A good daughter, neuer trouble thy mind, for anye thyng that euer shall happe me in this worlde. Nothyng can come, but that that God wille. And I make me verye sure, that what soeuer that bee, seme it neuer so badde in sight, it shal in dede be the best. And with thys my good chylde I pray you heartely, be you and all your sisters and my sonnes to, comfortable and seruisable to your good mother my wyfe. And of youre good houshandes mindes I haue no maner dout. Commende me to theym all, and to my
B good daughter Alington, and to all my other frendes, sisters, neces, nephewes, and alies, and vnto all our seruauntes, man, woman, and chylde, & all my good neyghbours and oure acquayntance abrode. And I right heartely, prayse both you and them, to serue God, and be merry and reioyce in hym. And if any thyng happe me that you would be lothe, pray to god for me, but trouble not your selfe as I shall full heartely praye for vs all, that wee maye meete together once in heauen, where we shall make merye for euer, and neuer haue trouble after.

C

¶ A letter written and sente by syr T. More to master doctor Nicholas Wylson (than both prisoners in the tower of London) in the yere of our lorde God. 1534. and in the. xxvi. yere of the raygn of kyng Henry the eyght.

DEare Lorde be youre comfort. And wheras I perceue by sundry meanes, that you haue promised to sweare the othe, I beseche our Lorde geue you theare of good
D lucke, I neuer gaue anye man counsell to the contrarye in my dayes, nor neuer vsed anye wayes to putte anye scruple in other folkes conscience concernyng the matter. And where as I perceyue that you wouldde gladdely knowe what I entende to doe, you wotte well that I tolde you when wee were bothe abrode, that I wouldde therein neyther knowe youre mynde nor no mannes elles: nor you nor no manelles should therein knowe myne. For I wouldde be no parte taker with no manne, nor of trouth neuer I wyll: but leauynge euerye other man to theyr own conscience, my self will with Goddes grace folowe myne owne. For agaynsse myne owne to sweare, were peryll of my dampnacion. And what mine owne shalbe to mo- C
rowe, my selfe cannot be sure. And whither I shall haue finallye the grace to dwe accordynge to myne owne conscience or not, hangeth in goddes gwdnes and not in myne, to whome I beseche you heartelye remember me in your deuoute prayers, and I shall and dayely dwe, remember you in myne, suche as they be. And as longe as my poore short lyfe shall last, anye thynge that I haue youre part shalbe therein.

¶ Another letter wryten and sent by sir Thomas More to master doctor Wilson (than bothe prisoners in ye towre) in the yere of our lord. 1534. and in the. xxvi. yere of the raygne of kyng Henry the eyght. F

GOod maister Wilson in my right herty wyse I recōmend me to you. And very sorye am I to see you, beside the trouble that you be in by this imprisōment, with losse of libertie, gwdes, reuenues of youre lyuelode and coumforte of your frendes companye, fallen G
also into suche agonye and vexacion of mynde, thorowe doutes falling in your mynde, that dyuersye to and fro tosse and trouble youre conscience, to youre great heauines of heart, as I (to no little griefe of myne own mynde for your sake) perceiue. And so muche am I for you good maister doctor the more sorye, for that it lyeth not in me, to geue you suche kynde of coumforte, as me semeth you somwhat desyre and loke for at my hande. For where as you wouldde somwhat heare of my mind in your doutes, H
I am a manne at this daye verye lyttle mete therfore. For this you knowe well good maister doctour, that at suche time as the matter came in suche maner in question, as myne opinion was asked therin amonge other, and yet you made priuie therunto before me, you remember wel that at that time, you and I manye times talked together thereof. And by all the tyme after, in which I dyd at the kynges gracious commaundement both seeke out and reade, and common with all suche as I knewe made priuie to the matter, to perceue what I might therin, vpō both ye sides, & by indifferent wayeng of euerye thinge as nere as my poore wit & lerning wold serue me) to see to which side my cōscience could ēcline, &
as myne

A as myne own mynd should geue me, so to make hys highnes repoꝛt which way my selfe should hap to thinke therin: foꝛ other cõmaũdement had I neuer of his grace in good fayth, sauing ꝑ thys knot hys hyghnes added therto, that I sholde therin loke first vnto god, & after god vnto hym: which wooꝛd was also the fyꝛst lesso that hys grace gaue me what tyme I came fyꝛst into hys noble seruice, and neither a moꝛe indifferent commaũdement noꝛ a moꝛe gracious lesson, could ther in my mynde neuer kyng geue hys counsaylour oꝛ anye his other seruant: but (as I began to tell you) by all thys B long tyme (I cannot now tell you howe many yeres) of all those that I talked w̃ of the matter, & with whõ I most conferred those places of scripture, & of ꝑ olde holye doctours that touched eyther the tone syde oꝛ the tother, w̃ the counsailes & lawes that spake therof also, the mosse (as I trow you wot wel) was your self. Foꝛ w̃ no man cõmuned I so much and so oftẽ therof as with you, both foꝛ your substancial lerning, & foꝛ your mature iudgement, & foꝛ that I well perceiued euer in you, that no man had oꝛ lightly could haue, a moꝛe faythfull respect vn- C to the kinges honour and surety both of body & soule, than I euer sawe that you had. And yet among manye other thynges which I wel liked in you, one specially was, that I perceiued in the thyng that ꝑ kinges grace did put you in truste with, your substaunciall secret maner. Foꝛ wheras I had hearde (I wotte nere now of whom) that you had wꝛitten his highnes a boke of that mater fro Paris beforꝛe, yet in all those yeres of our long acquayntance, & often talking and reasoning vpõ the thing, I neuer herd you so muche as make once any mencion of D that boke. But elles (except ther wer anye other thinges in that boke that you peradũture thought not on) I suppose that all that euer came to your mynd, ꝑ mighte in the matter make foꝛ the tone syde oꝛ the tother, compꝛysed either in ꝑ scripture oꝛ in the olde auncięt doctoꝛs, I verely think in my mynd that you did cõmunicate with me, & I likewyse with you. And at the leastewyse I remember well, that of these poyntes which nowe you call newly to your remembꝛaunce, ther was none at that tyme foꝛgotten. I remember well also, by our often conference in the matter, that by all the tyme in whiche I studied about it, you and I wer in euery poynt both twayne of one opinion. And I remember well, that the E lawes and counsayles, and the woꝛdes of S. Austine *de ciuitate dei*, and the epistle of S. Ambꝛose *ad paternum*, and the epistle of S. Basile translated out of the greke, and the wꝛyting of S. Gregoꝛye, you & I read together: & ouer that the places of the scripture selfe, both in Leuiticus and in the Deuteronomy, & in the ghospels, and in Saynt Paules pystles: and ouer this in that other place of Saynte Austine that you remember nowe: and besyde that, other places of hys, wherin he pꝛoperly toucheth the matter expꝛesly, with the woꝛdes of saynt Hierome & of S. Chꝛisostome tw: & I cannot nowe F remember of how many moe. But I verely thinke that on your part, and I am very sure that on my part (albeit that it had bẽn peradũture ouer long to shew and reade with you euerye mans bokes that I readde by my self, whereto ꝑ perties peradventure that trusted me therwith, gaue me no leue to shew their bokes ferther, as you peradventure vsed ꝑ like maner with me) yet in good faith (as it was of reason my parte in that case to doe, you and I hauing both one cõmaũdement indifferẽtly to consider the matter) euerye thyng of scripture and of the doctours, I faithfully communed with G you: and as I suppose verely so dyd you with me. So that of me good master doctour, though I hadde all the poyntes as ryppe in my minde nowe as I had than, and had still al the bokes about me that I had than, and wer as willyng to meddle in the matter as any man could be, yet could you nowe no new thing heare of me, moꝛe than you haue I wene oftẽ heꝛde beforꝛe: noꝛ I wene I of you neyther. But nowe standeth it with me far in other case. Foꝛ afterward whẽ I had signifyed vnto ꝑ kinges hyghnes myne own pooꝛe opinion in the matter (which H his highnes verye graciously toke in good parte) and that I sawe ferther pꝛogresse in ꝑ matter, wherin do his grace seruice to his pleasure I could not, and any thing medle against his pleasure I wold not, I determined with my self vtterly to discharge my mynde of any ferther studyinge oꝛ musinge on the matter. And thereupon I sent home agayns such bokes as I had: sauing that some I burned by the consente of ꝑ owner, that was minded as my self was, no moꝛe to meddle of the matter. And therfoꝛe now good master doctoꝛ, at this time I could not be sufficient & hable to reason those

