

{ornament}

THE
Tragedie of Gorbo=
duc , *whereof three Actes were writ-*
ten by *Thomas Norton* ,and the two laft by
Thomas Sackuyle.

Set forth as the fame was fhewed before the Queenes
moft excellent Maiefty,in her highnes Court of
Whitehall,by the Gentlemen of
the Inner Temple.

{ornament}

AT LONDON,
Printed by *Edward Allde* for *Iohn*
Perrin, and are to be fold in Paules Church-
yard, at the signe of the Angell.
1590.

<A.i.v>

¶ The Argument of the Tragedie.

G O R B O D V C, king of Brytaine, deuided his Realme
in his life time to his Sonnes, Ferrex and Porrex . The
Sonnes fell to deuifion and diffention . The yonger killed
the elder . The mother that more dearely loued the elder,
5 for reuenge killed the yonger. The people moued with the crueltie
of the fact, rose in rebellion and flewe both father and mother. The
Nobilitie affembled, and moft terribly deftroied the Rebels. And
afterwards for want of Iffue of the Prince, whereby the fuccefsi-
on of the Crowne became vncertaine, they fell to Ciuill warre, in
10 which both they and many of their Iffues were flaine , and the
lande for a long time almoft defolate and miferably wafsted.

¶ The names of the Speakers.

Gorboduc, king of great *Brytaine*.

Videna, Queene and wife to king *Gorboduc*.

Ferrex, Elder Sonne to king *Gorboduc*.

Porrex, Yonger Sonne to king *Gorboduc*.

Clotyn, Duke of *Cornewall*, [*Mandud*, Duke of
Fergus, Duke of *Albany*.] *Leagre*.

Gwenard, Duke of *Cumberlande*.

Eubulus, Secretarie to the king *Gorboduc*.

Aroftus, A Counfellour of king *Gorboduc*.

Dordan, A Counfellor afsigned by the king to
his eldeft Sonne *Ferrex*.

Philander, A counfellor afsigned by the king
to his yonger Sonne *Porrex*.

Both being of the old kings counfell 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.

Marcella, A Lady of the Queenes priuy chamber.

Chorus, Foure auncient and fage men of *Brytaine*.

A.ij.<r>

¶ The

¶ The Order of the dumbe shewe
*before the first Act, and the signi-
fication therof.*

¶ Firft the Mufike of Violenze began to play , du-
ring which came in vpon the Stage fix wilde men,
clothed in leaues . Of whome the firft bare on his
necke a fagot of fmall ftickes, which they all both
feuerallye and together affayed with all their 5
ftrengths to breake , but it could not be broken by
them. At the length one of them pulled out one of
the ftickes and brake it : And the reft plucking out
all the other ftickes one after another , did eafilie
breake the fame beyng feuered, which being con- 10
ioyned, they had before attempted in vaine. After
they had this done, they departed the ftage, and the
Mufike ceafed. Hereby was fignified, that a ftate
knit in vnitie dooth continue ftrong againft all
force, but being deuided, is eafily deftroyed. As be- 15
fell vpon Duke Gorboduc, deuiding his Lande to
his two fonnes which he before helde in Monar-
chie. And vpon the diffention of the brethren to
whom it was deuided.

<A.ii.v>

The

¶ The Tragedie of *Gorboduc*.

Actus primus. Scena prima.

Viden. *Ferrex.*

- T **He filent night that brings the quiet pause,** *Viden.*
 From painefull trauailes of the wearie Daye:
 Prolongs my carefull thoughtes & makes me blame
 The flowe Aurora that fo for loue or flame
 Dooth long delay to fhew her blushing face,
5 **And now the day renewes my griefull plainte.**
 My gracious Lady and Mother déere, *Ferrex.*
 Pardon my gréeffe for your fo greeued minde
 To afke what caufe tormenteth fo your hart.
 So great a wronge and fo vniuft despote, *Viden.*
10 **Without all caufe againft all courfe of kinde.**
 Such caufeleeffe wrong and fo vniuft despote, *Ferrex.*
 May haue redrefse,or at the leaft reuenge.
 Neither my Sonne,such is the froward will, *Viden.*
 The perfon fuch,such my mishap and thine.
15 **Mine know I none,but gréeffe for your diftreffe:** *Ferrex.*
 Yes: mine for thine my Sonne: A father?no: *Viden.*
 In kinde a Father,but not in kindelynes.
 My Father: why? I know nothing at all, *Ferrex.*
 Wherin I haue mifdōne vnto his Grace.
20 **Therefore,the more vnkinde to thée and me,** *Viden.*
 For knowing well my (Sonne) the tender loue
 That I haue borne and beare to thée,
 He gréeu'd therat,is not content alone,
 To fpoyle thée of my fight my cheefest loye,
25 **But thée,of thy birth=right and Heritage**
 Caufeleeffe,vnkindely and in wrongfull wife,
 Against all Law and right he will bereaue,
 Halfe of his kingdome he will giue away.
 To whome? *Ferrex.*
 Euen to Porrex his younger Sonne *Viden.*
30 **Whose growing Pride I dō fo fore fufpect,**
 That being raifed to equall rule with thée,

<A.iii.r>

Me

The Tragedye

- Me thinks I fee his enuious hart to fwell,
Filde with difdaine and with ambitious pride,
The end the Gods doo knowe, whose Aulters I 35
Full oft haue made in vaine of Cattell flaine,
To fend the facred fmoake to heauens Throne,
For thee my Sonne if thinges fo fuccéede,
As now my Ielious minde mifdémeth fore.**
- Ferrex.* **Madam leaue care and carefull plainte for me, 40
Iuft hath my Father béene to euery wight,
His firfte vniuftice he will not extend
To me I truft, that giue no caufe therof,
My Brothers pride fhall hurt him felfe not me.**
- Viden.* **So graunt the Gods: But yet thy Father fo 45
Hath firmly fixed his vnmoued minde
That plaintes and praiers can no whit auaille,
For thofe haue I affaied, but euen this daye,
He will endeuour to procure affent,
Of all his Counfell to his fonde deuife. 50**
- Ferrex.* **Their Auncestours from race to race haue borne
True faith to my forefathers and their féede,
I truft they eke will beare the like to me.**
- Viden.* **There refteth all, but if they faile therof, 55
And if the end bring forth an euill fucceffe
On them and theirs the mifchéefe fhall befall,
And fo I praie the Gods requit it them,
And fo they will, for fo is wont to be
When Lordes and trusted Rulers vnder Kinges
To please the prefent fancy of the Prince, 60
With wrong tranfpofe the courfe of gouernaunce
Murders, mifchéefe, or ciuill Swoord at length,
Or mutuall treafon, or a iuft reuenge,
When right fuccéeding Line returnes againe
By Ioues iuft Iudgement and deferued wrath 65
Bringes them to ciuill and reprochefull death,
And rootes their names and Kinreds from the earth.**
- Ferrex.* **Mother content you, you fhall fee the end.**
- Viden.* **The end: thy ende I feare, Ioue end me firft.**

<A.iii.v>

Actus

of Gorboduc.

Actus primus Scena fecundus.

Gorboduc. Aroftus. Philander. Eubulus.

**M Y Lords whose graue aduife and faithfull aide,
Haue long vphelde my honour and my Realme,
And brought me from this age and tender yeeres,
Guiding fo great eftate with great renowne:**

Gorboduc.

5 **Now more importeth me the erft to vfe
Your faith and wifdome wherby yet I raigne,
That when by death my life and rule fhall ceafe,
The Kingdome yet maye with vnbroken courfe,
Haue certaine Prince,by whose vndoubted right,**
10 **Your wealth and peace may ftand at quiet ftay,
And eke that they whom Nature hath preparde,
In time to take my place in Princely Seate,
While in their fathers time their pliant youth,
Yéeldes to the frame of fkilfull gouernaunce**
15 **Maye fo be taught and trained in noble Artes,
As what their Fathers which haue raignde before,
Haue with great fame deriued downe to them
With honour they may leaue vnto their féede:
And not be taught for their vnwoorthy life,**
20 **And for their laweleffe fwaruing out of kinde,
Wwoorthy to loofe what Law and kind them gaue
But that they may preferue the common peace,
The caufe that firft began and ftill maintaines,
The Lineall courfe of Kinges enheritaunce,**
25 **For me,for mine,for you,and for the ftate
Wherof both I and you haue charge and care.
Thus doo I meane to vfe your woonted faith
To me and mine,and to your natie Land,
My Lordes be plaine without all wrye respect**
30 **Or poyfons craft to fpeake in pleafing wife,
Leaft as the blame of ill fuccéeding thinges
Shall light on you,fo light the harmes alfo.**

Your good acceptaunce fo (moft noble King)

Aroftus.

<A.iv.r>

Of

The Tragedye

Of fuch your faithfulnes as héertofore
We haue employed in dueties to your Grace, 35
And to this Realme whose wørthy head you are,
Well proues that neither you mistrust at all,
Nor we shall néede no boasting wife to shew,
Our trueth to you,nor yet our wakefull care
For you,for yours,and for our natiue land, 40
Wherfore (O King) I fpeake for one as all,
Sith all as one d∞ beare you egall faith:
Doubt not to vfe their counfailes and their aides
Whose honors,g∞ods and liues are whole auowed,
To ferue, to aide,and to defend your grace. 45

Gorboduc. My Lordes I thank you all. This is the cafe
Ye know,the Gods, who haue the foueraigne care,
For Kings,for Kingdomes,and for common weales,
Gauē me two Sonnes in my more lufty Age,
Who now in my deceiuing yéeres are growen 50
Well towards riper ftate of minde and ftrength,
To take in hand fome greater Princely charge,
As yet they liue and fpend their hopefull daies,
With me and with their Mother héere in Court:
Their age now asketh other place and trade, 55
And mine alfo d∞th afke an other change,
Theirs to more trauaile,mine to greater eafe:
Whan fatall death fhall end my mortall life,
My purpofe is to leaue betwéene them twaine
The Realme deuided into two fundry partes: 60
The one, Ferrex mine elder fonne shall haue,
The other, fhall the other Porrex rule
That both my purpofe may more firmly ftand,
And eke that they may better rule their charge,
I meane f∞rthwith to place them in the fame: 65
That in my life they maye both learne to rule,
And I may ioy to fée their ruling well.
This is in fumme, what I woulde haue you wey:
Firft whether ye allowe my whole deuice,
And think it good for me,for them, for you, 70

<A.iv.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

And for our Country, mother of vs all :

And if ye like it, and allowe it well,

Than for their guiding and their gouernance,

Shew foorth such meanes of circumfance,

75 As ye thinke méete to be both knowne and kept:

Loe, this is all, now tell me your aduife.

And this is much, and asketh great aduife,

Aroftus.

