

Nashe's Lenten Stuff

Containing the description and first procreation and increase of the town of Great Yarmouth in Norfolk.

With a new play never played before, of the praise of the red herring.

Fit of all clerks of noblemen's kitchens to be read, and not unnecessary by all serving-men that have short board-wages to be remembered.

Famam peto per vindas.

London.

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1599.

To his worthy good patron, Lusty Humfrey, according as the townsmen do christen him; Little Numps, as the nobility and courtiers do name him; and Honest Humfrey, as all his friends and acquaintance esteem him; king of the tobacconists *hic & ubique*, and a singular Maecenas to the pipe and the tabor (as his patient livery attendant can witness), his bounden orator T.N. most prostrately offers up this tribute of ink and paper.

Most courteous unlearned lover of poetry, and yet a poet thyself, of no less price than H.S., that in honour of Maid Marian gives sweet marjoram for his empress, and puts the sow most saucily upon some great personage, whatever she be, bidding her (as it runs in the old song), *Go from my garden, go; For there no flowers for thee doth grow*, these be to notify to your diminutive excelsitude and compendiate greatness what my zeal is towards you, that in no straiter bonds would be pounded and enlisted than in an epistle dedicatory. To many more lusty-blood *bravamente* seigniors, with Cadiz beards as broad as scullers' mapples that they make clean their boats with, could I have turned it over and had nothing for my labour, some fair words except of *Good sir, will it please you to come near and drink a cup of wine? After my return from Ireland I doubt not but my fortunes will be of some growth to requite you. In the meantime my sword is at your command, and, before God, money so scatteringly runs here and there upon utensilia, furnitures, ancients and other necessary preparations (and, which is a double charge, look how much tobacco we carry with us to expel cold, the like quantity of stavesacre we must provide us of to kill lice in that rugged country of rebels) that I say unto you, in the word of a martialist, we cannot do as we would.* I am no incredulous Didymus, but have more faith to believe they have no coin than they have means to supply themselves with it, and so leave them. To any other carpet-monger or primrose knight of primero bring I a dedication, and the dice overnight have not befriended him, he sleeps five days and five nights to new-skin his beauty, and will not be known he is awaked till his men upon their own bonds (a dismal world for trencher-men, when their master's bond shall not be so good as theirs) have took up commodities or fresh droppings of the mint for him, and then, what then? He pays for the ten dozen of balls he left upon the score at the tennis-court; he sends for his barber to depure, decurtate and sponge him, whom having not paid a twelvemonth before, he now rains down eight quarter-angels into his hand, to make his liberality seem greater, and gives him a cast riding jerkin and an old Spanish hat into the bargain, and God's peace be with him. The chamber is not rid of the smell of his feet but the greasy shoemaker with his squirrel's skin and a whole stall of ware upon his arm enters, and wrencheth his legs for an hour together, and after shows his tally. By St. Loy, that draws deep, and by that time his tobacco-merchant is made even with, and he hath dined at a tavern, and slept his undermeal at a bawdy-house, his purse is on the hield, and only forty shillings he hath behind to try his fortune with at the cards in the presence, which, if it prosper, the court cannot contain him, but to London again he will, to revel it, and have two plays in one night, invite all the poets and musicians to his chamber the next morning, where, against their coming, a whole heap of money shall be bespread upon the board, and all his trunks opened to show his rich suits, but the devil a whit he bestows on them save bottle-ale and tobacco, and desires a general meeting.

The particular of it is that bounty is bankrupt, and Lady Sensuality licks all the fat from the seven liberal sciences, that poetry, if it were not a trick to please my lady, would be excluded out of Christian burial, and instead of wreaths of laurel to crown it with, have a bell with a coxcomb clapped on the crown of it by old Johannes de Indagines and his choir of dorbellists. Wherefore the premises considered (I pray you consider of that word *premise*, for somewhere I have borrowed it), neither to rich, noble, right worshipful, or worshipful of spiritual or temporal will I consecrate this work, but to thee and thy capering humour alone, that if thy stars had done thee right, they should have made thee one of the mightiest princes of Germany, not for thou canst drive a coach or kill an ox so well as they, but that thou art never well but when thou art amongst the retinue of the Muses, and there spendest more in the twinkling of an eye than in a whole year thou gettest by some grazierly gentility thou followest. A king thou art by name, and a king of good-fellowship by nature, whereby I ominate this encomion of the king of fishes was predestinate to thee from thy swaddling-clothes. Hug it, ingle it, kiss it and cull it now thou hast it, & renounce eating of green beef and garlic till Martlemas if it be not the next style to *The Strife Of Love In A Dream*, or *The Lamentable Burning Of Tiverton*. Give me good words, I beseech thee, though thou givest me nothing else, and thy words shall stand for thy deeds, which I will take as well in worth as if they were the deeds and evidences of all the land thou hast. Here I bring you a red herring; if you will find drink to it, there an end; no other detriments will I put you to. Let the can of strong ale, your constable, with the toast, his brown bill, and sugar and nutmegs, his watchmen, stand in a readiness to entertain me every time I come by your lodging. In Russia there are no presents but of meat or drink; I present you with meat, and you, in honourable courtesy, to requite me can do no less than present me with the best morning's draught of merry-go-down in your quarters, and so I kiss the shadow of your feet's shadow, amiable donzel, expecting your sacred poem of *The Hermit's Tale*, that will restore the golden age amongst us, and so upon my soul's knees, I take my leave.

Yours for a whole last of red herrings.

Th. Nashe.

To his Readers, he cares not what they be.

Nashe's Lenten Stuff. And why *Nashe's Lenten Stuff*? Some scabbed scald squire replies, because I had money lent me at Yarmouth, and I pay them again in praise of their town and the red herring. And if it were so, goodman Pigwiggen, were not that honest dealing? Pay thou all thy debts so if thou canst for thy life. But thou art a ninnyhammer; that is not it. Therefore, Nickneacave, I call it *Nashe's Lenten Stuff* as well for it was most of my study the last Lent, as that we use so to term any fish that takes salt, of which the red herring is one the aptest. O but, saith another John Dringle, there is a book of the red herring's tail printed four terms since, that made this stale. Let it be a tail of haberdine if it will, I am nothing entailed thereunto; I scorn it, I scorn it that my works should turn tail to any man. Head, body, tail and all of the red herring you shall have of me, if that will please you, or if that will not please you, stay till Easter term, and then, with the answer to the *Trim-Tram*, I will make you laugh your hearts out. Take me at my word, for I am the man that will do it. This is a light friskin of my wit, like the praise of injustice, the fever quartan, Busiris, or Phalaris, wherein I follow the trace of the famousest scholars of all ages, whom a wantonizing humour once in their lifetime hath possessed to play with straws, and turn mole-hills into mountains.

Every man can say B to a battledore, and write in praise of virtue and the seven liberal sciences, thresh corn out of the full sheaves and fetch water out of the Thames, but out of dry stubble to make an after-harvest, and a plentiful crop without sowing, and wring juice out of a flint, that's Pierce a God's name, and the right trick of a workman. Let me speak to you about my huge words which I use in this book, and then you are your own men to do what you list. Know it is my true vein to be *tragicus orator*, and of all styles I most affect & strive to imitate Aretine's, not caring for this demure soft mediocre genus that is like water and wine mixed together, but give me pure wine of itself, & that begets good blood and heats the brain thoroughly; I had as lief have no sun, as have it shine faintly; no fire, as a smothering fire of small coals; no clothes, rather than wear linsey-woolsey. Apply it for me, for I am called away to correct the faults of the press that escaped in my absence from the printing-house.

 The Praise of the Red Herring

The strange turning of *The Isle of Dogs* from a comedy to a tragedy two summers past, with the troublesome stir which happened about it, is a general rumour that hath filled all England, and such a heavy cross laid upon me as had well-near confounded me. I mean not so much in that it sequestered me from the wonted means of my maintenance, which is as great a maim to any man's happiness as can be feared from the hands of misery, or the deep pit of despair whereinto I was fallen, beyond my greatest friends' reach to recover me, but that, in my exile and irksome discontented abandonment, the silliest miller's thumb or contemptible stickleback of my enemies is as busy nibbling about my fame as if I were a dead man thrown amongst them to feed upon. So I am, I confess, in the world's outward apparence, though perhaps I may prove a cunninger diver than they are aware, which if it so happen, as I am partly assured, and that I plunge above water once again, let them look to it, for I will put them in brine, or a piteous pickle, every one. But let that pass, though they shall find I will not let it pass when times serves, I having a pamphlet hot a-brooding that shall be called *The Barber's Warming-pan*, and to the occasion afresh of my falling in alliance with this Lenten argument. That infortunate *imperfect embryo of my idle hours, *The Isle of Dogs* before-mentioned, breeding unto me such bitter throes in the teeming as it did, and the tempests that arose at his birth so astonishing outrageous and violent as if my brain had been conceived of another Hercules, I was so terrified with my own increase (like a woman long travailing to be delivered of a monster) that it was no sooner born but I was glad to run from it. To inconsiderate headlong rashness this may be censured in me, in being thus prodigal in advantaging my adversaries, but my case is no smothered secret, and with light cost of rough-cast rhetoric it may be tolerably plastered over, if under the pardon and privilege of incensed higher powers it were lawfully indulgenced me freely to advocate my own astrology. Sufficeth what they in their grave wisdoms shall proscribe, I in no sort will seek to acquit, nor presumptuously attempt to dispute against the equity of their judgements, but, humble and prostrate, appeal to their mercies. Avoid or give ground I did; *scriptum est*, I will not go from it. And *post varios casus*, variable knight arrant adventures, and outroads and inroads, at Great Yarmouth in Norfolk I arrived in the latter end of autumn. Where, having scarce looked about me, my presaging mind said to itself, *Hic favonius serenus est, hic auster imbricus*, This is the predestinate fit place for Pierce Penilesse to set up his staff in. Therein not much diameter to my divining hopes did the event sort itself, for six weeks first and last, under that predominant constellation of Aquarius, or Jove's nectar-filler, took I up my repose, and there met with such kind entertainment and benign hospitality when I was *Vna litera plusquam *medicus*, as Plautus saith, and not able to live to myself with my own juice, as some of the crumbs of it, like the crumbs in a bushy beard after a great banquet, will remain in my papers to be seen when I am dead and under ground, from the bare perusing of which infinite posterities of hungry poets shall receive good refreshing, even as Homer by Galataeon was pictured vomiting in a basin (in the temple that Ptolemy Philopater erected to him), and the rest of the succeeding poets after him greedily lapping up what he disgorged. That good old blind bibber of Helicon, I wot well, came a-begging to one of the chief cities of Greece, & promised them vast corpulent volumes of immortality if they would bestow upon him but a slender out-brother's annuity of mutton & broth, and a pallet to

Quassa
tamen nostra
est, non
mersa nec
obruta nauis.

*An
imperfect
embryon I
may well call
it, for I
having begun
but the
induction
and first act
of it, the
other four
acts without
my consent,
or the least
guess of my
drift or
scope, by the
players were
supplied,
which bred
both their
trouble and
mine too.

*Mendicus.

sleep on, and with derision they rejected him, whereupon he went to their enemies with the like proffer, who used him honourably, and whom he used so honourably that to this day, though it be three thousand year since, their name and glory flourish green in men's memory through his industry. I trust you make no question that those dull-pated penny-fathers, that in such dudgeon scorn rejected him, drunk deep of the sour cup of repentance for it when the high flight of his lines in common bruit was oyezed. Yea, in the word of one no more wealthy than he was (wealthy, said I? nay, I'll be sworn he was a grand-juryman in respect of me) those greybeard huddle-duddles and crusty cumtwangs were struck with such stinging remorse of their miserable Euclionism and snudgery, that he was not yet cold in his grave but they challenged him to be born amongst them, and they and six cities more entered a sharp war about it, every one of them laying claim to him as their own, and to this effect hath Buchanan an epigram:

*Vrbes certarunt septem de patria Homeri,
Nulla domus vivo patria nulla fuit.*

*Seven cities strove whence Homer first should come,
When living, he no country had, nor home.*

I allege this tale to show how much better my luck was than Homer's (though all of the King of Spain's Indies will not create me such a niggling hexameter-founder as he was) in the first proclaiming of my bankrupt indigence and beggary to bend my course to such a courteous compassionate clime as Yarmouth, and to warn others that advance their heads above all others, and have not respected, but rather flatly opposed themselves against the friar mendicants of our profession, what their ameracements and unretrievable penance will be, except they tear ope their oyster-mouthed pouches quickly, and make double amends for their parsimony. I am no Tiresias or Calchas to prophesy, but yet I cannot tell, there may be more resounding bell-metal in my pen than I am aware, and if there be, the first peal of it is Yarmouth's. For a pattern or tiny sample what my elaborate performance would be in this case, had I a full-sailed gale of prosperity to encourage me (whereas at the dishumoured composing hereof I may justly complain, with Ovid,

Anchora iam nostram non tenet ulla ratem,

My state is so tossed and weather-beaten that it hath now no anchor-hold left to cleave unto), I care not if, in a dim far-off landscape, I take the pains to describe this supereminent principal metropolis of the red fish. A town it is that in rich situation exceedeth many cities, and without the which, *caput gentis*, the swelling battlements of Gurguntus, a head city of Norfolk and Suffolk, would scarce retain the name of a city, but become as ruinous and desolate as Thetford or Ely; out of an hill or heap of sand reared and enforced from the sea most miraculously, and, by the singular policy and uncessant inestimable expense of the inhabitants so firmly piled and rampired against the fumish waves' battery, or suing the least action of recovery, that it is more conjectural of the twain the land, with a writ of *eiectioe firma*, will get the upper hand of the ocean than the ocean one crow's-skip prevail against the continent. Forth of the sands thus strugglingly as it exalteth and lifts up his glittering head, so of the neighbouring sands no

less semblably (whether in recordation of their worn-out affinity or no, I know not), it is so inamorately protected and patronized that they stand as a trench or guard about it in the night, to keep off their enemies. Now in that drowsy empire of the pale-faced queen of shades, malgre letting drive upon their barricadoes, or impetuously contending to break through their chain or bar, but they entomb and ballast(?) with sudden destruction. In this transcursive reportory without some observant glance I may not dully overpass the gallant beauty of their haven, which, having but as it were a welt of land, or, as M. Camden calls it, *lingulam terrae*, a little tongue of the earth betwixt it and the wide main, sticks not to manage arms and hold his own undefeasibly against that universal unbounded empery of surges, and so hath done for this hundredth year. Two mile in length it stretcheth his winding current, and then meets with a spacious river or backwater that feeds it. A narrow channel or isthmus in rash view you would opinionate it, when this I can devoutly aver, I beholding it with both my eyes this last fishing, six hundred reasonable barks and vessels of good burden (with a vantage) it hath given shelter to at once in her harbour, and most of them riding abreast before the key betwixt the bridge and the south gate. Many bows' length beyond the mark my pen roves not, I am certain; if I do, they stand at my elbow that can correct me. The delectablest lusty sight and movingest object methought it was that our isle sets forth, and nothing behind in number with the invincible Spanish Armada, though they were not such Gargantuan boisterous gully-guts as they, though ships and galleasses they would have been reckoned in the navy of K. Edgar, who is chronicled & registered with three thousand ships of war to have scoured the narrow seas, and sailed round about England every summer. That which especiallest nourished the most prime pleasure in me was after a storm when they were driven in swarms, and lay close-pestered together as thick as they could pack; the next day following, if it were fair, they would cloud the whole sky with canvas by spreading their drabbed sails in the full clue abroad a-drying, and make a braver show with them than so many banners and streamers displayed against the sun on a mountain top. But how Yarmouth, of itself so innumerable populous and replenished, and in so barren a plot seated, should not only supply her inhabitants with plentiful purveyance of sustenance, but provant and victual moreover this monstrous army of strangers, was a matter that egregiously bepuzzled and entranced my apprehension. Hollanders, Zealanders, Scots, French, Western men, Northern men, besides all the hundreds and wapentakes nine miles compass, fetched the best of their viands and mangery from her market. For ten weeks together this rabble rout of outlandishers are billeted with her, yet in all that while the rate of no kind of food is raised, nor the plenty of their markets one pint of butter rebated, and at the ten weeks' end, when the camp is broken up, no impression of any dearth left, but rather more store than before. Some of the town-dwellers have so large an opinion of their settled provision, that if all her Majesty's fleet at once should put into their bay, within twelve days' warning with so much double beer, beef, fish and biscuit they would bulk them as they could wallow away with.

