



Certaine godly and comfortable Letters , full of
Christian consolation. Written by *M. Ed. Dering* vn-
to sundry of his friends. And now published, for
the profit of the Church of God.

1. Th: 1. 10. 1. 15.

¶ Stand fast, and keepe the instructions which ye have been taught,
either by word, or by our Epistles.

¶ An Epistle of *M. Ed. Dering*, before his 24. Lecture
on the *Hebrewes*, which he preached the 6. of December, 1572.
And gaue for a new yeeres gift to the godly in London and else-
where.

To his very louing friend, *Maister M. F.*

THE outward afflictions and manifold troubles
of a great number of Gods children, whose tra-
uaile and labour, from day to day I had still in
experience, & the inward feeling of many wounded spi-
rits, whose wofull sighes and bitter mournings, I beheld
in other, and had tryed in my selfe; it made me very de-
sirous to seeke for remedies, to stop the complaints of so
griuous cryings, & to prepare our hearts in a strong de-
fence, that the fiery darts of the deuill might not wound
vs. Vpon this occasion when I had to expound that
place of the Apostle full of notable comfort; *That Christ in
the daies of his flesh, offered vp prayers and supplications to him
that was able to saue him fro death, with strong crying & teares,
and was deliuered from the things he feared.* I carryed the
longer in that matter, and declared more at large what
boldnes & assurance of hope was offered heere vnto all
that should obey the word. Which when I had done, as

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God gaue me vtterance, the poore in spirit, to whom I applied my selfe, one or two required me to set it down in writing, that it might be profitable to many, which was comfortable to them. I durst not reiect such a good request, but though sometime I deferred it, yet I neuer forgot it, till I had written all as I was required. Which when I had done, I purposed then with my selfe, to make it yet more common, and set it abroad in print: knowing assuredly, where God would giue it increase, it should bring forth the fruite of consolation, that we might stand vpright in the day of euill. Thus hauinge performed both the request of others, and mine owne desire, and the time falling out with the beginning of a new yere, I thought it not amisse to offer my labour to you, who I know would well accept of it as a new yeeres gift, though of no great price, yet of great good will: & though easily obtained, yet not little to be esteemed. Therefore my deere brother, whom I loue in Christ, and reuerence in the world, as many waies I haue cause, so I offer the same vnto you: The Lord for his mercies sake worke his owne good pleasure, that I may haue of you the fruit that I desire, and you the grace that ye stand in need of: that as God hath greatly blessed you, & made you abound in many graces to the glory of his name, the comfort of your friends, and the benefit of his people: so your ioy, that it might bee made perfect, you might also abound in this, to haue a strong faith against the day of triall: which God of his mercy will surely grant vnto you, & finish the good work that he hath begun. Though I loue not to speake faire (for flattery and deceitfull praises, I see what mischief they breed) yet I feare not to beare you witnes of your wel doing: the spirit of God hath planted humility more deepe in your breast,

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breast, then that pride and arrogancie can pull it out. And indeede the better you are, the more effectually you doe see your owne vnworthines, that all your righteousness is as a defiled cloth; and the more you approach vnto God, the more you abhor your selfe, and know that in your flesh there dwelleth no goodnes. Abraham our Father, Iob, Esay, and many other godly men, of excellent vertue in the sight of God, they haue beene all astonished, to see how their righteousnesses hath been scattered away as the clouds of the heauens. Paul cryeth out: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from this body of death! But because wee haue an enemy, that spareth not to display all our corruptions before our eyes, to the end he might make vs despaire, therefore we may be bold to the strengthening of our hope, to set before vs againe the spirituall graces that worke within vs, to assure our selues that we be borne of God.

So our Sauiour Christ praised many that beleued on him, so did the Apostles, so may we: and our heauenly Father will ratifie and confirme our wordes, when wee speake the truth, according to the measure of faith that euery one hath receiued. So Saint Iohn biddeth vs all be bold, and not be deceiued; He that doth the things that are righteous, himselfe is righteous, and like vnto Christ, in whom he is sanctified. So may I say vnto you, the grace of God hath wrought happily in you in these yeeres and condition of life, that so vnfaignedly you haue sought the Lord. It cannot bee of your selfe, who are not able so much as to thinke one good thought: but it is of him, whose seede abideth in you. And although, because you haue that treasure in a brittle vessell, you see sometime the fruite of old Adam, and the prickles of his transgression within your bowels; yet feare not his malice that

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hath wrought this woe ; You are bought with a deerer price, then that sinne may raigne againe within you, and he that hath purchased you, he will not suffer his inheritance to be spoiled. It is necessary you should know your sin, or you could not vnderstand how great were your redemption. But your sinnes cannot separate you away from him, who hath buried them in the earth, and will not see them any more. When you shall ascend to come into his sight, the earth will hold her owne, & keep your sinnes behind you. The pearcing serpent shall not clime to accuse you, nor the crooked serpēt shal not hide your redemption from you. Your care is cast vpon him that careth for you, and you know him who hath spoken ; All power is giuen vnto me in heauen and in earth. Ye know him who hath a name aboue all names, that in the name of Iesus all knees shall bow : euen hee that bought you with a price, & you are not your owne. If it be possible for you to perill, thē it is possible again that Christ should suffer iniurie. This boldnes you haue through him who hath made manifest his grace vnto you , that you denying impiety & worldly concupiscence, should liue soberly, purely, and godly in this present life, and looke for the blessed hope that shall bee reuealed, when all secrets shall be opened. To which issue & happy end of life, the Lord bring both you and yours, in the fellowship of his Saints, to praise his holy name, when hee shall make known vnto you his glory vnspeakeable, & crown it with immortality. Amen.

Farewell in Christ Iesu, and pray for me.
The 26. of December. 1572. Yours in
the Lord to command, Ed. Dering.

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A Letter of M. Ed. Dering to his Brother

Maister R. D.

THE grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with you
euer Amen. For Maister S. whether he bee angry
or no I know not, if he be God is witnessse between
him and me how little I haue deserued it, true it is, hee
seemed not very wel pleased, but if God be pleased, mans
goodwill, either it shall be reconciled, or shall not doe
much hurt : if I haue the losse in worldly things, I am
content to beare it, and God will supply my want where
I am able to doe nothing. I had leuer bee your Brother
not worth a groate, but hauing a good conscience to
pray for you, then haue (as I might) great liuing, and
encomber my conscience with much sinne. And good
Brother Dering, here follow me, you shalbe a great deale
richer then you are : study the Scripture, reade bookes,
be able to reason in your faith, especially and aboue all,
haue a liuely feeling of God, that you thinke more vile
of all the glory of the world, then of the dust of the
earth : you knowe wee must all perish, and you must
walke the way of all flesh : Our good Parents both Fa-
ther and Mother, they are gone before : you doe but
waite the time, and you must goe after, your goods and
lands must abide behinde, and the riches of your mind,
they are onely your owne. You are my eldest Brother,
and you know not how glad I would be, to see you goe
before me in Religion : God hath giuen you, neither a
light head nor little vnderstanding, if you would apply
your selfe vnto knowledge, you should then reape
the fruite of your labour in more gladnesse of hart then
yet you can imagine: begin once but a little, & taste how
sweete the Lord is, and you shall feele the riches of his
glory,

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glory, and say : Happy be the time that euer I knew it. Let not good Brother, let not the world deceiue you, it is faithlesse and deceitfull, when you shall loue it best, it will soonest deceiue you. And of me thinke thus : that in the world I can not doe you so great a pleasure, as continually to prouoke you to know God : and this I shall be able to performe, though otherwise I shall be able to pleasure you nothing, and therefore I beseech you pray for me, and I will pray for you, & so the Lord God shall helpe vs both, that I may be faithfull which way I am called, & you may be such as I desire. And for Master S. or any other of such high calling, I loue them in the Lord, euen as I loue mine owne soule, and will pray for them while they and I shall liue : Though I beare the losse of worldly things, yet by the grace of Christ, I will neuer lose a good conscience : and though they be angry with me, yet I will not leaue to pray for them, and commit my cause vnto God, he will one day multiply his graces, where he hath so well begun, and they shall (I trust) be thoroughly taught, whom God hath already so farre instructed. For my L. of C. I haue beene once with him, but I meane not yet to goe the second time, God will worke his will, his name bee praised for euer. My L. of L. is a good man, I am often with him, I haue seene in him so good tokens of a good spirit, that I reuerence him in my heart, and will serue him in Christ all wayes that I may. And for my doing with any man, I pray you tell where you see me faulty, but if you know not of any sinne, doe not dissuade mee from going vp-right in the Gospell : But for my comfort, if you see me grieued, let me see in you, how you professe the Gospell : & perswade your selfe of this, that a liuely zeale, & holy knowledge in you, & in my Sister, shall make me gladder
then

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then any Bishoprick in England. The Lord God for his mercies sake that hath called you out of the kingdome of darknes, and placed you in the fellowship of his Saints in light, make you to feele the depth of his graces, that you may be renewed, confirmed, strengthened, and made perfit vnto the end, Amen. Fare you well in Christ Iesu, and doe my hartly commendations to my Sister.
From London, the xix. of Nouember.

Your louing Brother, Ed. Dering.

To his Brother Maister R. D.

THE grace of our Lord Iesu Christ bee with you euer, Amen. Good Brother, I would gladly write oftner vnto you, but otherwise I haue so much to doe that some time I forget many duties. Another cause is, I haue nothing to write as I would, so I haue noe pleasure to doe that I would not. So it is, that I am forbidden to Preach; which grieueth me most: then slanderous reports doe hurt me much, where I would faynest please, so farre as I may in the feare of God. But howsoever things are, it is a blessed sentence which hee hath spoken, who will surely performe it: To them that loue God, all things happen to the best, and pray for me good Brother, that I may hold stedfast that loue, and wauer not in the faith of the Gospell in which we haue assured life: and as I am bound I trust I will pray for you, that your eyes may haue perfect and pure sight, to see the louing countenance of the Lord which is better then life: so you shall bee happy euen in the dayes of your vanity, and when nature shall make you yeelde to the necessity of all flesh, to goe walke in the way of all the worlde, then shall you reape the fruite of your labour, and say with gladnesse: *Lord now lettest thou*

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thy seruant depart in peace. This is all the hope we haue, and the only ioy that is to be looked for vnder the heauens: the neerer you shall feele it, the more you shall see it, it shall delight you and set you on a sure ground, that you shall not be ashamed for euer. The Lord God for his Christes sake strengthen vs all to so good a purpose, and the mutuall debt wee owe one to another in the bond of nature, let vs pay it in this holy affection, to pray for our perseuerance vnto the end. And as touching the issue of all my businesse, looke for the worst, hope for the best, and beare what-soeuer shall fall. I trust to God once I shall see the day wherein I shall faithfully speake it, euen as Saint Paul, *Vita mea non est chara mihi, vt consumam cursum meum cum gaudio.* The Bb. and many other seeke occasions against me. God hath still ray-sed me vp many friends, but my hope is only in him, that hath kept me hetherto, and not in man, when I know what end will come, you shall heare: if I would lose the truth I could winne the world, but that were a miserable change. God blesse vs and send vs peace, make vs wise in his Gospell, and stedfast vnto the ende. My Wife hath beene I thanke God in no trouble, neither was any toward her, that I know of, if any fall, God hath made her rich in grace and knowledge to giue account of her doing. D. W. on Friday last as I was about to Preach, forbad me in her Maicities name, so I stand now forbidden, not by the Bb. but by our Princessse, whom I beseech God make a happy gouernour in his Church, and many yeares to giue peace vnto his people. If we prayed as we should, God would make perfit the good worke hee hath begunne, and make vs see the peace of Ierusalem all the daies of our life. And I beseech God, that wee may wish so effectually his mercies,
that

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that at last he may shut vs vp in a blessed vnity, that they whom he hath afflicted, may reioyce. Commend mee to all. Thanke my Cosen, for her letters, and for the parsonage shee writeth of: I will not refuse it if I may haue it, neither will I sue for it though it were much better. If God call me to it, I pray God I may doe my dutie: if not, yet his will be done. I am perswaded, if I be settled there, it shall be a blessing vnto the Country: if not, without me God keepeth those that be his. Farewell good Brother, and the Lord keepe you and all yours, *Amen.* The 24. of December, 1573.