But for my part, my Soueraigne Lord and king,

This doe I thinke your Maieftie dooth know,

80 How vnder you in Iuftice and in peace,

Great wealth and honour long we haue enioyed,

So as we can not feeme with greedie minds

To wifh for change of prince or gouernance,

But if ye like your purpofe and deuife,

85 Our liking muft be déemed to procede,

Of rightfull reafon, and of heedfull care,

Not for our felues, but for our common ftate:

Sith our owne ftate dooth néed no better change,

I thinke in all, as earft your Grace hath faide,

90 Firft when you fhall vnloade your aged minde,

Of heauie care and troubles manifolde,

And lay the fame vpon my Lords your fonnes,

Whofe growing yéeres may beare the burden long,

And long I pray the Gods to graunt it fo:

95 And in your life while you fhall fo behold

Their rule, their vertues, and their noble déedes,

Such as their kind behighteth to vs all,

Great be the profits that fhall grow thereof,

Your age in quiet fhall the longer laft,

100 Your lafting age fhall be their longer ftate,

For cares of kings, that rule as you haue rulde,

For publike welth, and not for priuate ioy,

Do wafte mans life and haften crooked age,

With furrowed face, and with enfébled lims,

105 To draw on créeping Death a fwifter pace.

They two yet yong fhall beare the partie reigne

With greater eafe than one now olde alone

B.<i.r>

Can

The Tragedye

Can welde the whole,for whom much harder is
With leffened ftrength the doubled weight to beare
Your eye,your counfell,and the graue regard 110
Of fathers, yea of fuch a fathers name,
Now at beginning of their fundred reigne,
When it is hazard of their whole fucceffe,
Shall bridle fo their force of youthfull heates,
And fo refraine the rage of infolence, 115
Which moft affailes the yong and noble minds,
And fo fhall guide and traine in tempred ftay
Their yet greene bending wits with reuerent awe,
And now inurde with vertues at the firft,
Cuftome (O king) fhall bringe delightfulnes 120
By vfe of vertue, vice fhall grow in hate,
But if you fo difpofe it,that the day
Which ends your life,fhall firft begin the reigne,
Great is the perill,what fhall be the ende,
When fuch beginning of fuche liberties 125
Voide of fuch ftates as in your life d∞ lie,
Shall leaue them to free random of their will
An open pray to traiterous flatterie,
The greateft peftilence of noble youth:
Whiche perill fhall be paf,if in your life 130
Their tempred youth with aged fathers awe
Be brought in vre of fkilfull ftayednes,
And in your life their liues difpofed fo,
Shall length your noble life in ioyfulnes:
Thus thinke I that your grace hath wifely thought 135
And that your tender care of common weale
Hath bred this thought,fo to deuide your Lande,
And plant your fonnes to beare the prefent rule
While you yet liue to fee their ruling well,
That you may longer liue by ioy therein. 140
What further meanes beh∞uefull are and meete
At greater leifure may your grace deuife,
When all haue faid,and when we be agreed
If this be beft to parte the Realme in twaine,

<B.i.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

145 **And place your fonnes in present gouernment,
Whereof as I haue plainely said my minde,
So would I heare the rest of all my Lordes.**

**In part I thinke as hath bene faide before,
In part againe my mind is otherwife,**

Philander.

150 **As for deuiding of this realme in twaine,
And lotting out the fame in egall partes,
To either of my Lords your Graces fonnes,
That thinke I best for this your realmes behoefe,
For profite and aduancement of your fonnes,**

155 **And for your comfort and your honour eke:
But fo to place them while your life doth laft,
To yeeld to them your royall gouernance,
to be aboue them onely in the name
Of father,not in kingly ftate also,**

160 **I thinke not good for you, for them,nor vs,
this kingdome since the bloody ciuill field
Where Morgan flaine did yeeld his conquered part
Vnto his Cōfens fword in Cumberland,
Conteineth all that whilome did suffife**

165 **three noble fonnes of your forefather Brute,
So your two fonnes it may also suffife,
the mo the stronger,if they gree in one:
the smaller compaffe that the realme dooth holde,
the easier is the fway thereof to welde,**

170 **the neerer Iustice to the wronged pōore,
the smaller charge,and yet inough for one.
And when the Region is deuided fo
that brethren be the Lords of either part,
Such strength dooth nature knit betwene them both**

175 **In fundry bodies by conioyned loue,
that not as two,but one of doubled force,
Ech is to other as a fure defence,
the noblenes and glorie of the one
Dooth sharpe the courage of the others mind,**

180 **With vertuous enuie to contend for praife,
And fuch an eagalnes hath nature made,**

B.ij.<.r>

Betwene

The Tragedye

Betweene the brethren of one fathers féede,
As an vnkindly wrong it féemes to be,
To throw the other subiect vnder féete
Of him, whose péere he is by courfe of kind, 185
And nature that did make this egalnes,
Oft fore pineth at fo great a wrong,
That oft she raifeth vp a grudging gréeffe,
In yonger brethren at the elders ftate:
Wherby both towns and kingdoms haue béen rafed 190
And famous ftocks of royall blöod deftroied:
The Brother that fhould be the brothers aide
And haue a wakefull care for his defence,
Gapes for his death,& blames the lingering yeres,
That brings not föörth his ende with fafter courfe, 195
And oft impacient of fo long delayes,
With hatefull flaugh ter he prefents the fates
And kéepes a iuft reward for brothers blöod,
With endleffe vengeance on his ftocke for aye:
Such mifcheefes heere are wifely mette withall: 200
If egall ftate maye nourifhe egall loue,
Where none hath caufe to grudge at others good,
But now the head to ftoupe beneath them both,
Ne kind,ne reafon,ne good order beares,
And oft it hath béen feene, that where Nature 205
Hath béene preuerted in difordered wife,
When fathers ceafe to know that they fhould rule,
And children ceafe to know they fhould obey,
And often our vnkindly tendernes,
Is mother of vnkindly ftubbornes: 210
I fpeake not this in enuie or reproch,
As if I grudged the glorie of your fonnes,
Whofe honour I beféech the Gods to increafe:
Nor yet as if I thought there did remaine,
So filthie cankers in their noble breftes, 215
Whom I esteeme(which is their greateft praife)
Vndoubted children of fo good a king,
Onely I meane to fhew my certaine Rules,

<B.ii.v>

Which

of Gorboduc.

Which kinde hath graft within the minde of man,
220 That Nature hath her order and her course,
Which (being broken) dooth corrupt the state
Of mindes and thinges euen in the best of all.
My Lordes your Sonnes may learne to rule of you,
Your owne example in your noble Courte,
225 Is fittest guider of their youthfull yéeres,
If you desire to féeke some present ioye
By sight of their well ruling in your life,
Sée them obey, so shall you see them rule,
Who so obeyeth not with humblenes
230 Will rule with outrage and with infolence,
Long may they rule I doo beseech the Gods,
But long may they learne ere they begin to rule
If kinde and faies would suffer I would wish
Them aged Princes and immortall Kinges:
235 Wherefore most noble King I will affent,
Between your sonnes that you deuide your Realm,
And as in kinde, so match them in degree
But while the Gods prolong your royall life
Prolong your reigne, for therto liue you heere,
240 And therefore haue the Gods so longe forborne
To ioyne you to themselves, that still you might
Be Prince and Father of our Common weale:
They when they see your Children ripe to rule
Will make them roome, and will remoue you hence
245 That yours in right ensuing of your life
May rightly honour your mortall name.

Your wonted true regarde of faithfull hartes,
Makes me (O King) the bolder to presume
To speak what I conceiue within my brest,
250 Although the same doo not agree at all
With that which other heere my Lords haue said
Nor which your selfe haue féemed best to like,
Pardon I craue, and that my wordes be deemed
to flowe from hartly zeale vnto your grace,
255 And to the safetie of your Common weale:

Eubulus

B.iiij.<r>

To

The Tragedye

To parte your Realme vnto my Lords your Sonnes
I think not good for you,ne yet for them,
But woort of all,for this our natue Land:
For with one Land,one fingle rule is best:
Deuided Regions doo make deuided hartes, 260
But Peace preferues the Countrey and the Prince,
Such is in man the greedy minde to raigne,
So great is his desire to climbe alofte,
In worldly Stage the ftateliest partes to beare,
that faith and iustice and all kindly loue, 265
Doo yeelde vnto desire of Soueraigntie:
Where egall ftate doth raife an egall hope
to winne the thing that either wold atteine,
Your grace remembreth how in paffed yeeres,
the mighty Brute,first Prince of all this Lande, 270
Poffessed the fame and ruled it well in one,
He thinking that the compaffe did fuffice
For his three Sonnes thrée Kingdomes eke to make
Cut it in three, as you would now in twaine:
But how much Brutifh blood hath fithence been fpilt 275
to ioyne againe the fundred vntie?
What Princes flaine before their timely honour?
What wafte of townes and people in the Land?
What treafons heaped on murders and on fpoyles?
Whose iuft reuenge euen yet is scarfely ceafed, 280
Ruthefull remembraunce is yet had in minde:
the Gods forbyd the like to chaunce againe.
And you (O King)giue not the caufe thereof:
My Lord Ferrex your elder Sonne,perhappes
whome kinde and custome giues a rightfull hope 285
to be your Heire and to fuccede your Reigne,
Shall think that he dooth suffer greater wrong
then he perchaunce will beare,if power ferue:
Porrex the yonger fo vnpaied in ftate,
Perhaps in courage will be raifed alfo, 290
If Flattery then which failes not to affaile
the tender mindes of yet vnfkilfull youth,

<B.iii.v>

In

of Gorboduc.

In one fhall kinde and encrease difdaine:
If/ Enuie in the others hart enflame,
295 This fire fhall wafte their loue,their liues,their land,
And ruthefull ruine fhall deftroÿ them both.
I wifh not this(O King)fo to befall
But feare the thing,that I do moft abhorre,
Giue no beginning to fo dreadfull end,
300 Kéepe them in order and obedience:
And let them both by now obeying you,
Learne fuch behaiour as befeemes their ftate,
The Elder mildenes in his gouernaunce,
the yonger, a yeelding contentednes:
305 And keepe them neere vnto your prefence ftill,
that they reftreined by the awe of you,
May liue in compaffe of well tempred ftate,
And paffe the perilles of their youthfull yeeres.
Your aged life drawes on to feebler time,
310 Wherin you fhall leffe able be to beare
the trauailes that in youth you haue fufteined,
Both in your perfons and your Realmes defence,
If planting now your Sonnes in further partes,
You fend them furdre from your prefent reach,
315 Leffe fhall you know how they themfelues demaund
traiterous corrupters of their pliant youth,
Shall haue vnfpied a much more free acceffe,
And of ambition and inflamed difdaine,
Shall arme the one,the other,or them both
320 to cyuill warre,or to vfurping pride.
Late fhall you rue,that you ne recked before:
Good is I graunt of all to hope the beft,
But not to liue ftill dreadles of the woorft.
So truft the one that the other be forfeene,
325 Arme not vnkilfulnes with princely power
But you that longe haue wifely ruled the reignes,
Of Royaltie within your noble Realme,
So holde them,while the Gods for our auailles,
Shall ftretch the threed of your prolonged daies.

<B.iv.r>

T∞

The Tragedye

T∞ foone he clamme, into the flaming Carte 330
Whose want of skill did fet the earth on fire,
Time and example of your noble Grace,
Shall teache your Sonnes both to obey and rule:
When time hath taught them, time fhall make them pace
the place that now is full: and fo I pray 335
Long it remaine, to comfort of vs all.

