

**Date sent: 1 April 1556**

**Date received:**

**Writer: Peter Martyr Vermigli**

**Recipient: Christopher Goodman**

**Location of origin: Strasbourg**

**Destination: Geneva**

**Original language: Latin**

**Ref: Denbighshire Record Office, Plas Power MSS, DD/PP/839 55-56**

**Transcript of Later copy/English translation of copy**

**Other Versions: None**

To Dominus Christopher Goodman, outstanding in piety and learning, most dear friend.  
At Geneva.

I send greetings. Your letter, most dear brother in Christ, was most pleasing to me, though I do not judge that it was necessary that you make excuses to me at such length for your long-continued silence. For I am not so disposed that if friends should ever cease to write, I would cease to love them. Nothing of my fatherly love toward you and my Christian charity has been lessened because of this; therefore it will be incumbent on you in turn, though there is no time to write or it should be burdensome, to preserve nonetheless the same

disposition toward me – which I do not doubt that you do, in keeping with your goodness and straightforwardness. I rejoice from my heart at the sight and taste of the church of Geneva; nowhere today do I have more close friends whom I love more than there. I know full well concerning the holiness, true doctrine, and pure worship which flourish there. Accordingly I exhort that when you are there, you take care that you not have been there in vain – which I do not at all doubt that you will do of your own accord. I also congratulate both

you and the other English who are in your company that you have now found a calm and quiet abode. This remains – that, when a peaceful and quiet place has been granted by God, you also conduct yourselves with each other with a peaceful disposition. About the book that has been published by you, I am not able to judge. For, as you are aware, I

know very little English.<sup>1</sup> Others have read it, to be sure, and of those who are in Argentina [*Strasbourg*] I have not heard any who speak ill of it. As to what your people who are in Frankfort have in mind,

[56] I have absolutely no information, since they have written nothing to me concerning this matter. Nonetheless I should wish that here at last there were an end to quarrels and disputes. From the recent<sup>2</sup> marriage between our Italian Count<sup>3</sup> and a noble English woman I received no small pleasure. May God grant each of them through Jesus Christ our Saviour that whatever they have done serve as a help to each of them for eternal salvation. I love the Count sincerely in Christ, and I

have always embraced him with charity all the more because, though he was born in the highest position and is of great nobility, he has even from boyhood followed Christ with so burning a heart. Concerning that lady and most excellent wife I have also heard many uncommon tokens of piety. Therefore I again pray that Christ deem it fitting to be present to each of them with his Spirit. Bid Whittingham, most dear in the Lord, greetings on my behalf – and all the English as well to whom you reckon that I am known.

Julius<sup>4</sup> with his wife and our whole household greet you. Farewell, and love me as you do. 1 April 1556 in Argentina [*Strasbourg*].

Yours in the Lord  
Peter Martyr.

In Oxford there is great discord in our College – namely, the scholastics<sup>5</sup> act with great force against the canons. The case is being dealt with before the Cardinal, who promises that he will provide a remedy. Certain Spanish friars dwell in Canterbury College.<sup>6</sup> I am afraid that the scholastics are to have monks for choristers.<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew lecture has been

---

<sup>1</sup> *Minime novi* could also be taken – very naturally – to mean ‘I do not at all know’ (as I translated *minime dubito* four lines above as ‘I do not at all doubt’). But he has spent six years in England. Even if the conversation at Christ Church high table was always in Latin (was it?), he must occasionally have needed *some* English to buy a loaf of bread or yell at the servants. Perhaps *minime* even in the sense of ‘very little’ is somewhat less than candid.

<sup>2</sup> *De novo matrimonio*: *u/v* and *n* are sometimes hard to distinguish in this hand, but I think we’re safe in assuming that it’s a *new* (*novo*) marriage, and not the Count’s *ninth* (*nono*) that Martyr is purring about.

<sup>3</sup> *Comes* can mean simply ‘companion’, but this is a reference to Maximilian Celsus Count Martinengo, pastor of the Italian congregation at Geneva from 1552 till his death in August 1557 (according to Henri Heyer, *L’Église de Genève* (Genève, 1909), p. 487). His marriage to Jane Stafford on 24 February 1556 is recorded in the register of the English congregation in Frankfort (‘Livre des Anglois’, in Charles Martin, *Les Protestants Anglais réfugiés à Genève, au temps de Calvin 1555-1560, Leur Église – Leur Écrits* (Genève: Librairie A. Jullien, 1915), p. 337).

<sup>4</sup> Terentianus.

<sup>5</sup> I assume that by *scholastici* he means the Students (in the technical sense) of Christ Church.

<sup>6</sup> Just behind Tom Quad of Christ Church – on the site of the present Canterbury Quad.

<sup>7</sup> This is a guess, but it gives good sense. I can’t, however, produce a parallel for the form *coericus*.

taken away from Bruerne<sup>8</sup> and transferred or turned into a theology lecture. Soto,<sup>9</sup> a Dominican monk,

got possession of it; he publicly expounds the Master of the *Sentences*. Another Spanish friar has taken on your lecture as well, and he also teaches in Magdalene College. Doctor Warner was forced to leave his College of Souls [*All Souls*]. Some other Papist [?] succeeded him.

---

<sup>8</sup> Richard Bruerne, Professor of Hebrew. There may be an element of *schadenfreude* in Peter Martyr's concern, since in 1553 Bruerne had been given the canonry at Christ Church of which Martyr was dispossessed.

<sup>9</sup> Pedro de Soto