Letter to the Marquess of Buckingham (June 1620)

Thomas Alured

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 4149, ff. 158r–162v

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A L[ett]re written by Mr Thomas Alured a Diuine to Geroge
Marquesse of Buckingham about the yeare 1620. disswading the
Match of Charles Prince of Wales with the Infanta Maria of Spaine.

Although to advize maye seeme p[re]sumpteous yet what is well intended I ame more then confident, will not be either offensiue to your Lor[dshi]pp or p[re]iudiciall to me the eather since what is nowe offered, is not for your good onlye, but for the generall all soe. The honor whereof as in some sorte you may app[ro]priate soe you cannot but perticipate & communicate [th]e benifit. The parable in the Gospell telleth us of a greate Kinge that maried his sonne & bad manye there vnto, yet vpon the excusalle of some & refusall of others All of what Condic[i]on soeuer as well out of the high wayes as out of the high places ~~we~~ weere called and invited, As euery true [Christ]ian hath an interest in the mariage of that Kinges sonne of hea-ven, soe euerie good subiect aswell as euery great subiect hath an interest in the Mariage & well feare of the Kinges sonne here one earth w[hi]ch occasions soe manye, and me amongst those manye the meanest to wishe that it may bringe with it glorie to God on high good will and peace to them on earth which is much doubted cannot be from Spayne, since the motioninge of the Match bringes a generall feare ~~yet~~ that it cann neither be safe for the Kinges person nor good for the Church and Com[m]on weale becase that

thereby

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thereby, there maye be ~~*{gap: illegible}*~~ inlett to the Romishe locusts, whoe like the cankerworme, may in an instant smite oure Gourd, vnder whose shaddowe wee sit safe. And then what may wee feare but the heate of persecution & dissenc[i]on to beate vpon the heade of Ionah (the best affected of Gods people) whoe cannot but fainte & wishe with Ionah to die rather then to see & indure that daye. for what will not they attempt against our goodlie Ceader tree, that the vine that theire left hand Shall plaint may growe vpp and they be sheltred vnder the branches./

But herein it is hoped, that God will enable the state soner to make p[re]uenc[i]on of their mischife then tryall of theire affecc[i]on for as noe person hath wounded them more deeplye soe there is noe p[er]son they hate more deadlie. And if they murdred the least two Henryes of France because they suspected them to fauour protestantes howe doe they burne in malice against him that hath p[ro]fessed him-selfe and blased them to his glorie and theire shame. And it is as vnsafe for men as vnpleasinge to God to reley vpon them. Henry of Burbon father to H. the 4. drawne by an inmaginarye Crowne of Sardinia, and the prince of the same lefte the protestantes both in pro-fession and person and became a persecutor of those whose protector hee was: but while'st hee cast his hopes in Spaine, Spaine decei-ved him of his Crowne And God in iustice (whoe neuer leaues anie man that leaves not him first) gaue him ouer to violent death, for a bullet toke him in his owne trenches beseiginge the protestantes

in Roane Henry the 4. what battilles did hee fight, & what dangers did he eschape, euen to admirac[i]on

whilest

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whilest he was in defiance with Pope & Spanniard: but when in policie & wordley respect he submitted hee tas-ted the same sower grapes that sett his fathers teeth on edge. first a younge Iosuit smote him on the mouth & then a papist Rauiliack stabbed him to the hearte Whereas Queene Elizabeth the hapiest instrument of Gods glory for her sexe since [th]e most blissed virgin notwith-standinge fewe frindes she had abroade, & [th]e diuisions at home when she came to the Crowne beinge alone Woman yet she refused the Kinge of Spaine beinge the first and earnest suytor by the Earle of Floria his Imbassador And not-withstandinge the thundringe of the Popes bulls & Spannishe cannons openly or the workinge of his pistols priuatelie weere able to cutt of soe much as the lap of her coate, or to diminishe an heire (Much lesse the Crowne) of her heade and his Ma[jes]tie that nowe is, continewinge constant in the same Religion she professed contineweth noe lesse miraculosley in Gods protexton then she did And thought there weere ~~by~~ but one p[ro]testant Kinge or prince in [Christe]ndom[m]e then, besides himselfe these rather to match this, then with all the wealth of Spaine or anie other popishe Prince what therfore his Ma[jes]tie hath giuen by precept to the prince in his booke & by presedent in his owne person will vndoubtedlie bee expected, And as all good men doe hope will assuredlie be performed. For as the prince p[ro]claimes the Kinge his father by his wonderfull likenes and resemblance of the Kinge himselfe; soe it is hoped hee will neuer appeare vnlike vnto him in his other virtues, soe p[ar]ticularlie in the choise of his second selfe w[hi]ch soe neerly concernes himselfe (as your Lor[dshi]pp allsoe in your own paticuler) as none cann bee to circumspect especiallie since not a Somersett a Suffolke or a Secrettary onely but