Gorboduc. I take your faithfull hartes in thankfull parte
But fith I fee no caufe to draw my minde,
To feare the nature of my louing Sonnes,
Or to mifdeeme that Enuie or difdaine, 340
Can there w∞rk hate, where nature planteth loue,
In one felfe purpofe d∞ I ftill abide,
My loue extendeth egally to both,
My Land fuffifeth for them both alfo:
Humber fhall parte the Marches of their Realms : 345
The Sotherne parte the elder fhall poffeffe,
The Northerne fhall Porrex the yonger rule,
In quiet I will paffe mine aged daies,
Free from the trauaile and the painefull cares
That haften age vpon the w∞rthieft Kinges. 350
But leaft the fraude that ye d∞ féeme to feare
Of flattering tunges, corrupt their tender youth
And wrieth them to the waies of youthfull luft,
To climing pride or to reuenging hate,
Or to neglecting of their carefull charge 355
Lewdelye to liue in wanton rechlefneffe,
Or to oppreffing of the rightfull caufe
Or not to wreke the wronges d∞ne to the p∞re,
To tread downe trueth or fauour falfe deceite,
I meane to ioyne to either of my Sonnes, 360
Some one of thofe whose long approued faith,
And wifdome tried may well affure my hart:
That myning fraude fhall finde no way to creepe,
Into their fenced eares with graue aduife:
This is the end, and fo I pray you all 365
To beare my Sonnes the loue and loyaltie

<B.iv.v>

That

of Gorboduc.

That I haue found within your faithfull brefts.

You,nor your fonnes our fouereigne Lord fhall want *Aroftus.*

Our faith and feruice while our liues d∞ laft.

When fetled ftay d∞th hold the royall throne, *Chorus.*

In ftedefaft place by knowne and doubtles right:

And cheefely when difcent on one alone

Make fingle and vnparted reigne to light.

5 **Ech change of courfe vnioints the whole eftate**

And yeeldes it thrall to ruine by debate.

The ftrength that knit by laft accord in one

Againft all forreine power of mightie foes,

Could of it felfe defend it felfe alone,

10 **Difioyned once,the former force d∞th lofe**

The fticks,that fundred brake fo f∞ne in twaine

In fagot bound attempted were in vaine.

Oft tender mind that leades the partiall eye

Of erring parents in their childrens loue,

15 **Deftroies the wrongfull loued childe therby:**

This d∞th the proud fonne of *Apollo* proue,

Who rafhely fet in Chariot of his fire,

Inflamde the parched earth with heauens fire.

And this great king that d∞th deuide his Lande,

20 **And chaungde the courfe of his defcending crowne,**

And yeeldes the raigne into his childrens hand,

From bliffull ftate of ioy and great renowne,

A mirrour fhall become to princes all

To learne to fhunne the caufe of fuch a fall.

¶ The Order and fignification of the dumbe

fhew before the fecond Acte.

¶ Firft the Mufike of Cornets began to play , during which came in vpon the ftage a king accompanied with a number of his Nobilitie and Gentlemen. And after he had placed himfelfe in a Chaire of eftate prepared for him : there

5 came and kneeled before him a graue and aged Gentleman,and offered vp a Cuppe vnto him of wine in a glaffe,

C.<i.r> which

The Tragedye

which the king refused . After him comes a braue and luttie yoong Gentleman , and presents the King with a cup Golde filled with poyfon , which the King accepted, and drinking the same , immediatly fell downe dead vpon the stage, and so was carryed thence away by his Lordes and Gentlemen , and then the Muficke ceafed. Heereby was fignified , that as Glaffe by nature holdeth no poyfon , but is cleare and may eafily be feenethrough, ne boweth by any arte : So a faithfull Counfellour holdeth no treason , but is playne and open , ne yeeldeth to anie vndifcrete affection , but giueth any wholefome Counfell , which the ill aduifed Prince refuseth. The delightfull Golde filled with poyfon betokeneth Flatterie, which vnder faire feeming of pleafaunt wordes beareth deadly poyfon , which deftroiyeth the Prince that receyueth it . As befell in the two Brethren , *Ferrex*, and *Porrex* , who refusing the wholefome aduife of graue Counfellours , credited thefe yoong Parafites , and brought vnto themfelues death and destruction thereby. 10
15
20
25

Actus fecundus. Scena prima.

Ferrex. Hermon. Dordan.

Ferrex. I Meruaile much what reafon leade the king
My father thus without all my defarte
To reauie me halfe the kingdome which by courfe
Of lawe and nature fhould remaine to me.
Hermon. If you with ftubborne and vntamed pride 5
Had ftood againft him in rebellious wife,
Or if with grudging minde you had enuyde,
So flow a fliding of his aged yéeres,
Or fought before your time to hafte the courfe
Of fatall death vpon his Royall head, 10
Or ftainde your ftocke with murder of your kinne:
Some face of reafon might perhaps haue féemed
<C.i.v> To

of Gorboduc.

To yéeld fome likely caufe to fpoile ye thus.

The wrekefull Gods powre on my curfed heade

Ferrex.

15 Eternall plagues and neuer dyinge woes:

The hellifh Prince adiudge my damned Ghoft

To Tantalus thirft,or proude Ixions wheele,

Or cruell Gripe to gnaw my groaning hart

To during torments and vnquenched flames

20 If euer I conceiued fo foule a thought,

To wifh his ende of life,or yet of reigne.

Ne yet your father(O moft noble prince)

Dordan.

Did euer thinke fo fowle a thing of you,

For he with more than fathers tender loue

25 While yet the fates d∞ lend him life to rule,

(Who long might liue to fée 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 d∞one,

30 If he had once mifdéeemde that in your hart

There euer lodged fo vnkind a thought.

But tender loue(my Lord)and fetled truft

Of your good nature,and your noble minde,

Made him to place you thus in royall throne,

35 And now to giue you halfe his Realme to guide,

Yea and that halfe within abounding ftore

Of things that ferue to make a welthie realme,

In ftatelie Cities and in fruitfull foyle,

In temperate breathing of the milder heauen,

40 In things of needefull vfe,which frendly Sea

Transports by traffike from the forraine portes,

In flowing welth,in honour and in force,

D∞oth paffe the double value of the part

That Porrex hath allotted to his reigne,

45 Such is your cafe,fuch is your fathers loue.

Ah loue my frends,loue wrongs not whom he loues.

Ferrex.

Ne yet he wrongeth you that giueth you

Dordan.

So large a reigne ere that the courfe of time

Bring you to kingdome by defcended right,

C.ij.<r>

Which

The Tragedye

Which time perhaps might end your time before. 50

Ferrex. Is this no wrong, say you, to reave from me
 My natie right of halfe fo great a Realme,
 And thus to match his yonger sonne with me
 In egall power, and in as great degré:
 Yea and what sonne? the sonne whose swelling pride 55
 Would neuer yeeld one point of reuerence,
 When I the elder and apparant heire
 Stode in the likelyhood to possesse the whole,
 Yea and that sonne which from his childifhe age
 Enuieth mine honour, and dooth hate my life, 60
 What will he now doo? when his pride, his rage,
 The mindfull malice of his grudging hart
 Is armed with force, with welth and kingly state.

Hermon. Was this not wrong? yea ill aduised wrong,
 To giue fo mad a man fo sharpe a fworde, 65
 To fo great perill of fo great mishap,
 Wide open thus to fet fo large a way.

Dordan. Alas my Lord, what griefull thing is this?
 That of your brother you can thinke fo ill
 I neuer sawe him vtter likely signe 70
 Whereby a man might see or once misdéeme
 Such hate of you, ne such vnyeelding pride:
 Ill is their counsell, shamefull be their ende,
 That raising such mistrustfull feare in you,
 Sowing the feede of such vnkindly hate, 75
 Trauaile by reason to destroy you both:
 Wife is your brother and of noble hope,
 Worthie to weeld a large and mightie realme,
 So much a stronger friend haue you thereby,
 Whose strength is your strength, if you grée in one. 80

Hermon. If nature and the Gods had pinched fo
 Their flowing bountie and their noble gifts
 Of princely qualities from you my Lord,
 And powrde them all at once in waifull wife
 Vpon your fathers yonger sonne alone: 85
 Perhaps there be that in your preiudice

<C.ii.v>

Would

of Gorboduc.

Would fay that birth should yéeld to woorthines:
But fith in each good gift and and Princely Acte,
Ye are his match, and in the cheefe of all
90 In mildenes and in fober gouernauce,
ye far furmount: And fith there is in you
Suffifing skill and hopefull towardnes,
to weld the whole and match your elders praife,
I fee no caufe why ye should loofe the halfe,
95 Ne would I wifh you yeelde to fuche a loffe:
Leaft your milde sufferance of fo great a wrong,
Be déemed cowardife and fimple dread:
which fhall giue courage to the fiery head
Of your yong Brother to inuade the whole,
100 whiles yet therfore fticks in the peoples minde
The loathed wrong of your difheritaunce,
And ere your Brother haue by fetled power,
By guilefull cloake of an alluring fhowe,
Got him some force and fauour in this Realme
105 And while the noble Quéene your mother liues,
To woørke and practife all for your auaile
Attempt redrefse by Armes, and wreak your felf
Vpon his life that gaineth by your loffe,
Who now to flame of you, and gréeffe of vs,
110 In your owne Kingdome triumphes ouer you:
Shew now your courage méet for kinglye eftate
that they which haue auowed to fpend their goods
Their landes, their liues & honors in your caufe,
May be the bolder to maintain your parte
115 when they doo fée that cowarde feare in you,
Shall not betray ne faile their faithfull hartes,
If once the death of Porrex end the ftrife,
And pay the price of his vfurped Reigne,
Your mother fhall perfwade the angry King,
120 the Lords your friends eke fhall appeafe his rage
For they be wife and well they can forefee,
That ere long time your aged Fathers death
will bring a time when you fhall well requite

C.iiij.<r>

Their

The Tragedye

Their fréndly fauour,or their hatefull spite,
Yea,or their slacknes to auauce your caufe, 125
Wife men d∞ not fo hange on paffing ftate
Of prefent Princes,cheefely in their age,
But they will further caft their reaching eye
To viewe and weigh the times and reignes to come,
Ne is it likely though the King be wrath, 130
That he yet will,or that the Realme will beare
Extreme reuenge vpon his onely Sonne:
Or if he would,what one is he that dare
Be minifter to fuch an enterprife.
And héere you be now placed in your owne 135
Amid your fréndes,your vaffailes and your ftrength
We fhall defend and kéepe your perfon fafe,
Till either Counfell turne his tender minde,
Or age,or forrow ende his weary daies
But if the feare of Gods and fecret grudge 140
Of natures Lawe,repining at the fact,
Withholde your courage from fo great attempte:
Know ye that luft of kingdomes hath no Lawe,
The Gods d∞ beare and well allow in Kinges,
The thinges they abhorre in rafcall routes. 145
When Kinges on flender quarrels run to warres,
And then in cruell and vnkindely wife,
Commaund thefts,rapes,murder of Innocents,
To fpoyle of townes and reignes of mighty realms
Think you fuch Princes d∞ fuppreffe themfelues, 150
Subiect to Lawes of kinde and feare of Gods,
Yet none offence, but decked with glorious name
Of noble Conquefts in the handes of Kinges,
Murders and violent theftes in priuate men,
Are heinous crimes and full of foule reproche: 155
But if you like not yet fo hote deuife,
Ne lift to take fuche vauntage of the time.
But though with great perill of your ftate,
You will not be the firft that fhall inuade,
Affemble yet your force for your defence, 160

<C.iii.v>

And

And for your safetie stand vpon your garde.

O heauen was there euer heard or knowne,

Dordan.

So wicked Counfell to a noble Prince?