Here I could break out into a boundless race of oratory in shrill trumpeting and concelebrating the royal magnificence of her government, that for state and strict civil ordering scant admitteth any rivals, but I fear it would be a theme displeasent to the grave modesty of the discreet present magistrates, and therefore consultively I overslip it; howsoever I purpose not in the like nice respect to leap over the laudable pedigree of

Yarmouth, but will fetch her from her swaddling-clouts or infancy, & reveal to you when and by whom she was first raught out of the ocean's arms, and start up and aspired to such starry sublimity, as also acquaint you with the notable immunities, franchises, privileges she is endowed with beyond all her confiners, by the descentive line of kings from the Conquest.

There be of you, it may be, that will account me a palterer, for hanging out the sign of the red herring in my title-page, and no such feast towards for aught you can see. Soft and fair, my masters, you must walk and talk before dinner an hour or two, the better to whet your appetites to taste of such a dainty dish as the red herring, and that you may not think the time tedious, I care not if I bear you company, and lead you a sound walk round about Yarmouth, and show you the length and breadth of it.

The masters and bachelors' commencement dinners at Cambridge and Oxford are betwixt three and four in the afternoon, & the rest of the antecedence of the day worn out in disputations; imagine this the act or commencement of the red herring, that proceedeth bachelor, master & doctor all at once, & therefore his disputations must be longer. But to the point; may it please the whole generation of my auditors to be advertised how that noble earth where the town of Great Yarmouth is now mounted, & where so much fish is sold, in the days of yore hath been the place where you might have caught fish, & as plain a sea, within this 600 year, as any boat could tumble in, & so was the whole level of the marshes betwixt it and Norwich. An. Do. 1000 or thereabouts (as I have scraped out of worm-eaten parchment), and in the reign of Canutus, he that died drunk at Lambeth or Lomehithe somewhat before or somewhat after, not a prenticeship of years varying, *caput extulit undis*, the sands set up shop for themselves, and from that moment to this sixteen century (or let me not be taken with a lie, five hundred ninety eight, that wants but a pair of years to make me a true man) they would no more live under the yoke of the sea, or have their heads washed with his bubbly spume or barber's balderdash, but clearly quitted, disterminated and relegated themselves from his inflated capriciousness of playing the dictator over them.

The northern wind was the clanging trumpeter who, with the terrible blast of his throat, in one yellow heap or plump, clustered or congested them together, even as the western gales in Holland right over against them have wrought unruly havoc, and threshed and swept the sands so before them that they have choked or clammed up the middle walk or door of the Rhine, and made it as stable a clod-mould or turf-ground as any hedger can drive stake in. Caister, two mile distant from this new Yarmouth we entreat of, is inscribed to be that old Yarmouth whereof there are specialties to be seen in the oldest writers, and yet some visible apparent tokens remain of a haven that ran up to it, and there had his entrance into the sea (by aged fishermen commonly termed Grubs Haven), though now it be gravelled up, and the stream or tide-gate turned another way. But this is most warrantable, the alpha of all the Yarmouths it was, & not the omega correspondently, & from her withered root they branch the high ascent of their genealogy. *Omnium rerum vicissitudo est*, One's falling is another's rising, and so fell it out with that ruined dorp or hamlet, which after it had relapsed into the Lord's hands for want of reparations, and there were not men enough in it to defend the shore from

invasion, one Cerdicus, a plashing Saxon that had revelled here and there with his battle-axe, on the bordering banks of the decrepit overworn village now surnamed Gorleston, threw forth his anchor, and with the assistance of his spear, instead of a pikestaff, leaped aground like a sturdy brute, and his yeomen bold cast their heels in their neck and frisked it after him, and thence sprouteth that obscene appellation of Sarding Sands, with the draff of the carterly hoblobs thereabouts concoct or digest for a scripture verity, when the right christendom of it is Cerdic sands, or Cerdic shore, of Cerdicus so denominated, who was the first May-lord or captain of the morris-dance that on those embenched shelves stamped his footing where cods & dog-fish swum (not a warp of weeks forerunning), & till he had given the onset, they balked them as quicksands. By and by after his jumping upon them, the Saxons, for that Garianonum or Yarmouth that had given up the ghost, in those slimy plashy fields of Gorleston trolled(?) up a second Yarmouth abutting on the west side of the shore of this Great Yarmouth that is, but feeling the air to be unwholesome and disagreeing with them, to the overthwart brink or verge of the flood, that writ all one style of Cerdic sands, they dislodged with bag and baggage, and there laid the foundation of a third Yarmouth, *Quam nulla potest abolere vetustas*, that I hope will hold up her head till doomsday. In this Yarmouth, as Master Camden saith, there were seventy inhabitants or householders that paid scot and lot in the time of Edward the Confessor, but a chronographical Latin table, which they have hanging up in the guild-hall of all their transmutations from their cradle-hood, infringeth this a little, and flatters her she is a great deal younger, in a fair text-hand texting unto us how in the sceptredom of Edward the Confessor the sands first began to grow into sight at a low water, and more shoaler at the mouth of the river Hirus or Ierus, whereupon it was dubbed Iernmouth or Yarmouth, and then there were two channels, one on the north, another on the south, wherethrough the fishermen did wander and waver up to Norwich and divers parts of Suffolk and Norfolk, all the fenny Lerna betwixt, that with reed is so imbristled, being (as I have forespoke or spoken tofore), Madonna Amphitrite, fluctuous demeanes or fee simple.

From the city of Norwich on the east part it is sixteen mile disjunct and dislocated, and though betwixt the sea and the salt flood it be interposed, yet in no place about it can you dig six foot deep but you shall have a gushing spring of fresh or sweet water for all uses, as apt and accommodate as Saint Winifred's Well, or Tower Hill water at London, so much praised and sought after. My tables are not yet one quarter emptied of my notes out of their table, which because it is, as it were, a sea-ruttier diligently kept amongst them from age to age of all their ebbs and flows and winds that blew with or against them, I tie myself to more precisely, and thus it leadeth on.

In the time of King Harold and William the Conqueror, this sand of Yarmouth grew to a settled lump, and was as dry as the sands of Arabia, so that thronging theatres of people (as well aliens as Englishmen) hived thither about the selling of fish and herring from Saint Michael to Saint Martin, and there built sutlers' booths and tabernacles to canopy their heads in from the rheum of the heavens, or the clouds' dissolving cataracts. King William Rufus having got the golden wreath about his head, one Herbertus, bishop of the see of Norwich, hearing of the gangs of good-fellows that hurtled and bustled thither, as

thick as it had been to the shrine of Saint Thomas a Becket or Our Lady of Walsingham, builded a certain chapel there for the service of God, and salvation of souls.

In the reign of King Henry the First, King Steven, King Henry the Second, and Richard de Coeur de Lion the apostasy of the sands from the yawping world was so great that they joined themselves to the mainland of Eastflege, and whole tribes of males and females trotted, barged it, thither to build and inhabit, which the said kings, whiles they wielded their swords temporal, animadverted of, assigned a ruler or governor over them that was called the king's provost, and that manner of provostship or government remained in full force and virtue all their four throneships, alias a hundred year, even till the inauguration of King John, in whose days the forewritten-of bishop of Norwich, seeing the numbrous increase of souls of both kinds that there had framed their nests, and meant not to forsake them till the soul-bell tolled them thence, pulled down his chapel, and what by himself and the devout oblations and donatives of the fishermen upon every return with their nets full, re-edified and raised it to a church of that magnitude as, under minsters and cathedrals very queasy it admits any hail fellow well met, and the church of St. Nicholas he hallowed it, whence Yarmouth road is nicknamed the road of St. Nicholas. King John, to comply and keep consort with his ancestors in furthering of this new waterwork, in the ninth year of the engirthing his anointed brows with the refulgent Ophir circle, and anno 1209, set a fresh gloss upon it of the town or free borough of Yarmouth, and furnished it with many substantial privileges and liberties, to have and to hold the same of him and his race for fifty-five pound yearly. In anno 1240, it perched up to be governed by bailies, and in a narrower limit than the forty years' undermeal of the seven sleepers, it had so much tow to her distaff, and was so well-lined and bombasted, that in a sea battle the ships and men conflicted the Cinque Ports, and therein so laid about them that they burnt, took, and spoiled most of them, whereof such of them as were sure flights (saving a reverence of their manhoods) ran crying and complaining to King Henry the Second, who, with the advice of his council, set a fine of a thousand pound on the Yarmouth men's heads for that offence, which fine in the tenth of his reign he dispensed with and pardoned.

Edward the First and Edward the Second likewise let them lack for no privileges, changing it from a borough to a port town, and there setting up a custom-house with the appurtenances for the loading and unloading of ships. Henry the Third in the fortieth of his empery cheered up their bloods with two charters more, and in anno 1262, and forty-five of his court-keeping, he permitted them to wall in their town, and moat it about with a broad ditch, and to have a prison or jail in it. In the swinge of his trident he constituted two Lord Admirals over the whole navy of England, which he disposed in two parts, the one to bear sway from the Thames' mouth northward, called the northern navy, the other to shape his course from the Thames' mouth to the westward, termed the western navy, and over this northern navy, for admiral, commissioned one John Peerbrown, burgess of the town of Yarmouth, and over the western navy one Sir Robert Laburnus, knight.

But Peerbrown did not only hold his office all the time of that king, doing plausible service, but was again readmiraled by Edward the Third, and so died, in the fourteenth of whose reign he met with the French king's navy, being four hundred sail, near to the

haven of Sluys, and there so sliced and slashed them, & tore their planks to mammocks, and their lean guts to kites' meat, that their best mercy was fire & water, which hath no mercy, and not a victualler or a drumbler of them hanging in the wind aloof but was rib-roasted, or had some of his ribs crushed with their stone-darting engines, no ordinance then being invented. This Edward the Third, of his propensive mind towards them, united to Yarmouth Kirkley road, from it seven mile vacant, and, sowing in the furrows that his predecessors had entered, hained the price of their privileges, & not brought them down one barley-kernel.

Richard the Second, upon a discord twixt Lowestoft and Yarmouth, after divers law-days and arbitrary mandates to the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk directed about it, in proper person 1385 came to Yarmouth, and, in his parliament the year ensuing, confirmed unto it the liberties of Kirkley road (the only motive of their contention). Henry the Fifth, or the fifth of the Henries that ruled over us, abridged them not a mite of their purchased prerogatives, but permitted them to build a bridge over their haven, and aided and furthered them in it. Henry the Sixth, Edward the Fourth, Henry the Seventh and King Henry the Eighth, with his daughters Queen Mary and our *chara deum soboles*, Queen Elizabeth, have not withered up their hands in signing and subscribing to their requests, but our virgin rectoress most of all hath showered down her bounty upon them, granting them greater grants than ever they had, besides by-matters of the clerk of the marketship, and many other benevolences towards the reparation of their port. This and every town hath his back-winters or frosts that nip it in the blade (as not the clearest sunshine but hath his shade, and there is a time of sickness as well as of health). The back-winter, the frost-biting, the eclipse, or shade and sickness of Yarmouth was a great sickness or plague in it 1348, of which in one year seven thousand and fifty people toppled up their heels there. The new building at the west end of the church was begun there 1330, which, like the imperfect works of King's College in Cambridge, or Christ Church in Oxford, have too costly large foundations to be ever finished.

It is thought, if the town had not been so scourged and eaten up by that mortality, out of their own purses they would have proceeded with it, but now they have gone a nearer way to the wood, for with wooden galleries in the church that they have, and stairy degrees of seats in them, they make as much room to sit and hear as a new west end would have done.

The length and breadth of Yarmouth I promised to show you; have with you, have with you, but first look wistly upon the walls, which, if you mark, make a stretched-out quadrangle with the haven. They are in compass from the south chains to the north chains, two thousand one hundred and fourscore yards. They have towers upon them sixteen; mounts underfonging & enflanking them two of old, now three, which have their thundering tools to compel Diego Spaniard to duck, and strike the wind-colic in his paunch, if he prance too near them, and will not vail to the Queen of England. The compass about the wall of this new mount is five hundred foot, and in the measure of yards, eightscore and seven. The breadth of the foundation, nine foot; the depth within ground, eleven. The height to the setting thereof, fifteen foot, and in breadth, at the setting of it, five foot three inches, and the procerous stature of it (so embailing and

girdling in this mount) twenty foot and six inches. Gates to let in her friends and shut out her enemies Yarmouth hath ten; lanes(?), sevenscore; as for her streets, they are as long as threescore streets in London, and yet they divide them but into three. Void ground in the town from the walls to the houses, and from the houses to the haven, is not within the verge of my geometry. The liberties of it on the fresh water one way, as namely from Yarmouth to St. Olaves in Beccles water, are ten mile, and from Yarmouth to Hardley Cross another way, ten mile, and, conclusively, from Yarmouth to Waybridge in the narrow north water, ten mile, in all which fords or meanders none can attach, arrest, distress but their officers, and if any drown themselves in them, their crowners sit upon them.

I had a crotchet in my head here to have given the reins to my pen, and run astray throughout all the coast towns of England, digging up their dilapidations and raking out of the dust-heap or charnel-house of tenebrous eld the rottenest relic of their monuments, and bright scoured the canker-eaten brass of their first bricklayers and founders, & commented and paralogized on their condition in the present, & in the preter tense, not for any love or hatred I bear them, but that I would not be snibbed, or have it cast in my dish that therefore I praise Yarmouth so rantantly because I never elsewhere baited my horse, or took my bow and arrows and went to bed. Which leasing (had I been let alone) I would have put to bed with a recumbentibus by uttering the best that, with a safe conscience, might be uttered of the best or worst of them all, and notwithstanding all at best that tongue could speak or heart could think of them, they should bate me an ace of Yarmouth. Much brain-tossing and breaking of my skull it cost me, but farewell it, and farewell the bailies of the Cinque Ports, whose primordiate genethliaca was also dropping out of my ink-horn with the silver oar of their baronry by William the Conqueror conveyed over to them at that nick when he firmed and rubricked the Kentishmen's gavelkind of the son to inherit at fifteen, and the felony of the father not to draw a foot of land from the son, & amongst the sons the portion to be equally distributed, and if there were no sons, much good do it the daughters, for they were to share it after the same tenure, and might alienate it how they would, either by legacy or bargain, without the consent of the lord.

