Copy of a Letter from the Devil to the Pope (1629 or earlier)

The Devil

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 22959, ff. 33v–34r

33v

{*gap: elision*}

A Copie of a letter sent from the devill to the Pope.

Most reverend & deere sonne whose holines I reverence, whose p[er]son I adore, whose policie I wonder at, I cannot but applaud extoll & commende thee my deere sonne for ~~the~~ thy extraordinary greate meanes, costes & charges in the preparation of so great forces against the Rebellious heretikes fro[m] the Rom[an] Catholike religion, I meane the British ~~Danish~~ Irish Danish & Flemish heretikes, the particulers of which Course I haue in writing, & I heare say likewise that they are published to the whole world Therefore followe it $^{\text{nowe}}$ with all celeritie & expedition. Now be the dayes to conquer, nowe is the time to strike/ God hath forsaken them, theire land is impoverished, theire ships tattered, theire state is weakened, theire Parliament is ended & nothing amended,

34r

the Nobles disquieted, theire Gentry discouraged, the Commons discontented & the whole kingdome divided And the Rom[an] Chatholikes in England gasping & gaping for ~~the arrivall~~ yo[u]r arrivall Therefore strike nowe or else for ever hereafter hold thine hand. By this meanes thou mai'ste roote out & extirpate all malitious turbulent & evill affected spirits against the sea of Rome. There are but 5 Nations thou needest to feare in the world. The k[ing] of greate Brittaine, the king of Denmarke /the king of Sweden/ the Palsgraue [*Left margin:*else there is not five.] falsly vsurping the title of king of Bohemia, & the Rebellious Hollanders. But what are those against thee, but so many molehilles to mountaines~~?~~ & no more in our handes then a lambe in the pawes of a lyon? Yet it were not amisse to practise some deadly stratagem by poulder or poyson, by my servants the seminaries & Iesuites, especially vpon the k[ing] of greate Brittaine & the Palsgraves children (king Henry 5s faces & Queene Elisabeths hearty apes) for if these be not cut of in the blossomes but continue to be ripe fruite, it is to be feared, they will doe much harme. And I heare say that my servant Spinola hath receiued my Sacraments & sworne to St Iames by his *Agnus dei* that he would spend his best bloud in England against the Revolters from the Romish church, which I, Cruell Fortune, & Fate conspire so to effecte. It is my desire that his hearte may be baked in a pastie & sent to the Nunnes at St Lucas, his bones may be buried in the Cathedrall ~~chu~~ Church of Civill & his stones to be conveyed to my handmaide the Archdutches for a token of his loue. And so my deere sonne I bidde the farewell.

Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 22587, ff. 20v–21r
- British Library, Additional MS 28011, ff. 69r–70r
- British Library, Harley MS 5108, ff. 137r–144v
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson poetry 160*, ff. 159v–161v

- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson poetry 26, ff. 9v–10r
- Cambridge University Library, MS Gg.4.13, pp78–0
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.275
- Huntington Library, EL 7974
- Huntington Library, EL 7975
- Wellcome Library, MS 805, ff. 92v–93v

Seventeenth-century print exemplars

- J[ohn] M[ilton], *Newes from Hell, Rome and the Inns of Court* (1641) [Wing M42A], pp. 1–7
- J[ohn] M[ilton], *News from Hell, Rome, and the Innes of Court* (1642) [Wing M2131], pp. 8–10

Modern print exemplars

- *The Harleian Miscellany* (1st ed.), vol. 7, pp. 202–205

© 2017–2026 University of Birmingham, University of Bristol. Provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence.