

Endorsement

The copy of her
Maiesties lettre for
Mr Secretary

Text

It maye please your Maiestie. vppon retourne from my late Iourney into Mounster (the discourse whereof havinge certified to my Lords of your Counsell I omitt for feare of tediousnes to repeat) I mett with lettres from their Lordships signefyinge the greate dislike your Highness had conceived with the charges you founde your self to bee at in this land vpon the late Bookes the Awditours here had certiefied. And therevpon was willed by their Lordships in your Highness name to enter into consideracion with some of my assotiates in Councell, bothe howe your highness saide charges by Casshinge of Bandes might bee eased and also to aunswer certen dowbttes and obieccions risinge to their Lordships vppon the saide Awditours book and collected by them into certein memorialls. The Awnsveringe of the memorialls beinge not fewe and dyuerslie misgathered, dothe aske a more tyme then this presente dispatche to full satisfaccion colde affoorde, which yet god willinge shall not be longe. The other point for casshinge of Bandes is so perillous as I cold not execut the direction without firste certefyinge the condicion of this State, and Consequentlie the daunger thereof. But eere I enter into the discours I am humblie to crave pardon. For findinge howe the charges of this Service hathe not so muche darkened and made of no account all care, travell & endeavour by mee therein vsed, butt hathe broughte even my self into meane tearmes of your highness likinge and good opinion, I cannott butt rest in feare or rather doughtlesse that this my Theame seeminge to impugn sparinge shall bringe smale content, if haply it escape displeasure. Yet dutifull and zealous true Meaninge beinge my emboldner in thone and defence in thother, with confidence that troathe shall not rest buried howe ever clowded, I will playnly yet with moste humble and reverent intent, delyuer
myne=

opynion and then referre and submitt all to your Maiesties will and direccion./

Howe this State in everie parte thereof was in stirre and Revolt at my entringe into the governement, is not vnknowne to your highnes and howe generall the combinacion of the conspiracie besides those that in Accion haue shewed it, the late discouerie of no small number nor Common persons even of the hart of the Pale hathe manifested: Howe suche an Accion without greate charge colde be prosecuted, and how hard if not possible it is to warre and spare attonce, your Maiesties indifferent Iudgement I appeale vnto: But it is obiected that tyme is to bee respected, otherwise that two Englandes were vnhabable for suche a contynuall charge Wherevnto I might saie, that tymes and howres of all thinges are only in god his knowledge and appointment, yet in this cause so certein liklyhoodes his goodnes had afforded mee, as within twoo yeares space I durste haue lymited vpon pawne of my Lief to haue throughlie ended theis broyles, reformed the State, and setled suche a governement as in fewe yeares after the charges sholde haue beene well repaide in case your highnes had hold on your resolute begynninge: But when before one halfe yeare was fullie expired your Maiestie greved with the warre by reason of the charge began to think the tyme longe and to esteeme of no service because all was not done attonce, nor god his pleasure to haue that that was done to light on the chiefest, and setled on that conceit fell to temporizinge and pardoninge them who all your warre had nowe brought to that exigent as by thende of this Winter of necessitie they must haue famyshed, fowght, or yeilded to your mercye here, with humblenes and all submission I speake it,
was the

was the overthrowe of this service and makinge vaine of all former cost and travell. For by this proceedinge the onlie shewe of good was the takinge in of some such of them as had moste wealthe and lyvinge, and whose bodies were by age or other accident growne vnhabable [.] The yonger sorte and men of accion in the meanwhile standinge out were releived by theis, and so the woorke brought in manner to the same state that at the begynninge it was, Their Abettors and favorors herevpon so comforted and emboldned, as wheare before warely and with greate heede they afforded them succour and relief, Nowe careleslie even at Noone daies they sticked not to accompanie and harbour them, On the contrarie side the trewe man and dewtifull Subiecte that had either served on them or discovered eny their conspiracies, became all amated, restinge doubtfull of defence, and casting suer account of malicious revendge: / If nowe to this your highness shall for proffitt sake add casshing of your bandes here, the slipperie holde of this late taken in people, the generall conspiracie nowe last discried, the peace still threatninge warres of Tirlough The arrogant and disobedient carriage of Clarickard his sonnes and Orurk, the insolencie of the Oconnours Moores, and Cavenaghes, the Rebellious accion of Desmond Barrie and their accomplissies not reckoninge Baltinglas nor William Newgent, this thinges I saye weyed, the stey and bitt to all which is onlie your force, and not dutye nor goodwill your highness can account of, I feare that eere two yeares come about suche spareinge will prove costlie husbandrie either in treble expences or losse of the stake; The Lord make mee a falce prophett, or ells enspire your Maiestie not to trye it. /