Your louing Brother, Edward Dering.

To his Brother, I. D.

THE God of all grace who giueth vs eyes to see, and eares to heare, giue vnto vs euer his holy spirit, that in the middelt of a darke world, wee may see the brightnesse of his heauenly kingdome, and in this weake tabernacle of small continuance, we may knowe the dwelling place which wee shall haue for euer in the resurrection of the iust, Amen. I thanke you, good Brother, for your Letter, and for your care of my recouerie, but most of all because you shew a good testimony of your minde, that the feare of God doth dwell in you: of this I am glad, and I am sure I shalbe glad. For I know how earnestly I desire it, and I see how vnfainedlie you are brought vnto it, and when the Lord in his good wil, and his appointed time shall make vs see more cleare how great this blessing is, wee know wee shall reape the fruite of it in the sight of his presence and in eternall life, this is enough for vs: a strength vnto our hope, a stay vnto our faith, a continuance vnto our loue, let the

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good worke of God be finished in vs. And of this wee may be sure, who-soeuer regardeth it not, or els embraceth the present world, he knoweth not God, nor yet hath euer seene the length and breadth of immortality. And therefore good Brother, (because blessed are the eyes which see that we see,) let vs strengthen our sight, with the sweet oyntment of Gods holy Spirit, that wee may yet see more cleere, til through all the graces of God our Father, wee may see our bodies also raised vp from the dead, and our selues ioyned vnto our Sauour Christ by that decree and sentence which neuer shall be reuersed; Come you blessed vnto eternall life: vnto this a good conscience will cary vs with ioy and gladnesse. Beyond this our senses faile vs, and our hart is able to comprehend nothing of the glory which we shall behold. One lie I know it is exceeding great, whose greatnesse I can neither see, nor heare, nor comprehend with thought. And therefore, if euer any thing delighted vs, or if euer we haue seene pleasure, or can wish the thing in which we would reioyce, let vs turne all affections hither with hart and soule, life and strength, to delight in this, which alone is all, and no body shall take it from vs.

And vndoubtedly Brother, this is true, if God haue receiued vs to that blessed kingdome, he hath appointed the time in which he will giue vs his holy spirit, though not fully to comprehend it, yet so farre to see it, that we will account all the world to be but dunge, to the ende we may winne Christ. And this I am perswaded (good Brother,) God hath and will giue plentifully vnto you, so that you shall vse this worlde as though you used it not, and be here with men, as one whose dwelling were with the Angels of God, vsing our calling in any godly recreation, but hauing our heart neereft vnto God that
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gaue it : and the Lord graunt you this happines, that all the pleasure of your life may be in deede acceptable, such as shal not after be mingled with shame and sorrow. And I beseech God blesse my good Vncle B. and make him now to know, which in his tender yeares he could not see : for the world was then darke, and we were blinde ^m it : but since wee haue beene lightened with the Gospell of the Lord Iesus, and so much more earnestly now wee must pray that it may bee vnto vs the Gospell of health, and we may increase in the knowledge of the mystery of it. And the Lord open his gracious countenance reuealed in it, vnto my Aunt, that she may also make a blessed change, to leaue vaine imaginations of her owne minde, which are full of ignorance, and learne the Scripture, which can make knowne vnto her the liuing God. And commend me hartily vnto them both, to whom I wish as to my selfe.

Your louing Brother. Ed. Dering.

*A comfortable Letter written by Maister Ed.
Dering, to a Christian Gentlewoman,
in heauinelle of spirit.*

IT is true (good Mistrisse H.) which the spirit hath spoken, and wee feele it by experience, *That by manie tribulations wee must enter into the kingdome of heauen.* This is a common decree which GOD hath sanctified to be a lotte for all his Children. So the Authour and finisher of our faith, Iesus Christ him selfe was made perfect. Into this similitude we are also predestinate that we should first die with him, and then be partakers of his glory : Let vs not therefore refuse that condition

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condition of life in which wee haue the fellowship of all the Saints of God, but rather confesse with the holy Apostle, That *blessed is the man who endureth temptation.* But because all afflictions are bitter for the present time, and when the minde is shaken with sorrowe, it is then most easily cast downe of the enemye, let vs learne wisely what our troubles are, and bee prepared of remedie in the day of triall. All our afflictions are either according to the flesh, in hunger, colde, nakednesse, shame, contempt, slander, &c. Or according to the Spirit, in lamentations and mournings, which the world knoweth not. The first euills are easily borne, for they are all but vanity, and in vanitie they shall die: if wee see no fauour in the sight of the Sunne that shineth not heere acceptable vnto vs, when wee haue payd the debt wee owe vnto death, the Lord will deliuer vs from all the iniuries of men. But in this behalfe let mee comfort my selfe, God hath set you free from such afflictions. Your goods are vnto you in a liberall portion, your life made happy with a louing husband, your calling acceptable vnder a gracious and good Mistresse, in whose sight you haue found fauour, in this estate you feele no trouble, therefore I let it passe.

The other affliction which is of the spirit, and which cannot bee resisted with any earthly blessing, looke for it assuredly, for without doubt it will come vnto you, that you may suffer with Christ, and raigne with him in glory. These troubles they come many wayes, euen as the spirit of G O D doth leade vs vnto life. First we are commanded to learne and know the word of God, against this looke for many temptations, the enemye will try which way to plucke that out of our harts: Out of the word we must learne a precious faith, and hold that
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vnmooueable before God : against this what temptations are betweene heauen and earth, you shall feele your portion, if any thing possible can discourage you. With faith you must ioyne a liuely hope, which is a longing apprehension of Gods glory: in this also sathan will pretermitt nothing to quench your affections, that it may be dead, and to darken your minde that you may see nothing ; without these you cannot possibly liue, and vnto these you cannot possibly come, but first you shall feele what is the strength of sinne. And yet notwithstanding faint not, the Lyon hath ouercome which is of the tribe of Iuda. The force of the Serpent shall bruse our heele but it shall not take away from vs the head-peece of saluation. Learne therefore first the word of God, this is the seede of regeneration, by which we are made new creatures, this is the bread of spirituall nourishmēt, by which we are growen vp into eternall life. This is the weapon of our warfare, by which wee may wound and driue away our enemies. This is the Scepter of our glorious kingdome, by which we do know that God doth raigne in vs. Take this vnto you, the shield of your defence, the strength of your age, the wisdom of your hart, and the safetie of your life, commended vnto you in the word of Christ. Search the Scriptures, and seale it in your heart with a good perswasion that it is the word of God, and of life, and hee hath grauen in it an expresse image of eternall truth. Let it dwell plentifully within you, & your heart is armed with a most strong defence, all enemies shall fall before him, the wisdom of the wise shall bee brought to nought, and the counsell of the prudent shall bee made foolish ; the wayes of the aduersaries shall be scattered, and the scornors seate shall be thrown downe, so true it is that the Lord hath spoken. Blessed is the man
whose

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whose delight is in the Law of the Lord, and whose meditation is in it day and night. Let vs then bring downe the hautinesse of our mindes, and receiue with meeknes the word grafted in vs, which can saue our soules. To this desire of vnderstanding when G O D hath brought vs, then let vs pray to be deliuered from temptation, and take heede we be not spoiled of so great a treasure. We haue three especiall enemies in this behalfe, of which S. Paul biddeth vs all beware : the one is *Philosophie*, that is a vain and curious searching of Gods misteries, or measuring things reuealed according to our vnderstanding, with which tentations whilst our Fathers were overcome, they became foolish in their owne imaginations, and changed the glory of G O D into the likenesse of a corruptible man, making Images, praying to Angels, imagining of soules like little children, deuising Purgatory, reasoning of Gods wisdom about our capacitie. As if we be predestinate we may liue as we list, if we are commanded to worke, if our dayes are numbred, why seeke we any safety in our life. If the Angel; doe keepe vs in all our wayes, that we shall not hurt our foote against a stone, why feare wee any falling ? These phantasies, and worse then these, disquiet our mindes, and fight within vs against our humble obedience to the word of G O D. Which all when wee haue overcome (and sayd with the Prophet : Secret things are for the Lord, but things reuealed for vs and our children) yet haue we no peace.

A second enemy riseth vp greater then the first, which Saint Paul calleth *The traditions of men*. For the heart of man which drinketh in error, as the ground doth drink water, is very obstinately bound with olde customes & long continuance, measuring truth which is pure and holy,

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holy, onely by time, which is corrupt and euill, and not onely this, but nature also hath inflamed our affections to loue too much our Fathers waies, to like their opinions, to esteeme their iudgements, to praise their dooings, to commend their age, to talke of their names, till through many entisements we are at last bewitched, our wisdome is stolne away, and truth is taken from vs: by this meanes all corruptions which haue ouer-flowed the earth, haue still wide roomes in the hartes of many. The Popes supremacie, Latine seruice, prayer for the dead, Masses, Diriges, Pardons, Pilgrimages, Sensing, and all Popery, with the authors of it, Popes, Cardinalles, Monkes, Fryers, all which haue neither trueth, nor shadow of trueth; not one worde of them is in all the Gospell of our Sauour Christ, onely old custome hath bred it in our bones, and an opinion of our Fathers hath printed it in our brests, and wee will not cast it out. But the Lorde bee thanked, who hath had mercy vpon vs, to make vs hold fast the word of trueth, what-soeuer our fore-fathers haue vainely taught vs, & yet we are not in securitie.