Let me(my Lord) disclofe vnto your grace

165 This heinous tale,what mischeefe it conteines:

Your Fathers death, your Brothers and your owne,

Your present murder and eternall fhome:

Heare me (O King)and suffer not to finke,

So high a treason in your Princely breft.

170 The mighty Gods forbid that euer I,

Ferrex.

Should once conceiue such mischeefe in my hart,

Although my Brother hath bereft my Realme,

And beare perhaps to mee an hatefull minde,

Shall I reuenge it, with his death therefore?

175 Or fhall I fo deftroy my Fathers life

That gaue me life,the Gods forbid I fay,

Cease you to speake fo any more to me,

Ne you my fréend with aunfwere once repeate

So foule a tale,in filence let it dye:

180 What Lord or Subiect fhall haue hope at all

That vnder me they safelye shall enioy

Their goods, their honours,lands and liberties,

With whom, neither one onely brother déere

Ne Father déerer,could enioy their liues?

185 But fith, I feare my yonger brothers rage,

And fith perhaps some other man may giue

Some like aduife,to moue his grudging head

At mine estate:which counfell may perchaunce

Take greater force with him,then this with me,

190 I will in fecret fo prepare my selfe,

As if his mallice or his luft to raigne,

Breake forth with Armes or fodeine violence

I may withftand his rage and kéepe mine owne.

I feare the fatall time now draweth on,

Dordan.

195 When cyuill hate fhall ende the noble lyne

Of famous Brute and of his royall féede,

Great Ioue defend the mischéefes now at hand,

<C.iv.r>

O that

O that the Secretaries wife aduife
 Had earft beene heard when he befought the King
 Not to deuide his land,nor fend his Sonnes 200
 to further partes from prefence of his Courte,
 Ne yet to yéelde to them his gouernaunce.
 Loe fuch are they now in the Royall throne
 As was that Phaeton in Phœbus Carre
 Ne then the fiery Steedes did drawe the flame 205
 With wilder randon through the kindled Skies,
 Then traiterous counsell now will whirle about,
 The youthfull heads of thefe vnſkilfull Kinges,
 But I heereof their Father will enforme,
 The reuerence of him per haps ſhall ftay 210
 the growing miſchéefes, while they yet are greene,
 If this helpe not, then woe vnto themfelues,
 The Prince,the people,the deuided Land.

Actus fecundus. Scena fecunda.

Porrex. Tyndar. Philander.

Porrex. A Nd is it thus?And dooth he fo prepare
 Againft 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 fawe my ſelfe the great prepared ſtore,
 Of Horfe,of Armour and of weapons there,
 Ne bring I to my Lorde reported tales,
 Without the ground of feene and feared troth,
 Loe ſecret quarrelles runne about his Courte, 10
 to bring the name of you my Lord in hate
 Eche man almoſt can now debate the caufe,
 And afke a reaſon of fo great a wrong,
 while he fo noble and fo wife a Prince,
 Is as vnworthy reft his Heritage. 15
 And why the King miſlead by crafty meanes
 Deuided thus his Land from courſe of right.

<C.iv.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

The wifer fort holde downe their griefull heads,
Ech man withdrawes from talke and company
20 Of thofe that haue béene knowne to fauour you,
To hide the mifchiefe of their meaninge there.
Rumors are fprede of your preparynge heere.
The rafcall numbers of the vnfkilfull fort
Are filled with monftrous tales of you and yours,
25 In fecret I was counfailed by my frends
To haft me thence, and brought you as you knowe
Letters from thofe that both can truly tell,
And would not write vnleffe they knew it well.

My Lord,yet ere you now vnkindly warre,
30 Send to your brother to demaund the caufe:
Perhaps fome traiterous tales haue filled his eares
With falfe reports againft your noble Grace:
Which once difclofde fhall end the growing strife
That els not ftaide with wife forefight in time,
35 Shall hazard both your kingdoms and your liues:
Send to your father eke,he fhall appeafe
Your kindled minds,and rid you of this feare.

Philander

Rid me of feare ? I feare him not at all,
Ne will to him,ne to my father fend
40 If daunger were for one to tarrie there,
Thinke ye it fafely to returne againe,
In mifchiefes fuch as *Ferrex* now intends,
The wonted courteous lawes to meffengers
Are not obserued,which in iuft warre they vfe,
45 Shall I fo hazard anie one of mine?
Shall I betray my truftie frende to him?
That hath difclofde his treason vnto me?
Let him intreat that feares,I feare him not:
Or fhall I to the king my father fende?
50 Yea and fende now while fuch a mother liues,
That loues my brother and that hateth me.
Shall I giue leyfure by my fond delayes
To *Ferrex* to opprefse me at vnware?
I will not,but I will inuade his realme

Porrex.

D.<i.r>

And

The Tragedye

And feeke the traitour prince within his court, 55
Mifchiefe for mifchiefe is a due reward.

His wretched head fhall pay the worthie price
Of this his treason and his hate to me,
Shall I abide, intreat, and fend and pray?

And holde my yeelden throte to traitours knife? 60

While I with valiant mind 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 booteles cafe may yet appeafe his wrath: 65

If not I will defend me as I may.

Philander. Lo héere the end of thefe two youthfull kings,
The fathers death, the reigne of their two realms,
O moft vnhappie ftate of Counfellors,

That light on fo vnhappie Lords and times, 70

That neither can their good aduife be heard,
Yet muft they beare the blames of ill fuceffe:

But I will to the king their father haft,
Ere this mifcheefe come to that likely ende,

That if the mindefull wrath of wrekefull Gods 75

Since mightie Ilions fall not yet appeafed
With thefe pøore remnant of the Troians name
Haue not determinedly vnmooed fate

Out of this realme to race the Brutifh line

By good aduife, by awe of fathers name, 80

By force of wifer Lords, this kindled hate
May yet be quencht ere it confume vs all.

Chorus, When youth not bridled with a guiding ftay,
Is left to rantom of their owne delight,
And welds whole realms by force of fouereigne fray
Great is the daunger of vnmaiftred might,

Leaft fkillleffe rage throw downe with headlong fall 5

their lands, their ftates, their liues, themfelues & all

When growing pride doth fill the fwelling breft,

And greedie luft doth raife the climbing mind,

Oh hardly may the perill be repreft,

<D.i.v>

Ne

of Gorboduc.

- 10 **Ne feare of angrie Gods,ne Lawes kinde,
Ne Country care can fired harts refraine
When force hath armed enuie and difdaine.
When kings of forefet will neglect the réede,
Of beft aduife,and yeeld to pleafing tales,**
- 15 **That d∞ their fancies noyfome humour feede,
Ne reafon,nor regarde of right auailles,
Succeeding heapes of plagues fhall teach t∞ late
To learne the mifchiefes of mifguiding ftate.
Fowle fall the traitour falfe that vndermines**
- 20 **The loue of brethren to deft roy them both,
Woe to the prince,that pliaunt eare inclines
And yéeldes his minde to poifenous tale that floweth
From flattering mouth, and woe to wretched lande
that wafts it felfe with ciuill fword in hande.**
- 25 **Loe,thus it is poifon in golde to take,
And wholefome drinke in homely cuppe forfake.**

¶ The Order and fignification of the dumbe
fhewe before the third Acte.

- ¶ Firft the Mufike of Fluites began to play, during which
came in vppon the Stage a companie of Mourners all clad
in blacke , betokening Death and forrowe to enfue vpon
the ill aduifed mifgouernement and diffention of Bre-
5 thren, as befell vpon the murder of *Ferrex* by his yonger
brother . After the Mourners had paffed thrife about the
Stage,they departed,and then the Mufike caufed.

Actus tertius. Scena prima.

Gorboduc. Eubulus. Aroftus. Philander. Nuntius.

**O Cruell fates,O mindfull wrath of Gods,
Whofe vengeance neither *Simois* ftreined ftreames
Flowing with bl∞od of *Troian* princes flaine,
Nor *Phrygian* fields made ranke with Corpfes dead**

Gorboduc,

D.ij.<r>

Of

The Tragedye

Of Afian kings and Lords can yet appeafe, 5
Ne flaughter of vnhappie Pryams race
Nor Ilions fall made leuell with the foile,
Can yet fuffice : but ftill continued rage
Purfue our liues,and from the fartheft feas
Dooth chaft the iffues of destroyed Troy: 10
Oh no man happie till his end be feene,
If any flowing wealth and féeming ioy
In prefent yéeres might make a happy wight,
Happie was Hecuba the wofulleft wretch
That euer liued to make a mirrourof, 15
And happie Pryam with his noble fonnes,
And happie I till nowe.Alas, I féé
And fééle my moft vnhappie wretchednes:
Behold my Lords,read ye this Letter heere,
Lo it conteines the ruine of this realme 20
If timely fpeede prouide not haftie helpe,
Yet,O ye Gods,if euer wofull king
Might moue you kings of kings,wreake it on me
And on my fonnes,not on this gittles realme.
Send downe your wafting flames from wrathful fkies, 25
To reaue me and my fonnes the hatefull breath.
Read,read my Lordes : this is the matter why
I called ye now to haue your good aduife.

¶ The Letter from *Dordan* the Coun-
fellow of the elder Prince.

Eubulus readeth the Letter.

M Y Souereigne Lord,what I am loth to write
But lotheft am to féé,that I am forced 30
By Leters now to make you vnderftand,
My Lord Ferrex your eldeft fonne mislead
By traitours framde of yooong vntempred wittes,
Affembleth force againft your yooonger fonne,
Ne can my counfell yet withdraw the heate 35
And furious pangs of his inflamed head:

<D.ii.v>

Difdaine

of Gorboduc.

**Disdaine(faith he)of his inheritaunce
Armes him to wreke the great pretended wrong
With cyuill Swoord vpon his Brothers life,
40 If present helpe doo not refraine this rage
This flame wil waſte your ſonnes,your land & you.**

Your Maieſties faithfull and moſt
humble Subiect *Dordan.*

O King, appeaſe your gréeſe and ſtay your plaint

Aroftus.

45 **Great is the matter and a woſull caſe:
But timely knowledge may bring manly help.
Send for them both vnto your preſence here,
The reuerence of your honour,age,and ſtate,
Your graue aduice, the awe of Fathers name
50 Shall quickly knit againe this broken peace:
And if in either of my Lordes your Sonnes,
Be ſuch vntamed and vnyélding pride
As will not bend vnto your noble Heſtes.
If Ferrex the elder Sonne can beare no peere,
55 Or Porrex not content, aſpires to more
Then you him gaue aboute his natiue right:
Ioyne with the iuſter fide, ſo ſhall you force
Them to agree:and holde the Land in ſtay.**

What meaneth this?loe yonder comes in haſte,

Eubulus.

60 **Philander from my Lord your yonger Sonne.**

The Gods ſend ioyfull newes.

Gorboduc.

The mighty Ioue

Philander.

Preferue your Maieſtie,O noble King.

Philander, **welcome: But how dooth my Sonne?**

Gorboduc.

Your ſonne,ſir,liues and healthie I him left:

Philander.

65 **But yet (O King)this want of luſtfull health,
Could not be halfe ſo greefeſull to your grace,
As theſe moſt wretched tidings that I bring.**

O heauens yet more?no end of woes to me?

Gorboduc,

Tindar,**O King,came lately from the Courte,**

Philander.