To shun spite I smothered these dribblements, & refrained to descant how William the Conqueror, having heard the proverb of Kent and Christendom, thought he had won a country as good as all Christendom when he was enfeoffed of Kent, for which, to make it sure unto him after he was entailed thereunto, naught they asked they needed to ask twice, it being enacted ere the words came out of their mouth. Of that profligated labour yet my breast pants and labours, a whole month's mind of revolving meditation I ravelling out therein (as ravelling out signifies Penelope's *telam retexere*, the unweaving of a web before woven and contexted). It pities me, it pities me, that in cutting off so fair a diamond as Yarmouth, I have not a casket of dusky Cornish diamonds by me, and a box of muddy foils, the better to set it forth. *Vt nemo miser nisi comparatus, sic nihil pro mirifico nisi cum alijs conferatur. Cedite soli, stellae scintillantes; soli Garrianano cedite, reliqua oppida veligera, sedium naualium speciocissimo. Sed redeo ad vernaculum.*

All commonwealths assume their prenominations of their common-divided weal, as where one man hath not too much riches, and another man too much poverty; such was Plato's community, and Lycurgus and the old Romans' laws of measuring out their fields, their meads, their pastures & houses, and meting out to everyone his child's portion. To this *commune bonum* (or every horse his loaf) Yarmouth in propinquity is as the buckle to the thong, and the next finger to the thumb, not that it is sib or cater-cousins to any mongrel *democratia*, in which one is all, & all is one, but that in her, as they are not all one, so one or two there pockets not up all the pieces, there being two hundred in it worth three hundred pound apiece, with poundage and shillings to the lurches, set aside the bailiffs, four and twenty, and eight and forty. Put out mine eye, who can, with such another brag of any sea-town within two hundred mile of it. But this common good within itself is nothing to the common good it communicates to the whole state. Shall I particularize unto you *quibus vijs & modis*, how and wherein? There is my hand to; I will do it, and this is my exordium. A town of defence it is to the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk against the enemies (so accounted at the first granting of their liberties), and by the natural strength of the situation so apparent, being both environed with many sands, and now of late by great charge much more fortified than in ancient times. All the realm it profiteth many ways, as by the free fair of herring chiefly, maintained by the fishermen of Yarmouth themselves, by the great plenty of salted fish there, not so little two years past as four hundred thousand, wherein were employed about fourscore sail of barks of their own.

By the furnishing forth of forty boats for mackerel at the spring of the year when all things are dearest, which is a great relief to all the country thereabouts, and soon after Bartholomew-tide a hundred and twenty sail of their own for herrings, and forty sail of other ships and barks trading Newcastle, the Low Countries, and other voyages. Norwich, at her Majesty's coming in progress thither, presented her with a show of knitters on a high stage placed for the nonce; Yarmouth, if the like occasion were, could clap up as good a show of net-braiders, or those that have no clothes to wrap their hides in or bread to put in their mouths but what they earn and get by braiding of nets (not so little as two thousand pound they yearly dispersing amongst the poor women and children of the country for the spinning of twine to make them with, besides the labour of the inhabitants in working them), and, for a commodious green place near the sea-shore to mend and dry them, not Salisbury Plain or Newmarket Heath (though they have no vicinity or neighbourhood with the sea, or scarce with any ditch or pond of fresh water) may overpeer or out-crow her, there being above five thousand pounds' worth of them at a time upon her denes a-sunning. A convenient key within her haven she hath for the delivery of nets and herrings, where you may lie afloat at a low water (I beseech you, do not so in the Thames); many serviceable mariners and seafaring men she traineth up (but of that in the herring).

The marishes and lower grounds lying upon the three rivers that vagary up to her (comprehending many thousand acres) by the vigilant preservation of their haven are increased in value more than half, which else would be a *Maetis palus*, a mere or lake of eels, frogs and wild ducks. The city of Norwich (as in the prelude hereof I had a twitch at) fares ne'er the worse for her, nor would fare so well if it were not for the fish of

all sorts that she cloyeth her with, and the fellowship of their haven, into which their three rivers infuse themselves, and through which their goods and merchandise from beyond seas are keeled up with small cost to their very thresholds, and to many good towns on this side and beyond. I would be loath to build a labyrinth in the gatehouse of my book for you to lose yourselves in, and therefore I shred off many things; we will but cast over the bill of her charge, and talk a word or two of her buildings, and break up and go to breakfast with the red herring. The haven hath cost in these last 28 years six and twenty thousand two hundred and six and fifty pound, four shillings and five pence. Fortification and polder since anno 1587, two thousand marks; the sea-service in anno 1588, eight hundred pounds; the Portugal voyage, a thousand pound; the voyage to Cadiz as much.

It hath lost by the Dunkirkers a thousand pound, by the Frenchmen three thousand, by wafting eight hundred, by the Spaniards and other losses not rated, at the least three thousand more. The continual charge of the town in maintenance of their haven, five hundred pounds a year, *omnibus annis* forever; the fee-farm of the town, fifty-five pound, and five pound a year above for Kirkley road. The continual charge of the bridge over the haven, their walls, and a number of other odd reckonings we deal not with, towards all which they have not in certain revenues above fifty or threescore pounds a year, and that is in houses. The yearly charge towards the provision of fish for her Majesty, 1000 pounds; as for arable matters of tillage and husbandry, and grazing of cattle, their barren sands will not bear them, and they get not a beggar's noble by one or other of them, but their whole harvest is by sea.

It were to be wished that other coasters were so industrious as the Yarmouth in winning the treasure of fish out of those profundities, and then we should have twenty eggs a penny, and it would be as plentiful a world as when abbeys stood, and now, if there be any plentiful world, it is in Yarmouth. Her sumptuous porches and garnished buildings are such as no port town in our British circumference (nay, take some port cities overplus into the bargainer) may suitably stake with, or adequate.

By the proportion of the east-surprised Gades or Cadiz, divers have tried their cunning to configurate a twin-like image of it, both in the correlative analogy of the span-broad rowse(?) running betwixt, as also of the skirt or lappet of earth whereon it stands, herein only limiting the difference, that the houses here are not such flat custard-crowns at the top as they are. But I, for my part, cast it aside as too obscure a canton to demonstrate and take the altitude by of so Elysian a habitation as Yarmouth. Of a bouncing side-waisted parish in Lancashire, we have a flying voice dispersed where they go nine mile to church every Sunday, but parish for parish throughout Lancashire, Cheshire or Wingandecoy, both for numbers in gross of honest householders, youthful courageous valiant spirits, and substantial grave burghers, Yarmouth shall drop vie with them to the last Edward groat they are worth. I am posting to my proposed scope, or else I could run ten quire of paper out of breath in further traversing her rights and dignities.

But of that fraught I must not take in too liberal, in case I want stowage for my red herring, which I rely upon as my wealthiest loading. Farewell, flourishing Yarmouth,

and be every day more flourishing than other until the latter day; whiles I have my sense or existence I will persist in loving thee, and so with this abrupt postscript I leave thee. I have not travelled far, though conferred with farthest travellers, from our own realm; I have turned over venerable Bede, and plenteous bead-rolls of friarly annals following on the back of him. Polydore Vergil, Buchanan, Camden's *Britannia*, and most records of friends or enemies I have searched as concerning the later model of it; none of the inland parts thereof but I have traded them as frequently as the middle walk in Paul's, or my way to bed every night, yet for aught I have read, heard or seen, Yarmouth, regal Yarmouth, of all maritimal towns that are not more but fisher-towns, solely reigneth sans peer.

Not anywhere is the word severer practised, the preacher reverentlier observed and honoured, justice sounder ministered, and a warlike people peaceabler demeanoured betwixt this and the Grand Cathay, and the strand of Prester John.

Adieu, adieu, ten thousandfold delicate paramour of Neptune; the next year my standish may haps to address another voyage unto thee, if this have any acceptance. Now it is high heaking-time, and be the winds never so easterly adverse, and the tide fled from us, we must violently tow and hale in our redoubtable Sophy of the floating kingdom of Pisces, whom so much as by name I should not have acknowledged had it not been that I mused how Yarmouth should be invested in such plenty and opulence, considering that in M. Hakluyt's English discoveries I have not come in ken of one mizen-mast of a man-of-war bound for the Indies or Mediterranean stern-bearer sent from her zenith or meridian, mercurial-breasted M. Harborne always excepted, a rich spark of eternity first lighted and enkindled at Yarmouth, or there first bred and brought forth to see the light, who since, in the hottest degrees of Leo hath echoing noised the name of our island and of Yarmouth so Tritonly that not an infant of the curtailed skin-clipping pagans but talk of London as frequently as of their Prophet's tomb at Mecca, & as much worships our maiden peace as it were but one sun that shined over them all. Our first ambassador was he to the Behemoth of Constantinople, and as Moses was sent from the omnipotent God of heaven to persuade with Sultan Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, so from the prepotent goddess of the earth, Eliza, was he sent to set free the English captives, and open unto us the passage into the Red Sea and Euphrates. How impenetrable he was in mollifying the *adamantest tyranny of mankind, and hourly crucifier of Jesus Christ crucified, & wrooter up of Palestine, those that be scrutinous to pry into, let them revolve the digests of our English discoveries cited up in the precedence, and be documentized most locupletely. Of him and none but him, who in valuation is worth 18 huge argosies full of our present-dated mis-shapen childish travellers, have I took scent or come in the wind of, that ever Yarmouth unshelled or engendered to weather it on till they lost the North star, or sailed just antipodes against us, nor, walking in her streets so many weeks together, could I meet with any of these swaggering captains (captains that wore a whole ancient in a scarf, which made them go heave-shouldered, it was so boisterous), or hufty-tufty youthful ruffling comrades, wearing every one three yards of feather in his cap for his mistress' favour, such as we stumble on at each second step at Plymouth, Southampton and Portsmouth, but an universal merchantly formality in habit, speech, gestures, though little merchandise they beat their heads about, Queen Norwich for that

*The
adamant
mollified
with nothing
but blood.

going between them and home; at length (O, that length of the full point spoils me; all gentle readers, I beseech you pardon me), I fell a-communing hereupon with a gentleman, a familiar of mine, & he eftsoons defined unto me that the red herring was this old ticklecob, or magister factotum, that brought in the red ruddocks and the gromwell seed as thick as oatmeal, and made Yarmouth for argent to put down the city of Argentine. Do but convert, said he, the slenderest twinkling reflex of your eyesight to this flinty ring that engirts it, these towered walls, portcullised gates and gorgeous architectures that condecorate and adorn it, and then perponder of the red herring's priority and prevalence, who is the only unexhaustible mine that hath raised and begot all this, and minutely to riper maturity fosters and cherisheth it. The red herring alone it is that countervails the burdensome detriments of our haven, which every twelvemonth devours a justice of peace' living in weirs and banks to beat off the sand, and overthwart ledging and fencing it in; that defrays all impositions and outward payments to her Majesty (in which Yarmouth gives not the wall to six, though sixteen moth-eaten burgess-towns that have daubers and thatchers to their mayors challenge in parliament the upper hand of it); and, for the vaward or suburbs of my narration, that empalls our sage senators or ephori in princely scarlet as pompous ostentive as the vinti quater or [sic?] Lady Troynovant, wherefore, quoth he, if there be in thee any whit of that unquenchable sacred fire of Apollo (as all men report), and that Minerva amongst the number of her heirs hath adopted thee, or thou wilt commend thy muse to sempiternity, and have images and statutes [sic?] erected to her after her unstringed silent interment and obsequies, rouse thy spirits out of this drowsy lethargy of melancholy they are endrenched in, and wrest them up to the most outstretched airy strain of elocution to chant and carol forth the alteza and excelsitude of this monarchal floodly induperator.

Very tractable to this lure I was trained, and put him not to the full anvilling of me with any sound hammering persuasion, in that at the first sight of the topgallant towers of Yarmouth, and a week before he had broken any of these words betwixt his teeth, my muse was ardently inflamed to do it some right, and how to bring it about fitter I knew not than in the praise of the red herring, whose proper soil and nursery it is. But this I must give you to wit, however I have took it upon me, that never since I spouted ink was I of worse aptitude to go through with such a mighty March brewage as you expect, or temper you one right cup of that ancient wine of Falernum which would last forty year, or consecrate to your fame a perpetual temple of the pine-trees of Ida, which never rot. For besides the loud-bellowing prodigious flaw of indignation stirred up against me in my absence and extermination from the upper region of our celestial regiment, which hath dung me in a manner down to the infernal bottom of desolation, and so troubledly bemudded with grief and care every cell or organ-pipe of my purer intellectual faculties, that no more they consort with any ingenuous playful merriments, of my note-books and all books else here in the country I am bereaved, whereby I might enamel and hatch over this device more artificially and masterly, and attire it in his true orient varnish and tincture, wherefore heart and goodwill, a workman is nothing without his tools; had I my topics by me instead of my learned counsel to assist me, I might haps marshal my terms in better array, and bestow such costly cookery on this marine magnifico as you would prefer him before tart and galingale, which Chaucer pre-eminentest encomionizeth above all junketries or confectionaries whatsoever.

Homer of rats and frogs hath heroicked it, other oaten pipers after him in praise of the gnat, the flea, the hazel-nut, the grasshopper, the butterfly, the parrot, the popinjay, Philip Sparrow, and the cuckoo; the wantoner sort of them sing descant on their mistress' glove, her ring, her fan, her looking-glass, her pantofles, and on the same jury I might empanel Johannes Secundus, with his book of the two hundred kinds of kisses. Philosophers come sneaking in with their paradoxes of poverty, imprisonment, death, sickness, banishment and baldness, and as busy they are about the bee, the stork, the constant turtle, the horse, the dog, the ape, the ass, the fox and the ferret. Physicians deafen our ears with the honorificabilitudinitibus of their heavenly panacea, their sovereign guaiacum, their clysters, their treacles, their mithridates of forty several poisons compacted, their bitter rhubarb and torturing stibium.

The posterior Italian and German cornugraphers stick not to applaud and canonize unnatural sodomitry, the strumpet errant, the gout, the ague, the dropsy, the sciatica, folly, drunkenness and slovenry. The Galli Gallinacei, or cocking French, swarm every pissing-while in their primer editions, Imprime aujourd'hui, of the unspeakable healthful conducibleness(?) of the Gomorrean great poco a poco, their true countryman every inch of him, the prescript laws of tennis or balloon (which is most of their gentlemen's chief livelihoods), the commodity of hoarseness, blear eyes, scabbed hams, threadbare cloaks, poached(?) eggs, and panadas(?). Amongst our English harmonious calinos, one is up with the excellence of the brown bill and the long-bow; another plays his prizes in print in driving it home with all weapons in right of the noble science of defence; a third writes passing enamorately of the nature of white meats, and justifies it under his hand to be bought & sold everywhere that they exceed nectar & ambrosia; a fourth comes forth with something in praise of nothing; a fifth, of an inflamed zeal(?) to copper-smiths' hall, all-to-berimes it of the diversity of red-noses, and the hierarchy of the nose magnificat. A sixth sweeps behind the door all earthly felicities, and makes bakers' malkins of them if they stand in competency with a strong dozen of points; marry, they must be points of the matter, you must consider, whereof the foremost cod-piece point is the crane's proverb in painted cloths, *Fear God and obey the king*, and the rest, some have tags, and some have none. A seventh sets a tobacco-pipe instead of a trumpet to his mouth, and of that divine drug proclaimeth miracles. An eighth capers it up to the spheres in commendation of dancing. A ninth offers sacrifice to the goddess cloaca, and disports himself very scholarly and wittily about the reformation of close-stools and houses of office, and spicing and embalming their rank entrails, that they stink not. A tenth sets forth remedies of toasted turfs against famine.

See the epistle
commendatory
before M.
Samuel
Daniel's
translation of
the empresses
of Paulus
Jovius.