But a third enemy resteth in the hart of man, that the word of G O D may not haue his perfect honour, and that is a fond opinion conceiued of earthly thinges, and planting of holines in corruptible creatures, as in Meats, Drinkes, Dayes, Garments, Conditions of life, Places, Times, Ceremonies, neyther hearing the words of our Sauour Christ, who saith, that God is a spirit, and only hee is to be worshipped in Spirit & Trueth; nor regarding his Apostle Saint Paule, who saith, that the Element of that worlde commende vs not vnto God, neither if we eate, are wee euer the worse: neither if we eate not, are we euer the better. These and many great temptations

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temptations stand against vs as soone as wee would giue ouer our selues to the word of God, which is the beginning of a Christian life. Trow you that in the continuance of our course and iourney, before we come at our Sauour Christ, shall wee not be sifted and tryed to see what is within vs? And you (good Mistres H.) to apply this to your selfe, tell mee how you haue learned Christ, hath his Gospell been peaceable in you from the first day till now, without all contradiction? Was your mind neuer puffed vp in vaine imaginations? did the traditions & perswasions of men neuer shake your thought? Haue you not been tempted with opinions of creatures, as though some were more holy, some more prophane? I know as you long after Christ and desire his truth in single hart: so his grace you haue not, without sharpe and bitter trialles, and the more freely the word of God shall possesse your soule, and fill your hart with all desire of it, the more you shall feele what fight is against it, look for the like in all your life, and when you approach to the true feare of God, prepare your hart to the strongest assault. The word of God thus made knowne vnto vs, & when we follow it with all our soule, that we may haue a liuely faith to reioyce at the promises of God, to feare at his threatnings, and feele a full perswasion of a certaine performance of all his wordes: O Lord, what is the malice of sathan! And though many temptations are against vs, the long prosperity of the wicked in which they triumph, whilst the goodnes of God prouoketh them still to repentance, the bitter fighting of the godly, in which they mourne vnder many crosses, whiles God maketh their faith prerious before him: these haue rooted quite out of the harts of the yngodlie, the faith and truth which they owe vnto God, so that against all his iudgements,

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iudgements, they haue opened their mouth, and said aloude: *Where is the promise of his coming?* And against all his mercies they haue proclaimed warre, and saide, *They will not haue Christ to raigne ouer them.* But these temptations Christ hath ouercome in vs, and giuen vs his Spirit, in which we know assuredly that the Lorde raigneth; neither slacketh he his coming, as many account slacknes, but he will come, and his glory shall bee knowne. And yet we are not in peace, but sathan our common aduersary will sift vs another way; he will lay our sinnes before vs, to make vs feare, that the promises of God belong not vnto vs, and this of all temptations is the greatest, yet we feare not, for what belongeth to all our sins, which Christ hath not borne? Sorrow, sickenes, death, hell, condemnation, were they not in his body, and are they not all crucified vpon the Crosse? Is he not risen from them, and hath he not broken the chaines of death, and so is ascended into glory? If this be my feare because I am a sinner, rather let me reioyce, for Christ hath taken my sinnes vpon him, and hath buried them deeper then the bottome of the Sea, he hath led it openly in triumph, and nailed it vpon the crosse, from henceforth and for euermore it hath no strength, whosoeuer seeme to colour it as redde as scarlet, or make it like purple, it is still nothing, and casteth but a vaine terrour before our eyes; We will neuer denie this, but freely confesse it, that we be miserable sinners, and not worthy to lift vp our eyes to heauen, but who will lay our sinnes to our charge, now God hath iustified vs? or what sin can rest vpon vs, now Christ hath washed them away? That which once was in fight with Christ, and he hath overcome it, who shall sette to his hand the seconde time, to make the victory perfect?

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This is true, & euerlasting truth hath sealed it vp, that sinne is abolished for euer and euer; howsoeuer we feare and tremble, or bee faint-hearted, yet before the Lorde with whom our life is hidde, there is no perrill, no daunger, no feare, but peace and righteousnes without end. Let our sinnes be neuer so great, neither wee nor our sins can change the new Testament, that God is mercifull to our sinnes, and wil blot out all our transgressions: therefore this care is past, that our sinnes be many, the more they are, the greater is his mercy, who hath forgiuen them. And this is the token which G O D hath giuen vs, that we are his, because we are grieued with our sins, for our Sauour Christ ouercame sinne with paines and sufferings which belong vnto it, and this is the badge of our redemption, to be made like him in afflictions, we haue sinne, and abhorre it, it woundeth vs with feare, it setteth before vs condemnation, we haue a sence & feeling of Gods anger against it, and hel gnaweth vpon our soules because of transgression.

O blessed state, and treasure of gladnes! this was the image of Christ when he ouercame sinne, a marke of my redemption in mine owne flesh, that I should not faint. As the sunne maketh the day, and the night darknes, so this affliction for sinne, is the badge and cognisance of our certaine forgiuenesse. And heerein see the goodnes of almighty G O D, which turneth all things to the best to those that loue him. Through feare of sin the Deuill fighteth against vs, without feare of sinne wee could neuer haue boldnes: through anguish of heart the Deuill would ouerwhelme vs with sorrowe: without anguish of hart we could neuer haue ioy. In feeling Gods anger, the Deuill would make vs to despaire: without feeling his threatning, & trembling before him, we could neuer haue

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haue strength of faith, that his mercies are for euer. In all sufferings I am like to Christ, they are the markes of mine adoption, that I am his child. Doe we not heare the Lord? Himselfe doth speake, *If we be without correction, then are we bastards, and not sonnes*: and to shewe what our correction shall be, he saith in another place: *If we be planted with him into the similitude of his death, then shall we also be partakers of his resurrection.*

Who hath heard so great saluation as this? Euerie weapon where-with the enemy striketh, the same armeth vs to greater saluation: and euerie wound that we doe receiue, the same confirmeth vs to a surer life. Then (as before I said) care not for sin, for that is abolished, so heere I may adde, care not for hell, for the neerer wee feele it, the further we are from it. Let them feare sinne that feele it not, and let them be afraide of condemnation that know not what it is, vpon whom destruction shall come suddainly as an armed man. Our eyes haue bene kept waking, and we haue seene our sinnes: our harts haue fainted before the anger of the Lord, and we haue not despised his heauenly calling, therefore in the day of trouble we shall haue rest.

In this perswasion wee will liue and die: and if our soules shoulde melt for feare within vs, although the Lord should kill vs, yet would we trust in him. *Abraham* beleued in the Lord, and it was imputed vnto him for righteousnesse, against hope he beleued vnder hope: and if our hope seemed to be taken from vs, yet would we patiently waite the Lords leysure, vntill he saue our hope againe, that at the last our faith might haue againe glory and trueth of full assurance. Another thing wee must labour in, and in another thing wee shall haue temptation, and that is, that wee may see what is the

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glory of God and immortall life : herein let vs meditate in our beddes, and thinke on this in our secret places, in in the middest of our companies, let these cogitations be often in our harts, and in all places let these be our muses. When we shall apprehend with all the seruants of God what is the height, the breadth, the length, the depth, we shall know that the glory is great of immortality, & he is only to be beleued, who shall shine in honor when this vanity is ouer-past. His strength is great that laid the foundations of the world, and his brightnes exceeding, that made the Sunne and the Moone. His treasure and riches are aboue measure, who hath giuen Princes their gold and siluer, and other precious stones and iewels for the honour of man. Hee indeed is of most excellent maiestie, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and his power is aboue all, who maketh sicknes his messenger, and death his minister, till hee shall abolish them both. For his mercies are vnspeakable, that forgiveth vs all our sinnes ; and his goodnes is great, who hath had regard to the children of men. From nothing he brought vs into life, he kept vs from the graue, hee will restore vs, and make vs see his glory. When I would thinke on this, my soule is compassed with dulnesse of flesh, that I cannot see the fulnesse of his fauour : When I would consider in my hart what is his grace, darknes ouershadoweth mine vnderstanding, and all my thoughts doe vanish in his immortality. When I would speake of his louing kindnes, my tongue cleaueth to the roofof my mouth, and my words sticke fast within my lips. But this one thing in all mine infirmities I can perceiue, that his glory is exceeding great, whose glory I cannot comprehend, and the life is long, appointed vnto man, where his heart and minde can see no end.

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If all the world were a flowing water, and euery yeare one drop should be diminished, the sea should be all made dry, and the bottomes of the deepe should appeare, before he shall cease to liue, whom God hath raysted from the dead, and this breadth and widenessse betweene heauen and earth, if it should be filled vp, and euery yeare but one handfull of earth added to the worke: yet sooner should the great distance be closed vp; and the emptie places made full, then he shall cease from ioy and gladnes, who shall stand in the resurrection of the iust. This is the glory that hath neyther spot nor blemish, before which me thinketh, not only Princes and the glory of the world, but the Sunne and Moone and all the hoasts of heauen are nothing else but meere vanity, for death shadoweth the glory of man, though he spread his branches neuer so far, yet the graue closeth vp in little roome the ambitious heart, which before was enlarged from East to West. And the Heauens that are high and free from death, yet are holden vnder the tyranny of enuious and consuming time, in which they shall bee changed: Onely the Lord is in honour and maiesty, who hath set eternity round about him, and cast out time vnto confusion. Oh Lorde, where are theyr eyes that see not this, or theyr hearts that see and regarde it not! Who hath bewitched them, in the countenances of men, to carry the hearts of beasts, and to forget the latter ende. The Lord turne them that runne astray, that they may knowe and see where is theyr glory, but the temptations haue ouer-taken them, which are against our honour. When the Lord shall deliuer them from euil, they shall giue thankes and reioyce with vs, that they also haue eyes to see. And blessed are you (good Mistresse H.) and God hath visited you in an acceptable time,

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whose heart he hath touched with feare, and whose afflictions he hath filled with hunger and thirst, that you should mourne for the redemption that is in Christ, and be pleased with nothing but with the grace of his countenance. This is a Schoolemistresse to bring you vnto him, and a bond to tye you fast, that you shall not be seperated: and accomplish I beseech you, this good work of his grace, till you loue the Lord with all your heart, and till you can say with the blessed Apostle, *I desire to be dissolued, and to be with Christ*. For this purpose wee are chastised of the Lord, and when our faith is tryed, at the last it shall be made strong, that with it wee may quench all the fierie dartes of sathan, and in righteousnesse and peace, and ioy of the holy Ghost, runne the course that is set before vs, till in a blessed issue of happy dayes, with a good spyrite wee may say boldly, *Lord nowe lettest thou thy Seruant depart in peace*. Which I beseech God the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, the God of mercy, and Father of all consolation graunt vnto you, Amen.

Pray, pray, pray, pray, this is your best seruice where-
souer your ducty is most bound.

Letters of Ed. Der. to Mistris B.

GRace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, &c. I had much leuer good mistres B. come my selfe then write vnto you, but as other things are farre contrary to my desire, so is it in my comming vnto you, and I am constraind rather to write then to come, but God appointes our waies, whether I come and be with you, or else be other where and heare from you, I trust and am perswaded, that both I shall heare from you,
and

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and you shal haue the same constancy in the loue of truth, and still increase in the knowledge of it, till the good grace of God haue made the worke perfect that it hath begune, and you with all your heart and all your soule doe feare the Lord, and delight in all obedience of his holy will. Whereunto though we be sufficiently perswaded by the nature of godlinesse it selfe, which all men doe praise, and the righteous doe loue: yet a greater prouocation is in you, because God hath giuen you a good estate, in which your example shall doe good to many, and because God hath filled you with a hartie affection to testifie his religion, that you may accordingly in all well doing surmount the praise of your profession, and especially because he that hath called you is holie, that you may expresse his similitude and likenesse in all your wayes, and this good course through euill dayes, when God of his mercy shall make straight vnto vs we shall see then what is the latter end. Our harts shall be satisfied with it, and our tongue shall speake not as the world doth, blessed are the rich men, or blessed are the mighty, for all these haue wings to flie away, and high estates to sit downe in the dust, when man must go make his bed in the darke, and say to corruption thou art my Father, and to the worme thou art my Mother, & Sister, but our song shall be in better harmony, and we shal say with the Prophet Dauid, blessed is the man that feareth the Lord and delights greatly in his commandements: For when all hatred shall grow against this, and all aduersity shall striue to come vpon it, yet all is nothing, and shall not moue it. For when our hart is strengthened with this grace, we see our portions in all estates and times: in discredit, we see praise, in pouerty, riches, in anger, fauour, in darkenes, light, in bondage, libertie, and in death,

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death, life, yea whosoever, in weakenes of body, in enuy
of time, in vncertainty of estate, in danger of life, or in
any thing else, because nothing can seperate vs from the
loue of God, nothing can turne vnto our harme, for we
haue his promise that is able to performe it, that to those
that loue God all things happen for the best. This pur-
pose of life is sone had, and this course is easily begune,
but the fruite of it doth not vade, nor the gladnes of it
shall neuer be lost, so that we shall not, nor by the grace
of God we will not for so little labour lose so great a re-
ward, nor for a little pleasure which vainely we thinke
is in other things, receiue the reward of our foolishnes,
which assuredly we know hath euerlasting grieffe, wee
haue not so vnfruitfully learned Christ, nor so unhappily
giuen witness of his truth, But better things belong vnto
vs, in better waies we will runne our course, in a better
hope lay downe our bodies: The Children of the
world shall make the world their portion, we looke for
another Citty of which the Lord is the workeman, and
we will not build vp our unhappinesse in the vaine de-
sires and concupiscence of this world, neither yet (see-
ing God is good to vs to fill our daies with peace) will
wee denie any comfort that is offered vs in this present
pilgrimage, but seeing the earth is the Lords, and all that
therein is, wee haue perfect pleasure in friends, riches
authority, honour: if all be his? All are pure: if all be
of him? In all is pleasure: for where his kingdome is,
there is righteousnesse and peace, and ioy of the holic
Ghost: and sorrowe and sinne is cast out, onely let vs
care as all thinges are good, so we vse them: and as they
are corrupt, so to let them alone. Saint Paule teacheth
that to the pure all thinges are pure, but to the impure
all thinges are impure: And the thinges of this world
are

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are made according to the conscience of man : Holde this to remember it at noone dayes , and let our reynes instruct vs in it in the night season , that wee feele our heartes inflamed with the loue of God , and that it may be acceptable vnto vs as our owne life , to set forth his praise : That wee acknowledge his glory which shineth in all his workes , and then the Lorde hath set vs in a large roome of liberty , where wee walke with boldnesse in good delight of his creatures : and in deede , & in truth this it is , when this affection hath taken root within me , and I feele the worke of it perpetually within my minde , whether I bee following my Hawke or my bowle , I make a more acceptable sacrifice to God , then the hart barren of this loue of God can do ; though the knee bowe , or the tongue say , prayesed be the Lord , for euery one that saith , Lord , Lord , shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen , but in whom so euer the loue of G O D doeth raigne , and hath driuen out the lewde desires of a dissolute minde ; him God hath chosen , and the spirite of his Sonne Christ cryeth within him , Our Father : yet I meane not heere to iustifie these worldly minded men , to whom the day is too short for their vaine playes , except they reach it out til mid-night at Cardes and Dice : such people , as they commonlie fill theyr delightes with blasphemie , so lette them know that the loue of the liuing God they neuer felt , but the God of this world hath blinded their vnbelieuing hearts , and in their vncleanenesse there I leaue them , till the sinnes of their youth bee rotten in their bones , that they may sinke deepe in their owne shame . My meaning is , that the man of God whose soule doeth thirst to see his glory , and hath the ioy of his lyfe in immortalitie , in respect of the which he accounteth

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all the world to be but dung : I say , that man may haue true delight in the daies of his vanity , the smelling of the dogge, the flying of the bird, the qualities of al creatures, they were made for him: and he is iniurious to the blood of Christ, that thinks he may not vse them: but al these things are good for our recreation, to comfort the frailty of weake bodies , & to bring refreshing to a wearie spirit : which end, if wee forget, and make it our pastime, and so call it, then we turne our pastime into sin. For what is our time that we are weary of it', or what is our life that seemeth so slow to passe ? are wee grieued with the light which the Lord hath set in the Heauens, or is the feeling of our body burdenous vnto vs , or our eye-lids pained with being open, or are our eares wounded with the sound of the ayre , or what grieffe, what care, what sorrow is it, why we wish our time forgotten and past ? Surely *Iob* knew not this, when he saide, His time passed faster then a post : nor *Dauid* knewe it not when he thought his life but a spanne long : and surely, he hath but a wretched life, and let him not loue it, who is faine to runne to the birds of the ayre, and the beastes of the field, to seeke some comfort against it. And therefore (good Mistres B.) let pastime alone, and be not wearied with your good daies, your times are passed meetly well, and you haue scene forty yeeres filled and gone, the residue behinde will passe with them; you shall not hold them if you would, but pastime and they will dwell together, till our appointed time shall come : and one end shall be vnto all. But then you shall see another state, and this enmity betweene vs and it, shall be taken away : we shall not be weary of it to wish it gone, and it will not be weary of vs to weare vs away , but Tyme and we shall dwell together, and the glory of God shall bee eternallie
before

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before vs, and we before his Maiestie in immortality. A blessed state, a hope of life, a glorious body, a heauenly minde, and woe be to al these time passers off, that know how to delight in this, but haue more pleasure in all vncleannesse: when the end of their labour shall come vpon them, they shal feele more grieffe in one day, then after shall be ended world without end And in one sentence of an angry Iudge (*goe you cursed into eternall fire,*) they shall be wounded with that miserie, which world without end shal rest vpon them, and their old pastime shall neuer more bee found: but this is the portion of them that know not God.

But as for you good mistres B. you haue already passed the daies of your ignorance, and the kingdome of heauen is come vnto you with power: you loue the truth of the Lord Iesus, and all false wayes you doe abhorre: you doe feele the hope of the Elect of GOD: and it hath quenched the desires of vngodlines. Pray still, that you may haue increase; and read the Scriptures, in which you shall haue comfort: these will leade you in a perfect way, and neyther Paule nor Peter haue a more blessed end, then is for vs, in a like precious faith: and I (as I am bound) will beseech the GOD of mercy, and father of our Lord Iesus Christ, that he wil looke vpon you, to fill you with his grace & holy spirit, that it may guide you, and all your children before you, & your children committed to your charge, that you may dwell in the newe and blessed Testament of the forgiuenes of sins, through faith in Christ Iesus, who hath destroyed the worke of the deuill, and is able to keep you for euermore. And to his gracious defence, I hartily leaue you and all yours.

Yours in the Lord Ed. Dering.

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To Mistris B.

TH E grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with you euer, Amen. Good Mistresse Baret, howe fayne I would be with you, God knoweth, and how I am indebted to doe good in your house, if I should not confesse, I must needes accuse my selfe of much vnthankfulness: but God alone disposeth all our wayes, to bee so as pleaseth him, whom hartily I beseech for his sonnes sake, blesse vs with that blessing which hee gaue his Apostle; that in all places we may be vnto him in Iesus Christ, a sweet fauour of life vnto life to all his Saints with whom wee are. So shall I more gladly walke all the waies of his appointment, and you more willingly beare with mine absence, the will of God bee done in all thinges. When you are at Bray, if the Lord will, I shall be more quiet with you. In the meane time (good Mistresse) so beleue as you haue seene and heard, and pray for me that I may liue to his glory, who hath shewed me such mercy, that I may say with the Prophet Dauid: *What shall I giue againe for all that hee hath giuen mee?* And so doe you reioyce in the blessing that G O D hath giuen you, that more & more your estate heere may be a sure testimony of a more blessed hope, that shall one day be reuealed, when honour and glory shall succede in the place of labour and sorrowe that now aboundeth. The Lord blesse you and all yours, keepe you, and giue you a plentifull blessing in his new Testament, and in his kingdome, which is righteousnesse, and peace, and ioy in the holy Ghost, the glory whereof shall not bee darkened, when the Sunne and Moone shall loose their light, and faine men with desire of it, that shall fill vs once with the countenance of the Lorde. A glorious hope

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hope in an earthly Tabernacle, but a more glorious performance in a heavenly creature, when we shall be free from sinne and death, and bee made like vnto him that sitteth at the right hand of maiestie and power. Which time the Lord God fulfill in the goodnes of his pleasure, for our soules hope: in whom we haue setled our hope. Commendations, &c.

Yours Ed. Dering.

To Mistris B.

THE grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with you euer, Amen. I am sorie that hetherto I coulde not come vnto you, and I would be sorry, if you shold thinke I had leuer bee any where then in your house; I had thought shortly to haue come, and I felt my selfe some-what strong and able to trauell, but nowe on Friday last, the eleuenth of this moneth, I had a feauer, and five or sixe daies after I felt it, and my stomacke is very ill euer since, and my cough much increaseth. This is my health that G O D giueth me. But let him doe his will. he is the God of life, and one day will abolish these troublesome things, and make vs feele health in immortality, and I beseech him for his Christes sake, to remember vs in his goodnes, that we may know all his mercies, & then I am well assured both you and I, and all weake bodies shal so little care for the frailtie of these Tabernacles, that we wil reioyce in the remembrance of putting them off, to think that we shal see and take hold of him that liueth euer, and will one day make these mortall bodies like vnto the glorious body of his deare & welbeloued son. This we knowe, and in this wee are comforted: and hold it fast good Mistresse B. euen as you will hold your
happy

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happy daies : for the hope of it shall not be confounded, but when all our enemies haue spent their euill wils, and can doe no more hurt vnto vs, hee shall be on our right hand whom we haue looked for, and hee shall call vs with that blessed voice, *Come ye blessed of my Father, &c.* Let vs pray to vnderstand this, for it hath pleasure and effectuall gladnesse, more then all the faire countenaunces of the world, in which indeede there is nothing but vanitie of vanities, and all is vanitie : and thinke good Mistresse B. how many occasions are before vs to cause vs to forgette this, or to let the desire of it to be quenched in vs, or at the least to fill our selues with other pleasures of the world, but G O D shall keepe you from the corruptions of the world, & giue vnto you a wise hart, which euery day may search your thoughts, and suffer you neuer to forget your latter end : and seeing euery day doth bring you neere vnto it, let euery day kindle more and more your affections, that you may loue it vnto the end : and then your hope shall be full, and our mouthes opened for euer, Amen.

Yours Ed. Dering.

To Mistris B.

TH E grace of our Lord Iesus Christ bee with you euer. As I trust the Lord doth strengthen you to berter health, that you may liue to his praise, so I am desirous to heare also of your amendement, but much more (as G O D hath made manifest in you many tokens of his grace) so I hartily pray, that you may bee made euen as Paule, to mourne still in this earthly Tabernacle and to say vnfainedly, *I desire to be dissolued, & to be with Christ.* This is that good issue of life to which I haue

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haue often praied that I might attaine vnto it: this is that measure of grace, which as I am most bound, so hartily I beseech our God and Sauour, that it may plentifully be powred vpon you. And if we shall be made in our liues so happy, then haue we a dwelling in perfect peace; and indeede wee bee receiued into the couenant of the new Testament, that wee should bee filled with ioy of the holy Ghost.