poyntes

A poyntes agayne, though I wer minded therto, sith many thinges are out of my mind, which I neither purpose to loke for again, nor though I would, wer neuer like to find again while I liue. Besydes this, al that euer I loked for, was (you wot well) concerning two or thre questions to be pondred & wayed by the studye of scripture and the interpretors of the same, saue for somwhat that hath bẽn touched in the same by the Canon lawes of the church. But than wer ther at that time in the matter other thinges B moe, diuers faultes found in the bull of the dispensacion, by whiche the kynges counsayle learned in the spirituall law, rekoned the bull vicious, partly by reason of vntrue suggestion, partly by reason of suggestion vnsufficiente. Nowe concerning those poyntes, I neuer medled. For I neither vnderstand the doctoures of the lawe, nor well can turne theyr bookes. And manye thynges haue ther synce in this great matter growen in question, wherein I neither am sufficiently learned in the law, nor full enfourmed of the fact. And therfore I am not he, that either murmure or grudge, C make assertions, hold opinions, or kepe despicions in ỳ matter: but like the kinges true pore hũble subiect, dayly pray for the preseruacion of hys grace, & the quenes grace, & theyr noble issue, and of all the realme, without harme doing or entending (I thanke our lord) vnto any man liuing. Finally as touching ỳ oth, the causes for which I refused it, no mã woteth what they be. For they be secret in myne own conscięce, some other peradueuture, than those that other menne woulde wene, & suche as I neuer disclosed vnto any man yet, nor neuer entend D to dwe whyle I liue. Finally as I sayde vnto you, before the oth offred vnto vs, when we met in London at aduenture, I would be no part taker in the matter, but for mine own selfe folow mine own conscięce, for which my selfe must make aunswer vnto God, and shall leaue euery other man to hys owne, so say to you stylll, & I dare saye ferther, that no more neuer entended any of you neither. Many thinges euery man learned wotteth wel ther are, in which euerye man is at libertie without peril of damnacion, to thinke whiche waye him lyst, tyl ỳ tone parte be determined for necessarye to be beleued, by a general counsayl. And I am not he that take vpõ me to defyne or determine, of what kynd or nature euery thing is, that the oth conteyneth: nor E am so bolde or presumpteous to blame or dispraylse the conscience of other mẽ, their trueth nor their learning neither: nor I meddle of no man but of my selfe, nor of no mannes conscience elles will I medle but of mine own. And in myne owne conscience (I crye God mercye) I synde of myne own life matters inough to thynke vppon. I haue liued me thynketh a long lyfe, & nowe neither I loke nor I long to liue much lengar. I haue synce I came in the tower, loked once or twyse to haue geuen vp my ghost ere thys: and in good fayth mine heart wared the lighter with hope therof. Yet for- F get I not that I haue a long reckoning and a great, to geue accounpte of. But I putte my trust in God, and in the merites of his bitter passion, and I beseche hym geue me and kepe me the mynde, to long to be out of this worlde and to be with him. For I can neuer but truste, that whoso long to be with hym, shalbe welcome to him. And on the tother side my minde geueth me verely, that any ỳ euer shal come to him, shal ful heartely wish to be wõ him, ere euer he shall come at him. And I besech him heartely to set G your heart at such rest & quyete, as may be to his plesure & eternal weale of your soule, & so I verely trust that he shortlye shall, and shal also if it be hys pleasure, incline the kinges noble heart to be gracious & fauorable to you & me both, sith we be both twayn of true faithful mind vnto him, whither we be in thys matter of one mind both, or of diuers. *Sicut diuisiones aquarum, ita cor regis in manu domini, quocunque voluerit inclinabit illud.* And if the pleasure of God be, of any of vs bothe otherwyse to H dispose, I nede to geue you no counsaile nor aduice. But for my selfe, I most hũblye beseche hym, to geue me the grace in such wyse paciently to conforme my mynde vnto his hygh pleasure therein, that after the troubelous storme of this my tempestreous tyme, his great mercy maye conducte me into the sure hauyn of the blisseful iope of heauen, and after at his ferther pleasure (if I haue any) al myne enemies too. For there shall we loue together well inough: and I thank our lord for my parte, so dwe I here too. Be not angrye now though I pray not like for you. You be sure inough I wold my frẽdes shold fare no worse thã they, nor yet they so helpe me god no worse than my selfe. For our lordes sake good maister Willson pray for me, for I pray

for

A for you daylye, and sometyme when I
wouldes be sorye but if I thoughte you
were a slepe. Coumfort your selfe good
maister doctoure, with remembryng of
Goddes great mercye, and the kynges
accustomed godnes. And by my trouth
I thinke that all hys graces counsayle
fauoureth you in their hearte. I can-
not iudge in my mynde anye one of the
so euill, as to be of the mynde, that you
shoulde dwe otherwyse than well. And
for conclusion in God is all. *Spes non con-
fundit.* I pray you pardon my scribeling,
for I cannot all thynge so well endure
B to wryte as I might sometyme. And I
praye you when ye see tyme conuenient
at your pleasure, send me this rude bill
agayne *Quia quanquam nihil inestimabili, tamen propter ministrum nolim rescire.*

¶ A letter written & sent by maistres Margaret Roper, to her father syr T. More than shette vp in close prison in the tower, writen in the yere of our Lord god. 1534. & in the. xxvi. yere of the raygn of kyng Henrye the eyght, aunswerynge to a letter which her father had sent vnto her.

C Myne owne moste entierelye beloued father, I thynke my selfe neuer hable to geue you sufficiente thankes, for the inestimable coumforte my poore hearte receiued in the readyng of youre moste louynge and godlye letter, representing to me, the cleare shynyng bryghtenesse of youre soule, the pure temple of the holy spirite of God, which I doubte not shall perpetualye reste in you and you in hym. Father, if all the worlde hadde bee geuen to me, as I be laued it hadde bene a small pleasure, in comparison of the pleasure I conceiued
D of the treasure of youre letter, whiche thoughe it were written with a cole, is woorthye in myne opinion to be wrytten in letters of golde. Father, what moued them to shytte you vppe againe, we can nothynge heare. But surelye I coniecture that when they considered that you wer of so temperate mind, that you were contented to abyde there all your lyfe with suche libertie, they thought it wer neuer possible to enclyne you to their will, excepte it were by restrayning you from the church, and the companye of my good mother youre deare wyfe and vs youre chyldren and bedesfolke. But father this chaunce was not straunge to you. For I shal not forgeat howe you tolde vs when we were with
E you in the gardeyne, that these thinges wer like ynoughe to chaunce you shortlye after. Father I haue manye tymes rehearsed to myne owne coumfort and dyuers others, your fashyon and wordes ye hadde to vs when we were lasse with you: for which I trust by the grace of god to be the better while I liue, and when I am departed oute of this frayle lyfe, which I praye God I maye passe & ende in his true obedient seruice, after the wholesome counsayle and fruitful exaumple of liuing I haue had (good father) of you, whom I pray god geue me grace to folowe: which I shal the better
F thorow the assistaunce of your deuoute prayers, ye specialli kaye of my frayltie. Father I am sorye I haue no lenger laysure at this time to talke with you, the chief comfort of my life, I trust to haue occasion to write again shortly. I trust I haue your daily prayer & blessing.

Your most louing obedient daughter and bedeswomã Margaret Roper, which daily & howrely is boũde to pray for you, for whom she prayeth in this wise, that our lord of his infinite mercye geue you of hys heuely comfort, & so to assist you with hys specialli grace, that ye neuer in
G anything declyne from hys blessed will, but liue and dye his true obedient seruaunt. Amen.

A letter written and sent by syr Thomas More, to his daughter maistres Roper, aunswerynge her letter here next before.

¶ The holy spirite of god be with you.

I F I woulde with my writinge (mine owne good daughter) declare howe much plesure & comforte, your daughterlye louing
H letters were vnto me, a pecke of coales wolde not suffise to make me ye pennes. And other pennes haue I (good Margaret) none here: and therfore can I wryte you no long processe, nor dare aduẽture good daughter to write oftẽ. The cause of my close keping again, dyd of likelyhed grow of my negligent & very playn true word which you remẽber. And verely whereas my mynde gaue me (as I tolde you in the gardeyn) that some such thing wer likely to happen, so doth my mynde alway geue me, ye some folke yet wene that I was not so poore as it appeared in the searche, and that it maye

therfore

A therefore happen, that yet eftsone ofter than once, some newe sodaine searches may happe to be made in euery house of ours, as narowly as is possible. Which thing if euer it so should hap, can make but game to vs ý know the trouth of my pouerty, but if they fynd out my wyues gay gyrdle & her golden bedes. Howbeit I verely beleue in good faith, that the kynges grace of hys benigne pittie, wil take nothing from her.

I thought & yet thinke, that it may be that I was thet vp again, vpõ some new causeles suspiciõ, growen peraduẽture B vpon some secret sinister informacion, whereby some folke happely thought, ý there shold be found out against me some other greatter thinges. But I thanke oure lorde whensoeuer this coniecture hath fallen in my mind, the clearenes of my conscience hath made myne hearte hoppe for ioy. For one thing am I very sure of hetherto, & trust in goddes mercy to be while I liue, that as I haue oftẽ sayd vnto you, I shall for any thing toward my prince, neuer take gret harme but if I take gret wrong, in the sight of God I say, howe so euer it shall seme in C the sight of men. For to ý world, wrong may seme right sometyme by false contecturing, sometime by false witnesses: as that good lord sayd vnto you, which is I dare saye my very good lorde in hys mind, & sayd it of very good will. Before the world also, my refusing of this othe, is accounted an heyghnous offẽce, and my religious feare towarde god, is called obstinacy toward my Prynce. But my lordes of the counsayle before whõe I refused it, myght well perceiue by the heauines of mine heart, appearing well mo wayes than one vnto them, that all D stourdy stubbernes whereof obstinacye groweth, was very farre fro my mind. For ý clearer profe wherof, sith they semed to take for one argumẽt of obstinacie in me, that refusing the othe, I wold not declare ý causes why, I offred with a full heauy hert, ý albeit I rather wold endure al the payn & peril of the statute, thã by the declaring of the causes, geue anye occasion of exaspiracion vnto my mosse dradde souerayn lord and prince, yet rather than his highnes shoulde for not disclosing the causes, accounte me for stubburne and obstinate, I woulde vpon such his gracious lycence and cõmaundement as should discharge me of his displeasure & peril of any statute, declare those poyntes that letted my poore conscience to receue that othe: & woulde E ouer that be sworne before, ý if I holde after the causes disclosed and declared, finde them so aunswered as my conscience shoulde thynke it selfe satisfyed, I would thereupon sweare the oth that I there refused. To this maister Secretary aunswered me, ý though the kynges grace gaue me such a licẽce, yet it could not discharge me against the statutes, in saying anye thing that were by them vppon haynous paynes prohibited. In this good warning he shewed hymselfe my speciall tender frend. And now you see well Margarete, that it is none ob- F stinacy to leaue the causes vndeclared, while I coulde not declare them without perill. But nowe is it accoumpted greate obstinacy, that I refuse the othe whatsoeuer my causes be, considering that of so manye wyser and better men, none stycketh therat. And maister Secretarye of a greate zeale that he bare vnto me, sware there before them a gret othe, that for the dyspleasure that he thoughte the kynges hyghnesse woulde beare me, and the suspicyon that hys grace woulde conceiue of me, whiche woulde nowe thinke in hys mynde that G all the nunnes busynesse was wrought and deuysed by me, he hadde leuer than I should haue refused the othe, that hys owne onely sonne (whiche is a goodlye young gentleman, of whome our lorde send hym much ioy) had hadde hys head stricken of. This woorde Margaret, as it was a meruellous declaracion of M. Secretaries great good mynde and fauour towarde me, so was it an heauye hearynge to me, that the kynges grace my mosst drad souerayn lord, wer likely to conceiue such high suspicion of me, & H beare suche grieuous indignacyon toward me, for the thyng, which without the danger and perill of my poore soule, lay not in my hande to help, nor doothe. Now haue I heard since, that some say ý this obstinate maner of mine, in styll refusing the oth, shal peraduẽture force & driue the kynges grace to make a ferther law for me. I cannot let such a law to be made. But I am verye sure that if I dyed by such a lawe, I shoulde dye for that poynte innocent afore god. And albe it (good daughter) that I thinke, our lord ý hath the heartes of kinges in hys hand, wold neuer suffer of his high goodnes, so gracious a prince, & so many honorable mẽ, & so many good mẽ as be in ý parlement to make such an vnlawful law,

