

{Anno} 1556. January.

you M. Calthrop thinke on Iohn Groue, an honest poore man, Traiford, and Rice Aprice his accomplices: My cofin Thomas Witton (a Scriuener in Lombardstreete) hath promised to further their deliuerie: at the least hee can instruct you whiche waye to worke. I doubt not but that Maister Boyer will labour for the good wife Cooper (for she is worthy to bee holpen) and Berard the Frenchman. There bee also diuers other well disposed men, whose deliuerance if ye will not labour for: yet I humbly beseeche you to seeke their reliefe, as you shall see cause, namely of Henry Aprice, Lancelot, Hobbes, Lothar, Homes, Carre, and Bockyngham, a young man of goodly gifts in witte and learning, and (saying that he is somewhat wilde) likely to doe well hereafter. There bee also two women, Conyngham and Alice Alexander that may prouue honest. For these and all other poore prisoners, here I make this my humble sute, and prayer to you all my Maisters, and especiall good frendes, beseeching you of all bondes of amitie, for the precious blood of Iesus Christ, in the bowelles of mercie: to tender the causes of miserable captiues: helpe to clothe Christ, visite the afflicted, comfort the sorrowfull, and releue the needy. The very God of peace guide your hartes to haue mercy on the poore, and loue faythfully together, Amen. This present Monday, when I looke to dye, and liue for euer.

Yours as euer Bartlet Greene.

\*An other letter of M. Greene to Mistres Elizabeth Clarke.

W Ould GOD (if it wete his pleasure) that with this Letter I might send you may harte and mynde, and whatsoeuer there is in me elles, that pertayneth vnto GOD: So should I thinke it the beste message, and happyest Letter that euer I should write. But though I obtaine not my desire, yet shall I not cease with continuall prayer to labour for you, desiring almighty GOD to increase that, which he hath long sith begonne in you, of sober lyfe, and earnest zeale towards his Religion. In fayth (as sayth Sainct Paule) she that is a true widowe and frendlesse, putteth her trust in GOD, continuing day and night in Supplication and prayer: but she that liueth in pleasure is dead, euen yet aliue. And verely a true widowe is she that hath maryed Christ, forsaking the vanities of the worlde, and luste of the fleshe. For as the maryed woman carth howe to loue, please, and serue her husband: so ought the widowe to geue all her hart and soule, thoughtes and wordes, studies and labours: faythfully to loue GOD, virtuously to bryng vp her children and household, and diligently to prouide for the poore and oppressed.

Therefore Sainct Paule first instructeth a widow, how to behaue her selfe, that is: Not to liue in pleasure, then to watche vnto prayer, as the onely meanes to obayne all our desires, steadfastly laying vpe all our trust in GOD, as Dauid right well sayeth: First eschew euill, then doe good. Of Anna the prayse was written, that she neuer went out of the Temple, but serued GOD with fasting and prayer night and day: so well had she espoused Christ. Iudith ware a smocke of heare, continuing in fasting, and had good report of all men.

The next care that belongeth to a widowe, is that she bryng vpe her children and household godly, in the nourture and information of the Lorde. Whereof Saincte Paule sayeth: If any haue Children or Nephewes, lette them learne firste to rule their owne house Godly, and to recompence their elders. The life continencie and couetousnesse of Phinix and Ophny, not corrected by Ely their Father, prouoked GODS vengeance vpon him, and all his kynred. The ouer tender loue of Absolon, expelled Dauid from his kyngdome. The vnreduced finnes of Ammon encouraged Absolon to slea his brother: most manifest examples agaynste the parentes, for the offences of their Children.

Contrary wise, how greatly might Hannah reioyce ouer Samuell her Sonne, whom she had brought vpe in the house of the Lorde: What thankes might Tobias wife giue for her Sonne Toby? How happy was Salomo to be taught by the prophet Nathan? But above all widowes, thise blessed was the happy mother of the viij. Sonnes, that so had instructed them by the feare of GOD, that by no tormentes they would shrinke from the loue of his truth.

Of the last parte Saincte Paule sheweth that a widowe shoulde bee chosen, if shee haue nourished her Children, if shee haue been liberal to straungers, if shee haue walked the Sainctes feete, and if shee haue ministrred to them in aduersitie. Herein it is euident howe earnestly Saincte Paule would haue widowes bent towards the poore; for that (as though they onely had been therefore meete) hee appointed onely widowes to minister to the Sainctes, and to gather for the poore. Whiche vse also continued, almost throughout the primitive Church, that widowes had the charge, and gathering for the poore men and straungers.