To these I might wedge in Cornelius the Brabantine, who was feloniously suspected in 87 for penning a discourse of tuft mockados, and a country gentleman of my acquaintance who is launching forth a treatise as big-garbed as the French Academy of the cornucopia of a cow, and what an advantageable creature she is beyond all the four-footed rabblement of herbagers and grass champers (day or night that she can rest for filing and tampering about it), as also a sworn brother of his that so bebangeth poor paper in laud of a bag-pudding, as a Swisser would not believe it. Neither of their decades are yet

stamped, but ere midsummer term they will be, if their words be sure payment, and then tell me if our English sconces be not right Sheffield or no.

The application of this whole catalogue of waste authors is no more but this, *Quot capita tot sententiae*, So many heads, so many whirligigs, and if all these have terlery-jinked it so frivolously of they recked not what, I may *cum gratia & privilegio* pronounce it, that a red herring is wholesome in a frosty morning, and rake up some few scattered syllables together in the exornation and polishing of it. No more excursions and circumquaques but *totaliter ad oppositum*.

That English merchandise is most precious which no country can do without; if you ask Suffolk, Essex, Kent, Sussex, or Leominster or Cotswold what merchandise that should be, they will answer you it is the very same which Polydore Vergil calls *Vere aureum vellus*, the true golden fleece of our wool and English cloth, and naught else; other ingrating upland cormorants will grunt out it is *grana paradisi*, our grain or corn, that is most sought after. The westerners and northerners, that it is lead, tin and iron. Butter and cheese, butter and cheese, saith the farmer, but from every one of these I dissent, and will stoutly bide by it that, to troll in the cash throughout all nations of Christendom, there is no fellow to the red herring. The French, Spanish and Italian have wool enough of their own whereof they make cloth to serve their turn, though it be somewhat coarser than ours. For corn, none of the east parts but surpasseth us; of lead and tin is the most scarcity in foreign dominions, and plenty with us, though they are not utterly barren of them. As for iron, about Eisenburg and other places of Germany they have quadruple the store that we have. As touching butter and cheese, the Hollanders cry, By your leave, we must go before you, and the trans alpiners with their lordly Parmesan (so named of the city of Parma in Italy where it is first clout-crushed and made) shoulder in for the upper hand as hotly, whenas, of our appropriate glory of the red herring, no region twixt the poles Artic and Antarctic may, can or will rebate from us one scruple.

On no coast like ours is it caught in such abundance, nowhere dressed in his right cue but under our horizon, hosted(?), roasted and toasted here alone it is, and as well powdered and salted as any Dutchman would desire. If you articulate with me of the gain or profit of it, without the which the newfangl'est rarity, that nobody can boast of but ourselves, after three days' gazing is reversed over to children for babies to play with, behold, it is every man's money, from the king to the courtier; every household of goodman Baltrop that keeps a family in pay casts for it as one of his standing provisions. The poorer sort make it three parts of their sustenance; with it, for his denier, the patchedest leather-pilched laboratho may dine like a Spanish duke when the niggardliest mouse of beef will cost him sixpence. In the craft of catching or taking it, and smudging it merchant and chapmanable as it should be, it sets a-work thousands, who live all the rest of the year gaily well by what in some few weeks they scratch up then, and come to bear office of questman and scavenger in the parish where they dwell, which they could never have done, but would have begged or starved with their wives and brats, had not this captain of the squamy cattle so stood their good lord and master; carpenters, shipwrights, makers of lines, ropes and cables, dressers of hemp, spinners of thread, and net-weavers it gives their handfults to, sets up so many salt-houses to make salt, and salt upon salt, keeps in

earnings the cooper, the brewer, the baker, and numbers of other people to gill, wash and pack it, and carry it and recarry it.

In exchange for it from other countries they return wine and woads, for which is always paid ready gold, with salt, canvas, vitry, and a great deal of good trash. Her Majesty's tributes and customs this Semper Augustus of the sea's finny freeholders augmenteth & enlargeth uncountably, and to the increase of navigation for her service he is no enemy.

Voyages of purchase or reprisals, which are now grown a common traffic, swallow up and consume more sailors and mariners than they breed, and lightly not a slop of a rope-hauler they send forth to the Queen's ships but he is first broken to the sea in the herring-man's skiff or cock-boat, where having learned to brook all waters, and drink as he can out of a tarry can, and eat Poor John out of sooty platters when he may get it, without butter or mustard, there is no ho with him but, once heartened thus, he will needs be a man of war, or a tobacco-taker, and wear a silver whistle. Some of these for their haughty climbing come home with wooden legs, and some with none, but leave body and all behind; those that escape to bring news tell of nothing but eating tallow and young Blackamoors, of five and five to a rat in every mess, and the ship-boy to the tail, of stopping their noses when they drunk stinking water that came out of the pump of the ship, and cutting a greasy buff-jerkin in tripes and broiling it for their dinners. Divers Indian adventures have been seasoned with direr mishaps, not having for eight days' space the quantity of a candle's-end among eightscore to grease their lips with, and landing in the end to seek food, by the cannibal savages they have been circumvented, and forced to yield their bodies to feed them.

***That is for a man to be his own executioner, and at his prince's beck to go up to the top of the rock, and thence throw himself headlong.**

***Fol. 63, pag. 2.**

Our mitred arch-patriarch, Leopold Herring, exacts no such *Muscovian vassalage of his liegemen, though he put them to their trumps otherwhile, and scuppets not his beneficence into their mouths with such freshwater facility as M. Ascham in his *Schoolmaster* would imply. His words are these in his censure upon Varro: *He enters not (saith he) into any great depth of eloquence, but as one carried in a small low vessel by himself very nigh the common shore, not much unlike the fishermen of Rye, or herring-men of Yarmouth, who deserve by common men's opinion small commendation for any cunning sailing at all. Well, he was her Majesty's schoolmaster, and a St. John's man in Cambridge, in which house once I took up my inn for seven year together lacking a quarter, and yet love it still, for it is and ever was the sweetest nurse of knowledge in all that university. Therefore I will keep fair quarter with him, and expostulate the matter more tamely. *Memorandum non ab uno*, I vary not a minim from him that, in the captious mystery of Monsieur Herring, low vessels will not give their heads for the washing, holding their own pell-mell in all weathers as roughly as vaster timbermen, though not so near the shore as, through ignorance of the coast, he soundeth, nor one man by himself alone to do everything, which is the opinion of one man by himself alone, and not believed of any other. Five to one, if he were alive, I would beat against him, since one without five is as good as none to govern the most egg-shell shallop that floateth, and spread the nets and draw them in. As stiffly could I controvert it with him about pricking his card so badly in Cape Norfolk or Sinus Yarmouthiensis, and discrediting our countrymen for shore-creeper, like these Colchester oyster-men, or whiting-mongers and

sprot-catchers. Suleiman Herring, would you should persuade yourselves, is loftier-minded and keepeth more aloof than so, and those that are his followers, if they will seek him where he is, more than common danger they must incur in close driving under the sands which alternately or betwixt-times, when he is disposed to ensconce himself, are his entrenched rendezvous or castle of retiring, and otherwhile forty or threescore leagues in the roaring territory they are glad on their wooden horses to post after him, and scour it with their Ethiop pitch-boards till they be windless in his quest and pursuing. Returning from waiting on him, have with you to the Adriatic and abroad everywhere far and near to make port-sale of their perfumed smoky commodities, and that toil rocked asleep, they are for ultima Thule, the north seas or Iceland, and thence yerke over that worthy Palamede Don Pedro de Ling and his worshipful nephew Hugo Haberdine, and a trundle-tail tike or shough or two, and towards Michaelmas scud home to catch herring again. This argues they should have some experience of navigation, and are not such halcyons to build their nests all on the shore as M. Ascham supposeth.

Rye is one of the ancient towns belonging to the Cinque Ports, yet limpeth cinque ace behind Yarmouth, and it will sink when Yarmouth riseth, and yet if it were put in the balance against Yarmouth, it would rise when Yarmouth sinketh, and to stand threshing no longer about it, Rye is Rye, and no more but Rye, and Yarmouth wheat compared with it. Wherefore, had he been a right clerk of the market, he would have set a higher price on the one than the other, and set that one of highest price above the other.

Those that deserve by common men's opinion small commendation for any cunning sailing at all are not the Yarmouthers, however there is a foul fault in the print escaped that curstly squinteth and leereth that way, but the bonny northern cobbles of his country, with their Indian canoes or boats like great beef trays or kneading-troughs, firking as flight-swift through the glassy fields of Thetis as if it were the land of ice, and sliding over the boiling desert so yarely(?) and never bruise one bubble of it, as though they contended to outstrip the lightfoot tripper in the *Metamorphosis*, who would run over the ripe-bending ears of corn, and never shed or perish one kernel. No such iron-fisted Cyclops to hew it out of the flint, and run through anything, as these frost-bitten crab-tree-faced lads, spun out of the hards of the tow, which are donzel herring's lackeys at Yarmouth every fishing.

Let the careeringest billow confess and absolve itself before it prick up his bristles against them, for, if it come upon his dancing horse and offer to tilt it with them, they will ask no trustier lances than their oars to beat out the brains of it, and stop his throat from belching.

These rubs removed, on with our game as fast as we may, & to the gain of the red herring again another crash. Item, if it were not for this Huniades of the liquid element, that word Quadragesima or Lent might be clean sponged out of the calendar, with Rogation weeks, saints' eves, and the whole Ragman's roll of fasting-days, and fishmongers might keep Christmas all the year for any over-lavish takings they should have of clowns and clouted shoes, and the rubbish menialty, their best customers, and their blood adversaries, the butchers, would never leave cleaving it out in the whole chines till they had got a Lord

Mayor of their company as well as they. Nay, out of their wits they would be haunted with continual takings, & stand cross-gagged with knives in their mouths from one Shrove Tuesday to another, and wear candles'-ends in their hats at midsummer, having no time to shave their pricks or wash their fly-blown aprons, if Domingo Rufus or Sacrapant herring caused not the dice to run contrary.

The Romish rotten Pythagoreans or Carthusian friars, that mump on nothing but fish, in what a phlegmatic predicament would they be did not this counterpoison of the spitting sickness (sixtyfold more restorative than bezoar) patch them out and preserve them, which, being double-roasted and dried as it is, not only sucks up all rheumatic inundations, but is a shoeing-horn for a pint of wine overplus.

The sweet smack that Yarmouth finds in it, and how it hath made it *lippitudo Atticae* (as it was said of Aegina, her near-adjacent confronter), the blemish and stain of all her salt water sisters in England, and multiplied it from a mole-hill of sand to a cloud-crowned Mount Teneriffe, abbreviately and meetly according to my old Sarum plain-song I have harped upon, and that, if there were no other certificate or instance of the enlinked consanguinity twixt him and Lady Lucre, is *instar mille*, worth a million of witnesses, to exemplify the riches of him. The poets were trivial that set up Helen's face for such a topgallant summer maypole for men to gaze at, and strutted it out so in their buskined braves of her beauty, whereof the only Circe's hey-pass and repass was that it drew a thousand ships to Troy, to fetch her back with a pestilence. Wise men in Greece in the meanwhile to swagger so about a whore.

Eloquious hoary-beard father Nestor, you were one of them, and you, M. Ulysses, the prudent dwarf of Pallas, another, of whom it is iliadized that your very nose dropped sugar-candy, and that your spittle was honey. Natalis Comes, if he were above ground, would be sworn upon it. As loud a ringing miracle as the attractive melting eye of that strumpet can we supply them with of our dapper Piemont Huldrick herring, which draweth more barks to Yarmouth bay than her beauty did to Troy. O, he is attended upon most Babylonically, and Xerxes so overcloyed not the Hellespont with his foists, galleys and brigantines as he mantleth the narrow seas with his retinue, being not much behind in the check-roll of his janissaries and contributories with eagle-soaring Bolingbroke, that at his removing of household into banishment (as father Froissart threaps us down), was accompanied with 40,000 men, women and children weeping, from London to the land's end at Dover. A colony of critical Zenos, should they sinew their syllogistical clusterfists in one bundle to confute and disprove moving, were they but during the time they might lap up a mess of buttered fish in Yarmouth one fishing, such a violent motion of toiling Myrmidons they should be spectators of, and a confused stirring to and fro of a Lepanto-like host of unfatigable flood-bickerers and foam-curbers, that they would not move or stir one foot till they had disclaimed and abjured their bedrid spittle-positions. In verament and sincerity, I never crowded through this confluent herring-fair but it put me in memory of the great year of jubilee in Edward the Third's time, in which it is sealed and delivered under the hands of a public notary, three hundred thousand people roamed to Rome for purgatory pills and paternal venial benedictions, and the ways beyond sea were so bunged up with your daily orators or beadsmen, and your Crutched or crouchant

In old time they used to ring out at any miracle.

The sea battle at Lepanto, fought in the beginning of her Majesty's reign.

Friars, or cross-creepers and barefoot penitentiaries, that a snail could not wriggle in her horns betwixt them. Small things we may express by great, and great by small, though the greatness of the red herring be not small (as small a hop-on-my-thumb as he seemeth). It is with him as with great personages, which from their high estate and not their high statures propagate the elevate titles of their Gogmagogs. Cast his state who will, and they shall find it to be very high coloured (as high-coloured as his complexion, if I said, there were not a pimple to be abated). In Yarmouth he hath set up his state-house, where one quarter of a year he keeps open court for Jews and gentiles.