A law, as that should be if it so mischapped, yet lest I note ý poynt vnthoughte vpon, but many times mo than one, reuolued and cast in my minde before my coming hether, both that perill, and all other that might put my bodye in perill of death by the refusyng of this oth. In deuysing wherupon, albeit (mine owne good daughter) that I founde my selfe (I crye god mercye) very sensuall, and my flesshe much more shrinking from payn and from death, than me thought it the part of a faythful christen man, in such a case as my conscience gaue me, that
B in the saueing of my body should stande the losse of my soule, yet I thanke oure lord, that in that conflict, the spirite had in conclusion the mastrye, and reason with help of faythe finallye concluded, that for to be put to death wrongfullye for doing well (as I am very sure I doe, in refusing to swere against mine owne conscience, beyng suche as I am not vpon peril of my soule bound to change whither my death should come without law, or by colour of a law) it is a case in which a man may lese his head and yet haue none harme, but in stede of harme inestimable good at the hand of god. And
C I thanke our lorde (Megge) syncе I am come hither, I sette by death euery daye lesse than other. For though a man lese of hys yeres in thys worlde, it is more than manifold recompensed by coming the sooner to heauen. And though it be a payne to dye whyle a man is in health, yet see I verye fewe that in sickenes dye with ease. And finallye, very sure am I that when so euer the tyme shall come, that may happe to come god wot howe soone, in whiche I should lye sicke in my death bed by nature, I shal than thinke that god had done much for me, if he had
D suffred me to dye before by the colour of suche a lawe. And therefore my reason sheweth me (Margaret) that it wer gret folye for me to be sorye to come to that death, which I woulde after wishe that I had died. Beside that, that a man may happe with lesse thanke of God, & more aduenture of his soule, to dye as violetlye and as paynefullye by manye other chaūces, as by enemies or theues. And therefore myne owne good daughter I assure you (thanke be to God) the thinking of any such, albeit it hath grieued me ere thys, yet at thys day grieueth me nothyng. And yet I knowe well for all thys mine own frailtie, and that Saint Peter whiche feared it much lesse than I, fel in such feare sone after, that at the
E word of a simple gyrle, he forsoke & forsware our sauiour. And therefore am I not (Megge) so madde, as to warraunte my selfe to stand. But I shal praye, and I praye the myne owne good daughter to pray with me, that it maye please god that hath geuen me this mynde, to geue me the grace to kepe it. And thus haue I myne owne good daughter dysclosed vnto you, the very secrete bottom of my mynd, referring the order thereof onely to the goodnes of god, and that so fully, ý I assure you Margaret on my faythe, I neuer haue prayde God to bryngе me hence nor deliuer me fro deathe, but re-
F ferred all thing whole vnto hys onelye pleasure, as to hym ý seeth better what is best for me than my selfe dooth. Nor neuer longed I syncе I came hether, to set my fote in myne owne house, for any desyre of or pleasure of my house: but gladlye woulde I sometime somewhat talke w̄ my frendes, & specially my wife and you that pertein to my charge. But sith that god otherwyse disposeth, I cōmit you all wholy to his goodnes, and take dayly gret coumfort, in that I perceiue that you liue together so charitably and so quyetlye: I beseche our lorde continue it. And thus myne owne good
G daughter, putting you finally in remēbraunce, that albeit if the necessitie so shoulde require, I thanke oure lorde in thys quiet and coumfort is mine hearte at this day, and I trust in goddes goodnes so shall haue grace to continue, yet (as I sayde before) I verelye trusse that god shall so inspire and gouerne ý kynges heart, that he shal not suffer hys noble hearte and courage, to requyte my true faythfull hearte and seruice, with such extreme vnlawful and vncharitable dealing, only for the displesure that
H I cannot thinke so as other dooe. But his true subiect wil I liue and dye, and truely praye for him will I, both here & in the tother worlde too. And thus mine own good daughter haue me recommēded to my good beddefelowe and all my children, men, women, and all, with all your babes and your nursys, and al the maydes and all the seruauntes, and all our kynne, and all our other frendes abrode. And I beseche oure lorde to saue them all and kepe them. And I pray you all pray for me, and I shall pray for you all. And take no thoughte for me whatsoeuer you shall happe to heare, but be mery in god.

A Another letter writen and sent by sir Thomas More (in ye yere of our lord 1534. and in the. 26. yere of king Henry the eyghte) to his doughter maistres Roper, answeryng to a letter whiche she wrote and sent vnto hym.

¶ The holy spirite of god be with you.

YOur doughterly louyng letter, my derely beloued childe, was & is I faithfully assure you, much more inward comforte vnto me, then my penne can wel expresse you, for diuers thyngs B that I marked therein: but of al things most especially, for that god of his high goodnes geueth you the grace to consider, the incōperable differēce, betwene the wretched estate of this present lyfe, and the welthy state of the lyfe to come, for thē that dye in god, and to praye god in suche a good Christen fashion, that it maye please hym (it dothe me good here to rehearse youre owne wordes) of his tender pitie so firmely to rest our loue in him, with litle regard of this world, and so to flee sinne & embrace vertue, that we maye saye wyth saint Paul, *Mihi viuere Christus est & mori lucrum: Et illud, Cupio dissolui & esse cum Christo.*

C I beseche our lorde my dearely beloued daughter, this holesome prayer that he hath put in your mind, it may like him to geue your father the grace, daylye to remember and praye, and your selfe as you haue writen it, euē so daily deuoutlye to kneele & praye it. For surely if god geue vs that, he geueth vs and wil geue vs therewith, all that euer we can well wish. And therfore good Marget, when you pray it, pray it for vs both: & I shall on my part the like, in such maner as it shall lyke oure Lorde to geue me poore wretche the grace, that lykewise as in this wretched worlde I haue bēen very glad of your company & you of mine, & D yet woulde if it myghte be (as naturall charitie bindeth the father & the chylde) so we may reioyce & enioye eche others company, with our other kinsfolke alies and frendes, euerlastynglye in the glorious blisse of heauen: & in the mene tyme, with good counsayle and prayer, ech help other thitherward. And where you write these wordes of youre selfe: But good father I wretche, am farre farre farthest of all other from such poynt of perfeccion, our lord send me the grace to amend my lyfe, & continually to haue an eye to myne ende, without grudge of death, whiche to them that dye in god, is the gate of a welthy lyfe, to whiche god of hys infinite mercy bring vs all Amen. Good father strength my fraylte with your deuoute prayers: The father of heauen mote strēgth thy frailtie my good daughter, and the frailtie of thy fraile father too. And let vs not doute but he so will, if we wil not be slacke in calling vpon him therfore. Of my poore prayers suche as they be, ye may be bold to reckon. For christen charitie, and naturall loue, & youre very daughterlye dealing, *funiculo triplici, qui (vt ait scriptura) difficile rumpitur*, both bynde me and strayn me therto. And of yours I put as little doubte. That you feare your owne fraylte Marget, nothinge misliketh me. God geue vs both twayn the grace, to dispayre of our owne self, and whole to depende and hang vppon F the hope and strength of god. The blissed apostle saint Paule, foūd such lacke of strength in himself, that in his owne temptacion he was fain thrise to call & crye out vnto god, to take that temptacion frō him. And yet sped he not of his prayer, in the maner that he required. For god of his high wisdom, seing that it was (as himselfe saith) necessarye for him to kepe him from pryde, that els he mighte peraduenture haue fallen in, would not at his thrise praying, by and by take it from him, but suffred him to be panged in the payn and feare therof, geuing him yet at the last this comfort G against his feare of falling: *Sufficit tibi gratia mea.* By which wordes it wel semeth, that the tēptation was so strong (what so euer kind of temptacion it was) that he was very feard of falling, thorowe ye fieblenes of resistinge that he began to feele in himselfe. Wherto for his comfort God aunswered: *Sufficit tibi gratia mea:* putting hym in suretie, that were he of himselfe neuer so fieble and faynte, nor neuer so likelye to fall, yet the grace of god was sufficient to kepe him vp and make him stand. And our lord sayd ferther: *Virtus mea in infirmitate perficitur.* The H more weake that manne is, the more is the strength of God in his safegard declared. And so Saynt Paule saith: *Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat.* Surely Megge a faynter hearte than thy fraile father hath, canst thou not haue. And yet I verely trust in the great mercye of God, ye he shal of his goodnesse so staye me with his holy hand, ye he shal not finallly suffer me to fall wretchedlye from hys fauour. And the like truste (deare daughter) in his gigh goodnesse, I verely con-

A ceue of you. And so muche the more, in that ther is neither of vs both, but that if we call his benefites to minde, & geue him oft thankes for them, we may find tokens many, to geue vs good hope, for all our manifold offences toward him, ý his great mercy, when we wil hertely call therefore, shall not be withdrawen from vs. And verely my dere daughter in this is my great comforte, ý albeit I am of nature so shrinking from payne, that I am almost afeard of a philip, yet in all ý agonies that I haue had, wherof before my coming hether (as I haue shewed you ere this) I haue had neither small nor few, with heauy fereful hert, forecasting all such perils and painfull
B dethes, as by any maner of possibilitie might after fall vnto me, & in such thought lyen oft long restles and waking, while my wife had went I had slept, yet in anye suche feare and heauye pensifenes (I thinke the mighty mercye of God) I neuer in my mynde entended to consent, that I would for the enduring of the vttermost, doe any such thing, as I should in myne owne conscience (for with other mennes, I am not a manne mete to take vpon me to medle) thinke to be to my selfe, such as shoulde dampnably cast me in the displeasure of god. And this is the least poynt that any mā
C may with his saluacion coin to, as farre as I can see, & is bounden if he see peril, to examine his conscience surely by lernyng and good counsaile, & be sure that his conscience be such as it may stande with his saluaciō, or els reforme it. And if the matter be such, as both the partys may stand with saluacion, then on whi ther sides his conscience fal, he is safe ynough before god. But that mine own, may stand wmine own saluaciō, therof I thank our lorde I am very sure. I besech our lord brīg al partes to his bitte. It is now my good doughter late. And
D therfore thus I commend you to the holy trinitie, to gyde you, comfort you, & direct you with his holy spirite, and all yours, and my wife with al my childrē and all oure other frendes.

Thomas More
Knyght.

A letter writen by sir Thomas More to one master Leder a verteous priest the. 16. day of January, in the yere of our lord. 1534. after the computaciō of the church of England, & in the. 26 yere of the raigne of king Henry ý. 8.

THe tale that is reported, albeit I cannot but thank you though ye wold it wer true, yet I thank god it is a very vanitye. And I trust in the great goodnes of god, that he shal neuer suffer it to bee true. If my mynde hadde bene obstinate in dede, I wold not let for any rebuke or worldly shame, playnely to confesse the trouthe. For I purpose not to depend vppon the fame of the worlde. But I thanke oure lord that the thyng that I do, is not for obstinacye, but for the saluacion of my soule, because I cannot enduce myne owne minde, otherwise to think than I doe concerning the othe. As for other mennes conscience I will bee no iudge
F of, nor I neuer aduised any manne neyther to sweare nor to refuse. But as for mine owne self, if euer I should misshap to receue ý othe (which I trust our lord shal neuer suffer me) ye may reckeu sure ý it wer erpressed & extorted by duresse & hard handling. For as for al ý goodes of this world, I thank our lord I set not much more by, than I do by dust. And I trust both ý they wil vse no violent forcible wayes, and also that if they wold, god would of his grace (and the rather a great deale through good folkes prayers) geue me strength to stand. *Fidelis deus* saith saint Poule, *qui non patitur vos tentari supra id quod potestis ferre, sed et dat cum tentatione pro*
G *uentum, vt possitis sustinere.* For this am I very sure, ý if euer I should swere it, I shold swere deadly sore against myne owne cōscietce. For I am very sure in my mind, that I shall neuer be hable to chaunge myne owne conscience to the contrary. As for other mennes I wyll not medle of. It hath bene shewed me, that I am reckened wylfull and obstinate, because that synce my commyng hether, I haue not wrytten vnto the kynges hyghnesse, and by myne owne writing made somme sute vnto his grace. But in good faythe I doo not forbeare it of anye obstinacye, but rather of a low-
H ly mynde and a reuerente, because that I see nothynge that I coulde wrote, but that I feare me fore, that his grace were lykely, rather to take displeasure with me for it than otherwyse, whyle his grace beleueth me not that my conscyence is the cause, but rather obstynate wylfulnesse. But surelye that my lette is but my conscyence that knoweth Godde, to whose order I commytte the whole matter, *In cuius manu cordā regū sunt*. I beseche oure Lorde that all

may

I may prone as true faythfull subiectes to the king that haue sworne, as I am in my minde very sure, that they be which haue refused to swere. In hast this saterday the.16. daye of Januarye. By the hand of your bedes man

Thomas More
knight prisoner.

A letter writen and sent by sir Thomas More to his doughter maystres Rooper, writē the second or third day of May, in the yere of our lord.1535. & in the.27. yere of the raygne of kynge Henry the.8.

B

Our lorde blisse you.

My derely beloued doughter, I doubt not but by the reasō of the kinges counsellers resorting hither, in this tyme in which (our lorde be theyr cōforte) these fathers of the charterhouse and master Reynoldes of Sion, be now iudged to death for treason (whose matters and causes I know not) may happe to put you in trouble and feare of mind, concerning me being here prisoner, specially for that it is not vnlikely, ý you haue harde that I was brought also before the counsayle here my selfe. I haue thought it necessary to aduertise you of the verye trouthe, to thende that you shoulde neyther conceyue more hope than the matter geueth, lesse vppon a nother torne it myght agreue your heuinesse: nor more griefe and feare than the matter geueth, on the tother syde. Wherefore shortly ye shal vnderstand, that on frydaye the laste daye of Aprylll in the afternone, master Leuetenaunt came in here vnto me, and shewed me that master Secretarye woulde speake with me. Whereuppon I shyfted my gown, and wēt out with master Leuetenante into the galery to hym, where I mette manye, some knowen and some vnknowne in the waye. And in conclusion commyng into the chamber where hys mastershippe sat, wyth master Attorney, master Solicitor, master Fedyll and master doctor Tregonwell, I was offered to sitte downe with them, whiche in no wyse I woulde. Whereupon master Secretary shewed vnto me, that he doubted not, but that I had by suche frendes as hyther had resorted to me, sene the newe statutes made at the laste sittyng of the parlement. Wherunto I aunswered: ye verely. Howe be it for as much as beyng here, I haue no cōuersaciō with any people, I thought it lytle nede for me to bestowe muche tyme vppon theym, and therefore I redeliuered the boke shortly, and theffect of the statutes I neuer marked nor studyed to putte in remembraunce. Then he asked me whyther I hadde not redde the fyrste statute of them, of the kynge beyng hedde of the churche. Whereunto I aunswerde, yes. Than his mastership declared vnto me, that sythe it was nowe by acte of parlemente ordeyned, that his highnes and his heyres be, and euer of right haue bene, and perpetualye should be, supreme head in earth of the churche of Englande vnder Christ, ý kinges pleasure was, that those of his counsayle there assembled, shoulde demaunde myne oppinion, and what my mynde was therein. Whereunto I answered, that in good fayth I hadde wel trusted, that the kynges hyghnesse woulde neuer haue commaunded anye suche question to be demaunded of me, cōsideryng ý I euer frō the beginning, well and truelye from tyme to tyme declared my mynde vnto his highnesse: & since that time (I sayd) vnto youre masershippe master Secretary also, bothe by mouth and by writyng. And now I haue in god faith discharged my minde of all suche maters, and neither wyll dispute kynges titles nor popes: but the kinges true faithfull subiect I am and will be, and dayly I praye for him, and al his, and for you al that are of his honorable counsaile, & for al ý realm. And otherwyse than this, I neuer entende to medle. Whereunto master Secretarye answered, that he thoughte this maner of answere should not satisfy nor contēt the kinges highnes, but that hys grace would exact a more full answere. And his mastership added therunto, that the kinges highnes was a prince, not of rygour but of mercy & pitie. And thoughe ý he had found obstinacy at some tyme in any of his subiectes, yet whē he shold fynde them at an other tyme conformable and submytte thē selfe, his grace woulde shewe mercye: and that concernyng my selfe, his highnesse would be gladde to see me take such conformable wayes, as I myghte bee abrode in the worlde agayne among other menne as I haue bene before. Whereunto I