70 **Of Ferrex, to my Lord your yonger Sonne,
And made reporte of great prepared ſtore**

D.iiij.<r>

Of

The Tragedye

Of warre, and faith that it is wholly ment
Against Porrex for high disdain that he
Lives now a King and equal in degree
With him, that claimeth to succeede the whole, 75
As by due title of descending right:

Porrex is now set on flaming fire,
Partely with kindled rage of cruel wrath,
Partely with hope to gaine a Realme thereby,
That he in haste prepareth to invade 80

His Brothers Land, and with unkindly warre
Threatens the murder of your elder Sonne,
Ne could I him persuade that first he should,
Send to his brother to demand the cause:
Nor yet to you to stay his hateful strife, 85

Wherefore fith there no more I can be heard,
I come my selfe now to enforce your Grace:
And to beseeche you as you love the life
And safety of your Children and your Realme,
Now to employ your wisdom and your force 90
To stay this mischief ere it be too late.

Gorboduc. Are they in armes? would he not fend for me?
Is this the honour of a Fathers name?
In vaine we trauaile to affwage their minds,
As if their hartes whome neither Brothers love 95
Nor Fathers awe, nor Kingdomes care can moue
Our counsell could withdrawe from raging heate,
Love flaye them both, and end the cursed Line,
For though perhaps feare of such mighty force
As I my Lords, ioyned with your noble aides 100
Might yet raise, shall expresse their present heate,
The secret grudge and malice will remaine
The fire not quenched, but kept in close restrainte
Fed still within, breakes forth with double flame
Their death and mine must please the angry Gods. 105

Philander. Yeelde not, O King, so much to weake dispaire,
Your Sonnes yet live, and long I trust they shall:
If fates had taken you from earthly life,

<D.iii.v>

Before

of Gorboduc.

Before beginning of this cyuill ftrife:

- 110 Perhaps your Sonnes in their vnmaftered youth,
Lofe from regarde of any liuing wight,
Would runne on headlong, with vnbrideled Race
To their owne death and ruine of this Realme.
But fith the Gods that haue the care for Kinges,
115 Of thinges and times difpofe the order fo
That in your life this kindled flame breakes fòrth
While yet your life, your wifdome and your power,
May ftay the growing mifcheefe, and repreffe
The fiery blaze of their vnkindled heate
120 It feemes, and fo ye ought to deeme therof,
That louing Ioue hath tempred fo the time
Of this debate to happen in your daies
That you yet liuinge may the fame appeaze,
And adde it to the glory of your latter age
125 And they your Sonnes may learne to liue in peace.
Beware (O King) the greateft harme of all,
Leaft by your wailefull plaints your haftened death
Yéelde larger røome vnto their growing rage :
Preferue your life, the onely hope of ftay:
130 And if your highnes héerin lift to vfe
Wifdome or force, counsell or Knightly aide:
Loe we our perfons, powers and liues are yours,
Vfe vs till death, O King, we are your owne.
Loe heere the perrill that was erft forfeene
135 When you (O King) did firft deuide your Land
And yeelde your prefent raigne vnto your Sonnes.
But now (O noble Prince) now is no time
to waile and plaine, and wafte your wofull life,
Now is the time for prefent gòod aduice,
140 Sorrow døth darke the iudgement of the wit
The hart vnbroken and the courage free
from feeble faintenes of bøoteles difpaire
Doth either rife to fafetie or renowne,
By noble valour of vnvanquifhed minde:
145 Or yet døth perrifh in more happie forte.

Eubulus.

<D.iv.r>

Your

The Tragedye

Your Grace may fend to either of your Sonnes
Some one both wife and noble perfonage,
Which with good counsell and with weightye name
Of Father shall present before their eyes
Your heft, your life, your safetie and their owne, 150
The present mischeefe of their deadly strife
And in the while, assemble you the force
Which your commaundement and the speedy hafte,
Of all my Lords héere present can prepare:
The terrour of your mighty power shall stave 155
The rage of both, or yet of one at least.

Nuntius. O King the greatest gréefe that euer Prince did
The euer wofull messenger did tell, (heare,
That euer wretched Land hath seene before
I bring to you. Porrex your yonger Sonne 160
With fudden force, inuaded hath the Land
That you to Ferrex did allotte to rule:
And with his owne most bloody hand he hath
His Brother flaine, and dooth possesse his Realme.

Gorboduc. O heauens fend down the flames of your reuenge, 165
Destroy I say with flash of wreakefull fier,
The traitour Sonne, and then the wretched fire.
But let vs goe, that yet perhaps I may,
Dye with reuenge, and peaze the hatefull Gods.

Chorus. The luft of Kingdomes knowes no sacred faith,
No rule of reason, no regarde of right:
No kindly loue, no feare of heauens wrath:
But with contempt of Gods, and mans despite,
Through bloody slaughter dooth prepare the waies, 5
To fatall Scepter and accursed reigne.
The fonnes so loathes the Fathers lingring daies,
Ne dreads his hand in Brothers bloude to ftaine
O wretched Prince, ne doost thou yet recorde,
The yet freshe Murthers done within the Lands 10
Of thy forefathers, when the cruell Swoord
Bereft Morgan his life with Cozins hand?
Thus fatall plagues pursue the guiltie race

<D.iv.v>

Whofe

of Gorboduc.

Whose murderous hand imbrued with giltles bloud

- 15 **Afkes vengeance before the heauens face,
With endles mischiefes on the curfed brood,
The wicked child this brings to wofull Sire,
The mournfull plaints to waft his weary life:
Thus d∞ the cruell flames of ciuill fire**
- 20 **Destroy the parted reigne with hatefull ftrife.
And hence d∞th fpring the well from which d∞th floe,
The dead black fstreams of mournings,plaints and woe.**

¶ The Order and fignification of the dumbe
fhewe before the fourth Acte.

- ¶ Firft the Mufike of Howeboies began to playe , during
which there came fourth from vnder the Stage, as though
out of Hell three Furies, *Alecto, Megera, and Ctefiphone,*
clad in blacke garments fprinkled with bloud and flames,
- 5 their bodies girt with Snakes , their heads fpred with Ser-
pents in fteed of haire,the one bearing in hir hand a Snake
the other a whip,and the third a burning firebrand : eche
driuing before them a King and a Queene , which moo-
ued by Furies,vnnaturally had flaine their owne children.
- 10 The names of the Kings and Queenes were thefe, *Tanta-
lus,Medea, Athamas, Ino, Cambifes, Althea,* after that the
Furies and thefe had paffed about the Stage thrife,they de-
parted,and then the Mufike ceafed : heereby was fignified
the vnnaturall murders to followe, that is to faye, *Porrex*
- 15 flaine by his owne mother . And of King *Gorboduc,* and
Queene *Viden,*killed by their owne Subiects.

Actus quartus. Scena prima.

Viden fola.

W Hy fhould I liue and linger foorth my time

In longer life to double my diftreffe?

O mée moft wofull wight whome no mishap

Long ere this day could haue bereaued hence.

E.<i.r>

Might

The Tragedye

Might not these hands by fortune or by fate 5
Haue pearft this breft and life with iron reft,
Or in this pallace here where I fo long
Haue fpent my daies,could not that happie houre
Once,once haue hapt in which these hugie frames
With death by fall might haue oppreffed me, 10
Or fhould not this moft hard and cruell foyle,
So oft where I haue preft my wretched fteps,
Somtmes had ruth of myne accurfed life,
To rend in twaine and fwallow me therein.
So had my bones poffeffed now in peace 15
Their happie graue within the clofed ground,
And greedie wormes had gnawne this pined hart
Without my feeling paine : fo fhould not now
This liuing breft remaine the ruthefull tombe
Wherein my hart yeelden to death is graued: 20
Nor driery thoughts with pangs of pining grieffe
My dolefull mind hath not afflicted thus.
O my beloued fonne : O my fwéet child,
My deare Ferrex,my ioy,my liues delight.
Is my welbeloued fonne,is my fweet child, 25
My deare Ferrex,my ioy,my liues delight
Murdred with cruell death?O hatefull wretch,
O hainous traitour both to heauen and earth,
Thou Porrex,thou this damned déed haft wrought,
Thou Porrex,thou fhalt dearely aby the fame, 30
Traitor to kinne and kinde,to fire and me,
To thine owne flefh,and traitour to thy felfe,
The Gods on thée in hell fhall wreke their wrath,
And heere in earth this hand fhall take reuenge
On thée Porrex,thou falfe and caitife wight, 35
If after bloud fo eager were thy thirft,
And murderous mind had fo poffeffed thee,
If fuch hard hart of rocke and ftonie flint
Liued in thy breft,that nothing els could like
Thy cruell tyrants thought but death and bloud, 40
Wild fauage beafts might not the flaughter ferue

<E.i.v>

To

of Gorboduc.

To féede thy gréedy will, and in the middest
Of their entrailles to ftaine thy deadly handes
With blood deferued, and drinke thereof thy fill:
45 Or if nought els but death and blood of man
Might please thy luft, could none in Britaine land
Whose hart betorne out of his louing breft
With thine own hand, or worke what death thou wouldst
Suffice to make a sacrifice to appease
50 That deadly minde and murderous thought in thee?
But he who in the felle fame wombe was wrapped
Where thou in difmall houre receuedst life?
Or if needes, néedes this hand might slaughter make,
Mightst thou not haue reacht a mortall wound
55 And with thy sword haue pierced this curfed wombe
That the accurfed Porrex brought to light?
And giuen me a iust reward therfore.
So Ferrex, if sweet life might haue enjoyed
And to his aged father comfort brought,
60 With some yong sonne in whome they both might liue.
But wherevnto waste I this ruthfull speech
To thee that hath thy brothers blood thus shed?
Shall I still thinke that from this wombe thou sprong?
That I thee bare? or take thee for my sonne?
65 No traitour, no: I thee refuse for mine,
Murderer I thee renounce, thou art not mine:
Neuer, O wretch, this wombe conceiued thee,
Nor neuer bode I painefull throwes for thee:
Chaungeling to me thou art, and not my childe,
70 Nor to no wight that sparke of pittie knewe,
Ruthles vnkind, monster of Natures worke,
Thou neuer suckt the milke of womans breft,
But from thy birth the cruell Tigres teates
Haue nurfed, nor yet of flesh and blood
75 Formed is thy hart, but of hard iron wrought.
And wilde and desert woods bred thee to life:
But canst thou hope to scape my iust reuenge?
Or that these hands will not be wrekte on thee?

E.ij.<r>

Doest

The Tragedye

**Dooest thou not knowe that Ferrex mother liues
That loued him more dearely than her selfe? 80
And dooth she liue, and is not venged on thee?**

Actus quartus. Scena fecunda.

Gorboduc. Aroftus. Eubulus. Porrex. Marcella.

Gorboduc. **W E meruaile much whereto this lingering staie
Falles out fo long : Porrex vnto our Court
By order of our Letters is returned,
And Eubulus receiued from vs by heft
At his arriual heere to giue him charge 5
Before our prefence freight to make repaire,
And yet we heare no word whereof he staies.**

Aroftus. **Lo where he comes and Eubulus with him.**

Eubulus. **According to your highnes heft to me
Heere haue I Porrex brought euen in fuch fort 10
As from his wearied horfe he did alight,
For that your Grace did will fuch haft therein.**

Gorboduc. **We like and praife this speedie will in you
To worke the thing that to your charge we gaue.
Porrex, if we fo farre should fwarue from kinde, 15
And from these bounds which lawes of nature fets,
As thou haft done by vile and wretched deede
In cruell murder of thy brothers life,
Our present hand could stay no longer time,
But freight should bath this blade in bloud of thee, 20
As iust reuenge of thy detested crime.**

**No, we should not offend the lawe of kinde
If now this sword of ours did slay thee heere:
For thou haft murdered him whose heinous death
Euen natures force dooth moue vs to reuenge 25
By bloud againe : But iustice forceth vs
To meafure Death for Death, thy due deferte,
Yet fithens thou art our childe, and fith as yet
In this hard cafe what word thou canst alledge
For thy defence, by vs hath not bene heard, 30**

<E.ii.v>

We

of Gorboduc.

