

BRIEF NOTES

TWO NOTES CONCERNING PAMPHLET LITERATURE OF THE REFORMATION ERA

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In the immediately preceding issue of *AUSS*, we were pleased to publish a catalog of forty-seven Reformation-era *Flugschriften* ("tracts" or "pamphlets") in the "Heritage Room" of the James White Library at Andrews University. We indicated in our "Introductory Note to Volume 24" (on p. 3) that from time to time we would endeavor to provide further information on at least a few of the more intriguing (and/or less well-known) of these pamphlets. In harmony with this purpose, we present here a brief note concerning the first pamphlet in the catalog—a short piece set forth as a communication from the "hellish Prince Lucifer" to Martin Luther. Also, immediately following this note we include a second one, relating more broadly to the type of literature that is classified as "Reformation-era *Flugschriften*."

1. A MESSAGE FROM "HELLISH PRINCE LUCIFER" TO MARTIN LUTHER

So-called "letters from heaven" and "letters from hell" provided one of the familiar forms into which Reformation-era *Flugschriften* or "pamphlets" were cast. "Heavenly letters" had for centuries provided a fairly common literary device for promoting religious ideas and ideals. At precisely what time their negative counterpart, the "letters from hell," came into being is not easy to determine; but such literature is known to have existed in late-medieval times. For instance, during the era of the Avignonese Papacy (the so-called "Babylonian captivity of the church," A.D. 1309-77), a "Devil's Letter" appeared in the year 1351.¹ This Avignonese-Papacy period

¹See Otto Clemen, "Einleitung" to his edition of the "Absag oder Fehdschrift Lucifers an Luther (1524)," in Clemen, *Flugschriften aus den ersten Jahren der Reformation*, 3 (1909): 356.