Of your neighbours I neede not to put you in remem-

brance, seeinge you dayly fede them with good Hospitalitie, by whiche meanes also many foreners are of you relieued: but of the poore Almes houses, and miserable prisoners here in London many lacking their libertie without cause, some vnder the colour of Religion, some onely kept for fees, and some on priuate mennes displeasure. Alas that Christe so hungereth, and no man will feede hym: so sore oppressed with thyrst, and no man will geue him to drinke: destitute of all lodgyng, and not relieued, naked, and not clothed, sicke, and not visited: imprisoned, and not seene. In tyme past menne could bestowe large summes of money on copes, vestimentes, and ornamentes of the Church. Why rather follow we not S. Ambroses example, whiche solde the same to the reliefe of the poore, or Chrysolomes commaundement, which willeth first to decke and garnish the liuing temple of God: But alas, suche is the wickednesse of these our last dayes, that nothing moueth veyther the pure doctrine, the godlines of life, nor good examples of the auncient Fathers. If in any thing they erred, if they haue written anye thyng that serueth for sectes and dissension, that will their charitable children embrace, publishe and mayntayne with sword, Fagot and fire. But all in vayne: they stryue agaynst the streame. For though in despite of the truth, by force of the oers of crafty perswasion, they maye bringe themselves into the haueu of hell: yet can they not make all menne beleue, that the bankes moue whilest the shippe sayleth, nor euer shall be able to turne the directe course of the streame of Gods truth. Our Lord Iesus Christ strengthen you in a pure doctrine, and vpright liuing, and geue you grace, vertuously to bring vp your children and family, and carefully to prouide for the poore and oppressed, Amen. At Newgate the 10. of January, Ann. 1556. Your assured, Bartlet Greene.

\* S. Ambrose toke from the church, & gaue to the poore: we take from the poore their tithes and impropertions, & giue them to Churches and ministers where is nothing but singing, and idleness.

An other certayne writing of M. Bartlet Greene.

BETTER is the day of death (sayth Salomon) then the days of birth. Man that is borne of woman, liueth but a shorte tyme, and is replenished with many miseries: but happye at the dead that dye in the Lord. Man of woman is borne in trauell, to liue in misery: manne thorough Christe doth dye in ioye, and lyue in felicitie. He is borne to dye, and dyeth to liue. Straight as he cometh into the worlde, with cryes he vttereth his miserable estate: straight as he departeth, with songes hee prayseth God for euer. Scarle yet in his cradle 3. deadly enemies assault him: after death no aduersary may annoy him. Whilest hee is here, he displeaseth God: when he is dead he fulfilleth his will. In this lyfe here he dyeth through sinne: in the life to come he liueth in righteoufnesse. Through many tribulations in earth he is still purged: with ioye vnspokeable in heauen is he made pure for euer. Here he dyeth euery houre: therchee liueth continuallye: Here is sinne: there is righteoufnes. Here is tyme: there is eternitie. Here is hatred: there is loue. Here is payne: there is pleasure. Here is misery: there is felicity. Here is corruption: there is immortalitie. Here we see vanitie: there shall we behold the maiestie of god, with triumphant and vnspokeable ioy in glory everlasting. Seeke therefore the things that are aboue, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God the father: vnto whom with the sonne and the holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen. Yours in Christ, Bartlet Grene.

An other certayne writing of M. Bartlet Grene.

Diuers other letters and matters there were beside which this seruant of God did write, as namely certayne notes & extractes in Latine out of the Doct. & order notes for his memory, whereby is declared how studious he was in searching and knowledge of the law of God; although his profession was the temporal lawe. Where I would to God, he were not among the lawyers such a phent that he had very few or no followers to flye to him of to followe his steps. But God is to be praised, that although we read of few of none among that sort that dyed as he did, yet good witness doe spring vpp dayly of the same profession, to such towards and Godly zeale, that some hope already appeareth, shortly to come to passe, that this godly phent shall not flye alone. These foresayde notes and gatheringes of his out of the Doctours, were taken from him by Bouer, being found about hym, which was to him no little grieve. Ice among the rest was first apprehended, but last of them condemned, which was the xx. day of January, and afterward burned with the other martyrs, the 27. of the same moneth.

A commendati of Lawyers.

3. Thomas Browne, Martyr.

THOMAS BROWNE, borne in the Parsh of Wyton, within the Dyoces of Wyke, came afterwarde to London, where he dwelled in the Parsh of Saint Bides in Fleetstreete, a martyrd manne, of the age of 37. yeres: who because he came not to his parish church was

Ex Reg. f. Tho. Browne, Martyr. January. 17.

An other letter of Bartlet Grene to Mistres Elizabeth Clarke.

1. Tim. 5.

1. Cor. 5.

1. Tim. 5.

Pfalm. 31. Luke. 2.

Judith. 8.

Ephesian. 6.

1. Tim. 5.

1. Reg. 2.

2. Reg. 15.

1. Reg. 8.

2. Reg. 13.

3. Reg. 1.

2. Mach. 7.

1. Tim. 5.

The office and exercise of christen widowes in the primitive Church.