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the first man, the strongest man & the wisest man [tha]t euer was, though they weere all good men and tipes of Christ yet they weere hereby ~~by~~ tempted & deceyved.

To addresse this poore discourse more p[ar]ticularly to your Lor[dshi]pp Kinges haue allmost euer vsed to haue their fauorites, Allexander had a long tyme his Ephestion H. the 3. of France had his Espernon & Philipp of Spaine his Lermai yea the best princes haue not wanted them, for after the Reckoninge of Davids greate officers Hushay the Arkite called [th]e Kinges freind. and Iea the Iarit is set downe to haue bine cheife aboute David which stands w[i]th reason and agrees with nature, for euery priuate man is left to affect as hee likes best neither cann affection be forced Nowe to disalowe or [tha]t in a Kinge which is left ^{at}~~at~~ libertie in the meanest Subiecte weere pr[e]postruous & iniurious for though they com[m]anded nations as they are Kinges, yet are they subiecte to theire passions as they are men And if I may alledge it with out misinterpretac[i]on of others as I ame free from anie illmeaninge in my selfe, who knowes not but that Christ, the reather to shew himselfe a naturall man expresseth soe much the more his passions in his often weepinge and his affecc[i]on diu[er]se perticulers, but especiallie to St. Iohn if I maye not saye a favorite yet certa[n]lye a disciple whome Iesus loued more then anie of the rest it is gods blissinge and

your happines (if you rightlie accoumpt of it) to be the Kinges favorite as Peter therfore not pr[e]suminge to aske Christ ~~or~~ whoe it was he spake of, beckninge to the Disci-ple whome Iesus Loued (in whose breast hee leaned) to aske for him soe since men neither may or ought to be soe bould to aske or advise the Kinge in this busines soe much spoken of yet they poynte at you whoe [th]e higher

you are

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you are in the Kinges favour the more you are in the peoples eyes & obseruance and they expect yow will not bee wantinge in the dutye of a subiect, a councellor afauorite But as your reasons & perswasions are knowen to haue the best oppertunitie to be deliu[er]ed and the more credit to be beleeued soe in this case to bee as Moses (one of Godes greatest fauorites and famillier servantes) to stand in the gapp and diuert this plague (for soe in the most mens iudgementes and the voice of Godes people it is hard howe gloriouse soeuer or howe necessarie it seeme out-wardlie, I ame confident yow thinke the Kinges fauour & your fortunes are not for your owne endes alone, or for an ill end at all wee haue latelie seene the ende of those whoe haue purposed such endes. for promoc[i]on comes neither from the East nor from the West as a casuall thinge ~~thinge~~ but as Godes ~~to the~~ prouidence to the fall of a sparrowe soe much more to the rise of a seruant And whoe knoweth not but the same hande which raysed Ioseph in Egipt, hath aduanced yow in England for the like end. To parable yow in noe disparagm[en]t yow are younger brother by the second mariage, as Ioseph was a fayre p[er]son & well fauoured as Ioseph was [th]e Kinge hath for hono^{u}r altered your name, as Ioseph was, yow haue hono^{u}red & enriched your kindred as Ioseph did; (for hee gaue them the Lande of Goshen for theire maintenance And for the greater hono^{u}r Ioseph's kindered was made knowen vnto Pharoh and yours to ~~your~~^{our} Ceasar Nowe my Lord since yow followe Ioseph soe neare & soe farr leaue not to the end. Ioseph was sent before to provide breade for Godes people to preuent famine, and since yow are set vpp for