For what can disquiet vs, or what can be grieuous vnto vs, if in the face of Iesus Christ we see our rising again from the graue, & feare not before the shadow of death? all other afflictions they are but ministers vnto this, and in the presence of death they are dispersed, and they doe not follow vs vnto the dark places. If God wil haue mercy vpon vs to blesse vs into this victory, then hath hee giuen vs our inheritance in pleasant places, and our portion in a happy lot. What soeuer enemies are against vs, they shall striue in vaine: and all things contrary vnto vs shall haue no strength, for beyond death there is no power in them, and death it selfe is despised in our eyes. If we felt not this in our harts, but would seeke outward testimony of men, let him speake that findeth any greater feare then this. The sicke person or prisoner may be loth to die, but the dead man he feareth no euill: and they that liue in prosperity, this is not their feare leaft they should haue a fall, but it is death that is bitter vnto all them that haue peace in their riches. Seeing this then is the greatest Tyrant that maketh Princes tremble, and that anguish of hart that turneth all pleasure into worm-wood, whatsoeuer is vnder the Sunne, good M^{rs} B. as you are, so abide: & as you haue already receiued, so abound, till the good graces of the liuing GOD haue made you stronger then sin or death: so shall your
dayes

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dayes be all in blessing, and your accounted times haue true delight till the latter end doe shine in hope. So shall you be bold to say with David; *Surely the Lord will deliuer me from the snare of the Hunter, and from the noysome pestilence: I shall not bee afraid of the feare of the night, nor of the arrow that flyeth by day, nor of the pestilence that walketh in the darkenesse, nor of the plague that destroyeth at noone: I haue set the most high to bee my refuge, and there shall no euill come neere my Tabernacle.* The Lord blesse vs in this good hope, and make strong our confidence in this perswasion, that at last we may dwell in ioy and gladnesse: if feare haue often recourse into our fraile bodies, because wee cary in vs corruption, which is the strength of death, yet that feare shall not alwayes grieue vs, for our hope is perfect and shall not be shaken. Wee shall goe but as S. Paul, and Peter, Abraham and Isaack haue gone before: and not onely they, but our Fathers, our Mothers, and our dearest friends are gone with them: and all that are behind shall ouertake vs. The trouble of the trauel must needs appeare light in the midst of so happy companie; or if their loue haue not such force in vs, that Parents and friends, Apostles, Prophets, Patriarks, and all the Saints of God can make vs say, *Let vs dy with the righteous, and let our latter end be as vnto him,* yet sure when among the dead I haue seene Christ, & in the graue haue found the G O D of glory, I shall say with a perfect hart, *Christ is my life, and death is mine aduantage.* What then remaineth more vnto vs, but to striue faithfully, that we may come vnto this, that G O D may worke with vs as with his Saints, and we may be partaker with the happy Prophet, to see the louing kindnes of the Lord, which is better then life, and to say with him: *As the Hart longeth after the water brookes, so my soule longeth to see the Lorde:*
and

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and in the mean season that we yet fulfill our accounted time, which the Lord grant for his Churches sake, that you may do euen vntill old age and many yeers, in good increase of your childrens children, and happy peace of his chosen people. In the meane while I say, that your hope may be precious before you, & in this earthly Tabernacle, ye may haue your conuersation in the highest heauen, from thence looking for a Saviour, euen Iesus Christ the righteous, who shall change this corruptible body, to make it like to his glorious body, in that blessed time which shall scatter away all affliction, & seale with in the happy assurance of immortalitie, which shall bee in the presence of the G O D of glory: when this weak body shall haue a recompence (of a few sorrowful daies) in euerlasting righteousnes. In which hope the Lord grant many yeeres you may rest.

Yours Ed. Dering.

To Mistres B.

TH E Lord who is rich in mercy, keepe vs euer in the assured couenant of his new Testament made in Iesus Christ, that we may feele the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, and reioyce in the hope of eternall life: Amen. I am sure you will bee glad (good Mistres B.) to heare of our safe comming home, and I would bee glad to heare of all your well doing, at our Saint *Ellins*, and therefore I write vnto you, both to heare againe that God continueth his good blessings towards you, and to certifie you that (I thanke God) I am now safe at Shenfields; I haue not yett take the plaister, but this day I haue begun to drinke Mistres B. water. Let it haue the worke which God will: For in health our meats doe not nourish

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rish vs, but by his word. In sicknesse, medicines can do
us no good, except he blesse them, Wee haue no newes
heeere to write of but of Country things, scarce woorth
the telling, and lesse worth the practising if it could be a-
mended, euery man going after his Oxe and his Horse:
and most doe glorifie G O D no more then their brute
beast. If they be like vnto vs which are in the Court, and
in the Cittie, that the one be as ambitious, the other as
couerous as we be brutish, and God bee forgotten of vs
all alike, we may take vs againe the Lamentation of Iere-
mie: for it is the great mercies of G O D that we be not
consumed. But if such be the misery in the worlde, wee
that are not of the world, but by Christ are taken out of
the world: Let vs not loue the world which is such an e-
nemie vnto God, and then wee shall not be condemned
with the world when Christ shall come in glory. And
the Lord be praised, who hath giuen vs eyes to see and
eares to heare, that we might be wise harted: not to say
peace & truce with such things, with such men cry peace
& truce, but rather to haue our life hidden with Christ in
God, and on his right hand behold the peace which pas-
seth all vnderstanding, & good Mistres B. increase in this,
God hath giuen you a happier helper, who is willingly
led to all righteousnes. The Lord God make his good
worke perfect for his sonnes sake, in him, in you, and in vs
all, that loue the comming of Iesus Christ, Amen.

Yours in the Lord, Ed. Dering.
A Letter of M. Ed. Dering to Mistres H.

CRace and peace, &c. I haue heard (good Mistres
H.) of your heauie estate, that in many troubles
the Lord doth exercise you, but I trust you are also
taught.

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taught to say alwaies before God, *Thy will bee done*, and if this be your praier, then know that nothing happeneth but by his appointment, and be contented with all that he hath done, so that your hart may beare you witnes, that of all things the Lord is most deare vnto you: and for your troubles, giue only your hart to loue the Lord, and they shall seeme neither great nor strong vnto you. For what can be great, if our hart be prepared to say with the Apostle Saint Paule, *That we reioyce in afflictions, because they shall breed in vs a hope which shall neuer make vs ashamed*: Or what can be great, if God haue taught vs, *That the momentaine afflictions of this worlde, they are not worthy of the glory that shall bee reuealed vnto vs*: Or what can be great, if wee say with the Apostle: *Bretheren, reioyce in afflictions, reioyce exceedingly: when you fall into many and great tribulations.*

Surely good Mistresse H. all is nothing, for a frayle body, a short life, a sinfull creature, what can come vnto it that should dismay it? nay how should we not (if we know it well,) be gladde, if death also were at our beds side, that we might at once see the outmost malice of the deuill, and after for euer-more bee deliuered from him. A great Clowde of witnesses (as the Apostle saith) are cited in the eleuenth Chapter to the Hebrues, of which euery one should be our example to beare all crosses that the Lord doth sende, knowing that he is delighted with vs, when wee bee faithfull to abide these momentaine and light chastisements. *Job, Dauid, Paule*, our Sauour Christ himselfe, how many thinges suffered they, how are we not ashamed to refuse the cause which they haue borne; and way well your owne case what it is, and you shall see little cause of sortow in it, or if you compare it with other, none at all.

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Hath your husband beene vnkind to you, beare it, & you shall win him at the last: If not, thanke G O D that you can continue louing and obedient, euen vnto an vnkind husband. And I assure you in this one vertue, there is more comfort and ioy, then there can bee griefe in all the discourtesies of men: & what is that crosse of yours, in respect of that which Abigaill did so long and patiently beare? But your sonne hath grieued you much, yea but you haue not the hūdreth part of the griefe that Dauid might haue had for his sonne Absolon: and will you be more grieued then he? Your sonne I trust shall yet proue well, and you shall see his recovery: if not, this manner of disease is rather a testimony of a conscience grieued with his euill doing, then an argument of his destruction, so that euen in this griefe you haue great cause of ioy: and what if God take from you the comfort of one child, leauing again vnto you the comfort of a great many: Will you, or can you repine against the louing kindnes of the Lord? Howe glad would Dauid haue beene of other good children in the losse of one euill; yet you haue lost none, neither is your son known to be so euill, but you may reioyce in him againe: yet if all things were as euill as you could imagine, what then? Where is our loue to Iesus Christ, that gaue his precious bodie to the death vpon the Crosse for our sinnes? If we will not leaue Sonne, Daughter, and our owne life for his sake. Can one haire fall from your sonnes heade but at Christs commandement? Is not hee head of his Church, and all things happen they not vnto vs as hee will? Heerin you shall know you loue G O D aboue all, when you can forget the child of your wombe, for his sake. And therefore (good Mistres H.) giue not your selfe to any inordinate affections to offend G O D, and hurt

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hurt your selfe, but say and think, *Thy will be done O Lord*, and when the time shall come of our latter end, we shall neuer haue end of the blessed life which God shall giue vnto you, and to all his Saints in that day. Thus in haste I am constrained to cease to write; but I will not cease to pray, that God may blesse you, and giue you his ioyfull Spirit, to fill you with all spirituall comfort, against the temptations of the world, and all the enuie of the deuill. And pray for mee I beseech you, that I may account all the world to bee but dung, to the end I may win Iesus Christ, (to whom) the liuing and eternall God I commit you for euer, Amen. The xix of Aprill.

Yours in the Lord Iesus, the onely
forgiuenes of all our sinnes.

Edward Dering.

Letters of Ed. Dering to Mistris K.