***The fatal wooden horse at Troy fetched in with such pomp.**

***Cleopatra's glorious sailing to meet Antony.**

***The solemn bringing of the champions at Olympus.**

***Tugging forth by the strength of their arms.**

***Manny quasi Manly, & from him, I take it, the Manneys of Kent are descended.**

To fetch him in in *Trojan equipage, some of every of the Christ-cross alphabet of outlandish cosmopoli furrow up the rugged brine and sweep through his tumultuous ooze, will or nill he, rather than in tendering their allegiance they should be benighted with tardity. For our English microcosmos or Phoenician Dido's hide of ground, no shire, county, count palatine, or quarter of it but rigs out some oaken squadron or other to waft him along *Cleopatra's *Olympicly, and not the diminutivest nook or crevice of them but is parturient of the like superofficiousness, *arming forth though it be but a catch or pink no capabler than a runlet or washing-bowl to imp the wings of his convoy. Holy S. Taubard, in what droves the gouty-bagged Londoners hurry down and dye the watchet air of an iron russet hue with the dust that they raise in hot-spurred rowelling it on to perform compliments unto him. One beck more to the bailies of the Cinque Ports, whom I were a ruder barbarian than Smill, the Prince of the Crims & Nagayans, if in this action I should forget (having had good cheer at their tables more than once or twice whiles I loitered in this paragonless fish-town). City, town, country, Robin Hood and Little John, and who not, are industrious and careful to squire and safe-conduct him in, but in ushering him in, next to the bailies of Yarmouth they trot before all, and play the provost-marshals, helping to keep good rule the first three weeks of his ingress, and never leave roaring it out with their brazen horn as long as they stay, of the freedoms and immunities sourcing from him. Being thus entered or brought in, the consistorians or settled standers of Yarmouth commence intestine wars amongst themselves who should give him the largest hospitality, and gather about him as flocking to handsel him and strike him good luck as the sweetkin madams did about valiant S. Walter Manny, the martial tutor unto the Black Prince (he that built Charterhouse), who, being upon the point of a hazardous journey into France either to win the horse or lose the saddle (as it runs in the proverb), & taking his leave at court in a suit of mail from top to toe, all the ladies clung about him, and would not let him stretch out a step till they had enfettered him with their variable favours, and embroidered over his armour like a gaudy summer mead with their scarves, bracelets, chains, ouches, in generous reguerdonment whereof he sacramentally obliged himself that, had the French king as many giants in his country as he hath pears or grapes, and they stood all enranged on the short to interdict his disembarking, through the thickest thorny quickset of them he would pierce, or be tossed up to heaven on their spears, but in honour of those debonair Idalian nymphs and their spangled trappings he would be the first man should set foot in his kingdom, or unsheathe steel against him. As he promised, so was his *manly blade's execution, and in emulation of him whole herds of knights and gentlemen closed up their right eyes with a piece of silk every one, & vowed never to uncover them or let them see light till, in the advancement of their mistress' beauties, they had enacted with their brandished bilbo-blades some chivalrous

Bellerophon's trick at arms, that from Solomon's Islands to St. Magnus' corner might cry clang again. O, it was a brave age then, and so it is ever, where there are offensive wars, and not defensive, & men fight for the spoil, and not in fear to be spoiled, & are as lions seeking out their prey, and not as sheep that lie still whiles they are preyed on. The red herring is a legate of peace, and so abhorrent from unnatural bloodshed that if, in his quarrel or bandying who should harbinge him, there be any hewing or slashing, or trials of life & death, there where that hangman embowelling is, his pursuivants or bailies return *non est inventus*, out of one bailiwick he is fled, never to be fastened on there more. The Scottish Jockeys or Red-shanks (so surnamed of their immoderate ranching up the red-shanks or red herrings) uphold & make good the same. Their clack or gabbling to this purport: *How, in diebus illis, when Robert de Breaux, their gude king, sent his dear heart to the Haly Land, for reason he caud not gang thidder himself (or then or thereabout, or whilom before, or whilom after, it matters not), they had the staple or fruits of the herring in their road or channel, till a foul ill feud arose amongst his sectaries and servitors, and there was mickle tule, and a black warld, and a deal of whinyards drawn about him, and many sackless wights and praty bairns run through the tender wames, and fra thence ne sarry tail of a herring in thilk sound they caud gripe.* This language or parley have I usurped from some of the deftest lads in all Edinburgh town, which it will be no impeachment for the wisest to turn loose for a truth without any diffident wrestling with it. The sympathy thereunto in our own frothy streams we have took napping, wherefore, without any further bolstering or backing, this Scottish history may bear palm, & if any further bolstering or backing be required, it is evident by the confession of the six hundred Scottish witches executed in Scotland at Bartholomew-tide was twelvemonth, that in Yarmouth road they were all together in a plump on Christmas eve was two year, when the great flood was, & there stirred up such ternados & furicanos of tempests, in envy (as I collect) that the staple of the herring from them was translated to Yarmouth, as will be spoke of there whiles any winds or storms & tempests chafe & puff in the lower regions. They and all the seafaring towns under our temperate zone of peace may well envy her prosperity, but they cannot march cheek by jowl with her or coequal her, and there's no such manifest sign of great prosperity as a general envy encompassing it. Kings, noblemen it cleaves unto, that walk upright, and are anything happy, & even amongst mean artificers it thrusts in his foot, one of them envying another if he have a knack above another, or his gains be greater, and if in his art they cannot disgrace him, they will find a starting-hole in his life that shall confound him; for example, there is *a mathematical smith or artificer in Yarmouth that hath made a lock and key that weighs but three farthings, and a chest with a pair of knit gloves in the till of it whose whole poise is no more but a groat; now I do not think but all the smiths in London, Norwich or York (if they heard of him) would envy him if they could not outwork him. Hydra herring will have everything *Sybarite dainty where he lays knife aboard, or he will fly them, he will not look upon them. Stately born, stately sprung he is, the best blood of the Ptolemies no statelier, and with what state he hath been used from his swaddling-clouts I have reiterated unto you, and, which is a note above ela, stately Hyperion or the lordly son, the most rutilant planet of the seven, in Lent when Heralius herring enters into his chief reign and sceptredom, skippeth and danceth the goat's-jump on the earth for joy of his entrance. Do but mark him on your walls any morning at that season, how he sallies & lavoltas, and you will say I am no fabler. Of so

*John
Thurkle.

*The
Sybarites
never would
make any
banquet
under a
twelve-
month's
warning.

eye-bewitching a deaurate ruddy dye is the skin-coat of this landgrave that happy is that nobleman who for his colours in armory can nearest imitate his chemical temper; nay, which is more, if a man should tell you that god Hymen's saffron-coloured robe were made of nothing but red herrings' skins, you would hardly believe him; such is the obduracy & hardness of heart of a number of infidels in these days, they will tear herrings out of their skins as fast as one of these Exchequer tellers can turn over a heap of money, but his virtues, both exterior and interior, they have no more taste of than of a dish of stock-fish. Somewhere I have snatched up a jest of a king that was desirous to try what kind of flesh-meat was most nutritive prosperous with a man's body, and to that purpose he commanded four hungry fellows in four separate rooms by themselves to be shut up for a year and a day, whereof the first should have his gut bombasted with beef and nothing else till he cried Hold, belly, hold, and so the second to have his paunch crammed with pork, the third with mutton, & the fourth with veal. At the twelvemonth's end they were brought before him, & he enquired of every one orderly what he had eat. Therewith out stepped the stall-fed foreman that had been at host with the fat ox, and was grown as fat as an ox with tiring on the sirloins, and baffed in his face, Beef, beef, beef. Next the Norfolk hog or the swine-worrier, who had got him a sagging pair of cheeks, like a sow's paps that gives suck, with the plentiful mast set before him, came lazily waddling in, and puffed out, Pork, pork, pork. Then the sly sheep-biter issued into the midst, and somersetted & flip-flapped it twenty times above ground, as light as a feather, and cried Mitton (sic?), mitton, mitton; last the Essex calf or lag-man, who had lost the calves of his legs with gnawing on the horse-legs(?), shuddering and quaking, limped after, with a visage as pale as a piece of white leather, and a staff in his hand and a kerchief on his head, and very lamentably vociferated, Veal, veal, veal. A witty toy of his noble grace it was, and different from the recipes and prescriptions of our modern physicians, that to any sick languishers, if they be able to waggle their chaps, propound veal for one of the highest nourishers.

*As much to say as Urry, urry, urry, one of the principal places where the herring is caught.

But had his principality gone through with fish as well as flesh, and put a man to livery with the red herring but as long, he would have come in, *Hurry, hurry, hurry, as if he were harrying and chasing his enemies, & Bevis of Hampton, after he had been out of his diet, should not have been able to have stood before him. A choleric parcel of food it is, that whoso ties himself to rack and manger to for five summers and five winters, he shall beget a child that will be a soldier and a commander before he hath cast his first teeth, & an Alexander, a Julius Caesar, a Scanderbeg, a Barbarossa he will prove ere he aspire to thirty.

But to think on a red herring, such a hot stirring meat it is, is enough to make the cravenest dastard proclaim fire and sword against Spain. The most intenerate virgin wax physiognomy that taints his throat with the least rib of it, it will embrown and iron-crust his flesh, and harden his soft-bleeding veins as stiff and robustious as branches of coral. The art of kindling of fires that is practised in the smoking or parching of him is old dog against the plague. Too foul-mouthed I am to becollow or becollier him with such chimney-sweeping attributes of smoking and parching. Will you have the secret of it? This well-meaning pater patriae, & proveditor and supporter of Yarmouth (which is the lock and key of Norfolk), looking pale and sea-sick at his first landing, those that be his

stewards or necessariest men about him whirl him in a thought out of the raw cold air to some stew or hot-house, where immuring himself for three or four days, when he unhouseth him, or hath cast off his shell, he is as freckled about the gills, & looks as red as a fox clum(?) & is more surly to be spoken with than ever he was before, and, like Lais of Corinth, will smile upon no man except he may have his own asking. There are that number of herrings vented out of Yarmouth every year (though the grammarians make no plural number of *halec*) as not only they are more by two thousand last than our own land can spend, but they fill all other lands to whom at their own prices they sell them, and happy is he that can first lay hold of them. And how can it be otherwise, for if Cornish pilchards, otherwise called fumados, taken on the shore of Cornwall from July to November be so saleable as they are in France, Spain and Italy (which are but counterfeits to the red herring, as copper to gold, or occamy to silver), much more their elbows itch for joy when they meet with the true gold, the true red herring itself. No true flying fish but he, or if there be, that fish never flies but when his wings are wet, and the red herring flies best when his wings are dry; throughout Belgia, High Germany, France, Spain and Italy he flies, and up into Greece and Africa, south and south-west, estrich-like, walks his stations, and the Sepulchre palmers or pilgrims, because he is so portable, fill their scrips with them, yea, no dispraise to the blood of the Ottomans, the Nebuchadnezzar of Constantinople and giantly Antaeus that never yawneeth nor neezeth but he affrighteth the whole earth, gormandizing, muncheth him up for imperial dainties, and will not spare his idol Mahomet a bit with him, no, not though it would fetch him from heaven forty years before his time, whence, with his dove that he taught to peck barley out of his ear, and brought his disciples into a fool's paradise that it was the Holy Ghost in her similitude, he is expected every minute to descend, but I am afraid, as he was troubled with the falling sickness in his lifetime, in self manner it took him in his mounting up to heaven, & so *ab inferno nulla redemptio*, he is fallen backward into hell, and they are never more like to hear of him. Whiles I am shuffling and cutting with these long-coated Turks, would any antiquary would explicate unto me this remblere or quiddity, whether those turbanto grout-heads that hang all men by the throats on iron hooks, even as our toers(?) hang all their herrings by the throats on wooden spits, first learned it of our herring-men, or our herring-men of them. Why the Alcoranship of that Beelzebub of Saracens, Rhinoceros Selim aforesaid, should so much delight in this shiny animal I cannot guess, except he had a desire to imitate Midas in eating of gold, or Dionysius in stripping of Jupiter out of his golden coat, and, to shoot my fool's bolt amongst you, that fable of Midas eating gold had no other shadow or inclusive pith in it but he was of a queasy stomach, and nothing he could fancy but this new-found gilded fish, which Bacchus at his request gave him (though it were not known here two thousand year after, for it was the delicates of the gods, & no mortal food till of late years). Midas, unexperienced of the nature of it (for he was a fool that had ass's ears), snapped it up at one blow, & because, in the boiling or seething of it in his maw, he felt it commotion a little and upbraid him, he thought he had eaten gold indeed, and thereupon directed his orisons to Bacchus afresh, to help it out of his crop again, and have mercy upon him and recover him; he, propensive inclining to Midas' devotion in everything, in lieu of the friendly hospitalities drunken Silenus, his companion, found at his hands when he strayed from him, bade him but go wash himself in the river Pactolus, that is, go wash it down soundly with flowing cups of wine, and he should be as well as ever he was. By the

**Turbanto,
the great
lawn roll
Turks wear
about their
heads.**

turning of the river Pactolus into gold, after he had rinsed and clarified himself in it (which is the close of the fiction) is signified that, in regard of that blessed operation of the juice of the grape in him, from that day forth in nothing but golden cups he would drink or quaff it, whereas in wooden mazers, and Agathocles' earthen stuff, they trilled it off before, and that was the first time that any golden cups were used.

Follow this tract in expounding the tale of Dionysius and Jupiter, and you cannot go amiss. No such Jupiter, no such golden-coated image was there, but it was a plain golden-coated red herring, without welt or guard, whom, for the strangeness of it, they (having never beheld a beast of that hue before) in their temples enshrined for a god, and insomuch as Jupiter had showed them such slippery pranks more than once or twice, in shifting himself into sundry shapes, and raining himself down in gold into a woman's lap, they thought this too might be a trick of youth in him, to alter himself into the form of this golden scali-ger, or red herring. And therefore, as to Jupiter, they fell down on their marrowbones, & lift up their hay-cromes unto him. Now King Dionysius being a good wise fellow, for he was afterwards a schoolmaster, & had played the coachman to Plato, & spit in Aristippus the philosopher's face many a time and oft, no sooner entered their temple, & saw him sit under his canopy so budgely, with a whole goldsmith's stall of jewels and rich offerings at his feet, but to him he stepped, and plucked him from his state with a wanion, then drawing out his knife most iracundiously, at one whisk lopped off his head, and stripped him out of his golden demy or mandilion, and flayed him, and thrust him down his pudding-house at a gob; yet long it prospered not with him (so revengeful a just Jupiter is the red herring), for as he tare him from his throne, and uncased him of his habiliments, so, in small devolution of years, from his throne was he chased, and clean stripped out of his royalty, & glad to go play the schoolmaster at Corinth, and take a rod in his hand for his scepter, and horn-book pygmies for his subjects, *id est* (as I intimated some dozen lines before) of a tyrant to become a frowning pedant or schoolmaster.

Many of you have read these stories, and could never pick out any such English; no more would you of the Ismael Persians' Haly, or Mortus Ali they worship, whose true etymology is, *mortuum halec*, a dead red herring, and no other, though, by corruption of speech they false dialect and mis-sound it. Let any Persian oppugn this, and in spite of his hairy tuft or lovelock he leaves on the top of his crown to be pulled up or pulleyed up to heaven by, I'll set my foot to his, & fight it out with him, that their fopperly god is not so good as a red herring. To recount *ab ovo*, or from the church-book of his birth, how the herring first came to be a fish, and then how he came to be king of fishes, and gradationately how from white to red he changed, would require as massy a tome as Holinshed, but in half a pennyworth of paper I will epitomize them. Let me see, hath anybody in Yarmouth heard of Leander and Hero, of whom divine Musaeus sung, and a diviner muse than him, Kit Marlowe?

Two faithful lovers they were, as every apprentice in Paul's Churchyard will tell you for your love, and sell you for your money. The one dwelt at Abydos in Asia, which was Leander, the other, which was Hero, his mistress or Delia, at Sestos in Europe, and she was a pretty pinkeny and Venus priest, and but an arm of the sea divided them; it divided

them and it divided them not, for over that arm of the sea could be made a long arm. In their parents the most division rested, and their towns, that like Yarmouth and Lowestoft were still at wrig-wrag, & sucked from their mothers' teats serpentine hatred one against each other. Which drove Leander when he durst not deal above-board, or be seen aboard any ship to sail to his lady dear, to play the didapper and ducking water-spaniel to swim to her, nor that in the day, but by owl-light.

What will not blind night do for blind Cupid, and what will not blind Cupid do in the night, which is his blind man's holiday? By the sea-side on the other side stood Hero's tower, such another tower as one of our Irish castles, that is not so wide as a belfry, and a cobbler cannot jert out his elbows in, a cage or pigeon-house, roomthsome enough to comprehend her and the toothless trot, her nurse, who was her only chatmate and chambermaid, consultively by her parents being so encloistered from resort that she might live chaste vestal priest to Venus, the queen of unchastity. She would none of that, she thanked them, for she was better provided, and that which they thought served their turn best of sequestering her from company, served her turn best to embrace the company she desired. Fate is a spaniel that you cannot beat from you; the more you think to cross it, the more you bless it and further it.

