

[Address, at back] To my worshipful good friend Mr William Cotton give these.

Sir, this tedious dead vacation is to me as unfortunate as a term at Hertford or St. Alban's to poor country clients, or Jack Cade's rebellion to the lawyers, wherein they hanged up the Lord Chief Justice. In town I stayed (being earnestly invited elsewhere) upon had I wist hopes, & an after-harvest I expected by writing for the stage & for the press, when now the players, as if they had writ another *Christ's Tears*, are piteously persecuted by the Lord Mayor & the aldermen, & however in their old Lord's time they thought their state settled, it is now so uncertain they cannot build upon it, & for the printers there is such gaping amongst them for the copy of my Lord of Essex' voyage & the ballad of the threescore & four knights that though my Lord Marquess write a second part of his fever-lurden or *Idleness* . . . or Churchyard enlarge his *Chips*, saying they were the very same which Christ in Carpenter's Hall is painted gathering up as Joseph, his father, stands hewing a piece of timber, & Mary, his mother, sits spinning by, yet would not they give for them the price of a proclamation out of date, or, which is the contemptiblest sum that may be (worse than a scute or a dandiprat), the price of [ ] Harvey's works bound up together. Only Mr Harington of late hath set up such filthy stinking jakes in Paul's Churchyard that the Stationers would give any money for a cover for it. What should move him to it, I know not, except he meant to bid a turd to all gentle readers' teeth, or whereas Don Diego & Brokkenbury beshit Paul's, to prevent the like inconvenience, he hath revived an old Inns a Court trick of turning [ ] out in paper, & framed close-stools for them to carry in their pockets, as gentlewomen do their sponges th[ ]. O, it is detestable & abominable, far worse than Munday's *Ballad of Untruss*, or *Gillian a Brainford's Will* in which she bequeathed a score of farts amongst her friends, & able to make any man have a stinking breath that looks but on the outside of it. Sure had I been of his counsel, he should have set for the mot or word before it, Fah!, & dedicated it to the house of the Shakerleys, that give for their arms three dog's turds reeking. For my part, I pity him, & pray for him, that he may have many good stools to his last ending, & so I would wish all his friends to pray, for otherwise it is to be feared that, according as Seneca reports, the last words Claudius Caesar was heard to speak were *Hei mihi vereor concacai me*, so he will die with a turd in his mouth at his last gasp, & be coffined up in a jakes-farmer's tun, no other nose-wise Christian, for his horrible perfume, being able to come near him. Well, some men for sorrow sing, as it is in the *Ballad of John Careless* in the book of martyrs, & I am merry when I have ne'er a penny in my purse. God may move you, though I say nothing, in which hope that that which will be, shall be, I take my leave.

Yours in acknowledgment of the deepest [ ].