THE Lord God direct vs with his holy spirit, that we may loue and feare him vnto the end, Amen. It greeueth me good Mistris K. that you should be so long at *Hendon* as now you haue beene, and all this while I could finde no leisure to come vnto you, and whatsoeuer my fault hath beene heerein, I will make no other excuse, but desire you to forgiue it. And I pray God though I see you not, yet I may so remember you, as I am bound, and so my not comming vnto you shall greeue me the lesse. Now touching your owne case, I know you are wise to see, that the Lord giueth you new instructions to bee wise in him, and to giue ouer your selfe vnto him. For as God hath blessed you many waies, and giuen you a good calling in the world, so he visiteth

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you euery day, and humbleth you with many chastise-
ments before him. God hath giuen you husband, chil-
dren, family, and other blessings, but you enioy none of
them without a crosse, sometime in one thing, sometime
in another, and commonly your owne weake and sickly
body makes you that you cannot haue your ioy as you
would. Yea I doubt not, but it is so abridged vnto you,
that sometime it grieueth you that you cannot haue ei-
ther care ouer your house as you wish, or attend on your
children, as you desire, or reioyce with your husband,
as otherwise you might. But this griefe God recompen-
ceth with great benefit, for our Sauour Christ is our
good warrant, that this is the lot of Gods Saints, to en-
ioy his blessings with afflictions, so that the more that
you be sorrowfull, the more you be sure that the liuing
God hath giuen you your portion: and so your sorrow
is ioy vnto you. Besides this, the mingling of your ioy
with sorrow, and wealth with woë, is a happy tempring
vnto you of heauen with earth, that you should neither
loue nor rest in this, aboue that which is meete, but ac-
knowledge all is but vanity; so loue it as transitory
things, and haue your great delight with the Lord alone,
who is vnto you health, prosperity, ioy, and eternall life.
This good Mistris K. you knowe, but yet this falso put
you in mind of; for though God haue blessed you, yet
you are but a weake woman, and haue need (in the com-
mon frailty of mans nature) to bee stirred vp with ex-
hortation. Remember therefore euer that which is the
end of all, *Feare God, and keepe his commandemens.* For this
is the whole scope of our life, which when wee haue
brought to his appointed ende, wee shall see the hope
which we haue long looked for; and when immortality
hath brought happines into light, & scattered away our
feare,

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feare, we shall say then, *Blessed be the day in which first we learned to feare the Lord.* And the Lord blesse you with his holy spirit, that you may in the midst of other care, haue pleasure in this, and in other sorrow reioyce in the Lord, and alwaies reioyce. Commend me I pray you, to your little ones, Nan, Bessie, & Mary. And the Lord make you and maister K. gladd parents of good children. Amen. From *Tobie*, the last of February. 1575.

Yours in the Lord Iesu, Ed. Dering.

To Mistris K.

THE grace of our Lord Iesus be with you euer. Amen. I thanke you good Mistris K. for your Letter, and for your medicine, and for your good will to him to whom you before did owe so little. Touching my disease, I did suddainly cough & spit much blood, so that when with much forcing my selfe, I refrained, it rattled in my throat, as if I had bin a dying: next day in the like sort I did, & once since the taking of these medicines for the staying of it. It is now staid, but I feele a great stopping of my wind, and much prouocation to cough, which if I did, I should spit blood as before. I pray you aske your Physition what hee thinketh best to be done. And good Mistris K. against all diseases and sicknesses of the bodie, doe as you do, and daily encrease it, with an vnfaigned testimony of your own hart. Commit your health, your sicknes, your body, your soule, your life, and your death, to the protection of him that died for vs, & is risen againe. A sicke body with such an aide, hath greater treasure thē the Queenes Jewell house. Pray still, and pray for mee. I see the goodnes of GOD such towardes mee, as (I thanke God) except sinne, I weigh

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not all the world a feather : and with as glad a minde I spitte blood, (I trust) as cleare spittle. To those that loue God, all things are for the best : he hath a hard hart that beleueth not this. For the Church, I commit it to the Lord, the Lord grant with that affection that I owe vnto it ; and for all my labour in it (I thanke God) I am guiltie neither of couetousnes, nor ambition, but as God hath giuen me grace, I sought onely his glory. I write this vnto you good Mistresse K. because you know it, and that you may the more effectually remember him, that will knowe you when the worlde, your health, your corruptible body, death and sinne it selfe, haue done their worst. Commend mee to Maister K. your little ones, to Maister R. The Lord blesse vs all, that we make our bodies shake, and not our bodies vs. *Vale in Christo Iesu.* 25. Iul. 1575.

Tuus in Christo, Ed. Dering.

To Mistris K.

THE Lord God who sheweth mercy to whom he will shew mercy, and haue compassion on whom he will haue compassion, according to his loue with which hee loued vs before the world was made, looke vpon vs, and leade vs in our waies, that in righteousness and holines, peace, and ioy of the holy Ghost, we may finish our compasse and come vnto him, Amen. If I could, good Mistris K. doe as I should ; then my waies were perfect among men, but it is with me as with many other, small hinderances to an vnwilling minde, are occasions great enough to keepe vs from doing well. This hath made me to pretermitt many duties which had been better done. And I dare not make any other excuse why
I haue

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I haue not written vnto you oftner: for though I haue in a weary body many things to do, and could make excuses which you would easily beleue, yet sure I am, if sloth and negligence were vtterly gone, a fewē lynes weee so soone written, that I could not want time for so little labour, this is true, & *sit erranti medicina confessio*. Touching my sickenes, hee that sent it he doeth rule it, and as he will so farre let it goe. I feele yet difficulty of breath and coughing: and I see palenes and leanenesse abiding still, yet I thanke God I am so well, as we supposed all to haue seene you at *Henden* this next Monday, but God hath changed our way, and by occasion wee haue deferred it, trusting yet to see you very shortly, if the Lord will, to whom we commit both your wayes and ours. And now good Mistris K. further I need not write vnto you, for which cause yet especially you craue my Letters, I know whom you haue beleued, vpon what ground you stand, who hath sealed your persuasion in you, he is able to keepe that you haue committed vnto him, euen vntill that day, that the things of the world are changed before vs all. Affliction may be great and make vs murmur, prosperity may abound and make vs proude, the world may fill our eyes and our eares, that sometime we may be blinde and not see our hope, our owne concupiscence may peraduenture sting vs that we forget the good workes wherein wee had delight, but the councell of the Highest standeth fast for euer: the Lord knoweth all that are his. In this Tower of defence our dwelling is made for vs, and the gates of hell shall not preuaile against vs. When wee sinne, we must needes be sorrowfull, and to offende such a Sauiour, it will grieue vs more then death it selfe: but to remember againe so assured hope, we cannot but reioyce in

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the Lord, and alwaies reioyce. Thus I leaue you to your owne hart, where is your stronge safetie: and to your secrete thoughts, which comfort you in the night. And committing my selfe vnto your praiers, I beseech God the Father of our Lorde Iesus Christ, to keepe you and yours. Commend me to your little ones: pardon me for writing in such a peece of paper, I could hardly get this. Maister H. and my wife wish to see you. The Lord keep vs vnblameable in his sight. From *Toby* the xiiij. day of August. 1575.

Your bounden in the Lord, Ed. Dering.

To Mistris K.

THE Lord God direct vs in all our waies, that they may be vnblameable in his sight, and our faith may be strengthened in the blessed hope of his Elect, so that nothing be able to shake it from henceforth, from the boldnes and assurance of euerlasting life. Many and iust causes good Mistris K. haue kept mee, so that these holy daies I could not see you, but I knowe no excuse why I could not write vnto you: and therefore for the one, as I am sure you doe willingly pardon me, so the other I beseech you to accept, both as a testimony of my mind that I forget you not, and as a discharge of that dutie I owe vnto you; for if I should not faithfully remember you, though you had otherwise done nothing for mee, yet I were vnworthy of such good will. And if I should not as in bounden duty be most careful to strengthen and comfort that good purpose, which your selfe haue chosen for the course of your life, I were not worthy of the acquaintance of the Saints of God. Therefore departing from London againe (as I could not chuse) I
haue

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haue yet written vnto you, as I must needs. And I hartily pray that God may encrease his goodnesse in you, & earnestly beseech you, as you haue receiued that, so you would abound more and more, a short request & soone heard : but exceeding difficult to some to practise, and yet not difficult vnto you, but easie and light as you can desire, for hee that is borne of God, ouer-commeth the world. And the annointing (as Iohn sayth) which you haue receiued of God, dwelleth in you, and you neede not that any man teach you, but as the same annointing teacheth you all things, and it is true and not lying, and as it is taught you, you shall abide in it.

Maruell not good Mistresse K. that I write this vnto you, nor be vnwillingly affected to heare of your owne happines, It is (as Salomon sayth) another mans mouth that praiseth you and not your owne, and what neede you feare. And I speake not deceitfully, which I thanke God I hate, nor giue I titles (as Iob sayth) which the Lord doth abhorre. But seeing (as I am certainly perswaded) that in you, which Saint Iohn could see in the people to whom he wrote, and to whom he gaue so honourable praise, why should not I be bold vpon so good warrant, to say also vnto you: You are the Lordes: and God who iustified then his Apostles words, hee will iustifie them now and euer, for hee is mercifull without end. Let vs not then good Mistresse K. bee hencefoorth sorrowfull or faint-hearted: Paul and Peter, and all the Apostles and Prophets, haue spoken glorious things vnto vs, and we will beleue them. And yet not they, but the Spirit of God hath giuen vs this testimonie, and it is true. For what were the Romanes, Corinthians, Ephesians, Galathians, and all other whom the Spirit nameth Saints and Holy ones, were they not as we? Fraile
and

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and weake as wee, and our faith as theirs? But wee feele a grat deale of infirmity in our selues; did not they so, and did not the spirit of God see more in them, then themselues could feele? yet it calleth them Saints: yea, and so it calleth vs, that we should not feare: and therefore as I sayd, I say againe, you are annointed of the Lord, and you shall not fall, if your heart beare you witness, that the profession which you make, is vnfained in you, as I am sure it beareth you witness. One care onely wee haue, which also we will haue vnto the end: and that is, that we may glorifie him, who hath glorified vs. In this doing, as I accuse my selfe most aboute all other men; - so I praise not you a whit. For I know good Mistresse K. heerein you are too too faulty, and so is all flesh: our flesh, the world, and the diuell, they are too strong for vs, but blessed be the Lord God, who hath giuen vs victory in Iesus Christ, and wee will doe if God giue vs grace, as his Apostles did, we will chastice our bodies, and bring them in subiection, that all that know our Religion; shall not blame our workes: And I thank God for all that you haue obtained: And I beseech you increase and abound more, that as hee will giue vs a full reward, so wee may offer vp our bodies a holy sacrifice, to praise his name, who hath had mercie vpon vs. And pray for mee, that my handes and tongue may ioyne in the workes of Gods Saints: and let vs all growe together vnto that blessed hope, till wee haue found that happie strength, by which the world is crucified vnto vs, and wee vnto the world: But the Lord that teacheth you, to him I leaue you: whom I beseech to open your eies into so large and wide a spirituall sight that you may yet more clearely see and feele the glorie of God and immortalitie. Farewell good Mistresse K.,
Commend

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Commend mee to Nan, Bessie, Mary. The Lord blesse you with them euer, Amen.

Thine in Christ Bd. Dering.

A Letter of M. Ed. De. to the Lady G.

The grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, be with you euer, Amen.