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A shortlye (after the inwarde affeccion of my minde) answerd for a very trouth, ý I wouldе neuer medle in the worlde agayn, to haue the world geuen me. And to the remenaunt of the matter, I answerd in effect as before, shewyng that I had fullye determined with my selfe, neyther to studye nor medle wyth anye matter of this world, but that my whole study should be, vpon ý passiō of Christ, & mine own passage out of this worlde. Vppon this I was commaunded to goo forth for a while, and after called in again. At which time master Secretarye
B sayd vnto me, that though I wer a prisoner condemned to parpetual prison, yet I was not thereby discharged of myne obedyence and allegeaunce vnto the kynges hyghnes. And thereuppon demaunded me, whither that I thought, ý the kynges grace myght not exact of me such thinges as are cōteined in the statutes, and vpon lyke paines as he might vppon other men. Wherto I answered that I would not say the contrarye. Wherunto he sayde, that lykewyse as ý kinges hyghnesse would be gracious to them that he found conformable, so his grace wouldе folowe the course of hys lawes towarde suche as he shall fynde
C obstinate. And his mastership said farther, that my demeanour in that matter was a thing, that of likelyhode made other so stiffe therein as they be. Wherto I aunswerde, that I geue no manne occasion to holde any poynt one or other, nor neuer gaue anye manne aduise or counsayle therin one way or other. And for conclusion I couldе no farther go, whatsoeuer payne should come therof. I am (quod I) the kinges true faythfull subiecte and daily bedesman, and prayе for his highnesse and all his and all the realme. I doo no body no harme, I say
D none harme, I thynke none harme, but wishe euerye bodye good. And yf this be not ynoughe to kepe a manne alyue, in good fayth I longe not to lyue. And I am dyinge all readye, and haue synce I came here, bene diuers tymes in the case that I thoughte to dye within one howre. And I thanke oure Lorde I was neuer sorye for it, but rather sorye when I sawe the pange passe. And therefore my poore bodye is at the kynges pleasure. Wouldе God my death myghte doo hym good. After this master Secretarye saide: well ye fynde no faulte in that statute: finde you anye in any of the other statutes after? Wherto I aunswerd, Sir, whatsoeuer thynge
E shouldе seme to me other than good, in anye of the other statutes or in that statute either, I wouldе not declare what fault I found, nor speake therof. Wher vnto finally his mastership sayd ful gētily, that of anye thyng that I had spoken, there should none auauntage be taken. And whether he sayde farther that thers was none to be taken, I am not well remembred. But he saide that report shouldе bee made vnto the kinges highnes, and hys gracious pleasure knowen. Wheruppon I was deliuered agayne to master Leuetenaunt, whiche was then called in. And so was I by
F master Leuetenant brought agayn into my chamber. And here am I yet in such case as I was, neyther better nor worse. That that shall folowe lyeth in the handе of god, whom I beseche to put in the kynges graces mynde, that thing that may be to his high pleasure, and in mine, to minde onely the weale of my soule, with litle regard of my body, and you with al yours, and my wyfe, and al my children, and all our other frendes, both bodily and ghostly hartely well to fare. And I pray you and them all pray for me, and take no thought whatsoeuer
G shal happen me. For I verely trust in ý goodnes of god, seme it neuer so euyl to this worlde, it shall in dede in a nother world be for the best.

Your louing father Thomas More Knyghte.

A nother letter written and sent by syr Thomas More to his doughter maistres Roper, written in ý yeare of our lord. 1535. and in the. 27. yere of the raygne of king Henry the. 8.

H

Our Lorde blesse you and all yours.

Forasmuche (dearely beloued doughter) as it is likeli, ý you eyther haue hard, or shortlye shall here, that the counsayle were here thys day, and that I was before theym, I haue thoughte it necessarye to sende you worde howe the matter standeth. And verelye to bee short, I perceue little differēce betwene this time and the last. For as farre as I can see, the whole purpose is, eyther to

A dryne me to say precisely the tone way, or elles precisely the tother. Here sate my lord of Canterbury, my lord chaūcellour, my lord of Suffolke, my lorde of Wilthyre, and maister Secretarye. And after my coming, maister Secretarye made rehearsall in what wyse he had reported vnto the kinges hyghnes, what had bēn sayd by hys graces coūsayle to me, and what had ben aunswered by me to them, at myne other being before them here last. Which thyng his maistership rehearsed in good sayth very wel, as I knowledged and confessed, B & hertely thanked him therfore. Wherupon he added therūto, that the kinges highnes was nothing contēt nor satisfyed with myne aunswer: but thought that by my demeanor, I had bēn occasion of much grudge and harme in the realme, & that I had an obstinate mind and an euill towarde him, and that my duetie was being hys subiect (and so he had sent them nowe in hys name vpon myne allegeaunce to commaunde me) to make a playne and a terminate aunswere, whether I thoughte the statute lawfull or not. And that I shold eyther C knowledge and confesse it lawful, that his highnes shoulde be supreme head of the churche of Englande, or elles vtter playnly my malignitie. Wherto I aūswered, that I had no malignitie, and therfore I could none vtter. And as to the matter I coulde none other aūswer make, than I had before made, which e aunswere his maistership had there rehearsed. Very heauy I was that ý kinges highnes shoulye haue any such opinion of me. Howbeit if ther were one ý had enformed his highnes manye euill thinges of me ý were vntrue, to whiche hys highnes for the time gaue credence D I wold be very sorry that he should haue that opinion of me the space of one day. Howbeit if I wer sure that other shold come on the morowe, by whō his grace should know the trouth of myne innocency, I should in the meane whyle cōfort my self with consideracion of that. And in lykewise now, though it be gret heauines to me, that his highnes hathe suche opinion of me for the whyle, yet haue I no remedy to helpe it, but onely to comfort my self with this consideracion, that I know very well ý the tyme shall come, when God shall declare my trueth toward his grace, before hym & all the worlde. And whereas it mygyte happely seeme to be but small cause of coumfort, because I might take harme E here fyrste in the meane whyle, I thanked God that my case was such here in this matter, thorowe the clearenesse of myne owne conscience, that though I myght haue payne, I coulde not haue harme. For a man maye in such a case lese his head and haue none harm. For I was very sure, that I had no corrupt affection, but that I had alway fro the begynning truely vsed my self, lokyng fyrst vpon god, and nert vpon the king, accordinge to the lesson that hys hyghnes taught me at my fyrst cumming to his noble seruice, the most verteous lesson that euer prince taughte his seruāt. F whose highnes to haue of me now such opinion, is my greate heauines. But I haue no meane as I said to helpe it, but only comfort my self in the meane time with the hope of ý ioyfull day, in which my trouthe towarde hym shall well be knowen. And in this matter further I could not goe, nor other aunswer therto I coulde not make. To thys it was sayd by my lord chauncellour and maister Secretary both, that the kyng might by his lawes compell me to make a plain answer therto, either ý tone way G or the tother. Wherto I answered that I would not dispute the kynges authoritie, what his highnes myght dooe in such a case. But I sayd that verely vnder correction, it semed to me sumwhat hard. For if it so wer that my consciēce gaue me agaynste the statute (wherein how my conscience geueth me I make no declaracion) than I nothyng doing nor nothing saying agaynst the statute it wer a very hard thing, to compell me to say, either precisely with it agaynste H my conscience to the losse of my soule, or precisely agaynst it to the destruction of my body. To this maister Secretarye sayde, that I had ere thys when I was chauncellour, examined heretikes and theues and other malefactours, & gaue me a great praise aboue my deserving in that behalf. And he sayd that I than as he thought, and at the leastwise bishops, did vse to examine heretykes, whether they beliewed the Pope to bee head of the church, and vsed to compell them to make a precise answer therto. And why shoulde not than the kynge, sith it is a law made here that his grace is head of the churche here, compell mē to aunswer precisely to the law here, as they dyd than concerning the Pope, I aunswered and sayde, that I protested