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whey maye not wee thinke of ~~of~~ yow, as Mordecay said of Hester, who knowes not yow become to the Kingdome ~~of~~^{for} such a tyme endeauo^{u}r both to prevente and provide that there ensue not any famine or dearth of spiri-tuall breade in this Land, ~~whether~~^{neither} that this wee haue bee either mingled or made vnsavorie with [th]e Romish leaven, wee doe not reade of anie seruante almost better respected of his Lord and Master then Ele^{a}zer of Damascus whome Abraham had ment (had hee died childles) to haue made his heire: and wee reade not of anie seruice he did Abraham more or at least greater then in choice of a wife for his sonne Isacke Amounge the seruantes of our Patri-arch the defender of ~~our~~^{the} fayth, wee obserue none bet-ter respected then your selfe for the Kinge hath manifested hee loues not your person onlye but takes care ~~for~~^{of} your soule & labours to make as good as greate, and as happie in ~~and~~ an other wourld as high in this yet wee knowe not where in yow cann doe him service more, then with Ele^{a}zer to helpe chose a Rebecka for our princly Isacke & Abrahams In iunction is ^{a} good direcc[i]on not to take her amounge the Cannanites Princes in respecte of

their hapines & other mens mi-seryes, seeme to be placed in an earthlie paradice havinge power to taste of eu[er]y tree in the garden where allsoe hauinge soe manie Royall branches and princly Stockes to grauft yf they shall onlye meddle with the forbidden fruite howe dangerous and woefull is theire Condic[i]on for the Serpent will not onlye beguile the woman but the Philistians will intreate dalilaz & shee will beetraye Sampson soe while they plowe with our Heifer they will vnfould all o[u]r riddles,

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and vndoe our estate Besides what language soeuer the father speakes the birth doth vsuallie followe the belly, and children most com[m]onlye speakes theire mother ~~toonget {*gap:* } nge~~tongue And wheresoeu[er] then is this babell, there is confusion, not of ~~t {*gap:* } ges~~tongues onlye but of states Where as Christ Church is like his coate closlie wouen & at vnitye within it selfe although some ignorant Separists seeke to finde or rather to make an hole in our coate and Church which the Papistes lye in waite to make the rent worse & the desperate Iesuit if he cann will make it past amendinge it, for wheresoeuer they come they torne Christes coate into Dianices garment which settes Hercules on fyer soe sett they others in combustian. The reason is their first founder was as soldier, & euer since [th]e way of peace haue they not knowne, at least not loued to ins-tance in p[ar]ticuler not vnfitt for [th]e p[re]sent purpose wee haue not heard of anie p[ro]testant Kinge [tha]t euer Maried with a contrarye Religion sauinge the last Henry of Navaire w[i]th the last Margarete of France w[hi]ch mariage was soe in-fortunate to the parties hauinge neuer issue, & beinge after-ward diuorsed was allsoe knowne [tha]t there was more blood spilt at those Nuptialles, then wine spent, for while the protestantes dreamed of the glorie & securetie they should haue by the match they weere most miserablie massacred And who doubtes ~~by~~but what the french papistes com[m]itted ag[ains]te theire owne Cuntry vpon that color & occasion [th]e Spannishe papists would not bee glad to see done on this Kingdome vpon the like for without the breach of Charitie wee maye doubte of theire sincere meaninge though there bee a treatie of a matche since in 88. whilest there was a treatie of peace the Spannishe Armadoes came vpon vs yf therfore wee will be led by precept or example wee shall finde it was forbiden the best people of [th]e wourld; and it vndid one of the best Princes of [th]e wourld to marye with one differinge in Religion the con[i]uncc[i]on the reasons and effectes are laied downe in Deuterinomy to the Iewes [tha]t they should not take anie daughters of the neighboringe nations, though greater & Mightier then ~~them~~

themselues

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themselues to bee wifes to theire sonnes, for they will cause theire sonnes to torne from God & to serue other godes: then will the Lord waxe hott against them & distroy them suddanly All which is verefied in Soloman the wisest Kinge that euer was, whoe maried one of the greatest Kinges daughters that then was yet wee see then, [tha]t the weakest Sexe withdrewe the wisest man for Soloman became an Idolater his sonne a foole, his Subiectes rebelled & [th]e best parte of his Kingdome rent from his ~~pa~~ posteritie foreuer Though Israell sinn yet let not Iuda trans-gresse & though Soloman one of the sonnes of David Maried and miscarried with Pharohes daughter, yet let not Isa[a]cke the onelie sonne of our Abraham doe as some