IF either I might doe the duty whereunto your well deseruing hath bounde mee, or might requite with thanks that with all your good will you haue deserued, I know and confesse it (good Madam) long since I should haue come to see you: but such is my case, as I can not doe either what is most meet, or what I most desire; for sometime by busines, and sometime by sicknes, and sometime by opportunity of others, I am holden heere, that I could neuer yet haue opportunity to ride farre, or to see my natie country and nighest friends. Once in Sommer I would haue gone to M. B. besides Winsore, and the second night of my trauel I could not sleepe, but tarried a seauennight in the same place, and then came backe againe, ill at ease: thus it pleased God to deale with me, and such a body he hath giuen me, to the end (I am sure) I should not loue this present vanity, but remember him that liueth euer; *and desire to be dissolued to see his glorie.* And this I beseech you thinke to be the onely cause, that I haue not of long time seene you and others, with whom otherwise I would wish to dwell: and if it be the good will of God to prosper my iournies in time conuenient, I trust to see you oftner heereafter; but his will be done, who appointeth our waies, & numbrieth our steps, and doth all things for the best to those that loue him, & to him if I can commit you in my daily praiers, that so my spirit be present with you; how long soeuer I be absent

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sent in body, yet my duty I owe you, shal not be altogether vnperformed, and that piece of it which yet is wanting, that in daily exhortations I might (by the grace of God) stirre vp your minde, that in the meane time, let me supply with these Letters: In which, most hartily I beseech you (good Madam) goe on forward, and faint not in the course of godlines, increase still in faith, in loue, in hope, till with a wise hart you haue such a feeling of the glory of God, & of eternal life, that you haue made your account vp with the worlde, and are at a point with all that is vnder the sunne. While God shall prolong your daies, reioyce in him that hath giuen you life, and vse all his gifts to his glory: and when his appointed time shall come and bring death into your doores: let this be the preparation of your heart, *you desire to be loosed and to bee with Christ.* And let this be the answer of your tongue, *Lord now lettest thou thy seruant depart in peace.* Surely the it shal come vnto you, that a happy life shall haue a blessed end. Your former times haue found their wished issue, and the entrance of your grace, shall be the beginning of your glory: Hee hath spoken it that cannot deceiue vs, *That every one that beleueth in him, shall not tast of death, but shall passe from death to life.* This (good Madame) is the crowne and garland of all our pleasures: reioyce in feeling it, and be gladde in louing it, knit it fast to all the thoughts of your hart, and neuer forget it, it shall giue you more pleasure in one day of your life, then without it you can find in a thousand yeeres: and all the men of the world which feele their pleasure in this life, & know nothing better, then to followe their owne concupiscence, they shall perish when you shall abide, and they shall mourne when you shall reioyce, because they haue forgotten the liuing God whom you haue loued. Many
temptations

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temptations shall be continually against you, but God is able to set you free from them : cast your care on him, & you haue wonne the victory. And to the end you may know him, and how to trutt in him, as the Prophet Dauid did so let vs doe, that is : Let vs make his testimonies to be our delight, and exercise our selues in them day & night, for they onely can make vs wise, and renewe in vs the image of God, that we may bee perfect, as our heauenly Father is perfect. This hope I thanke God hath been before me, that I haue not feared in any trouble, & in a good conscience of this doing, I had rather haue the displeasure of the world, then with losse of this desire or any hurt of it, to win the fauour of all mortall men. And so I am sure it shall be with you that day, in which you shall so feele Gods glory and eternall life, that you will consecrate your life for euer vnto him, loue him, feare him, long after him : It shall bee more ioyfull vnto you, then the day of your birth, and your hart shall besette as S. Paul saith, *to vse the world as though you used it not* : not to forsake the world or worldly things, (for they are the gifts of God for the comfort of our life) but as though we forsaked it, so let our loue be taken from it, & be euer with him who is the giuer of all, and hath immortality. there is not a day that passeth ouer our heades, but it afflicteth the body, and maketh it a day shorter liuing then it was. Let there not be a day but shall strengthen our faith, that we may be gladd wee are one day neerer the presence of God then wee were before. And I beseech God (who onely can doe what he will) worke his good will with you in all spirituall blessings, that you may abound : and in the condition of this life that you may reioyce, till your accounted times be all fulfilled. Amen.

Yours in the Lord Iesu, M. Dering.

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A Letter of M. Ed. De. to the Lady M.

THE Lord God who hath onely power to worke his will, and hath shewed mercy vnto vs in an eternall couenant, make vs perfect in all our wayes to abound in righteousnes, and loue his glory, that in life & death we may be happy, & haue ioy in his presence, who liueth euer, Amen. Good Madam, the duty that I haue long owed vnto you, doth much bind me: & the experience of your good inclination, sufficiently doeth embolden me to write at this time vnto you: and I trust the Lord God who hath giuen you his grace, and called mee to this worke, will blesse the labour that it may be profitable to his glory & your comfort. For if his word haue so great strength in his Saints when they are yet vnbelieuing and ignorant, that it reuealeth euen the secrets of their harts, that it maketh them fall downe to worshipping him, and to acknowledge his mighty power in it: I am sure that it cannot bee but the same worde shall haue strength in you, wholly & altogether to consecrate your self vnto the Lord, til al your delight be in him alone. So that I am nowe, more to pray for my selfe then for you, that I may rather speak the truth, then you hear it: for of this I am sure, your hart is prepared, as the Prophet saith, to a good purpose, the Lord make my hand as the pen of a good writer. And now (good Madam) this is the sum of all, Feare God and loue him: your goods, your credit, your thoughts, your desires, your body, your life, giue it all vnto him, that he onely may please you; his will perswade you; that whether you liue or whether you die, you may be wholly his. A short lesson and soone learned, hard I confesse of the world to practise, but not hard to you whom God hath loued: for what is it can call away
your

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your desire, that wholly and altogether it should not be in this? It is only the world that hath taken vp enmity against vs, & striueth dayly to seperate vs from the Lord. But what is in the world why the persuasions of it should please vs? especially you who haue had experience of it, whose life G O D hath filled with worldly things. You know what is the comfort of houses & lands: you haue weighed them well and founde them light. You know the gladnes of a mother, and haue in your sight sonnes and daughters, the tryall of it is in you, and hath entred deepe, euen as they haue beene the fruite of your owne wombe: but in them you haue no such ioy as in the spirit of adoption, by which you know your selfe to be the child of God. You knowe the treasure of a good husband, with whom you haue had peaceable and louing dayes: but how much is it a greater ioy of vnspeakeable gladnes to feele your selfe ioyned to Iesus Christ, & made a chaste member of a glorious body, with whom you shall be ioyned for euer.

You haue seen a great many yeeres of the age of man, and haue measured the length of them, so that if you might liue the daies of Abraham, yet you might account your howers and see the time at hand, when in the ende of your course you shall take your rest: and what were this to immortality. To be short, and to pretermit many things wherewith God hath made your life as a blessing, you haue seene fauour, credite, landes, authority, friends, seruants, the pleasures of these God hath giuen you. You haue seent fulnes of such delights: but this and all els that you haue seene, what is it to the grace of God, the fellowship of Saints, the forgiuenesse of your sinnes, the loue of his countenance, the assurance of your life, the brightnes of his glory, and your eternall blessings.

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blessings. Sith then in the world is noe sure refuge, the more I haue seene the fruite of your faith, the more assuredly I know the constancy of your mind, ready to leaue the world to approach neerer vnto God, and to account all those things to be but dung, to the end you may win Christ, in whō you shal be so much more blessed, as light is more bright then darknes, health is more excellent thē sicknes, and life more precious then cruell death. This (good Madam) you haue long knowne, and with praise professed it among men: And now especially reape the fruite of it in these dayes of Gods visitation, in which in a weake body you haue had a sharpe sicknesse, to teach you that your life is in the hands of God, and the nature of your body that is but dust, so that you shold not loue it but in the Lord, nor be pleased with it but as it pleaseth him, ready to lay it downe when he shal call you. This is that great and high commandement: *To loue God aboue all*, and this is the greatest obedience required of man, to be ready to die at the will of God. Vnto which commandement when I doe beseech you willingly to yee'de, I feele in my selfe howe the nature of man striueth against it: all those delights of which I spake before (the pleasures of this present life) they arise against it: although we had no other comfort, yet life it selfe is sweet vnto vs, and we are loth to make our beds in the darke, our eyes they would yet see the Sunne, our eares would heare the sounde of worldly elements, though our flesh bee grasse, yet grasse hath a flower, and our fraile bodies haue vanishing fantasies agreeable vnto them, as earth vnto earth, & from which most hardly you shal pul it away, the Patriarkes and Prophets were sometime afraide, Paule and Peter were not alwaies bolde, they loued euer that lyfe which they sawe in hope, but they did feele the death
which

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which did fight in their members, And how should I then say vnto you a weake woman, feare not death, or if I say it, how can you performe it, beeing so weake a vessel of flesh and blood: yet good Madam giue mee leaue to intreate you, and I hope you shal haue a hart to grant it: I most humbly beseech you feare not death. The Apostles were men as we are, yet Paule obtained at last to be dissolued and to be with Christ: if we be weaker then he, the graces of God shalbe more exalted in vs, and we also shall say at the last, *Let thy seruant O Lorde depart in peace.* It is the Lord that hath promised this blessing vnto vs, let vs haue it with faith, and it will make death vile in our eyes: it is enough if we know G O D will giue this victory to his people, let vs be bold, though wee feare a little while, yet feare shall be cast out, and wee shall say with a free spirite, O death where is thy sting, &c, Try your selfe therefore euery day, and if your hart be bold, reioyce good Madame, and reioyce for euer: the last and greatest enimie (which is death) is troden vnder your feete, and what els can hurt you: all other things of the world they are but seruants of death, and serue to make his power more fearefull vnto vs, friendes or kins-folke, golde, siluer, precious stones, or all other pleasures, all labour vnto one end, to make vs more loth to die, vanquish death, and you haue vanquished all, height and depth, life and death, all is yours, and you are Christes. And see I beseech you what glory you haue gotten, you are but a weake and sicke woman whom God hath shut vp in your chamber, and tyed to your bed: and yet the great tyrant of the world, that holdeth in bondage kings and Princes, and woundeth them all with feare & terror, he is confounded before you, & the Lord of life he hath crushed him in peeces vnder you. A blessed day that brought you

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you first into this battell, a blessed sicknes that made you endure the fight, and most blessed end in which you get the victory; for who hath giuen you this strength, or who raigneth in you in such a day, but he who hath said and done it, *O death, I will be thy death.* And if hee be in you who hath abolished death, & in whose sight death shall neuer haue any rule, what treasure what depth of ioy and gladnes shall he bring with him: while you liue you shall liue in him, and no man shall take your ioy from you: and when you die, you shall die in him, and death shall be noe death, but you shall passe to eternall life: and all that is fearefull shall be farre from you: the burthen of sinne, the malice of the deuill, the terrour of hell: the dreadfull words, *Go ye cursed into eternall fire.* All this is abolished and troden downe in the Crosse of Iesus Christ, who raigneth in you, and giueth his spirit, that you feare not death: and all things that fill with ioy, not the earth onely, but the heauens also (you haue destroyed death) you shall feele then all within you: the fellowship of Saints and Angels, the forgiuenes of sinnes, the resurrection of the body, the life euerlasting, & the God of glory: your eyes lightened with a pure faith, shall see these things in so perfect beauty, that you shall cast out death & the feare of it; yea you should thinke your time wearines if your daies should bee prolonged, and you should be yet many yeeres a sojourner in this bodie, in which you are a stranger from the presence of the Lord: And the nearer your time approcheth, the gladder you shall be of the end of your iourney, when your hart shall feele it: and when the earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be destroyed, you haue a building giuen of God, a house not made with hands, but eternall in the heauens: In this faith you shall not only not feare death, but you shall

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shall sigh and moane (as Paul saith) till you see your glorie, and the lot of the Saints that is in light, where there is no more sorrow nor care, nor feare, nor death, but the God of all mercy, & father of our Lord Iesus Christ shall be before vs for euer. Thus Madam (as my duty is) I haue written vnto you, and God will blesse it as his promise is, that it shall be for the best, & in the wisdom of his word we shall be strengthened in his grace, that death and sickness shall be forgotten, and all the desires of our hart shall be with him. And the Lord God for his sonnes sake so haue mercy vpon vs, that all euill taken from vs, we may reioyce in him, and see his blessed age that is in immortality, and is sealed in our hearts with his blessed spirit. To whom be glory for euer-more, Amen. From Saint *Ellins*; the tenth of Ianuary, Anno Dom. 1576.