Neither her father nor mother vowed chastity when she was begot, therefore she thought they begat her not to live chaste, & either she must prove herself a bastard, or show herself like them. Of Leander you may write upon, and it is written upon, she liked well, and for all he was a naked man and clean despoiled to the skin when he sprawled through the brackish suds to scale her tower, all the strength of it could not hold him out. O, ware a naked man; Cytherea's nuns have no power to resist him, and some such quality is ascribed to the lion. Were he never so naked when he came to her, because he should not scare her, she found a means to cover him in her bed, &, for he might not take cold after his swimming, she lay close by him, to keep him warm. This scuffling or bo-peep in the dark they had awhile without wem or brack, and the old nurse (as there be three things seldom in their right kind till they be old, a bawd, a witch, and a midwife) executed the huckstering office of her years very charily & circumspectly till their sliding stars revolted from them, and then, for seven days together the wind and the Hellespont contended which should howl louder; the waves dashed up to the clouds, and the clouds, on the other side, spit and drivelled upon them as fast.

Hero wept as trickling as the heavens, to think that heaven should so divorce them. Leander stormed worse than the storms, that by them he should be so restrained from his Cynthia. At Sestos was his soul, and he could not abide to tarry in Abydos. Rain, snow, hail, or blow it how it could, into the pitchy Hellespont he leapt, when the moon and all her torch-bearers were afraid to peep out their heads, but he was peppered for it; he had as good have took meat, drink and leisure, for the churlish frampold waves gave him his belly-ful of fish-broth ere out of their laundry or wash-house they would grant him his cocket or transire, and not only that, but they sealed him his quietus est for curvetting any more to the maiden tower, and tossed his dead carcass, well bathed and parboiled, to the sandy threshold of his leman or orange, for a disjune or morning breakfast. All that livelong night could she not sleep, she was so troubled with the rheum, which was a sign

she should hear of some drowning, yet towards cock-crowing she caught a little slumber, and then she dreamed that Leander and she were playing at check-stone with pearls in the bottom of the sea.

You may see dreams are not so vain as they are preached of, though not in vain preachers inveigh against them, and bend themselves out of the people's minds to exhale their foolish superstition. The rheum is the student's disease, and who study most, dream most. The labouring men's hands glow and blister after their day's work; the glowing and blistering of our brains after our day-labouring cogitations are dreams, and those dreams are reeking vapours of no impression, if our mateless couches be not half empty. Hero hoped, and therefore she dreamed (as all hope is but a dream); her hope was where her heart was, and her heart winding and turning with the wind that might wind her heart of gold to her, or else turn him from her. Hope and fear both combated in her, and both these are wakeful, which made her at break of day (what an old crone is the day, that is so long a-breaking) to unloop her luket or casement, to look whence the blasts came, or what gait or pace the sea kept, when forthwith her eyes bred her eyesore, the first white whereon their transpiercing arrows stuck being the breathless corps of Leander; with the sudden contemplation of this piteous spectacle of her love, sodden to haddocks' meat, her sorrow could not choose but be indefinite if her delight in him were but indifferent, and there is no woman but delights in sorrow, or she would not use it so lightly for everything.

Down she ran in her loose nightgown, and her hair about her ears (even as Semiramis ran out with her lye-pot in her hand, and her black dangling tresses about her shoulders with her ivory comb ensnarled in them, when she heard that Babylon was taken), and thought to have kissed his dead corse alive again, but as on his blue jellied sturgeon lips she was about to clap one of those warm plasters, boisterous wool-packs of ridged tides came rolling in, and raught him from her (with a mind belike to carry him back to Abydos). At that she became a frantic Bacchanal, & made no more bones but sprang after him, and so resigned up her priesthood, and left work for Musaeus and Kit Marlowe. The gods, and gods and goddesses all on a row, bread and crow, from Ops to Pomona, the first apple-wife, were so dumped with this miserable wrack that they began to abhor all moisture for the sea's sake, and Jupiter could not endure Ganymede, his cup-bearer, to come in his presence, both for the dislike he bore to Neptune's baneful liquor, as also that he was so like to Leander. The sun was so in his mumps upon it that it was almost noon before he could go to cart that day, and then with so ill a will he went that he had thought to have toppled his burning car or hurry-curry into the sea (as Phaeton did) to scorch it and dry it up, and at night, when he was begrimed with dust and sweat of his journey, he would not descend as he was wont, to wash him in the ocean, but under a tree laid him down to rest in his clothes all night, and so did the scowling moon under another fast by him, which of that are behighted the trees of the sun and moon, and are the same that Sir John Mandeville tells us he spoke with, and that spoke to Alexander. Venus, for Hero was her priest, and Juno Lucina, the midwives' goddess, for she was now quickened, and cast away by the cruelty of Aeolus, took bread and salt and eat it, that they would be smartly revenged on that truculent windy jailer, and they forgot it not, for Venus made his son and his daughter to commit incest together. Lucina, that there might be some lasting

characters of his shame, helped to bring her to bed of a goodly boy, and Aeolus, bolting out all this, heaped murder upon murder.

The dint of destiny could not be repealed in the reviving of Hero & Leander, but their heavenly hoods in their synod thus decreed, that for they were either of them sea-borderers and drowned in the sea, still to the sea they must belong, and be divided in habitation after death as they were in their lifetime. Leander, for that in a cold dark testy night he had his passport to Charon, they terminated to the unquiet cold coast of Iceland, where half the year is nothing but murk night, and to that fish translated him which of us is termed ling. Hero, for that she was paggled and tympanized, and sustained two losses under one, they footballed their heads together, & protested to make the stem of her loins of all fishes the flaunting Fabian or Palmerin of England, which is Cadwallader herring, and, as their meetings were but seldom, and not so oft as welcome, so but seldom should they meet in the heel of the week at the best men's tables upon Fridays and Saturdays, the holy time of Lent exempted, and then they might be at meat and meal for seven weeks together.

The nurse or mother Mam-pudding that was a-cowering on the backside whiles these things were a-tragedizing, led by the scritch or outcry to the prospect of this sorrowful heigh-ho, as soon as, through the ravelled button-holes of her blear eyes she had sucked in & received such a revelation of doomsday, & that she saw her mistress mounted a-cock-horse, & hoisted away to hell or to heaven on the backs of those rough-headed ruffians, down she sunk to the earth, as dead as a door-nail, and never mumped crust after. Whereof their supernalities (having a drop or two of pity left of the huge hogshead of tears they spent for Hero & Leander) seemed to be something sorry, though they could not weep for it, and because they would be sure to have a medicine that should make them weep at all times, to that kind of grain they turned her which we call mustard seed, as well for she was a shrewish snappish bawd that would bite off a man's nose with an answer, and had rheumatic sore eyes that ran always, as that she might accompany Hero & Leander after death as in her lifetime, & hence it is that mustard bites a man so by the nose, & makes him weep & water his plants when he tasteth it, & that Hero & Leander, the red herring and ling, never come to the board without mustard, their waiting-maid, & if you mark it, mustard looks of the tanned wainscot hue of such a withered wrinkle-faced beldam as she was that was altered thereinto. Loving Hero, however altered, had a smack of love still, & therefore to the coast of Lovingland (to Yarmouth near adjoining, & within her liberties of Kirkley road) she accustomed to come in pilgrimage every year, but contentions arising there, and she remembering the event of the contentions betwixt Sestos and Abydos, that wrought both Leander's death and hers, shunneth it of late, and retireth more northwards; so she shunneth quiet Humber, because Elstred was drowned there, and the Scots seas, as before, & every other sea where any blood hath been spilt, for her own sea's sake, that spilt her sweet sweetheart's blood and hers.

Whippet, turn to a new lesson, and strike we up *John for the King*, or tell how the herring scrambled up to be king of all fishes. So it fell upon a time and tide, though not upon a holiday, a falconer, bringing over certain hawks out of Ireland, and airing them above hatches on shipboard, and giving them stones to cast & scour, one of them broke loose

from his fist ere he was aware, which being in her kingdom when she was got upon her wings, and finding herself empty-gorged after her casting, up to heaven she towered to seek prey, but there being no game to please her, down she fluttered to the sea again, and a speckled fish playing above the water, at it she struck, mistaking it for a partridge. A shark or tuberon, that lay gaping for the flying fish hard by, what did me he, but, seeing the mark fall so just in his mouth, chopped aloft, and snapped her up, bells and all, at a mouthful. The news of this murderous act carried by the kingfisher to the ears of the land fowls, there was nothing but Arm, arm, arm, to sea, to sea, swallow & titmouse, to take chastisement of that trespass of blood & death committed against a peer of their royal blood. Preparation was made, the muster taken, the leaders allotted, and had their bills to take up pay; an old goshawk for general was appointed, for marshal of the field, a sparrowhawk, whom for no former desert they put in office, but because it was one of their lineage had sustained that wrong, and they thought they would be more implacable in condoling and commiserating. The peacocks with their spotted coats and affrighting voices for heralds they pricked and enlisted, and the cock-a-doodling cocks for their trumpeters (look upon any cock, and look upon any trumpeter, and see if he look not as red as a cock after his trumpeting, and a cock as red as he after his crowing). The kestrels or windfuckers, that, filling themselves with wind, fly against the wind evermore, for their full-sailed standard-bearers, the cranes for pikemen, and the woodcocks for demi-lances, and so of the rest every one according to that place by nature he was most apt for. Away to the land's end they trig, all the sky-bred chirpers of them. When they came there, *Aequora nos terrent & ponti tristis imago*, They had wings of goodwill to fly with, but no webs on their feet to swim with, for except the waterfowls had mercy upon them, and stood their faithful confederates and backfriends on their backs to transport them, they might return home like good fools, and gather straws to build their nests, or fall to their old trade of picking worms. In sum, to the water fowls unanimately they recourse, and besought duck and drake, swan and goose, halcyons & sea-pies, cormorants & sea-gulls of their oary assistance & aidful furtherance in this action.

They were not obdurate to be entreated, though they had little cause to revenge the hawks' quarrel from(?) them, having received so many high displeasures and slaughters and rapines of their race, yet in a general prosecution private feuds they trod underfoot, and submitted their endeavours to be at their limitation in everything.

The puffin, that is half fish half flesh (a John Indifferent, and an ambodexter betwixt either) bewrayed this conspiracy to Proteus' herds, or the fraternity of fishes, which the greater giants of Russia & Iceland, as the whale, the sea-horse, the nurse, the wasserman, the dolphin, the grampus fleered and jeered at as a ridiculous danger, but the lesser pygmies & spawn of them thought it meet to provide for themselves betimes, and elect a king amongst them that might deraign them to battle, and under whose colours they might march against these birds of a feather that had so collegued themselves together to destroy them.

Who this king should be beshackled their wits, and laid them a dry ground every one. No ravening fish they would put in arms, for fear after he had everted their foes, and fleshed himself in blood, for interchange of diet he would raven up them.

Some politic delegatory Scipio, or witty-pated Petito, like the heir of Laertes *per apheresin*, Ulysses (well known unto them by his prolixious sea-wandering and dancing on their topless tottering hills) they would single forth, if it might be, whom they might depose when they list if he should begin to tyrannize, and such a one as of himself were able to make a sound party if all failed, and bid base to the enemy with his own kindred and followers.

None won the day in this but the herring, whom all their clamorous suffrages saluted with *Vive le Roi*, God save the King, God save the King, save only the plaice and the butt, that made wry mouths at him, and for their mocking have wry mouths ever since, and the herring ever since wears a coronet on his head, in token that he is as he is. Which had the worst end of the staff in that sea journey or canvazado, or whether some fowler with his nets (as this host of feather-mongers were getting up to ride double) involved or entangled them, or the waterfowls played them false (as there is no more love betwixt them than betwixt sailors and land soldiers), and threw them off their backs, and let them drown when they were launched into the deep, I leave to some Alfonsus, Poggius or Aesop to unwrap, for my pen is tired in it, but this is notorious, the herring, from that time to this, hath gone with an army, and never stirs abroad without it, and when he stirs abroad with it, he sends out his scouts or sentinels before him, that oftentimes are intercepted, and by their parti-coloured liveries descried, whom the mariners after they have took, use in this sort: eight or nine times they swing them about the mainmast, and bid them bring them so many last of herrings as they have swunged them times, and that shall be their ransom, and so throw them into the sea again. King, by your leave, for in your kingship I must leave you, and repeat how from white to red you chameleonized.

It is to be read, or to be heard of, how in the punyship or nonage of Cerdic sands, when the best houses and walls there were of mud or canvas, or poldavy's entiltments, a fisherman of Yarmouth, having drawn so many herrings he wist not what to do withal, hung the residue that he could not sell nor spend in the sooty roof of his shed a-drying, or say thus, his shed was a cabinet in decimo-sexto builded on four crutches, and he had no room in it but in that garret or excelsis to lodge them, where if they were dry, let them be dry, for in the sea they had drunk too much, and now he would force them do penance for it.

The weather was cold, and good fires he kept (as fishermen, what hardness soever they endure at sea, they will make all smoke but they will make amends for it when they come to land), and what with his firing and smoking, or smoky firing, in that his narrow lobby, his herrings, which were as white as whale's bone when he hung them up, now looked as red as a lobster. It was four or five days before either he or his wife espied it, & when they espied it, they fell down on their knees & blessed themselves, & cried, A miracle, a miracle, & with the proclaiming it among their neighbours they could not be content, but to the court the fisherman would, and present it to the king, then lying at Burgh Castle two mile off.

Of this Burgh Castle, because it is so ancient, and there hath been a city there, I will enter into some more special mention. The flood Waveney, running through many towns of high Suffolk up to Bungay, and from thence encroaching nearer and nearer to the sea, with his twining & winding it cuts out an island of some amplitude named Lovingland. The head town in that island is Lowestoft, in which be it known to all men I was born, though my father sprang from the Nashes of Herefordshire.

The next town from Lowestoft towards Yarmouth is Corton, and next Gorleston. More inwardly on the left hand, where Waveney and the river Ierus mix their waters, Cnoberi urbs, the city of Cnobor, at this day termed Burgh or Borough Castle, had his being.

This city and castle, saith Bede and Master Camden, or rather M. Camden out of Bede, by the woods about it, and the driving of the sea up to it, was most pleasant. In it one Fursaesus, a Scot, builded a monastery, at whose persuasion Sigbert, King of the East Angles, gave over his kingdom and led a monastical life there, but forth of that monastery he was haled against his will, to encourage his subjects in their battle against the Mercians, where he perished with them.

Nothing of that castle save tattered ragged walls now remains, framed four-square, and overgrown with briars and bushes, in the stubbing up of which, erstwhiles they dig up Roman coins, and buoys(?) and anchors. Well, thither our fisherman set the best leg before, and unfardled to the king his whole satchel of wonders. The king was as superstitious in worshipping those miraculous herrings as the fisherman, licensed him to carry them up & down the realm for strange monsters, giving to Cerdic sands (the birthplace of such monstrosities) many privileges, and, in that the quantity of them that were caught so increased, he assigned a broken sluice in the island of Lovingland called Herringfleet, where they should disburden and discharge their boats of them, and render him custom. Our herring-smoker, having worn his monsters stale throughout England, spirted overseas to Rome with a pedlar's pack of them in the papal chair of Vigilius, he that first instituted saints' eves or vigils to be fasted. By that time he came thither he had but three of his herrings left, for by the way he fell into the thievish hands of malcontents, and of lance-knights, of whom he was not only robbed of all his money, but was fain to redeem his life besides with the better part of his ambry of burnished fishes.