We are content to staye our will for that
Which Iustice bids vs presently to woorke:
And giue thee leaue to vse thy spéech at full
If ought thou haue to laye for thine excufe.

- 35 Neither O King, I can or will deny *Porrex.*
But that this hand from Ferrex life hath reft:
Which fact how much my dolefull hart dooth waile
Oh would it mought as full appeare to fight
As inward gréeffe dooth poure it foorth to me,
40 So yet perhaps if euer ruthefull hart
Melting in teares within a manly breaft,
Through déepe repentance of his bloody fact,
If euer gréeffe,if euer wofull m^en
Might moue regreite with forow of his faulte,
45 I thinke the torment of my mournfull cafe
Knownen to your grace,as I doo féele the fame,
Woulde force euen wrath her felfe to pittie me.
But as the water troubled with the mudde
Shewes not the face which els the eye should fée:
50 Euen fo your Irefull minde with stirred thought,
Cannot fo perfectly difcerne my caufe,
But this vnhape,amongft fo many heapes
I muft content me with, most wretched man,
That to my felfe I muft referre my woe
55 In pining thoughtes of mine accursed fact:
Sithence I may not fhewe héere my smallest gréeffe
Such as it is, and as my breaft endures,
Which I esteeme the greatest miserie
Of all mishappes that Fortune now can fend,
60 Not that I rest in hope with plainte and teares
Should purchase life: for to the Gods I clepe
For true recorde of this my faithfull speech,
Neuer this hart shall haue the thoughtfull dread
To dye the death that by your graces doome
65 By iust defarte,shalbe pronounced to me:
Nor neuer shall this tung once spend this spéech,
Pardon to craue,or feeke by fute to liue:

E.ijj.<r>

I meane

The Tragedye

I meane not this as though I were not toucht
With care of dreadfull death,or that I helde
Life in contempt: but that I knowe,the minde 70
Stoupes to no dread,although the flesh be fraile,
And for my guilte,I yéelde the fame fo great
As in my felfe I finde a feare to fue
For graunt of life.

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

Porrex. Yet this,O Father, heare:

And then I ende: Your Maieftie well knowes,
That when my Brother Ferrex and my felfe
By your owne heft were ioyned in gouernaunce
Of this your Graces Realme of *Brittaine* Land 80

I neuer fought nor trauailed for the fame,
Nor by my felfe,or by no freend I wrought,
But from your highnes will alone it sprung,
Of your moft gracious goodnes bent to me,
But how my Brothers hart euen than repined, 85

With fwollen difdaine againft mine egall rule
Seeing that Realme,which by difcent should growe
Wholy to him, allotted halfe to me?

Euen in your highneffe Courte he now remaines,
And with my Brother then in neereft place 90

Who can recorde, what proöfe therof was shewde
And how my Brothers enuious hart appéerde
Yet I that iudged it my parte to feeke
His fauour and good will, and loth to make
Your highneffe know the thing which should haue brought 95

Gréefe to your Grace,and your offence to him,
Hoping by earneft fute should fone haue wonne,
A louing hart within a Brothers breft
Wrought in that forte that for a pledge of loue
And faithfull hart,he gaue to me his hand. 100

This made me think, that he had banished quite
All rancour from his thought, and bare to me

<E.iii.v>

Such

of Gorboduc.

Such hartie loue, as I did owe to him:
But after once we left your Graces Court
105 And from your highnesse prefence liued aparte,
This egall rule still, still did grudge him fo,
That now those enuious sparkes which erst lay rakte
In liuing Cinders of diffembling breft,
Kindled so farre within his hartes difdaine
110 That longer could he not refraine from proefe
Of fecrete practife to depriue my life
By Poyfons force, and had bereft me fo,
If mine owne Seruant hired to this fact
And moued by troth with hate to worke the fame,
115 If time had not bewraied it vnto me:
When thus I fawe the knot of loue vnknit,
All honest League and faithfull promise broke,
The Lawe of kinde and troth thus rent in twaine,
His hart on mischeefe fet, and in his breft
120 Black treason hid then, then did I dispaire
That euer time could winne him freend to me,
Then saw I how he smiled with flaying Knife
Wrapped vnder cloake, then saw I deepe deceite
Lurke in his face and death prepared for me:
125 Euen nature moued me then to holde my life
More deere to me then his, and bad this hand,
Since by his life my death must needs ensue,
And by his death my life to be preferred:
To shed his blood, and seeke my safetie fo,
130 And wisdom willed me without protract
In speedy wife to put the same in vre.
Thus haue I tolde the cause that moued me
To work my Brothers death and so I yeelde
My life, my death to iudgement of your grace.
135 Oh cruell wight, should any cause preuaile

Gorboduc.

To make the stain thy handes with brothers blood
But what of thee we will resolve to doo,
Shall yet remaine vnknown: Thou in the meane,
Shalt from our royall prefence banished be

<E.iv.r>

Vntill

The Tragedye

Vntill our Princely pleasure furdher shall 140
 To thee be shewed, departe therfore our fight
 Accurfed childe. What cruell destiny?
 What froward fate hath forted vs this chaunce
 That euen in thofe,where we should comfort finde,
 Where our delight now in our aged daies 145
 Should rest and be,euen there our only gréeffe
 And deepeft forrowes to abridge our life,
 Moft pining cares and deadly thoughts d∞ graue.

Aroftus. Your Grace should now in thefe graue yeeres of yours
 Haue found ere this the price of mortall Ioyes, 150
 How fhorte they be,how fading héere in earth
 How full of change,how brittle our eftate,
 Of nothing fure,faue only of the Death,
 To whome both man and all the worlde d∞th owe
 Their end at laft,neither shall natures power 155
 In other forte againft your hart preuaile,
 Then as the naked hand whose ftroke affaies
 The armed breaft where force d∞th light in vaine.

Gorboduc. Many can yeelde right graue and fage aduice
 Of patient fprite to others wrapped in woe, 160
 And can in fpeech both rule and conquer kinde,
 Who if by proöfe,they might feele natures force,
 Would fhew themfelues men as they are indeede,
 Which now will needes be Gods:but what d∞th meane
 The forry cheere that heere d∞th come? 165

Marcella. Oh where is ruthe? // where is pittie now?
 Whether is gentle hart and mercie fled?
 Are they exiled out of our ftony breaftes
 Neuer to make returne? is all the worlde
 Drowned in blood,and funcke in crueltie? 170
 If not in women mercy may be found,
 If not (alas) within the Mothers breft
 To her owne childe,to her owne flefh and bloud
 If ruthe be banifhed thence,if pittie there
 May haue no place,if there no gentle hart 175
 D∞ liue and dwell,where fhould we feeke it then?

<E.iv.v>

Madam

of Gorboduc.

- Madam (alas) what meanes your wofull tale? *Gorboduc.*
O filly woman I,why to this howre, *Marcella.*
Haue kind and fortune thus deferred my breath?
180 That I should liue to féé this dolefull daye:
Will euer wight beléuee that fuch hard hart
Could reft within the cruell Mothers breaft,
With her owne hand to flaye her onely Sonne?
But out (alas) thefe eyes behelde the fame,
185 They faw the driery fight, and are become
Moft ruthefull recordes of the bloody fact.
Porrex,alas,is by his Mother flaine,
And with her hand a wofull thing to tell,
While flumbring on his carefull bed he reftes,
190 His hart ftalde in with knife is reft of life.
O Eubulus,oh draw this Swøord of ours, *Gorboduc,*
And pierce this hart with fpéede, O hatefull light,
O loathfome life,O fweete and welcome Death,
Deere Eubulus woorke this we thee beféeche.
195 Patient your Grace,perhaps he liueth yet, *Eubulus.*
With wound receiued,but not of certaine death.
O let vs than repaire vnto the place, *Gorboduc.*
And fee if that Porrex,or thus be flaine.
Alas he liueth not,it is too true, *Marcella.*
200 That with thefe eyes of him a peereles Prince,
Sonne to a King,and in the flower of youth,
Euen with a twinke a fencelles flock I faw.
O damned deede. *Aroftus.*
But heare this ruthefull end. *Marcella.*
The noble Prince pierft with the fodaine wounds
205 Out of his wretched flumber haftilie ftart,
Whofe ftrength now failing ftreight he ouerthrew,
When in the fall his eyes euen now vnclofed
Beheld the Quéene,and cryed to her for helpe,
We then,alas,the Ladies which that time
210 Did there attend, féeing that heinous deede,
And hearing him oft call the wretched name
Of mother,and to crie to her for aide,

F.<i.r>

Whofe

The Tragedye

Whose direfull hand gaue him the mortall wound
Pitieng alas(for nought els could we doo)
His ruffull ende,ranne to the wofull bed 215
Dispoyled ftreight his breft,and all we might
Wiped in vaine with napkins next at hande,
The fodaine ftreames of bloud that flushed fast
Out of the gaping wound : O what a looke,
O what a ruthfull stedfast eye me thought 220
He fixed vpon my face, which to my death
Will neuer parte from me, when with a braide
A déepe fet figh he gaue,and therewithall
Clapting his hands,to heauen he cast his fight,
And streight pale death preffing within his face 225
The flying ghoft his mortall corps forfooke.
Aroftus. Neuer did age bring foorth fo vile a facte.
O hard and cruell hap,that thus affigned
Vnto fo worthie a wight fo wretched ende,
But moft hard cruell hart that could consent 230
To lend the hatefull deftenies that hande,
By which, alas,fo heynous crime was wrought,
O Quéene of Adamant,Omarble breft,
If not the fauour of his comely face,
If not his princely cheare and countenance, 235
His valiaunt actiue armes,his manly breft,
If not his faire and féemely perfonage,
His noble limmes in fuch proportion cast,
As would haue wrapped a filly womans thought.
If this might not haue moued the bloodie hart, 240
And that moft cruell hand the wretched weapon
Euen to let fall,and kift him in the face,
With teares for ruth to reauue fuch one by death
Should nature yet consent to flay her fonne?
O mother , thou to murder thus thy childe, 245
Euen loue with iuftice muft with lightning flames
From heauen fend downe fome ftraunge reuenge on thée.
Ah noble Prince,how oft haue I beheld
Thee mounted on thy fierce and trampling fteede,

<F.i.v>

Shining

of Gorboduc.

250 **Shining in armour bright before the Tilte,
And with thy miftriffe fléeue tide on thy helme,
And charge thy ftaffe to please thy Ladies eye,
That bowed the head peece of thy frendly foe?
How oft in armes on horfe to bend the mace,**

255 **How oft in armes on fōot to breake the fworde,
Which neuer now thefe eyes may fee againe.**

**Madame, alas, in vaine thefe plaints are fhed,
Rather with me depart, and helpe to affwage
The thoughtfull griefes that in the aged king**

Aroftus.

