe king without deſert at all, 15
And traitorouſly haue murdered him therfore,
And eke the queene.

Gwena. Shall ſubiectes dare with force
To worke reuenge vpon their princes fact?
Admit the worſt that may,as ſure in this
The deede was fowle,the queene to flay her ſonne, 20
Shall yet the ſubiect feeke to take the fworde,
Arife agaynſt his lord,and flay his king?
O wretched ſtate,where thoſe rebellious hartes
Are not rent out euen from their liuing breafteſ,
And with the body throwen vnto the foules 25
As carrion foode,for terrour of the reſt.

Ferg. There can no puniſhment be thought to great
For this ſo greuouſ cryme:let ſpede therfore
Be vſed therin for it behoueth ſo.

Eubulus. Ye all my lordes,I ſee,confent in one 30
And I as one confent with ye in all.
I holde it more than neede with ſharpeſt law
To puniſh this tumultuous bloody rage.
For nothing more may ſhake the common ſtate,
Than ſufferance of vproares without redreſſe, 35
Wherby how ſome kingdomes of mightie power
After great conqueſtes made,and florifhing

<G.i.v>

In

In fame and wealth,haue ben to ruine brought,
 I pray to loue that we may rather wayle
 Such happe in them than witneffe in our felues. 40
 Eke fully with the duke my minde agrees,
 Though kinges forget to gouerne as they ought,
 Yet fubiectes muft obey as they are bounde.
 But now my lordes,before ye farder wade,
 Or fpend your fpeech,what fharpe reuenge fhall fall 45
 By iuftice plague on thefe rebellious wightes,
 Me thinkes ye rather fhould firft fearch the way,
 By which in time the rage of this vproare
 Mought be repressed,and thefe great tumults ceafed.
 Euen yet the life of Brittain land doth hang 50
 In traitours balaunce of vnegall weight.
 Thinke not my lordes the death of Gorboduc,
 Nor yet Videnaes bloud will ceafe their rage:
 Euen our owne lyues, our wiues and children deare,
 Our countrey deareft of all,in daunger ftandes, 55
 Now to be fpoiled,now,now made defolate,
 And by our felues a conqueft to enfue.
 For geue once fwey vnto the peoples luftes,
 To rufh forth on,and ftay them not in time,
 And as the ftream that rowleth downe the hyll, 60
 So will they headlong ronne with raging thoughtes
 From bloud to bloud,from mifchiefe vnto moe,
 To ruine of the realme, them felues and all,
 So giddy are the common peoples mindes,
 So glad of chaunge,more wauering than the fea. 65
 Ye fee(my lordes)what ftrengh thefe rebelles haue,
 What hugie nombre is affembled ftill,
 For though the traiterous fact,for which they rofe
 Be wrought and done,yet lodge they ftill in field
 So that how farre their furies yet will ftretch 70
 Great caufe we haue to dreade. That we may feeke
 By prefent battaile to repreffe their power,

G.ij.<r>

Speede

Speede must we vse to leuie force therfore.	
For either they forthwith will mischiefe worke,	
Or their rebellious roares forthwith will ceafe.	75
These violent thinges may haue no lafting long.	
Let vs therfore vse this for present helpe,	
Perfwade by gentle speach, and offre grace	
With gift of pardon faue vnto the chiefe,	
And that vpon condicion that forthwith	80
They yelde the captaines of their enterprife,	
To beare such guerdon of their traiterous fact,	
As may be both due vengeance to them felues,	
And holsome terrour to posteritie.	
This shall, I thinke, scatter the greateft part,	85
That now are holden with desire of home,	
Werie in field with cold of winters nightes,	
And some (no doubt) striken with dread of law.	
Whan this is once proclaimed, it shall make	
The captaines to mistrust the multitude,	90
Whose safetie biddes them to betray their heads,	
And so much more bycause the rascall routes,	
In thinges of great and perillous attemptes,	
Are neuer trustie to the noble race.	
And while we treate and stand on termes of grace,	95
We shall both stay their furies rage the while,	
And eke gaine time, whose onely helpe sufficeth	
Withouten warre to vanquish rebelles power	
In the meane while, make you in redynes	
Such band of horsemen as ye may prepare.	100
Horsemen (you know) are not the commons strength,	
But are the force and store of noble men,	
Wherby the vnchofen and vnarmed fort	
Of skilleffe rebelles, whome none other power	
But nombre makes to be of dreadfull force,	105
With fodeyne brunt may quickly be opprest.	
And if this gentle meane of proffered grace,	
<G.ii.v>	With