It is not Madam eny private commoditie (god I take to
recorde) that carrieth mee to this declaracion in
my iustefyinge Wherein no favour or pardon will I crave
neither that I haue beene lesse carefull to serve your
lykinge in perfett then eny other that hathe borne
the place, so farre forthe as your honnour and good
of this poore countrie hathe not comen therewith in
ballaunce, and yet in that sort to by indifferent
audit I little feare to bee founde a prodigall or
Retchesse Factour: I haue not perchaunce looked so
narrowly into Matters of account and the ministers
thereof as the cause might require and your highness expect
To bee borne with therein not vniustlie I crave,
for care thereof, and willingnes wanted not, butt ablenes
to tende to that and aunswere the infinitenes of the
other service which the generall trooble of this Lande
required was not in mee: What thus only dischardge
of dewtie hathe exacted of mee I moste humblie crave
to bee as equallie and favourablie taken and considered
as it is reverently and zealouslie intended, and all
submitted to your Highness good pleazure. /
Further whereas by parte of your Maiesties instruccions vnto
mee by Mr Fenton, your will is I sholde make peace
by what meanes soeuer. surely Madam to make you an
honorable & sounde peace sometyme you will aske
and your warre the onlie meanes. If presentnes of
tyme and chardge bee respected and honour with more
adventure sett aside, of suche a peace thonlie
waye that I can see is this: your Highness muste
revoake all exceptions in your generall pardon, free
all Rebels from the hiest to the lowest, restore
them to all their Landes and Seignories, Admitt
no Englishe Governour of province, Interrupt nor
call to accounte no Irishe Captein of Contrie or chief of
Sept, permitt their wills to bee lawe, and lustes
reason,

Lastlie your highness self to bee contented with the Englishe Pale or so much thereof as the yrishe borders will suffer you to enioye and herewith the name of Queene; This Madame betwixt god and mee is thonlie meanes of a presente peace: to which yett as I see no reason for eny to advise your highness So I must confesse my dareinge farre lesse to vndertake the executing of it. Pardon mee therefore I moste humblie beseech your Maiestie thoughe I haue not followed that your highness direccion, the glorie of god your highness honour and welwillinge to a trewe reformacion of this moste •¹ forwandered estate² are the cawsors³ of it. / Oure distresse is here great for want of money, and suche as if your Maiestie haue not care to see it relieved hard•ly⁴ will the Sowldoour bee conteyned in dutie and from other greate disorders. weighe I beseeche your highness the inconvenience of it; if extremitye pressed not, I wolde not surelie trooble your highness with so disliked a suite, as I finde crave of paye to bee. So with a private moste humble Peticion I will end that it will please you to haue consideracion of my self⁵ whoe findinge him self greatelie in health decayed for the discharge of the service, besides the hardnes of his happe to content your Maiestie in the same, moste humblye beseecheth with your favour to bee called hoame. The Lorde of Lordes ever keepe and contynewe in all happynes your Maiestie. Dublin the. ⁶

Note on hands

The text of the letter is in a highly fluent, bold, and busy secretary hand, not Spenser's. Spenser has added the endorsement in his characteristic mixed hand (and, presumably, checked the copy for accuracy). The fact that this copied letter remains undated indicates that it was made from the original, draft version of Grey's dispatch to the Queen, and not from the 'fair' copy.

¹ 'f' deleted.

² The initial 'e' of this word may have been deleted; alternatively, it may be an accidental inkblot.

³ This word is slightly compacted and the medial letter forms unclear; it may read 'cawsers', but we have adopted the given spelling on analogy with similar words in the same letter.

⁴ Single-character deletion, indecipherable.

⁵ A small and apparently meaningless cross appears at the end of this word, which we have reluctantly ignored.

⁶ This copy of Grey's letter to the queen was left undated, suggesting that it was itself copied from the original, i.e. draft version of the letter, and not from the 'fair copy', which of course would have included the dated—not the date of composition, necessarily, but of signature and dispatch.