These herrings three he rubbed and curried over till his arms ached again, to make them glow and glare like a Turkey brooch, or a London vintner's sign thick jagged and round fringed with theaming(?) arsedine, and folding them in a diaper napkin as lily-white as a lady's marrying smock, to the marketstead of Rome he was so bold as to prefer them, and there on a high stool unbraced and unlaced them to any chapman's eye that would buy them. The Pope's caterer, casting a lickerous glance that way, asked what it was he had to sell. The king of fishes, he answered. The king of fishes? replied he. What is the price of him? A hundred ducats, he told him. A hundred ducats? quoth the Pope's caterer. That is a kingly price indeed; it is for no private man to deal with him. Then he is for me, said the fisherman, and so unsheathed his cuttle-bung, and from the nape of the neck to the tail dismembered him, and paunched him up at a mouthful. Home went his Beatitude's caterer with a flea in his ear, and discoursed to his Holiness what had

happened. Is it the king of fishes, the Pope frowningly shook him up like a cat in a blanket, and is any man to have him but I that am king of kings, and lord of lords? Go, give him his price, I command thee, and let me taste of him incontinently. Back returned the caterer like a dog that had lost his tail, and poured down the herring merchant his hundred ducats for one of those two of the king of fishes unsold, which then he would not take, but stood upon two hundred. Thereupon they broke off, the one urging that he had offered it to him so before, and the other that he might have took him at his proffer, which since he refused, and now halpered with him, as he eat up the first, so would he eat up the second, and let Pope or Patriarch of Constantinople fetch it out of his belly if they could. He was as good as his word, and had no sooner spoke the word, but he did as he spoke. With a heavy heart to the palace the yeoman of the mouth departed, and rehearsed this second ill success, wherewith Peter's successor was so in his mulligrubs that he had thought to have buffeted him, & cursed him with bell, book & candle, but he ruled his reason, & bade him, though it cost a million, to let him have that third that rested behind, and hie him expeditely thither, lest some other snatched it up, and as fast from thence again, for he swore by his triple crown no crumb of refection would he gnaw upon till he had sweetened his lips with it.

So said, so done; thither he flew as swift as Mercury, and threw him his two hundred ducats, as he before demanded. It would not fadge, for then the market was raised to three C. and the caterer grumbling thereat, the fisher swain was forward to fettle him to his tools, and tire upon it, as on the other two, had not he held his hands, and desired him to keep the peace, for no money should part them; with that speech he was qualified, and pursed the three hundred ducats, and delivered him the king of fishes, teaching him how to geremumble it, sauce it, and dress it, and so sent him away a glad man. All the Pope's cooks in their white sleeves and linen aprons met him middle way, to entertain and receive the king of fishes, and together by the ears they went, who should first handle him or touch him, but the clerk of the kitchen appeased that strife, and would admit none but himself to have the scorching and carbonadoing of it, and he kissed his hand thrice and made as many humblessos ere he would finger it, and such obeisances performed, he dressed it as he was enjoined, kneeling on his knees, and mumbling twenty Ave Marias to himself in the sacrificing of it on the coals, that his diligent service in the broiling and combustion of it, both to his kingship and to his Fatherhood, might not seem unmeritorious. The fire had not pierced it but it, being a sweaty loggerhead greasy souter, endungeoned in his pocket a twelvemonth, stunk so over the Pope's palace that not a scullion but cried foh, and those which at the first flocked the fastest about it now fled the most from it, and sought more to rid their hands of it than before they sought to bless their hands with it. With much stopping of their noses, between two dishes they stewed it, and served it up. It was not come within three chambers of the Pope but he smelled it, and upon the smelling of it enquiring what it should be that sent forth such a puissant perfume, the standers-by declared that it was the king of fishes; I conceited no less, said the Pope, for less than a king he could not be, that had so strong a scent, and if his breath be so strong, what is he himself? Like a great king, like a strong king, I will use him; let him be carried back, I say, and my cardinals shall fetch him in with dirge and processions under my canopy.

Though they were double and double weary of him, yet his edict being a law, to the kitchen they returned him, whither by and by the whole college of scarlet cardinals, with their crosiers, their censors, their hosts, their Agnus Deis and crucifixes, flocked together in heaps as it had been to the conclave or a general council, and the senior cardinal that stood next in election to be Pope heaved him up from the dresser with a dirge of *De profundis natus est fex; rex*, he should have said, and so have made true Latin, but the spirable odour & pestilent stream ascending from it put him out of his bias of congruity, &, as true as the truest Latin of Priscian, would have queasomed him like the damp that took both Bell and Barrham away, and many a worthy man that day, if he had not been protected under the Pope's canopy, and the other cardinals, with their holy-water sprinkles, quenched his foggy fume and evaporating. About and about the inward and base-court they circumducted him, with Kyrie eleison and Halleluiah, and the chanters in their golden copes and white surplices chanted it out above Gloria Patri in praising of him; the organs played, the ordinance of the Castle of Saint Angelos went off, and all wind instruments blew as loud as the wind in winter in his passado to the Pope's ordinary or dining-chamber, where having set him down, upon their faces they fell flat, and licked every one his ell of dust in ducking on all four unto him.

The busy epitasis of the comedy was when the dishes were uncovered and the swartrutter sour took air, for then he made such an air as Alcides himself, that cleansed the stables of Augeus, nor any hostler, was able to endure.

This is once, the Pope it popped under board, and out of his palace worse it scared him than Neptune's phocasas, that scared the horses of Hippolytus, or the harpies, Jupiter's dogs, sent to vex Phineus; the cardinals were at their *ora pro nobis*, and held this suffocation a meet sufferance for so contemning the king of fishes and his subjects, and fleshly surfeiting in their carnivals. Necromantic sorcery, necromantic sorcery, some evil spirit of an heretic it is which thus molesteth his Apostolicship, the friars and monks caterwauled, from the abbots and priors to the novices, wherefore *tanquam in circo*, we will trounce him in a circle, and make him tell what lanternman or groom of Hecate's close-stool he is, that thus nefariously and proditoriously profanes & penetrates our Holy Father's nostrils. What needs there any more ambages? The ringle or ringed circle was compassed and chalked out, and the king of fishes, by the name of the king of fishes, conjured to appear in the center of it, but *surdo cantant absurdi, siue surdum incantant fratres sordidi*, he was a king absolute, and would not be at every man's call, & if Friar Pendela and his fellows had anything to say to him, in his admiral court of the sea let them seek him, and neither in Hull, hell, nor Halifax.

They, seeing that by their charms and spells they could spell nothing of him, fell to a more charitable suppose, that it might be the distressed soul of some king that was drowned, who, being long in purgatory, and not relieved by the prayers of the church, had leave, in that disguised form, to have egress and regress to Rome, to crave their benevolence of dirges, trentals, and so forth, to help him onward on his journey to limbo patrum or Elysium, and because they would not easily believe what tortures in purgatory he had sustained unless they were eye-witnesses of them, he thought to represent to all their senses the image and idea of his combustion and broiling there, and the horrible

stench of his sins accompanying, both under his frying and broiling on the coals in the Pope's kitchen, & under the intolerable smell or stink he sent forth under either. *Una voce* in this spleen to Pope Vigilius they ran, and craved that this king of fishes might first have Christian burial, next, that he might have masses sung for him, and last, that for a saint he would canonize him. All these he granted, to be rid of his filthy redolence, and his chief casket wherein he put all his jewels he made the coffin of his enclosure, and for his ensainting, look the almanac in the beginning of April, and see if you can find out such a saint as Saint Gildard, which in honour of this gilded fish the Pope so ensainted, nor there he rested and stopped, but in the mitigation of the very embers whereon he was singed (that after he was taken of them, fumed most fulsomely of his fatty droppings), he ordained Ember weeks in their memory, to be fasted everlastingly.

I had well-nigh forgot a special point of my Romish history, & that is how Madam Celina Cornificia, one of the curiousest courtesans of Rome, when the fame of the king of fishes was canon-roared in her ears, she sent all her jewels to the Jewish Lombard to pawn, to buy and encaptive him to her trencher, but her purveyor came a day after the fair, & as he came, so he fared, for not a scrap of him but the cobs of the two herrings the fisherman had eaten remained of him, and those cobs, rather than he would go home with a sleeveless answer, he bought at the rate of fourscore ducats (they were rich cobs you must rate them, and of them all cobbing country chuffs which make their bellies and their bags their gods are called rich cobs). Every man will not clap hands to this tale, the Norwicheers imprimis, who say the first gilding of the herrings was deducted from them, and after this guise they tune the accent of their speech, how that when Castor was Norwich (a town two mile beyond this Norwich, that is termed to this day Norwich Castor, and having monuments of a castle in it environing fifty acres of ground, and ring-bolts in the walls whereto ships were fastened), our Norwich now upon her legs was a poor fisher-town, and the sea spawled and springed up to her common stairs in Conisford Street.

All this may pass in the Queen's peace, and no man say bo to it, but baw-waw, quoth Bagshaw, to that which drawlatcheth behind, of the first taking of herrings there, and currying and gilding them amongst them, whereof, if they could whisper to us any simple likelihood, or raw-boned carcass of reason more than their imaginary dream of Gilding Cross in their parish of St. Saviour's (now stumped up by the roots) so named, as they would have it it, of the smoky gilding of herrings there first invented, I could well have allowed of, but they must bring better cards ere they win it from Yarmouth.

As good a toy to mock an ape was it of him that showed a country fellow the red sea where all the red herrings were made (as some places in the sea where the sun is most transpiercing, and beats with his rays ferventest, will look as red as blood), and the least of a scholar in Cambridge, that standing angling on the town bridge there, as the country people on the market day passed by, secretly baited his hook with a red herring with a bell about the neck, and so conveying it into the water than no man perceived it, all on the sudden, when he had a competent throng gathered about him, up he twitched it again, and laid it openly before them, whereat the gaping rural fools, driven into no less admiration than the common people about London some few years since were at the

bubbling of Moorditch, sware by their christendoms that as many days and years as they had lived, they never saw such a miracle of a red herring taken in the fresh water before. That greedy sea-gull ignorance is apt to devour anything. For a new Messias they are ready to expect of the bedlam hat-maker's wife by London bridge, he that proclaims himself Elias, and saith he is inspired with mutton and porridge, and with them it is current that Don Sebastian, King of Portugal (slain twenty years since with Stukeley at the Battle of Alcazar) is raised from the dead like Lazarus, and alive to be seen in Venice. Let them look to themselves as they will, for I am theirs to gull them better than ever I have done, and this I am sure, I have distributed gudgeon-dole amongst them as God's plenty as any stripling of my slender portion of wit, far or near. They needs will have it so, much good do it them, I cannot do withal. For if but carelessly betwixt sleeping and waking I write I know not what against plebian publicans and sinners (no better than the sworn brothers of candlestick-turners and tinkers) and leave some terms in suspense that my post-haste want of argent will not give me elbow-room enough to explain or examine as I would, out steps me an infant squib of the Inns of Court, that hath not half greased his dining-cap, or scarce warmed his lawyer's cushion, and he, to approve himself an extravagant statesman, catcheth hold of a rush, and absolutely concludeth it is meant of the Emperor of Russia, and that it will utterly mar the traffic into that country if all the pamphlets be not called in and suppressed wherein that libelling word is mentioned. Another, if but a head or a tail of any beast he boasts of in his crest or his scutcheon be reckoned up by chance in a volume where a man hath just occasion to reckon up all beasts in armory, he straight engageth himself by the honour of his house and his never-recoiled sword, to thresh down the hairy roof of that brain that so seditiously mutined against him with the mortiferous bastinado, or cast such an uncurable Italian trench in his face, as not the basest creeper upon pattens by the highway side but shall abhor him worse than the carrion of a dead corse, or a man hanged up in gibbets.

I will deal more boldly, & yet it shall be securely and in the way of honesty, to a number of God's fools that for their wealth might be deep wise men and so forth (as now-a-days in the opinion of the best lawyers of England there is no wisdom without wealth, allege what you can to the contrary of all the beggarly sages of Greece), these, I say, out of some discourses of mine, which were a mingle-mangle-cum-purre(?), and I knew not what to make of myself, have fished out such a deep politic state meaning as if I had all the secrets of court or commonwealth at my fingers'-ends. Talk I of a bear, O, it is such a man that emblazons him in his arms, or of a wolf, a fox or a chameleon, any lording whom they do not affect it is meant by. The great potentate, stirred up with those perverse applications, not looking into the text itself, but the ridiculous comment, or if he looks into it, follows no other more charitable comment that that, straight thunders out his displeasure, & showers down the whole tempest of his indignation upon me, and, to amend the matter, and fully absolve himself of this rash error of misconstruing, he commits it over to be prosecuted by a worse misconstruer than himself, videlicet, his learned counsel (God forgive me if I slander them with that title of learned, for generally they are not), and they, being compounded of nothing but vociferation and clamour, rage & fly out they care not how against a man's life, his person, his parentage, two hours before they come to the point, little remembering their own privy scapes with their laundresses, or their night walks to Pancras, together with the hobnailed houses of their

carterly ancestry from whence they are sprung, that have cooled plow-jades' buttocks time out of mind with the breath of their whistling, and, with retailing their dung to manure lands, and selling straw and chaff, scratched up the pence to make them gentlemen. But, Lord, how miserably do these ethnics, when they once march to the purpose, set words on the tenters, never reading to a period (which you shall scarce find in thirty sheets of a lawyer's declaration) whereby they might comprehend the entire sense of the writer together, but disjoint and tear every syllable betwixt their teeth severally, and if by no means they can make it odious, they will be sure to bring it in disgrace by ill-favoured mouthing and mis-sounding it. These be they that use men's writings like brute beasts, to make them draw which way they list, as a principal agent in church controversies of this our time complaineth. I have read a tale of a poor man and an advocate, which poor man complained to the king of wrong that the advocate had done him in taking away his cow. The king made him no answer but this, that he would send for the advocate and hear what he could say. Nay, quoth the poor man, if you be at that pass that you will pause to hear what he will say, I have utterly lost my cow, for he hath words enough to make fools of ten thousand. So he that shall have his lines banded by our usual plodders in Fitzherbert, let him not care whether they be right or wrong, for they will writhe and turn them as they list, and make the author believe he meant that which he never did mean, and, for a knitting up conclusion, his credit is unreprievably lost that on bare suspicion in such cases shall but have his name controverted amongst them, & if I should fall into their hands I would be pressed to death for obstinate silence and never seek to clear myself, for it is in vain, since both they will confound a man's memory with their tedious babbling, and in the first three words of his apology with impudent exclamations interrupt him, whenas their mercenary tongues (lie they never so loudly) without check or control must have their free passage for five hours together.

I speak of the worsor sort, not of the best, whom I hold in high admiration, as well for their singular gifts of art and nature as their untainted consciences with corruption, and from some of them I avow I have heard as excellent things flow as ever I observed in Tully or Demosthenes. Those that were present at the arraignment of Lopez (to insist in no other particular) hereof I am sure will bear me record. Latinless dolts, saturnine heavy-headed blunderers my invective hath relation to, such as count all arts puppet-plays, and pretty rattles to please children in comparison of their confused barbarous law, which if it were set down in any Christian language but the Getan tongue, it would never grieve a man to study it.

Neither Ovid nor Ariosto could by any persuasions of their parents be induced to study the civil law, for the harshness of it; how much more (had they been alive at this day, and born in our nation) would they have consented to study this uncivil Norman hotchpotch, this sow of lead that hath never a ring at the end to lift it up by, is without head or foot, the deformedest monster that may be? I stand lawing here, what with these lawyers and self-conceited misinterpreters, so long that my red herring, which was hot broiling on the coals, is waxed stark cold for want of blowing. Have with them for a riddle or two, only to set their wits a-nibbling and their jobbernowls a-working, and so good night to their seigniories, but with this indentment and caution, that though there be neither rime nor reason in it (as by my goodwill there shall not), they, according to their accustomed

gentle favours, whether I will or no, shall supply it with either, and run over all the peers of the land in peevish moralizing and anatomizing it.