With stubborne hartes cannot fo farre auayle,
 As to affwage their desperate courages.
 Then do I wifh fuch slaughter to be made, 110
 As present age and eke pofteritie
 May be adrad with horroure of reuenge,
 That iuftly then fhall on thefe rebelles fall.
 This is my lord the fumme of mine aduife.

Clotyn. Neither this cafe admittes debate at large, 115
 And though it did, this fpeech that hath ben fayd
 Hath well abridged the tale I would haue tolde.
 Fully with Eubulus do I confent
 In all that he hath fayd: and if the fame
 To you my lordes, may feeme for beft aduife, 120
 I wifh that it fhould freight be put in vre.

Mandud. My lordes than let vs prefently depart,
 And follow this that liketh vs fo well.

Fergus. If euer time to gaine a kingdome here
 Were offred man, now it is offred mee. 125
 The realme is reft both of their king and queene,
 The offspring of the prince is flaine and dead,
 No iffue now remaines, the heire vnknownen,
 The people are in armes and mutynies,
 The nobles they are bufied how to ceafe 130
 Thefe great rebellious tumultes and vproares,
 And Brittain land now defert left alone
 Amyd thefe broyles vncertayne where to reft,
 Offers her felfe vnto that noble hart
 That will or dare purfue to beare her crowne. 135
 Shall I that am the duke of Albanye
 Difcended from that line of noble bloud,
 Which hath fo long florifhed in worthy fame,
 Of valiaunt hartes, fuch as in noble breftes
 Of right fhould reft aboue the thefaur fort, 140

G.iiij.<r> Refufe

Refuse to venture life to winne a crowne?
 Whom fhall I finde enmies that will withftand
 My fact herein,if I attempt by armes
 To feeke the fame now in thefe times of broyle?
 Thefe dukes power can hardly well appeafe 145
 The people that already are in armes.
 But if perhappes my force be once in field,
 Is not my ftrengh in power aboue the beft
 Of all thefe lordes now left in Brittain land?
 And though they fhould match me with power of mē, 150
 Yet doubtfull is the chaunce of battailles ioyned.
 If victors of the field we may depart,
 Ours is the fcepter then of great Brittain.
 If flayne amid the playne this body lye,
 Mine enemies yet fhall not deny me this, 155
 But that I dyed geuing the noble charge
 To hazarde life for conqueft of a crowne.
 Forthwith therefore will I in poft depart
 To Albanye,and raife in armour there
 All power I can:and here my fecret friendes, 160
 By fecret practife fhall follicite ftill,
 To feeke to wynne to me the peoples hartes.

Actus quintus. Scena fecunda.

Eubulus.Clotyn.Mandud.Gwenard.Aroftus.Nuntius.

E Vb. O Ioue, how are thefe peoples harts abusde?
 What blind fury,thus headlong caries them?
 That though fo many bookes,fo many rolles
 Of auncient time recorde,what greuious plagues
 Light on thefe rebelles aye,and though fo oft 5
 Their eares haue heard their aged fathers tell,