260 **Muft needs by nature growe by death of this
His onely fonne, whome he did hold fo deare.**

**What wight is that which fawe that I did fee,
And could refraine to waile with plaint and teares,
Not I, alas, that hart is not in me,**

Marcella.

265 **But let vs go, for I am greeued anewe,
To call to minde the wretched fathers woe.**

**When greedie luft in royall feate to reigne
Hath reft all care of Gods and eke of men,
And cruell hart, wrath, treafon and difdaine
Within the ambitious breft are lodged then,**

Chorus.

5 **Behold how mifchiefe wide her felfe difplayes,
And with the brothers hand the brother flayes.**

**When bloud thus fhed dōoth ftaine this heauens face,
Crying to Ioue for vengeance of the deede,
The mightie God euen moueth from his place**

10 **With wrath to wreke, then fend he fōorth with fpéede
The dreadful furies, daughters of the night,
With ferpents girt, carrying the whip of ire,
With haire of ftinging fnakes, and fhining bright
With flames and bloud, and with a brand of fire:**

15 **Thefe for reuenge of wretched murder done,
Dōoth caufe the mother kill her onely fonne.**

**Bloud asketh bloud, and death muft death requite,
Ioue by his iuft and euerlafting dōome
Iuftly hath euer fo requited it :**

20 **Thefe times before record, and times to come**

F.ij.<r>

Shall

The Tragedye

**Shall find it true, and fo dooth preſent proöfe,
Preſent before our eies for our behöufe.**

**O happie wight that fuffers not the fnare
Of murderous mind to tangle him in blood:
And happie he that can in tim e beware
By others harmes, and turne it to his good.
But woe to him that fearing not to offend,
Döoth ferue his luſt, and will not fee the end.**

25

¶ The Order and ſignification of the dumbe
ſhewe before the fiſt Acte.

¶ Firſt the Drummes and Fluites began to ſounde , dvring
which there came fourth vppon the Stage a companie of
Harquebufhers and of armed men all in order of battaile.
Theſe after their peeces difcharged , and that the armed
men had three times marched about the Stage, departed, 5
and then the Drummes and Fluites did ceaſe . Heereby
was ſignified Tumultes , Rebellions , Armes , and ciuill
warres to followe, as fell in the Realme of great *Britayne*,
which by the ſpace of fiftie yeares and more continued
in ciuill warre betweene the Nobilitie after the death 10
of King *Gorboduc* , and of his Iſſues , for want of cer-
taine limitation in the ſucceſſion of the Crowne , till
the time of *Dunwallo Molmutius* , who reduced the Land
to Monarchie.

Actus quintus. Scena prima.

Clotyn. Mandud. Gwenard. Fergus. Eubulus.

Clotyn. D **Id euer age bring foorth ſuch tyrants harts,
The brother hath bereft the brothers life,
The mother ſhe hath dyde her cruell hands
In bloud of her owne ſonne, and now at laſt
The people loe forgetting truth and loue,
Contemning quite both lawe and loyall hart,
Euen they haue flaine their foueraigne Lord and Quéene.**

5

<F.ii.v>

Shall

of Gorboduc.

Shall this their traiterous crime vnpunished reft *Mandud.*
Euen yet they ceafe not carried out with rage,
10 In their rebellious routes, to threaten fill
A new blood fhedde vnto the Princes Kinne
To flaye them all, and to vpröote the race
Both of the King and Quéene, fo are they moued
With Porrex death, wherin they fallfely charge
15 The guilteleffe King without defart at all.
And traiteroufly haue murdered him therfore
And eke the Quéene.

Shall Subiects dare with force *Gwenard.*
To woork reuenge vpon their Princes fact?
Admit the woort that may: as fure in this
20 The déede was foule, the Quéene to flaye her fonne:
Shall yet the Subiect féeke to take the Swoord?
Arife againft his Lord, and flaye his King?
O wretched ftate where thofe rebellious hartes
Are not rent out euen from their liuing breaftes
25 And with the body throwen vnto the Fowles
As Carrion foode, for terrour of the reft.

There can no punifhment be thought too great *Fergus.*
For this fo gréeuous crime, let fpéede therfore
Be vfed therin for it behoueth fo.

30 Ye all my Lordes I fee confent in one, *Eubulus.*
And I as one confent with ye in all:
I holde it more then néede with the fharpft Lawe,
to punifhe the tumultuous bloody rage:
For nothing more may fhake the common ftate,
35 then fufferance of vproares without redrefse:
Wherby how fome Kingdomes of mighty power
After great Conquefts made, and flourifhing
In fame and wealth haue beene to ruine brought,
I pray to Ioue that we may rather waile
40 Such hap in them, then witnes in our felues
Eke fully with the Duke my minde agréés
that no caufe ferues, wherby the Subiect may
Call to account the döinges of his Prince,

F.ijj.<r>

Much

The Tragedye

Much leffe in bløod by fwøord to woorke reuenge
No more then may the hand cut of the head, 45
In Acte nor fpeech,no: not in fecret thought
The Subiect may rebell againft his Lord
Or Iudge of him that fits in *Cæfars* Seate.
With grudging minde dōo damne thofe Hemiflikes,
Though Kinges forget to gouerne as they ought, 50
Yet Subiects muft obey as they are bound:
But now my Lordes before ye farder wade
Or fpend your fpéech, what fharpe reuenge fhall fall
By iuftice plague on thefe rebellious wights,
Me thinkes ye rather fhould firft fearche the way 55
By which in time the rage of this vproare,
Mought be repressed,and thefe great tumults ceafed
Euen yet the life of *Brittaine* Land dōoth hang,
In Traitours Ballaunce of vnequall weight,
Think not my Lords the death of Gorboduc 60
Nor yet *Videnaes* blood will ceafe their rage:
Euen our owne liues,our wiues and Children,
Our Cuntry déereft of all in danger ftandes,
Now to be fpoyled,now,now made defolate,
And by our felues a conquest tōo enfue: 65
For giue once fweye vnto the peoples luftes,
To rufh fōorth on,and ftaye them not in time,
And as the ftream that rowleth downe the hill,
So wil they headlong run with raging thoughtes
From bloud to bloud,from mifchéefe vnto moe, 70
To ruine of the Realme,themfelues and all,
So giddie are the common peoples mindes,
So glad of change,more wauering then the Sea,
Ye fée(my Lordes)what ftrength thefe Rebels haue
What hugie number is affembled ftill, 75
For though the traiterous fact, for which they rofe,
Be wrought and dōone,yet lodge they ftill in féelde
So that how farre their furies yet will ftretch.
Great caufe we haue to dread,that we may féeke
By prefent Battaile to repreffe their power, 80

<F.iii.v>

Spéede

of Gorboduc.

Spée de muft we vfe to leuie force therfore,
For either they forthwith will mifchéeefe woorke,
Or their rebellious roares forthwith muft ceafe:
Thefe violent things may haue no lafting londe
85 Let vs therfore vfe this for preſent helpe.
Perfwade by gentle fpéech , and offer grace
With gifte of pardon faue vnto the cheefe.
And that vpon condicion that forthwith
They yeelde the Captaines of their enterpriſe,
90 To beare ſuch guerdon of their traiterous fact
As may be both due vengeance to themfelues,
And holefome terrour to pofteritie.
This ſhall I think: flatter the greateſt parte,
That now are holden with deſire of home,
95 Wearied in féelde with colde of Winters nightes,
And ſome(no doubt)ſtriken with dread of Lawe
When this is once proclaimed, it ſhall make
The Captaines to miſtruſt the multitude,
Whoſe ſafetie bids them to betraye their heads,
100 And ſo much more becauſe the rafcall routes,
In thinges of great and perilous attemptes,
Are neuer truſtie to the noble race.
And while we treat and ſtande on tearmes of grace
We ſhall both ſtay their furies rage the while,
105 And eke gaine time,whoſe only helpe ſuffifeth
Withouten warre to vanquiſhe Rebels power
In the meane while,make you in readines,
Such band of Horſemen as ye maye prepare:
Horſemen you know, are not the Comons ſtrength
110 But are the force and ſtore of noble men
Wherby the vnchoſen and vnarmed forte
Of ſkilliſh Rebelles,whome none other power,
But number makes to be of dreadfull force,
With foddeine brunt may quickly be oppreſt,
115 And if this gentle meane of proffered grace
With ſtubborne hartes cannot ſo farre auaile
As to affwage their deſperate courages:

<F.iv.r>

Then

The Tragedie

Then doo I wifh fuch flaughter to be made,
As present age and eke posteritie
May be adrad with horroure of reuenge, 120
That iustly then shall on these Rebelles fall:
This is my Lordes the fumme of mine aduife.

Clotin. Neither this case admittes debate at large,
And though it did: this spéeche that hath béene fayde,
Hath well abridged the tale I would haue tolde: 125
Fully with Eubulus doo I confent
In all that he hath faide: and if the fame
To you my Lordes, may féeme for best aduife,
I wifh that it should fraight be put in vre.

Mandud. My Lords than let vs presently departe 130
And follow this that liketh vs so well.

Fergus. If euer time to gaine a kingdome héere
Were offred man, now it is offred me:
The Realme is reft both of their King and Quéene,
The offspring of the Prince is flaine and dead, 135
No iffue now remaines, the Heire vnknowne,
The People are in armes and mutinies,
The Nobles they are bufied how to ceafe
These great rebellious tumultes and vproares.
And *Brittaine* Land now deferte left alone 140

Amid these broyles vncertaine where to reft,
Offers her felfe vnto that noble hart
that will or dare purfue to beare her Crowne:
Shall I that am the Duke of *Albanye*
Discended from that line of noble bloud, 145
Which hath so long flourifhed in woorthy fame
Of valiant hartes, such as in noble Breafts
Of right should reft aboute the safer forte,
Refufe to aduenture life to winne a Crowne?
Whom shall I finde enemies that will withstand 150

My fact héerin, if I attempt by Armes
To feeke the Fame now in these times of broyle,
These Dukes power can hardly well appeafe
The people that already are in Armes.

<F.iv.v>

But

of Gorboduc.

- 155 **But if perhaps my force be once in field,
Is not my strength in power aboue the best
Of all these Lords now left in Britaine land.
And though they should match me with power of men:
Yet doubtfull is the chaunce of batailles ioyned,**
- 160 **If victors of the field we may depart,
Ours is the sceptor then of great Britaine,
If flaine amid the plaine this bodie be,
Mine enemies yet fhall not denie me this,
But that I died giuing the noble charge**
- 165 **To hazard life for conquest of a Crowne.
Forthwith therefore will I in poft depart
To *Albanye*,and raife in armour there
All power I can : and here my secrete frends
By secrete practife fhall follicite still**
- 170 **To feeke to winne to me the peoples harts.**

Actus quintus. Scena fecunda.

