

And it is not the least debt which we owe unto history, that it hath made us acquainted with our dead ancestors; and, out of the depth and darkness of the earth, delivered us their memory and fame. In a word, we may gather out of history a policy no less wise than eternal; by the comparison and application of other men's fore-passed miseries with our own like errors and ill deservings. . . .

With a most merciless hand [Richard III of England (reigned 1483-1485)] had pressed out the breath of his nephews and natural lords . . . The great outcry of innocent blood ... became a spectacle of shame and dishonour to both his friends and enemies. This cruel king Henry the Seventh [(reigned 1485-1509)] cut off; and was therein (no doubt) the immediate instrument of God's justice. A politic prince he [Henry VII] was, if ever there were any ...

Source: Walter Raleigh, From the Preface to *History of the World*, 1614