There was a herring, or there was not, for it was but a cropshin, one of the refuse sort of herrings, and this herring, or this cropshin, was censed and thurified in the smoke, and had got him a suit of durance that would last longer than one of Erra Pater's almanacs, or a constable's brown bill, only his head was in his tail, and that made his breath so strong that no man could abide him. Well, he was a Triton of his time, and a sweet-singing calandra to the state, yet not beloved of the showery Pleiades, or the Colossus of the Sun, however he thought himself another *tumidus Antimachus*, as complete an adelantado as he that is known by wearing a cloak of tuftaffaty eighteen year, and to Lady Turbot there is no demur but he would needs go a-wooing, and offered her for a dower whole hecatombs and a two-hand sword; she stared upon him with Megaera's eyes, like Iris, the messenger of Juno, and bade him go eat a fool's-head and garlic, for she would none of him; thereupon particularly strictly and usually he replied, that though thunder ne'er lights on Phoebus' tree, and Amphion, that worthy musician, was husband to Niobe, and there was no such acceptable incense to the heavens as the blood of a traitor, revenged he would be by one chimera of imagination or other, and hamper and embrake her in those mortal straight(?) for her disdain, that, in spite of divine symmetry & miniature, into her busky grove she should let him enter, and bid adieu, sweet lord, or the cramp of death should wrest her heart-strings.

This speech was no spirable odour to the Achelous of her audience, wherefore she charged him by the extreme lineaments of the Erimanthian bear, and by the privy fistula of the Pierides, to commit no more such excruciating syllables to the yielding air, for she would sooner make her a French hood of a cow-shard, and a gown of spiders'-webs with the sleeves drawn out with cabbages, than be so contaminated any more with his abortive loathly motives; with this, in an Olympic rage, he calls for a clean shirt, and puts on five pair of buskins, and seeketh out eloquent Zenophon, out of whose mouth the Muses spake, to declaim in open court against her.

The action is entered, the complaint of her wintered brows presented, of a violent rape of his heart she is indicted and convinced. The circumstance that follows you may imagine or suppose, or, without supposing or imagining, I will tell you; the nut was cracked, the strife discussed, and the centre of her heart laid open, and to this wild of sorrows and excruciamment she was confined, either to be held a flat thornback or sharp-pricking dog-fish to the weal public, or seal herself close to his sealskinned rivelled lips, and suffer herself as a spirit to be conjured into the hellish circle of his embraces.

It would not be, good cropshin, Madam Turbot could not away with such a dry withered carcass to lie by her; *currat rex, vivat lex*, come what would, she would none of him; wherefore, as a poisoner of mankind with her beauty, she was adjudged to be boiled to death in hot scalding water, and to have her posterity throughly sauced and soused and pickled in barrels of brinish tears so ruthless and dolorous that the inhabitants on Bosphorus should be laxative in deploring it. O, for a legion of mice-eyed decipherers and calculators upon characters now to augurate what I mean by this; the devil, if it stood

upon his salvation, cannot do it, much less petty devils and cruel Rhadamanths upon earth (elsewhere in France and Italy subintelligitur, and not in our auspicious island climate), men that have no means to purchase credit with their prince but by putting him still in fear, and beating into his opinion that they are the only preservers of his life in sitting up night and day in sifting out treasons, when they are the most traitors themselves to his life, health and quiet in continual commacerating him with dread and terror, when but to get a pension, or bring him in their debt, next to God, for upholding his vital breath, it is neither so, nor so, but some fool, some drunken man, some madman in an intoxicate humour hath uttered he knew not what, and they, being starved for intelligence or want of employment, take hold of it with tooth and nail, and in spite of all the waiters, will violently break into the king's chamber, and awake him at midnight to reveal it.

Say that a more piercing Lynceus' sight should dive into the entrails of this insinuating parasite's knavery, to the strappado and the stretching torture he will refer it for trial, and there either tear him limb from limb but he will extract some capital confession from him that shall concern the prince's life and his crown and dignity, and bring himself in such necessary request about his prince as he may hold him for his right hand and the only staff of his royalty, and think he were undone if he were without him, when the poor fellow so tyrannously handled would rather in that extremity of convulsion confess he crucified Jesus Christ than abide it any longer. I am not against it (for God forbid I should) that it behooves all loyal true subjects to be vigilant and jealous for their prince's safety, and, certain, too jealous and vigilant of it they cannot be if they be good princes that reign over them, nor use too many means of disquisition by tortures or otherwise to discover treasons pretended against them, but upon the least wagging of a straw to put them in fear where no fear is, and make a hurly-burly in the realm upon had I wist, not so much for any zeal or love to their princes or tender care of their preservation as to pick thanks and curry a little favour, that thereby they may lay the foundation to build a suit on, or cross some great enemy they have, I will maintain it is most lewd and detestable. I accuse none, but such there have been belonging to princes in former ages, if there be not at this hour.

Stay, let me look about, where am I? In my text, or out of it? Not out for a groat; out for an angel; nay, I'll lay no wagers, for now I perponder more sadly upon it, I think I am out indeed. Bear with it; it was but a pretty parenthesis of princes and their parasites, which shall do you no harm, for I will cloy you with herring before we part.

Will you have the other riddle of the cropshin to make up the pair that I promised you? You shall, you shall (not have it, I mean), but bear with me, for I cannot spare it, and I persuade myself you will be well contented to spare it, except it were better than the former, and yet I pray you, what fault can you find with the former? Hath it any more sense in it than it should have? Is it not right of the merry cobbler's cut in that witty play of *The Case Is Altered*?

I will speak a proud word (though it may be counted arrogancy in me to praise mine own stuff); if it be not more absurd than *Philip's Venus*, *The White Tragedy*, or *The Green Knight*, or I can tell what English to make of it in part or in whole, I wish, in the foulest

weather that is, to go in cut Spanish leather shoes or silk stockings, or to stand barehead to a nobleman and not get of him the price of a periwig to cover my bare crown, no, not so much as a pipe of tobacco to raise my spirits and warm my brain.

My readers peradventure may see more into it than I can, for in comparison of them, in whatsoever I set forth I am *Bernardus non vidit omnia*, as blind as blind Bayard, and have the eyes of a beetle; nothing from them is obscure, they being quicker-sighted than the sun, to spy in his beams the motes that are not, and able to transform the lightest murmuring gnat to an elephant. Carp or descant they as their spleen moves them, my spleen moves me not to file my hands with them, but to fall a crash more to the red herring.

How many be there in the world that childishly deprave alchemy, and cannot spell the first letter of it, in the black book of which ignorant band of scorners it may be I am scored up with the highest; if it be, I must entreat them to wipe me out, for the red herring hath lately been my ghostly father to convert me to their faith, the *probatum est* of whose transfiguration *ex luna in solem*, from his dusky tin hue into a perfect golden blandishment, only by the foggy smoke of the grossest kind of fire that is, illumines my speculative soul what much more, not sophisticate or superficial effects, but absolute essential alterations of metals there may be made by an artificial repurified flame and divers other helps of nature added besides.

Cornelius Agrippa maketh mention of some philosophers that held the skin of the sheep that bare the golden fleece to be nothing but a book of alchemy written upon it, so if we should examine matters to the proof, we should find the red herring's skin to be little less; the accidence of alchemy I will swear it is, be it but for that experiment of his smoking alone, and, which is a secret that all tapsters will curse me for blabbing, in his skin there is plain witchcraft, for do but rub a can or quart-pot round about the mouth with it, let the cunningest lick-spigot swelt his heart out, the beer shall never foam or froth in the cup whereby to deceive men of their measure, but be as settled as if it stood all night.

Next, to draw on hounds to a scent, to a red herring skin there is nothing comparable. The round or cob of it dried and beaten to powder is *ipse ille* against the stone, and of the whole body of itself, the finest ladies beyond seas frame their kickshaws.

The rebel Jack Cade was the first that devised to put red herrings in cades, and from him they have their name. Now as we call it the swinging of herrings when we cade them, so in a halter was he swung, and trussed up as hard and round as any cade of herring he trussed up in his time, and perhaps of his being so swung and trussed up, having first found out the trick to cade herring, they would so much honour him in his death as not only to call it swinging, but cading of herring also. If the text will bear this, we will force it to bear more, but it shall be but the weight of a straw, or the weight of Jack Straw more, who, with the same *Graeca fide* I marded unto you the former, was the first that put the red herring in straw over head and ears like beggars, & the fishermen upon that Jack Strawed him ever after, & some, for he was so beggarly a knave that challenged to be a gentleman, and had no wit nor wealth but what he got by the warm wrapping up of

herring, raised this proverb of him, Gentleman Jack Herring that puts his breeches on his head for want of wearing. Other disgraceful proverbs of the herring there be, as Ne'er a barrel better herring, Neither flesh nor fish, nor good red herring, which those that have bitten with ill bargains of either sort have dribbed forth in revenge, and yet not have them from Yarmouth, many coast towns besides it enterprising to curry, salt and pickle up herrings, but mar them because they want the right feat how to salt and season them. So I could pluck a crow with poet Martial for calling it *putre halec*, the scald rotten herring, but he meant that of the fat reasty Scottish herrings, which will endure no salt, and in one month (bestow what cost on them you will) wax rammish if they be kept, whereas our embarrelled white herrings, flourishing with the stately brand of Yarmouth upon them, scilicet the three half lions and the three half fishes with the crown over the head, last in long voyages better than the red herring, and not only are famous at Rouen, Paris, Dieppe, Caen (whereof the first, which is Rouen, serveth all the high countries of France with it, and Dieppe, which is the last save one, victuals all Picardy with it), but here at home is made account of like a marquess, and received at court right solemnly; I care not much if I rehearse to you the manner, and that is thus.

Every year about Lent-tide, the sheriffs of Norwich bake certain herring-pies (four and twenty, as I take it), and send them as a homage to the Lord of Caister hard by there, for lands that they hold of him, who presently upon the like tenure, in bouncing hampers covered over with his cloth of arms, sees them conveyed to the court in the best equipage; at court when they are arrived, his man rudely enters not at first, but knocketh very civilly, and then officers come and fetch him in with torch-light, where having disfraughted and unloaded his luggage, to supper he sets him down like a lord, with his wax-lights before him, and hath his mess of meat allowed him with the largest, & his horses (quatenus horses) are provendered as epicurely; after this, some four mark fee towards his charges is tendered him, and he jogs home again merrily.

A white pickled herring? Why it is meat for a prince. Hans van den Veken of Rotterdam (as a Dutch post informed me) in bare pickled herring laid out twenty thousand pound the last fishing; he had lost his drinking belike, and thought to store himself of medicines enow to recover it.

Noble Caesarean Charlemagne herring, Pliny and Gesner were to blame they slubbered thee over so negligently. I do not see why any man should envy thee, since thou art none of these lurcones or epulones, gluttons or flesh-pots of Egypt (as one that writes of the Christians' captivity under the Turk enstyleth us Englishmen), nor livest thou by the unliving or eviscerating of others, as most fishes do, or by any extraordinary filth whatsoever, but, as the chameleon liveth by the air, and the salamander by the fire, so only by the water art thou nourished, and naught else, and must swim as well dead as alive.

Be of good cheer, my weary readers, for I have espied land, as Diogenes said to his weary scholars when he had read to a waste leaf. Fishermen, I hope, will not find fault with me for fishing before the net, or making all fish that comes to the net in this history, since, as the Athenians bragged they were the first that invented wrestling, and one Erichthonius

amongst them that he was the first that joined horses in collar couples for drawing, so I am the first that ever set quill to paper in praise of any fish or fisherman.

Not one of the poets aforetime could give you or the sea a good word; Ovid saith, *Nimium ne credite ponto*, The sea is a slippery companion, take heed how you trust him; and further, *Periurij poenas repetit ille locus*, It is a place like hell, good for nothing but to punish perjurers, with innumerable invectives more against it throughout in every book.

Plautus in his *Rudens* bringeth in fishermen cowering and quaking, dung wet after a storm, and complaining their miserable case in this form, *Captamus cibum e mari; si eventus non venit, neque quicquam captum est piscium, salsi lautiq., domum redimus clanculum, dormimus incoenati*, All the meat that we eat we catch out of the sea, and if there we miss, well washed and salted we sneak home to bed supperless, and upon the tail of it he brings in a parasite that flouteth and bourdeth them thus: *Heus vos familia gens hominum ut vivitis? ut peritis?*, Hough, you hunger-starved gubbins or offals of men, how thrive you, how perish you?, and they, cringing in their necks like rats smothered in the hold, poorly replicated, *Vivimus fame, speq., sitiq.*, With hunger and hope and thirst we content ourselves. If you would not misconceit that I studiously intended your defamation, you should have thick hail-shot of these.

Not the lousy riddle wherewith fishermen constrained (some say) Homer, some say another philosopher, to drown himself because he could not expound it, but should be dressed and set before you supernaculum, with eightscore more galliard cross-points and kicksey-winseys of giddy earwig-brains, were it not that I thought you too fretful and choleric with feeding altogether on salt meats to have the secrets of your trade in public displayed. Will this appease you, that are the predecessors of the apostles, who were poorer fishermen than you, that for your seeing wonders in the deep you may be the sons and heirs of the prophet Jonas, that you are all cavaliers and gentlemen since the king of fishes vouchsafed you for his subjects, that for your selling smoke you may be courtiers, for your keeping of fasting-days, Friar Observants, and lastly, that, look in what town there is the sign of the three mariners, the huff-cappet drink in that house you shall be sure of always?

No more can I do for you than I have done, were you my god-children every one; God make you his children, and keep you from the Dunkirks, and then I doubt not but when you are driven into harbour by foul weather, the cans shall walk to the health of *Nashe's Lenten Stuff* and the praise of the red herring, and even those that attend upon the pitch-kettle will be drunk to my good fortunes and recommendums. One boon you must not refuse me in (if you be *boni socij* and sweet Olivers), that you let not your rusty swords sleep in their scabbards, but lash them out in my quarrel as hotly as if you were to cut cables or hew the mainmast overboard, when you hear me mangled and torn in men's mouths about this playing with a shuttlecock or tossing empty bladders in the air.

Alas, poor hunger-starved muse, we shall have some spawn of a goose-quill, or overworn pander, quirking and girding, Was it so hard driven that it had nothing to feed upon but a

red herring? Another drudge of the pudding-house (all whose lawful means to live by throughout the whole year will scarce purchase him a red herring) says I might as well have writ of a dog's turd (in his teeth, surreverence). But let none of these scum of the suburbs be too vinegar tart with me, for if they be, I'll take mine oath upon a red herring and eat it, to prove that their fathers, their grandfathers, and their great-grandfathers, or any other of their kin, were scullions' dish-wash, & dirty draff and swill, set against a red herring. The puissant red herring, the golden Hesperides red herring, the Meonian red herring, the red herring of Red Herrings' Hall, every pregnant peculiar of whose resplendent laud and honour to delineate and adumbrate to the ample life were a work that would drink dry fourscore and eighteen Castalian fountains of eloquence, consume another Athens of facundity, and abate the haughtiest poetical fury twixt this and the burning zone and the tropic of Cancer. My conceit is cast into a sweating-sickness with ascending these few steps of his renown; into what a hot broiling Saint Laurence fever would it relapse then, should I spend the whole bag of my wind in climbing up to the lofty mountain crest of his trophies? But no more wind will I spend on it but this: Saint Denis for France, Saint James for Spain, Saint Patrick for Ireland, Saint George for England, and the red herring for Yarmouth.

FINIS.