left here but my selfe and thys pore madyn; and yf yt wyl please yowre goodnes to take thys pore howse into yowre owne hondes, ether for yowre selfe, or for my nowne [maister] yowre sonne, I would be glad with all my hart to geve yt into yowre master-shypes hondes, with that ye wyll commaunde me to do therin. Trustynge and nothyng dowptynge in yowre goodnes, that ye wyll so provyd for us, that we shall have syche onest lyvyng that we shall not be drevyn be necessyte nether to begge, nor to fall to no other unconvenyence. And thus I offer my sylfe and all myne unto yowre most hygh and prudent wysdome, as unto hym that ys my only refuge and comfort in thys world, besechyng God of hys goodnes to put in yow hys holy sprete, that ye maye do all thyng to hys lawde and glory.

By yowre owne assured bedewoman,

MARGARET VERNON.

The writer of the next letter was at the time visiting the abbey of Lacock, in Wiltshire.

XXIII.

DR. LEGH TO CROMWELL.

[From MS. Harl. No. 604, fol. 59.]

After my due and moste hartie commendacions, please it your mastership to be advertised, that whereas I have in all the places that I have ben at, according to myne instructions and to the kinges graces pleasure and yours, restrayned as well the heddes and masters of the same places as the brethern from going forth of the precincte of the said places, which I adsure you greveth the said heddes not a litle, as ye shall well perceve by thinstant sutes that they shall make to the kinges grace and to you. It hathe ben reapoorted unto me sens my comyng to theis parties, that Mr. doctour Laitone hathe not doon the same in the places where he

hath ben, but licenced the heddes and masters to goo abrode, which I suppose maketh the brethern to grudge the more, whan they see that they be worse entreated than their master, which hath professed the same rule that they have. Wherfor, to thintent that an uniformitie maye be observed amongst us in all our procedinges, it maye please your mastershipp other to commaunde Mr. doctour Laytone to geve the same injuncions where he goeth and hath ben that I have geven in the places aforesaid, in which case yf ye see reasonable causes wherfor ye shulde release the same injuncions in some places ye maye at all tymes ; or els to advertise me of your pleasure therein, that I maye confourme myself to the same, and direct my proceeding after one weye with you. Sir, yf ye go to Oxorde shortely, as ye ones intended, this bringer is a man of good experience and intelligence there and can declare you the state of the Universitie very well. Thus knoweth Allmightie God, who have your mastership in his blessed tuicion. From Laycock, the xxth of Auguste.

Yours ever assureyt,

THOMAS LEGH.

To the right honourable
Mr. Thomas Crumwell, principall
secretarie to the kinges highnes.

The account of the relics at Maiden Bradley, in Wiltshire, and of the frailties of the prior, given in the following letter, is amusing. This small priory was founded in the latter part of the twelfth century. It was originally a house for leprous women, established by one of the Bisets. The last prior was Richard Jenyn, who, after the dissolution of his house, obtained the rectory of Shipton Moyne, in Gloucestershire.

The visitatorial injunctions were very severe against relics, and the worship of images : one of them, as given in the Cottonian MS. (Cleop. E. iv. fol. 21), runs as follows :—
“ Item, that they shall not shewe no relyques or fayned myracles for encrease of lucre, but that they exhorte pylgrymes and strayngers to geve that to the poore that they thought to offere to ther images or reliquies.” In the lists of relics in other monasteries, we find many which were pretended to be preservative of women in labour ; they had previously been made an object of satire in Piers Ploughman’s Creed.