<G.iii.v>

What

What iuste reward these traitours still receyue,
 Yea though them felues haue fene depe death & bloud,
 By ftrangling cord and flaughter of the fword,
 To fuch affigned,yet can they not beware, 10
 Yet can not ftay their lewde rebellious handes,
 But fuffring loe fowle treason to diftaine
 Their wretched myndes,forget their loyall hart,
 Reiect all truth and rife againft their prince.
 A ruthefull cafe,that thofe,whom duties bond, 15
 Whom grafted law by nature,truth,and faith,
 Bound to preferue their countrey and their king,
 Borne to defend their common wealth and prince,
 Euen they fhould geue confent thus to fubuert
 Thee Brittain land,& from thy wombe fhould fpring 20
 (O natie foile) thofe,that will needs deftroy
 And ruyne thee and eke them felues in fine.
 For lo,when once the dukes had offred grace
 Of pardon fweete,the multitude miffledde
 By traitorous fraude of their vngracious heades, 25
 One fort that faw the dangerous fucceffe
 Of ftubborne ftanding in rebellious warre,
 And knew the difference of princes power
 From headleffe nombre of tumultuous routes,
 Whom common countreies care,and priuate feare, 30
 Taught to repent the errour of their rage,
 Layde handes vpon the captaines of their band,
 And brought them bound vnto the mightie dukes.
 And other fort not trufting yet fo well
 The truth of pardon,or miftrufting more 35
 Their owne offence than that they could conceiue
 Such hope of pardon for fo foule mifdede,
 Or for that they their captaines could not yeld,
 Who fearing to be yelded fled before,
 Stale home by filence of the fecret night, 40
 The thirde vnhappy and enraged fort
 G.iiij.<r> Of

Of desperate hartes, who ftained in princes bloud
 From trayterous furour could not be withdrawen
 By loue,by law,by grace,ne yet by feare,
 By proffered life,ne yet by threatned death, 45
 With mindes hopeleffe of life,dreadleffe of death,
 Careleffe of countrey,and aweleffe of God,
 Stood bent to fight,as furies did them moue,
 With violent death to clofe their traiterous life.
 Thefe all by power of horfemen were opprest, 50
 And with reuenging fworde flayne in the field,
 Or with the ftrangling cord hangd on the tree,
 Where yet their carryen carcasses do preach
 The fruites that rebelles reape of their vproares,
 And of the murder of their facred prince. 55
 But loe,where do approche the noble dukes,
 By whom thefe tumults haue ben thus appeafde.

Clotyn.I thinke the world will now at length beware
 And feare to put on armes agaynft their prince.

Mand.If not?thofe trayterous hartes that dare rebell, 60
 Let them beholde the wide and hugie fieldes
 With bloud and bodies fspread of rebelles flayne,
 The lofty trees clothed with the corpfes dead
 That ftrangled with the corde do hang theron.

Aroftus. A iuft rewarde,fuch as all times before 65
 Haue euer lotted to thofe wretched folkes.

Gwen.But what meanes he that commeth here fo faft?

Nun. My lordes,as dutie and my trouth doth moue
 And of my countrey worke a care in mee,
 That if the fpendng of my breath auailed 70
 To do the feruice that my hart defires,
 I would not fhunne to imbrace a prefent death:
 So haue I now in that wherein I thought

<G.iv.v>

My

My trauayle mought performe some good effect,
 Ventred my life to bring thefe tydings here. 75
 Fergus the mightie duke of Albany
 Is now in armes and lodgeth in the fielde
 With twentie thoufand men, hether he bendes
 His fpedy marche, and mindes to inuade the crowne.
 Dayly he gathereth ftrengh, and fpreads abroad 80
 That to this realme no certeine heire remaines,
 That Brittain land is left without a guide,
 That he the fcepter feeke, for nothing els
 But to preferue the people and the land,
 Which now remaine as fhip without a fterne. 85
 Loe this is that which I haue here to fay.

Cloyton. Is this his fayth ? and fhall he falſely thus
 Abufe the vauntage of vnhappy times?
 O wretched land, if his outrageous pride,
 His cruell and vntempred wilfulneffe, 90
 His deepe diffembling fhewes of falſe pretence,
 Should once attaine the crowne of Brittain land.
 Let vs my lordes, with timely force refit
 The new attempt of this our common foe,
 As we would quench the flames of common fire. 95

Mand. Though we remaine without a certain prince,
 To weld the realme or guide the wandring rule,
 Yet now the common mother of vs all,
 Our native land, our countrey, that contains
 Our wiues, children, kindred, our felues and all 100
 That euer is or may be deare to man,
 Cries vnto vs to helpe our felues and her,
 Let vs aduaunce our powers to repreſſe
 This growing foe of all our liberties.