A that I entended not to defend my part, or stand in contencion. But I said thet was a difference betwene those two cases, because that at that tyme, as well here as elles where thorow the corps of christendome, the popes power was recognised for an vndouted thing: which seneth not lyke a thyng agreed in thys realme, & the contrary taken for trueth in other realmes. Wherto maister Secretarye aunswered, that they were as well burned for the denying of that, as they be beheaded for ỳ denying of this: and therefore as good reason to compell
B them to make precyse aunswere to the tone, as to the tother. Whereto I aunswered, ỳ sith in thys case a man is not by a law of one realme so bound in hys conscience, where there is a law of the whole corps of christendom to the contrary in matter touching beliefe, as he is by a law of the whole corps, though there happe to be made in some place a law locall to the contrary, the reasonablenes or the vnreasonablenes in bynding a man to precyse aunswere, standeth not in the respect or dyfference betwene headdyng and burnyng: but because of the difference in charge of con-
C science, the differēce standeth betwene heading and hell. Much was there aūswered vnto this, bothe by maister Secretarye and my lorde chauncellour, ouer long to rehearse. And in concluslō they offered me an othe, by whiche I sholde be sworne to make true aunswer to such thinges as shoulde be asked me on the kinges behalfe, concerninge the kynges owne persone. Wherto I aunswerd, that verely I neuer purposed to swere any boke oth more while I liued. Than they sayd that I was very obstinate if I would refuse that, for euerye
D man doth it in the sterre chaumber and euery where. I sayd that was true: but I had not so litle foresighte, but that I might well coniecture what should be parte of myne interrogatories: and as good it was to refuse theim at the fyrst, as afterward. Wherto my lord chauncellour aunswered, that he thoughte I geast trouth, for I should see them. And so they wer shewed me, & they were but twayn: the fyrst, whether I had seen the statute: the tother, whether I beleued ỳ it were a lawfull made statute or not. Wherupon I refused the othe, and said ferther by mouth, that the fyrst I hadde before confessed: & to the second I wold make none answer: which was the end of our cōmunicacion, and I was therbpon sent away. In the cōmunicacion E before, it was said that it was meruayled, that I stacke so much in my conscience, whyle at the vttermost I was not sure therin. Wherto I said, that I was very sure, that myne own conscience so enfourmed as it is, by suche diligēce as I haue so long taken therin, may stand with myne own saluacion. I medle not with the conscience of them that thinke otherwise. Euery man *suo damno stat aut cadit*. I am no mannes iudge. It was also sayde vnto me, that if I had as liefe bee out of the world as in it, as I had there sayde, why dyd I not than speake euen F playne oute agaynst the statute? It appeared well I was not content to dye, though I sayd so. Wherto I answered as the trouth is, that I haue not been a man of such holy liuing, as I myght be bolde to offer my self to death, lest God for my presumpcion might suffer me to fall: and therfore I put not my self forward but draw backe. Howbeit if god draw me to it himself, than trusse I in hys great mercy, that he shall not fayle to geue me grace and strength. In conclusion maister Secretarye sayde, that he lyked me this day much worse than he dydde the last tyme. For than he said he pitied me muche, & now he thought G I meante not well. But God and I knowe both, that I meane well, and so I praye God dw by me. I praye you be you and myne other good fredes of good chere whatsoeuer falle of me, and take no thought for me, but pray for me, as I dw and shall for you and all them.

Your tender louing father
Thomas More knight.

H Syr Thomas More a litle before he was arrayned and condemned (in the yere of oure lord. 1535. and in the. xxvii. yere of the raygn of kyng Henry the eight) being shit vp so close in prison in the tower that he had no penne nor inke, wrote with a cole a pistle in latine to maister Anthony Bonuyse (marchant of Luke and than dwellyng in London) his olde and deare frende, & sent it vnto hym, the copye whereof here foloweth.

*Amico-*

A Micorum amicissimè, & merito mihi charissime, salue. Quoniã mihi presagit animus (fortasse falso, sed presagit tamen) haud diu mihi superfuturam ad te scribendi facultatem, decreui dum licet, hoc saltem epistolio significare, quantum in hoc fortunæ meæ deliquio, B amicitiæ tuæ iucunditate reficiar. Nam ante quidem vir ornatissime tametsi mirifice certe semper amore isto in me tuo delectatus sum, tamen recordanti mihi annos iam prope quadraginta perpetuũ Bonuisæ domus non hospitem, sed alũnum fuisse me, nec amicũ interim vlla rependenda gratia, sed sterilem tantum amatorem prestitisse, C verecundia mea profecto fecerat, vt syncera illa suauitas, quam alioqui ex amicitiæ vestræ cogitatione deglutiebam, paululũ quiddam pudore quodam rustico, tanq; neglectæ vicissitudinis subacesseret. Verum enimuero nunc hac ego me cogitatione consolor, quod bene vicissim mihi merendi de te, nunq; se D præbebat occasio. Ea siquidẽ amplitudo fortunæ tuæ fuit, vt commodandi tibi nullus mihi relinqueretur locus. Conscuis igitur mihi non officij neglectu vicem non repẽdisse me, sed quia deficiebat occasio, quum iam te conspiciam, etiam sublata rependendi spe, sic in me amando & demerendo persistere, immo adeo progredi poti°, & cursu quodam indefesso procurrere, vt pauci sic amicos fortunatos ambiãt, quo- E modo tu prostratum, abiectum, afflictum, & adductum carceri, Morum tuum diligis, amas, foues, & obseruas, cum pristini pudoris mei quali quali me amaricie abluo, tum in huius admirabilis amicitiæ tuæ suauitate conquiesco. Et nescio quo pacto tam fidelis amicitiæ prosperitas, videtur mihi cum hoc impro- F spero et classis meæ naufragio propemodum paria facere: certe tollatur indignatio non amati mihi minus quám metuendi principis, quod ad reliqua pertinet propemodum plus quám paria, quippe quum illa sint inter fortunæ mala numeranda omnia. At amicitiæ tam constantis possessionem, quam tam aduer- G sus fortunæ casus non eripuit, sed ferruminauit fortius, amens profecto fuerim, inter caduca fortunæ bona si numerem. Sublimius haud dubie bonum est atq; angustius peculiari quadam dei benignitate pro ueniens, amicitiæ tam fidelis & re- H flante fortuna constantis, raro concessa felicitas. Ego certe non aliter accipio atque interpretor quám eximia dei miseratione curatum, vt inter tenues amiculos meos, tu vir talis, amicus tantus, iam longo ante tempore parareris, qui magnam istius molestiæ partẽ, quam mihi ruentis in me fortunæ moles inuexit, tua consolatione lenires ac releuares. Ego igitur mi Antoni mortaliũ mihi omniũ charissime (quod solũ possum) Deum

A op.max.qui te mihi prouidit, obnixe deprecor, vt quando tibi talem debitorē dedit qui nunq; soluendo sit futurus, beneficentiā istam quā mihi quotidie tam effusus impēdis ipse tibi dignetur pro sua benignitate rependere, tum vt nos ab hoc erumnoso & procelloso seculo in suam requiem pro sua miseratione B perducat, vbi non erit opus epistolis, vbi non distinebit nos paries, vbi non arcebit a colloquio ianitor, sed cum deo patre ingenito, et vnigenito eius filio domino & redemptori nostro Iesu Christo, atq; vtriusque spiritu ab vtroque procedēte paracleto, gaudio perfruamur eterno. Cuius interea gaudij desiderio faxit omnipotēs deus, vt tibi mi C Antoni, mihiq;, atq; vtinam mortalibus vndecunque omnibus, omnes huius orbis opes, vniuersa mundi gloria, necnon istius quoque dulcedo vitæ vilescat. Amicorum omniū fidissime mihique dilectissime, & (quod predicare iam olim soleo) oculi mei pupilla vale. Familiam tuam totam, herili in me affectui simillimam, Christus seruet incolumem. D

T. Morus frustra fecero si adijciam tuus. Nam hoc iam nescire non potes, quū tot beneficijs emeris. Nec ego nunc talis sum, vt referat cuius sim.