Yours bounden in the Lord Iesu, the only forgiveness
of all our finnes. Ed. Deering.

*A Letter written by M. Ed. Deering, to his Lord and
Maister the Duke of Northfolke.*

Gratia & pax a Deo patre, & Domino nostro Iesu Christo.

THE long good will that I haue borne vnto you, as to one that earnestly professed the Gospell, and the great duty I owe vnto you as to my Lord and maister, make, that now I should write vnto you, not knowing whether opportunity shall be such as hereafter I may doe you any seruice. God the author of all life, he hath shut both you and me vp in his hands: that there is great likelihood, our liues in this world they are but short. The Prince that executeth the iudgement of the Lorde, shee hath found you out in your great finnes: & sickness that raigneth over all flesh, it hath taken now long hold vpon me. So that as I said, we are both in the hands of the

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Lord, we are summoned peremptorily, death hath giuen an assault, and the weake holds of our life they are violently shaken. Now therefore my Lord, let vs take counsell together, and as a wise Matter, learne of a faythfull seruant, what is best to bee done: the worst that our sins can do vnto vs, is to lay vpō vs the iust reward of death, my disease which thus afflicteth me for many thousand sinnes; it can but take away my life which I haue so abused. And all your deepe dissimulation and hypocrisie, your great ambitions, your faithlesse Religion, which haue so bewitched you, what can they doe more then this? The remedy now is, to make of necessitie a vertue, that is, to beare it wisely, which you must needs abide. I haue I thanke G O D, found that grace, that I can loue this saying, *Cupio dissolui, & esse cum Christo*, the Lord also open your hart, and guide your vnderstanding, that with all Saints you may doe likewise, and pray, *Veni Domine Iesu.*

And now, forasmuch as this is the last duty, that I am like to doe vnto you, as G O D shall giue grace I wil so aduise you, as I may testifie mine owne faith, & make you strong against the day of trial: trusting that our God shall so remember vs both in mercie, that after a little while we shall see better daies, and raigne with him that abideth King for euer. There is now but one thing necessary for you to learne in this life, that is, how you may willingly desire to die; a hard lesson for a naturall man, for death is our last enemy and his assault most violent for the triall of our faith: but Christ who hath ouercome death and hell, he hath broken the strength of this battell, and set vp the songs of triumph vnto all that beleue, that we may haue the fulnes of ioy, & say with gladnes, *O Death where is thy sting?*

Now

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Now, that this ioy may be yours, and this gladnesse your inheritance, prepare your selfe, not in your owne wisdom, for that hath already deceiued you, but in the wisdom of God, that your hope may be sure. If you will now haue the hart that shal cōdemne the force of death, consider wherefore you are called to die; It is layd to your charge that you haue dealt traiterously with your Prince, with your Country, & with the religion of God: and vpon these crimes you are condemned to die. If you be guiltles, ô my Lord, blessed are you, & blessed is your portion: hee hath spoken it that neuer will change: If when you doe well you suffer wrongfully, take it patiently, for this is acceptable to God: but if you be guilty you haue not your hope in death (for that you haue deserued) but your hope is this, that you die so as it becometh you; which if God shall grant vnto you, then blessed is the houre that God shal bring vpon you, you shall make that change, which God for his Christs sake, lay speedily vpon all his children, and you shal die once that you may liue euer. Now that you may know how you ought to die, learne this of the Lord, which hee hath so plainly taught you. The first part of your true repentance must be an humble confession, whatsoeuer your one conscience can vtter more then is reuealed. O my Lord speak openly the truth, Sathan is enemy vnto vs, & his slights are many; if you will treade the malicious serpent vnder your feet, & triumph with Christ who hath spoiled hell, tell the truth my Lord, conceale nothing, so shall you shunne the diuell. If my words sceme but light to perswade you, heare the wisest counsellour that euer raigned in Israel: Hee that hideth his sinne (saith Salomon) shall neuer prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall finde mercy.

When

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When Acan had transgressed in Israell and deserued death, when he was brought to judgement, Iosua said vnto him, My son, I beseech thee giue glory to the Lord God of Israell, make confession vnto him, and shew mee now what thou hast done. Loe my Lord, this is to giue glory vnto God; to confesse your sin, and tell what you haue done. The good king Dauid when he had deserued death, and feared greatly the sentence of the Prophet, he confessed gladly and made it knowne vnto the world what his sin was, and wherein he had offended. When God gaue his lawes vnto Israel, & in the blood of goates & calues sheweth thē the redemption that was in Christ Iesus, hee so ordained, that before their forgiuenes was preached, the high Priest should proclaime openly what were the sins of the people, and so lay their sins vpon the beasts. So standeth it now with vs, if we wil find forgiuenes of our sins, let vs cast of the cloake of shame, and confesse before heauen and earth, what we haue sinned and what we haue done. What greater perswasions can you yet require, or how can you thinke to please God if you wil hide your sins? That was the practise of olde Adam, but you are borne anew: that was the sin of Caine, but you my good Lord are of a better kindred. Speake the truth and shrink not, God will once reueale the secrets of harts, & then you shal reioyce that there is nothing of yours hid: fie vpon that sin, that you should turne away for one howre and receiue heereafter euerlasting confusion: better a thousand times to receiue the reproch of flesh, and after receiue your glory of the Lord. When Iohn Baptist preached first the Gospell, hee baptized no more then such as confessed their sins. The lost son when he ran away, he found no hope of pardon, till hee called heauen and earth to witnesse his great iniquitie. Paul
who

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who preached the Gospell vnto vs Gentiles, howe often doth hee confesse that he was a persecutor. The happie theefe that was hanged entred not into paradise, till he first in the hearing of Israel said, we are rightly punished; and receiue things worthy of that we haue done. What should I say more, I trust you feare G O D, and I haue seene in you many signes of grace, I doubt not but you will make it knowen whatsoeuer is in your heart. It is the word of God that I haue spoken, and it is the onely truth vpon which you may build your faith. This thing toucheth so neere the glory of God and the safety of his Gospell, that you must now needes forsake your friends and kinsmen, yea forgette the loue of your selfe; and if you haue been partaker of any counsell, disclose the conspiracies of the wicked: you haue stoode in iudgement not before men, for they are but ministers, but before the Lord, who sitteth in the midst of iudgement. Surely, if you seeke to hide your sinnes, you seeke to hide them from him that knoweth the secrets of the heart & raines, and to dissemble with him that will not be mocked: and therefore with all humbleness of duty, I beseech you, and in the name of God I craue this at your handes, vnburthen your owne conscience, make your heart gladd, cast off the burthen of your secret sins, purge the eyes of your minde, that you may see Christ, let true repentance breake forth in holy confession, shame the Lordes enemies, and make the Church of God reioyce, and loe in the name of Christ I tell it you: Blessed is the day in which it was said of you, a man child is borne; and blessed shall bee the howre, in which it shall bee said of you, you are deade in the Lorde: the closing vp of your eyes shall be the beginning of your sight: and death your entrance into life. And now my Lord, I beseech you praye

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for mee, and humbly vppon my knees, I aske you heartie forgiuenes wherin I haue not done as it became me touching you.

You knowe howe in my time I haue perswaded you from your wicked seruants, from your Popish friendes, and from your adulterous woman. But (alas) my Lord, your high calling hath bridled my wordes, I could not speake as I should, my words were too soft to heale so olde a disease : why should I haue tarried in your Lordships house except these things had bin amended? This bearing with your euill, was the greatest euill I coulde haue done you. And I beseech you forgiue me, and God for his mercies sake shall make me strong, that heerafter I shall not feare to reprove the sinner, & God shall forgiue you your dulnes of spirit, that could not be moued with a little counsell. Now my Lord, bee strong in the Lord, and feare not, if you must die, remember that Christ hath ouercome him that hath the power of death, and hath sette vs free from the power of the graue. Though you doe for a very little time tume again vnto dust, yet again you shall heare the voice of the Trumper, corruption shall die because he was no better then his Fathers, and you when you goe, you shall goe to your Fathers, the long race of Nobility of which God hath raised you, e- uery one in his time is gone before you, and so manie as haue died in the faith, they shal be again of your fellowship and kindred, and you shall praise GOD with them and not feare the second death. The Lorde open your eyes that you may see your hope, & you shall loue that companie aboute Kings and Princes. You shall see Abraham of whom you haue heard so much, Isaac, Iacob, Iob, Samuel and Daniel, whose names you loued, you shall see Paul and Peter, whose societic you wish for, all the Patriakes,

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Patriarke, Prophets, and Apostles that are gone before you. Be bold therefore, and be bold to die : with Elias you shall see Christ clothed with your flesh, who hath immortalitie in his hand, and shall make you raigne for euer : your time shall not be tedious, and your glory shall haue no change : and he that made the heauens so high aboue the earth, the sun, the moone, the starres, so full of excellent beautie, he shall be your portion in his endlesse glory : would God you could see him nowe with open countenance, that you might knowe his louing kindnes, how much it is better then life ; I would you could with all his Saints perceiue what were the height, the breadth, the length and the depth of his vnsearchable riches. O happie daies that shall neuer end, O blessed inheritance that shall neuer waste, O holic Cittie newe Ierusalem, the perfection of beauty, where the inhabitants are Princes, O precious building that is not made with hands, and ioyfull Tabernacles which GOD himselfe hath pitched ; my voice faileth, and my tongue cleaueth to my mouth when I woulde declare the euerlasting gladnes, when God shall wipe away all teares from our eyes, & there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor yet any paine, for the first things are past. Who remembreth this and saith not, all flesh is grasse, and the glory of man is as the flower of the field. Wee haue nothing here, but feare of our enemy, griefe in povertie, paine in labour, care in riches, unstedfastnesse in friendship, enuie in authority, emulation in honour, change in nobilitie, feare in a kingdom : and as the greatest of all Princes hath wiselie pronouced, vexation of spirit in all things that is vnder the Sunne, so true it is vanitie of vanities, and all is but vanitie. You neede no example, O my Lord and Master, beholde your selfe and

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See what you were : reioice in the Lord and loue better things, cease to eate of this corruption, and desire Man-
na ; drinke not of these puddles, but goe to the pure wa-
ter of life, which is cleere as christall, and proceedeth out
of the throne of GOD and of the Lambe : you are but
one steppe from this glorious blessing, and that is to die
willingly and well ; speake forth the secrets of your hart,
and giue God glory. The Lord blesse and keep you,
the Lord lift vp his countenance vpon you,
and send you peace.

FINIS.

