

of himself on the occasion: "I do not at all congratulate More or literature, but I do indeed congratulate England, for a better or holier judge could not be appointed."

Many touching and beautiful stories are told of his career as Lord High Chancellor, of his wit, justice and charity, and of his quickness in deciding tedious cases, some of even twenty years' standing. When these were all disposed of, this punning verse was written:

When More some years had Chancellor been,

No more suits did remain:

The like shall never more be seen

Till More be there again.

Ever since Sir Thomas had become Chancellor, the King strove to bring him to his own mind concerning his proposed marriage with Anne Boleyn. Now, he goes so far as to order the clergy to acknowledge him "Supreme Head of the Anglican Church," allowing through the intervention of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, the saving clause, "as far as the law of Christ allows." With the submission of the clergy, More saw the parting of the ways—he had to choose between his conscience as a Catholic and the things of this world. He delivered the great seal into the King's hands on May 16, 1532 in presence of the Duke of Norfolk. On that occasion, Chapuys, the ambassador of Charles V, wrote; "The Chancellor has resigned, seeing that affairs were going on badly and likely to be worse, and that if he retained his office he would be obliged to act against his conscience, or incur the King's displeasure, as he had already begun to do, for refusing to take his part against the clergy. His excuse was that his salary was too small, and that he was not equal to the work. Every one is concerned, for there never was a better man in the office."

On his retirement he thus writes his faithful friend, Erasmus: "That which I have from a child unto this day almost continually wished (my most dear Desiderius), that being freed from the troublesome business of public affairs, I might live some while only to God and myself, I have now by the especial grace of Almighty God, and the favour of my most indulgent prince, obtained." He now devoted his time entirely to his