

INTRODUCTION

how one can give verbal portraits of figures who have been gone for thousands of years, and can make them walk again among us. With his spells, he calls back the dead.

As he rests, and lets his heroes rest, poised midway between the sinister and the beautiful, the two magic forces of the mountains by whose slopes Bœotia is bounded, so Plutarch is like the Lion of his homeland, Chæronea.

T O

the Most High and Mighty P R I N C E S S

ELIZABETH

By the Grace of GOD,

of ENGLAND, FRANCE and IRELAND

Q U E E N

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, *etc.*

U NDER HOPE of YOUR HIGHNESS' gracious and accustomed favor, I have presumed to present here unto YOUR MAJESTY, Plutarch's Lives translated, as a book fit to be protected by Your Highness and meet to be set forth in English. For who is fitter to give countenance to so many great states than such an high and mighty Princess? who is fitter to revive the dead memory of their fame than she that beareth the lively image of their virtues? who is fitter to authorize a work of so great learning and wisdom than she whom all do honor as the muse of the world? Therefore I humbly beseech Your Majesty to suffer the simpleness of my translation to be covered under the amplex of

NORTH'S DEDICATION

Your Highness' protection. For, most gracious Sovereign, though this book be no book for Your Majesty's self, who are meeter to be the chief story than a student therein, and can better understand it in Greek than any man can make it English, yet I hope the common sort of your subjects shall not only profit themselves hereby but also be animated to the better service of Your Majesty. For among all the profane books that are in reputation at this day there is none (Your Highness best knows) that teacheth so much honor, love, obedience, reverence, zeal, and devotion to princes, as these Lives of Plutarch do. How many examples shall your subjects read here, of several persons and whole armies, of noble and base, of young and old, that both by sea and land, at home and abroad, have strained their wits, not regarded their states, ventured their persons, cast away their lives, not only for the honor and safety, but also for the pleasure of their princes.

Then well may the readers think, if they have done this for heathen kings, what should we do for Christian princes? if they have done this for glory, what should we do for religion? if they have done this without hope of heaven, what should we do that look for immortality? And so adding the encouragement of these examples to the forwardness of their own dispositions, what service is

NORTH'S DEDICATION

there in war, what honor in peace, which they will not be ready to do for their worthy Queen?

And therefore that Your Highness may give grace to the book and the book may do his service to Your Majesty, I have translated it out of French and do here most humbly present the same unto Your Highness, beseeching Your Majesty with all humility, not to reject the good meaning but to pardon the errors of your most humble and obedient subject and servant, who prayeth God long to multiply all graces and blessings upon Your Majesty. Written the sixteen day of January, 1579.

*Your Majesty's most humble
and obedient servant,*

THOMAS NORTH.

NORTH, to *The READER*

THE PROFIT OF STORIES, and the praise of the author, are sufficiently declared by Amyot in his epistle to the reader, so that I shall not need to make many words thereof. And indeed if you will supply the defects of this translation with your own diligence and good understanding, you shall not need to trust him; you may prove yourselves that there is no profane study better than Plutarch. All other learning is private, fitter for universities than cities, fuller of contemplation than experience, more commendable in the students themselves than profitable unto others. Whereas stories are fit for every place, reach to all persons, serve for all times, teach the living, revive the dead, so far excelling all other books as it is better to see learning in noble men's lives than to read it in philosophers' writings. Now, for the author, I will not deny but love may deceive me, for I must needs love him with whom I have taken so much pain, but I believe I might be bold to affirm that he hath written the profitablest story of all authors. For all other were fain to take their matter as the fortune of the countries, whereof they wrote, fell out; but this man, being excellent in wit, learning, and experience, hath chosen the special acts of the best persons of the famoussest nations of the world. But I will leave the judgment to yourselves. My only purpose is to desire you to excuse the faults of my translation, with your own gentleness and with the opinion of my diligence and good intent. And so I wish you all the profit of the book. Fare you well. The four-and-twenty day of January, 1579.

THOMAS NORTH.

T H E
L I V E S
O F T H E N O B L E
G R E C I A N S A N D
R O M A N S

C O M P A R E D T O G E T H E R B Y T H A T
G R A V E, L E A R N E D P H I L O S O P H E R
A N D H I S T O R I O G R A P H E R

P L U T A R C H

O F C H Œ R O N E A

*Translated out of Greek into French by
JAMES AMYOT*

and out of French into English by

T H O M A S N O R T H

T H E T E X T b e i n g p r e p a r e d f o r t h i s E d i t i o n

by R O L A N D B A U G H M A N w i t h a n

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E M I L L U D W I G



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N E W Y O R K

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