

Letter from John Donne to Sir Thomas Egerton, 1602 February: autograph manuscript signed, Papers of the More family of Loseley Park, Surrey. Transcription by Early Modern Manuscripts Online (EMMO). MS L.b.534, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.

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The honorable favor that your lordship hath afforded me, in allowing me the liberty of mine own Chamber, hath given me leave so much to respect and love myself, that now I can desire to be well. And therefore, for health, not pleasure, (of which your lordship's displeasure hath dulled in me all taste and apprehension) I humbly beseech your lordship, so much more to slacken my fetters, that as I am by your lordship's favor, mine own keeper, and Surety, so I may be mine own physician and Apothecary: which your lordship shall work, if you grant me Liberty to take the Air, about this Town. The whole world is a straight Imprisonment to me, whilst I am barred your lordship's sight. But this favor may lengthen and better my life, which I desire to preserve, only in hope to redeem by my sorrow, and desire to do your lordship Service, my Offence past. Almighty God dwell ever in your lordship's heart, and fill it with good desires, and grant them.

Your Lordship's
poorest servant
John Donne

leaf 1 verso || leaf 2 recto

leaf 2 verso

To the right honorable
my very good Lord and
Master, Sir Thomas Egerton
knight, Lord keeper of
the great seal of
England.