¶ The translacion into englische of the laten pistle next before. E

GOod maister Bonoyse of all frendes most frendliest, and to me worthely derelicst beloued, I heartely greete you. Sith my mynd doth geue me (yet may chaunce falsly) but yet so it doth, that I shal not haue long libertie to wryte vnto you, I determined therefore whyle I maye, to declare vnto you by this litle epistle of myne, how much I am comforted with the swetenes of your frendshyp, in thys decaye of my fortune. For afore (righte worthipfull syr) although I alway delyted merueylouslye in thys your loue towardes me, yet when I consider in my mind, that I haue bēn now almost this fourtie yeares, not a geaske, but a continuall nurslynge in maister Bonuice house, & in the meane season haue not shewed my self in requyting you agayne, a frend, but a barrayn louer only, my shamefastnes verelye made, that that sincere swetenes, which otherwise I receiued of the reuolynge of youre frendship, somewhat wared sowrishe, by reason of a certayne rusticall shame as neglecting of my datie toward you. F But now I comfort my self with this, that I neuer had the occasion to do you G pleasure. For such was alwayes your greate wealth, that there was nothing left, in whiche I might be vnto you beneficiall. I therefore (knowing ý I haue not bēn vnthankefull to you by omyttynge my duetie towardes you, but for lacke of occasion and opportunitie, and seeing moreouer al hope of recompence taken away, you so to perceuer in loue toward me, byndyng me more & more to you, ye rather so to runne forewarde styll, and as it wer with a certayne indetatigable course to goe furth, ý sewe H menne so fawne vppon theyr fortunate frendes, as you fauoure, loue, foster & honour me, nowe ouerthrowne, abiected, afflicted, and condemned to prison) cleanse my selfe both from thys bitternes (suche as it is) of myne olde shamefastnes, and also repose my selfe in the swetenesse of thys merueylous frendship of yours. And this faithful prosperitie of this amitie and frendshippe of yours towardes me (I wot not howe) semeth in a maner to counterpeyse this vnfortunate shipwracke of myne, and sauing the indignacion of my Prince, of me no lesse loued than feared, els as

concer-

G concernyng all other thinges, doth almost more thē coūterpaise. For al those are to be accompted amongest the mischaunces of fortune. But yf I shoulde reken the possession of so constant frēdshippe (whiche no stormes of aduersitie hath taken away, but rather hath fortified and strengthed) amongest the brittle giftes of fortune, than were I madde. For the felicitye of so faithfull and constant frendshippe in the stormes of fortune (whiche is seldome sene) is doutles a high and a noble gifte procedyng of a certain singuler benignity of god. And in dede as concerning my self, I cannot otherwise take it nor recken it, but that
B it was ordeined by the greate mercye of god, that you good master Bonuyse amongest my poore frendes, suche a man as you are and so great a frende, should be long afore prouided, that shoulde by your consolacion, swage and releaue a greate part of these troubles and griefs of myne, which the hougenes of fortune hath haskely brought vpō me. Therfore my dere frend & of all mortall menne to me most dereff, doo (whiche nowe onely I am able to dooe) earnestlye praye to almyghtye God, whiche hath prouided you for me, that syth he hath geuen you suche a better as shall neuer bee able to
C pay you, that it maye please hym of hys benignitie, to requite this bountifulnes of yours, whiche you euerye daye thus plenteoustlye powre vppon me. And that for hys mercye sake he wyll bryngе vs from this wretched & stormy world, in to his rest, where shall nede no letters, where no walle shall disseuer vs, where no porter shall kepe vs from talkynge together, but that we maye haue the fruicion of the eternall ioy with god the father, and with his onelye begotten sonne oure redemer Iesu Christe, with the holye spirite of them bothe, the holye ghoste proceadynge from them
D bothe. And in the meane season, almyghtye Godde graunte both you and me good maister Bonuyse and all mortall menne euerye where, to sette at noughte all the rychesse of thys worlde, with all the glorye of it, and the pleasure of this lyfe also, for the loue and desyre of that ioye. Thus of all frendes moste truskye, and to me most derelye beloued, and as I was wont to call you the apple of myne eye, ryghte hartelys fare ye well. And Iesus Christe kepe safe and sounde and in good healthe, all youre familye, whiche be of lyke affeccion towarde me as theyre master is.

Thomas More: I shoulde in dayne putte to it, yours, for thereof can you not bee ygnorauunte, synce you haue boughte it with so many benefites. For now I am not such a one that it forceth whose I am.

Syr Thomas More was behedded at the Towre hyll in London on Tewesdaye the syxte daye of July in the yere of oure Lorde. 1535. and in the. xxviii. yere of the raign of King Henry thryght. And on ydaynerte before, beynge mundaye and the syxte day of July, he wrote with
F a cole a letter to his doughter maystresse Kooper, and sente it to her, (whiche was the lasse thynge that euer he wrote.) The coppye whereof here foloweth.

Oure Lorde blesse you good doughter, and youre good housbande, and youre lyttle boye, and all yours, and all my chyldren, and all my Goddechyldren, and all oure frendes. Recommende me whan ye maye, to my good doughter Cicily, whom I beseche
G oure Lorde to coumforte. And I sende her my blessyng, and to all her chyldren, and praye her to praye for me. I sende her an handkercher: and god coumfort my good sonne her husbande. My good doughter Daunce hathe the picture in parchemente, that you delyuered me from my ladye Coniers, her name is on the backeside. Shewe her that I hartelye praye her, that you maye sende it in my name to her agayne, for a token from me to praye for me. I lyke specialy wel Dorothe Coly, I pray you be good vnto her. I woulde wytte whether thys
H be she that you wrote me of. If not yet I praye you bee good to the tother, as you maye in her afflicion, and to my good doughter Iwne Aleyn to. Geue her I praye you some kynde aunswere, for she sued hither to me this day to pray you be good to her. I comber you good Margaret much, but I would be sorye, if it should be any lenger than to morow. For it is saint Thomas euen, and ȳ vigilias of saint Peter: & therfore to morow long I to go to god: it were a day verye mete and conuenient for me. I neuer li-

Giles Heron.

This was none of hys doughters, nor no kynne vnto him. but one of maystres Koopers maydes.

This was that he kissed hym, when he came from iudgement.

ked your maner toward me better, than when you kissed me lasse: for I loue, when doughterly loue and deere charitye, hath no layſure to ſoke to worldlye curteſy. Fare well my dere chylde, and pray for me, and I ſhall for you and all youre frendes, that we maye merelye mete in heauen. I thanke you for youre gret coſt. I ſede now to my god doughter Clement her algoriſme ſtone, and I ſend her and my godſonne and all hers, gods bleſſing and myne. I praye you at time conuenient recommende me to my

This was not his doughter, but he hadde brought her vp of a chylde with his own doughters.

good ſonne John Moore. I liked wel his naturall faſhion. Our lord bleſſe hym & his good wyfe my louing doughter, to whom I praye him be good as he hathe greate cauſe: and that yf the lande of myne come to his hande, he breake not my wyll concernynge hys ſiſter Maunce. And oure Lord bleſſe Thomas and Auſten and all that they ſhal haue.

This he meane by that his ſonne called hym bleſſynge when he came fro iudgement

These were his ſonnes chyldren

(‘,‘,‘)

Thus endeth this boke.

Imprinted at London in Fleteſtrete at the ſygne of the hande and ſtarre, at the coſte and charge of John Cawod, John Walley, and Richarde Tottle.
Finiſhed in Apryll, the yere of our Lorde God. 1557.

(.*.)

¶Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum ſolum.