Gwenard. Yea let vs fo, my lordes, with hafty ſpeede. 105
 And ye (O Goddes) fend vs the welcome death,
 H.j.<r> To

To fhed our bloud in field, and leaue vs not
 In lothefome life to lenger out our dayes,
 To fee the hugie heapes of thefe vnhappes,
 That now roll downe vpon the wretched land, 110
 Where emptie place of princely gouernaunce,
 No certaine ftay now left of doubtleffe heire,
 Thus leaue this guideleffe realme an open pray,
 To endleffe ftormes and waste of ciuill warre.

Aroftus. That ye (my lordes) do fo agree in one, 115
 To faue your countrey from the violent reigne
 And wrongfully vfurped tyrannie
 Of him that threatens conqueft of you all,
 To faue your realme, and in this realme your felues,
 From forreine thraldome of fo proud a prince, 120
 Much do I prayfe, and I befech the Goddes,
 With happy honour to requite it you.
 But (O my lordes) fith now the heauens wrath
 Hath reft this land the iffue of their prince,
 Sith of the body of our late foueraigne lorde 125
 Remaines no moe, fince the yong kinges be flaine,
 And of the title of difcended crowne
 Vncertainly the diuerfe mindes do thinke
 Euen of the learned fort, and more vncertainly
 Will parciall fancie and affection deeme: 130
 But moft vncertainly will climbing pride
 And hope of reigne withdraw to fundry partes
 The doubtfull right and hopefull luft to reigne:
 When once this noble feruice if atchieued
 For Brittain land the mother of ye all, 135
 When once ye haue with armed force repreft
 The proude attemptes of this Albanian prince,
 That threatens thraldome to your natie land,
 When ye fhall vanquifhers returne from field,
 And finde the princely ftate an open pray 140

<H.i.v>

To

To gredie luft and to vfurping power,
 Then, then (my lordes) if euer kindly care
 Of auncient honour of your auncesters,
 Of prefent wealth and nobleffe of your stockes,
 Yea of the liues and fafetie yet to come 145
 Of your deare wiues, your children, and your felues,
 Might moue your noble hartes with gentle ruth,
 Then, then, haue pitie on the torne eftate,
 Then helpe to falue the welneare hopeleffe fore
 Which ye fhall do, if ye your felues withholde 150
 The flaying knife from your owne mothers throate.
 Her fhall you faue, and you, and yours in her,
 If ye fhall all with one affent forbear
 Once to lay hand or take vnto your felues
 The crowne, by colour of pretended right, 155
 Or by what other meanes fo euer it be,
 Till firft by common counfell of you all
 In Parliament the regall diademe
 Be fet in certaine place of gouernaunce,
 In which your Parliament and in your choife, 160
 Preferre the right (my lordes) with respect
 Of ftrength or frendes, or what foeuer caufe
 That may fet forward any others part.
 For right will laft, and wrong can not endure.
 Right meane I his or hers, vpon whose name 165
 The people reft by meane of natieue line,
 Or by the vertue of fome former lawe,
 Already made their title to aduaunce.
 Such one (my lordes) let be your chofen king,
 Such one fo borne within your natieue land, 170
 Such one preferre, and in no wife admitte
 The heauie yoke of forreine gouernance,
 Let forreine titles yelde to publike wealth.
 And with that hart wherewith ye now prepare
 Thus to withftand the proude inuading foe, 175
 H.ij.<r> With

With that fame hart (my lordes) keepe out alfo
Vnnaturall thraldome of ftrangers reigne,
Ne fuffer you againft the rules of kinde
Your mother land to ferue a forreine prince.

Eubulus. Loe here the end of Brutus royall line, 180
And loe the entry to the wofull wracke,
And vtter ruine of this noble realme.
The royall king, and eke his fonnes are flaine,
No ruler reftef within the regall feate,
The heire, to whom the fcepter longes, vnknownen, 185
That to eche force of forreine princes power,
Whom vauntage of our wretched ftate may moue
By fodeine armes to gaine fo riche a realme,
And to the proud and gredie minde at home,
Whom blinded luft to reigne leades to afpire, 190
Loe Brittain realme is left an open pray,
A prefent fpoyle by conqueft to enfue.
Who feeth not now how many rifting mindes
Do feede their thoughts, with hope to reach a realme?
And who will not by force attempt to winne 195
So great a gaine, that hope perfwades to haue?
A fimple colour fhall for title ferue.
Who winnes the royall crowne will want no right,
Nor fuch as fhall difplay by long difcent
A lineall race to proue him lawfull king. 200
In the meane while thefe ciuel armes fhall rage,
And thus a thoufand mifchiefes fhall vnfolde,
And farre and neare fspread thee (O Brittain land)
All right and lawe fhall ceafe, and he that had
Nothing to day, to morrowe fhall enioye 205
Great heapes of golde, and he that flowed in wealth,
Loe he fhall be bereft of life and all,
And happieft he that then poffeffeth leaft,
The wiues fhall fuffer rape, the maides defloured,
<H.ii.v> And