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

- O Ioue,how are these peoples harts abufde? *Eubulus.*
What blind furie thus headlong carries them?
That though fo many bookes,fo many rolles
Of auncient time of record what greeuous plagues
- 5 **Light on these Rebels aye,and though fo oft
Their eares haue heard their aged fathers tell
What iuft reward these traitours still receiue.
Yea though themfelues haue feene deepe death and blood
By ftrangling cord and flaughter of the fword**
- 10 **To fuch affignde,yet can they not beware:
Yet can they not ftay their rebellious hands,
But fuffering too fowle treafon to diftaine
Their wretched minds,forget their loyall hart,
Reiect all truth,and rife againft their prince,**
- 15 **A ruthfull cafe, that thofe whom duties bound,
Whom grafted Lawe by nature,truth and faith
Bound to preferue their Country and their King,
Borne to defend their common welth and prince,**

G.<i.r>

Euen

The Tragedye

Euen they should giue consent thus to subuert
The Britaine land, and from the wombe should bring 20
(O native foile) those, that will néedes deftroy
And ruine thee and eke themfelues in fine:
For lo, when once the Duke had offered Grace
Of pardon fweet (the multitude misled
By traiterous fraud of their vngratious heads) 25
One fort that fawe the daungerous successe
Of ftubborne standing in rebellious warre,
And knew the difference of princes power,
From headles number of tumultuous routes,
Whom common countries care and priuate feare 30
Taught to repent the terrour of their rage,
Laid hands vpon the Captaines of their band,
And brought them bound vnto the mightie Dukes,
Another fort not trusting yet so well
The truth of pardon, or mistrusting more 35
Their owne offence then that they should conceiue
Such hope of pardon for so fowle misdéede:
Or for that they their Captaines could not yéeld,
Who fearing to be yéelded fled before,
Stole home by filence of the secrete night. 40
The third vnhappy and vnraged fort
Of desperate harts, who staid in princes blood,
From traiterous furour could not be withdrawne
By loue, by lawe, by grace ne yet by feare,
By proffered life, ne yet by threatened death, 45
With minds hopeles of life, dreadles of death,
Careles of country, and aweles of God:
Stoode bent to fight as Furies did them moue
With valiant death to clofe their traiterous life:
These all by power of horsemen were opprest, 50
And with reuenging sword flaine in the field,
Or with the strangling cord hangd on the trees,
Where yet the carren Carcafes d∞ proche
The fruits that rebels reape of their vproars,
And of the murder of their sacred prince, 55
But loe, where d∞ approach the noble Dukes,

<G.i.v>

By

of Gorboduc.

By whom these tumults haue béene thus appeafde.

I thinke the world will now at length beware

Clotyn.

And feare to put on armes againft their prince.

60 If not : thofe traiterous harts that d∞ rebell,

Mandud

Let them behold the wide and hugie fields

With bloud and bodie fpred with rebels flaine,

The luftie trees clothed with corpfes dead

That ftrangled with the cord d∞ hang therein.

65 A iuft reward fuch as all times before

Aroftus.

Haue euer lotted to thofe wretched folkes.

But what meanes he that commeth here fo faft?

Gwenard.

My Lords ,as dutie and my troth doth m∞ue,

Nuntius.

And of my Country worke and care in me,

70 That if the fpending of my breath auaille

To d∞ the feruice that my hart defires,

I would not fhun to imbrace a prefent death,

So haue I now in that wherein I thought

My trauaile might perfourme fome good effect

75 Ventred my life to bring thefe tidings heere.

Fergus the mightie Duke of Albany

Is nowe in armes,and lodgeth in the field

With twentie thoufand men,hither he bends

His fpéedie march,and minds to inuade the crowne,

80 Daily he gathereth ftrength,and fpreads abroad

That to this Realme no certaine heire remaines,

That Britaine land is left without a guide,

That he the fcepter feeke, for nothing els

But to preferue the people and the land

85 Which now remaine as fhippe without a fterne:

Loe this is that which I haue hereto faid.

Is this his faith? and fhall he fallly thus

Clotyn.

Abufe the vauntage of vnhappy times?

O wretched Land,if his outragious pride,

90 His cruell and vntempred wilfulnes,

His déepe diffembling fhewes of falfe pretence

Should once attaine the Crowne of Britaine land,

Let vs my Lords,with timely force refit

The new attempt of this our common foe,

G.ii.<r>

As

The Tragedye

As we would quench the flames of common fire. 95
Mandud. Though we remaine without a certaine prince
To weeld the realme,or guide the wandring rule,
Yet now the common mother of vs all,
Our natiue lande,our country that containes
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 repreffe
This growing foe of all our liberties.
Gwenard. Yea let vs fo my Lords with haftie spéede, 105
And ye(O Gods)fende vs the welcome death,
To fhed our bloud in field,and leaue vs not
In lothfome life to linger out our liues,
To fee the hugie heapes of thefe mishaps,
That now roll downe vpon the wretched lande 110
Where emptie place of princely gouernaunce,
No certaine ftay now left of doubtles heire,
Thus leaue this guideles realme an open pray
To endleffe ftormes and wafte of ciuill warre.
That ye,my Lords,d∞ fo agréé in one 115
To faue your country from the violent raigne
And wrongfully vfurped tyrannie
Of him that threatens conquest of you all,
To faue your realme,and in this realme your felues
From forraine thraldome of fo proude a prince, 120
Much d∞ I praife,and I befeech the Gods
With happie honour to requite it you.
But,O my Lords,fith now the heauens wrath
Hath reft this lande the iffue of their prince:
Sith of the bodie of our late foueraigne Lord 125
Remaines no mo,fince the y∞ng kings be flaine,
And of the title of the defcended Crowne
Vncertainly the diuers mindes d∞ thinke
Euen of the learned forte,and more vncertainlie
Will partiall fancie and affection deeme: 130
But moft vncertainly will climbing pride
And hope of reigne withdraw from fundrie parts

<G.ii.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

The doubtfull right and hopefull luft to reigne,
When once this noble seruice is atchiued
135 For *Brittaine* Land the Mother of ye all,
When once ye haue with armed force represt,
The proud attempts of this *Albanian* Prince,
That threatens thraldome to your Natiue Land,
When ye fhall vanquifhers returne from feelde
140 And finde the Princely ftate an open pray,
to gréedy luft and to vfurping power,
Then,then(my Lordes)if euer kindly care
Of ancient honour of your auncestours,
Of prefent wealth and nobleffe of your ftockes:
145 Yea of the liues and fafetie yet to come
Of your deere wiues,your Children and your felues
Might moue your noble hartes with gentle ruthe,
Then, then haue pittie on the torne eftate,
Then helpe to falue the well neere hopeles fore
150 Which ye fhall d∞ if you your felues withhold
The fleaing 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,
155 The Crowne by colour of pretended right:
Or by what other meanes fo euer it be,
Till firft by common counfell of you all
In Parliament the Regall Diadem,
Be fet in certaine place of gouernaunce,
160 In which your Parliament and in your choife,
Prefer the right(my Lordes)without respect
Of ftrength of freendes,or whatfoeuer caufe
That may fet forward any others parte,
For right will laft,and wrong can not endure,
165 Right meane I his or hers,vpon whose name
The people reft by meane of Natiue line,
Or by the vertue of fome former Lawe,
Alreadie made their title to aduaunce:
Such one(my Lords)let be your chofen King,
170 Such one fo borne within your natiue Land

G.iiij.<r>

Such

The Tragedye

Such one preferre, and in no wise admit,
The heauie yoake of forreine gouernaunce,
Let forreine titles yeelde to Publike wealth,
And with that hart wherwith ye now prepare
thus to withftand the proude inuading foe, 175
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 heere the end of Brutus royall Line, 180
And loe the entrie to the wofull wrack
And vtter ruine of this noble Realme.
the royall King, and eke his Sonnes are flaine,
No Ruler reftes within the Regall feate:
the Heire to whom the Scepter longes, vnknown: 185
that to the force of forreine Princes power,
Whome vauntage of your wretched ftate
By fodaine Armes to gaine fo riche a Realme,
And to the proude and gréedy minde at home
Whome blinded luft to reigne leades to afpire, 190
Loe *Brittaine* Realme is left an open praye,
A prefent fpoyle by Conqueft to enfue,
Who feeeth not now how many rifing mindes
D∞ feed 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 Crown will want no right
Nor fuch as fhall difplaye by long difcent
A lyniall race to proue him felfe a King, 200
In the meane while thefe cyuill armes fhall rage,
And thus a thoufand mifchéfes fhall vnfolde
And far and néere fspread thee (O *Brittaine* Land)
All right and Law fhall ceafe, and he that had,
Nothing to daye, to morrow fhall enioy 205
Great heapes of good, and he that flowed in wealth,
Loe he fhall be reft of life and all,
And happieft he that then poffeffeth leath.

<G.iii.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

The wiues shall suffer rape, the maidens defloured
210 And Children Fatherles shall weepe and waile:
With fier and Swoord thy natiue folke shall perishe,
One Kinfman shall bereaue an others life,
The Father shall vnwitting flay the Sonne,
The Sonne shall flea the Sire and know it not:
215 Women and maides the cruell Souldiers Swoord
Shall pearce to death, and fillie Children loe
That playing in the ftreetes and feeldes are found,
By violent hand shall clofe their latter day.
Whome shall the fierce and bloudie Souldier
220 Referue to life, whome shall he spare from death?
Euen thou (O wretched Mother) halfe aliue
Thou shalt beholde thy deere and only Childe
Slaine with the fwoord while he yet fuckes thy breft
Loe, giltles bloud shall thus eche where be shed:
225 Thus shall the wafted foyle yeelde foorth no fruite
But dearth and famine shall poffesse the Land.
The Townes shall be confumed and burnt with fier
The peopled Citties shall waxe defolate,
And thou (O Brittain Land) whilome in renowne,
230 Whilome in wealth and fame shalt thus be torne.
Dismembred thus, and thus be rent in twaine,
Thus wafted and defaced, spoyled and deftroyed:
These be the fruits your cyuill warres will bring.
Héerto it comes when Kinges will not consent,
235 To graue aduife, but follow wilfull will:
This is the end, when in yong Princes hartes
Flattery preuailes, and fage rede hath no place:
These are the plagues, when murder is the meane
To make new Heires vnto the Royall Crowne.
240 Thus wreak the Gods when that y^e mothers wrath
Nought but the bloud of her own childe may fwage
These mischeefes springes when rebells will arife,
To worke reuenge and iudge their Princes fact,
This, this enfues when noble men d^o faile
245 In loyall troth, and fubiectes will be Kinges.
And this d^oth grow, when loe vnto the Prince,

<G.iv.r>

Whome

The Tragedye

Whome death or fodeyne hap of life bereaues,
No certaine Heire remaines, fuch certeintie
As not all only is the rightfull Heire,
But to the Realme is fo made vnknowne to be 250
And troth therby vefted in fubiects hartes,
to owe faith 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 it not likely with confent to end:
While eche one for him felfe or for his frénd
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 yeelding hartes agree?
Or in the while, how shall the Realme be vfed?
No, no: then Parliament fhould haue beene holden,
And certaine Heires appointed to the Crowne 265
to ftaye their title of eftablifhed right:
And plant the people in obedience
While yet the Prince did liue, whose name and power
By lawfull Summons and authoritie
Might make a Parliament to be of force, 270
And might haue fet the Realme in quiet ftaye:
But now(O happie man) what fpéedy death
Depriues of life, ne is enforced to fee
Thefe hugie mifcheefes and thefe miferies,
Thefe cyuill warres, thefe murders and thefe wronges, 275
Of Iuftice, yet muft loue in fine reftore,
This noble Crowne vnto the lawfull Heire:
For right will alwaies liue, and rife at length,
But wrong can neuer take deepe roote to laft.

¶ The ende of the Tragedie of
King *Gorboduc*.

<G.iv.v>