And children fatherleffe fhall weepe and waile, 210
 With fire and fworde thy natiue folke fhall perifhe,
 One kinfman fhall bereaue an others life,
 The father fhall vnwitting flay the fonne,
 The fonne fhall flay the fire and know it not,
 Women and maides the cruell fouldiers fword 215
 Shall perfe to death, and fillie children loe,
 That play in the ftreeetes and fieldes are found,
 By violent hand fhall clofe their latter day.
 Whom fhall the fierce and bloody fouldier
 Referue to life ? whom fhall he fpare from death? 220
 Euen thou (O wretched mother) halfe aliue,
 Thou fhalt beholde thy deare and onely childe
 Slaine with the fworde while he yet fuckes thy breft.
 Loe, gitleffe bloud fhall thus eche where be fhed.
 Thus fhall the wafted foile yelde forth no fruite, 225
 But dearth and famine fhall poffeffe the land.
 The townes fhall be confumed and burnt with fire,
 The peopled cities fhall waxe defolate,
 And thou, O Brittain, whilome in renowme,
 Whilome in wealth and fame, fhalt thus be torne, 230
 Difmembred thus, and thus be rent in twaine,
 Thus wafted and defaced, fpoyled and deftroyed,
 Thefe be the fruites your ciuil warres will bring.
 Hereto it commes when kinges will not confent
 To graue aduife, but followe wilfull will. 235
 This is the end, when in fonde princes hartes
 Flattery preuailes, and fage rede hath no place.
 Thefe are the plag,es, when murder is the meane
 To make new heires vnto the royall crowne.
 Thus wreke the Gods, when that the mothers wrath 240
 Nought but the bloud of her owne childe may fwage.
 Thefe mifchiefes fpring when rebells will arife,
 To worke reuenge and iudge their princes fact.
 This, this enfues, when noble men do faile

H.ijj.<r>

In

In loyall trouth, and fubiectes will be kinges. 245
 And this doth growe when loe vnto the prince,
 Whom death or fodeine happe of life bereaues,
 No certaine heire remaines, fuch certaine heire,
 As not all onely is the rightfull heire,
 But to the realme is fo made knowen to be, 250
 And trouth therby vefted in fubiectes hartes.
 To owe fayth there where right is knowen to reft.
 Alas, in Parliament what hope can be,
 When is of Parliament no hope at all?
 Which, though it be affembled by confent, 255
 Yet is not likely with confent to end,
 While eche one for him felfe, or for his frend,
 Againft his foe, fhall trauaile what he may.
 While now the ftate left open to the man,
 That fhall with greateft force inuade the fame, 260
 Shall fill ambitious mindes with gaping hope,
 When will they once with yelding hartes agree?
 Or in the while, how fhall the realme be vfed?
 No, no : then Parliament fhould haue bene holden,
 And certeine heires appointed to the crowne, 265
 To ftay the title of eftablifhed right,
 And in the people plant obedience,
 While yet the prince did liue , whose name and power
 By lawfull fommons and authoritie
 Might make a Parliament to be of force, 270
 And might haue fet the ftate in quiet ftay.
 But now O happie man, whom fpedie death
 Depriues of life, ne is enforced to fee
 Thefe hugie mifchiefes and thefe miferies,
 Thefe ciuil warres, thefe murders & thefe wronges. 275
 Of iuftice, yet muft God in fine reftore
 This noble crowne vnto the lawfull heire:
 For right will alwayes liue, and rife at length,
 But wrong can neuer take deepe roote to laft.

<H.iii.v>