of [th]e sonnes of ~~our~~ God haue done whoe because they see, [tha]t [th]e daugh-ters of men bee (for out ward and politicke respect) faire take the wiues of them, from whence came monstrous enormities which like [th]e olde giantes, fight against God and all godlines but as God doubtles hath made his Covenante with the Kinge as hee did with Abraham, as hee hath brought him out of one Coun-trey into abetter as hee did Abraham, & as hee did put into the Kinges hearte to take a late Iournie as Abraham did, from the South of the place where his Courte had beene at the begininge to giue thankes to the Lord, the same God put into the Kinge the same minde hee put into Abraham to choose a Rebecca amoungste those of the same Spirituall kindred whoe call all vpon one God the father, and doe acknowledge the one and the same Church to bee their mother, that it bee with the prince (as in manie respectes soe this) as it was with Isaacke whoe tooke Rebecca to wife whoe loued her and brought her to the tent of Sarah his mother, and was comforted after theire mothers death. Nowe if from the wourd of God (w[hi]ch settes downe the vnlawfullnesse of those Matches with Aliens & Strangers from Godes Covenant) wee discend downe into our bookes of Chr^{o}nicles wee shall finde that God hath Crost if not curste our Aliance and associac[i]on p[ar]ticulerly w[i]th the Spannishe Natione the position of that Cuntrye & [th]e disposic[i]on of that people, beinge as it weere soe

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Mallignant & ill agreeinge, The prince of the greatest p[er]formanc that euer Kingdome or Christendome ^{had} was the blacke Prince, & yet our Chr^{o}noclies recorde, that hee goeinge into Spaine to settle Don Pedro in that Kingdome besides the monstrous ingra-titude and perfidiousnes of that Spanniard, whoe failed in the performance of his Condic[i]ons which hee had pro-mised w[hi]ch caused that miserable Revolt in France to the losse of our inheritance the prince was soe poysoned in that kingdome that he neuer had his health afterward./

But to come neere to our purpose & our owne tymes which are little the better for our Spannish frenshipp, I beseech yo[u]r Lor[dshi]pp obserue that all the mariages of the heires & princes of this crowne made in England for this last sixescore yeares (except the seuerall matches of H.8. haue bine onely and noe where els but Spaine ^{which} howe little God hath bissed the successe shewes. Prince Artur maried the Kinge of Spaines daughter wee knowe God tooke him awaye suddenlie in a small tyme & with out issue, In polliticke respect wee would needes make a second match soe Prince Henry (after wardes Kinge) maried the same daughter but doubtlesse God was lesse pleased with the match that was leste law-full, And therefore God tooke a waye all the male chil-dreen of it, and lefte onely a daughter in whose short Raigne was shed more blood for the true religion in 6. yeares, then for [th]e faulse in these succeedinge 60. yeares wee made then a third adventure & maried with Spaine. Queene Mary w[i]th Kinge Phillipp, which was soe discontentinge to the people that it caused ryottes Rebellion, soe dis-comfortable to the Queene that it brake her harte, & soe dishonorable & pr[e]iudicyall to this kingdome, that meerly for the Spanniardes sake wee hauinge noe differance at all w[i]th France wee lost Callice in 6. dayes w[hi]ch had beene about 200 yeares in our possession. Nowe if I ~~maye~~ make bould rather to adde then to replie & for observac[i]on of the Contrary rather then for immitac[i]on of [th]e pr[e]sent for though I haue not soe much Iudgment nor soe little

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witt to presume to advise ~~weere~~[where] to mat[c]h, yet I assure me soe much as to thinke a match at whome cannot bee held anie wayes inconvenient wee finde the first & last of o[u]r Kinges that matched with theire Subiectes, weere Edward the 4. and Henry the 8. from w[hi]ch two matches God as it weere to shewe the lesse wee relie vpon others abroad, the more he will help vs him selfe at home, gaue two daughters 2. Elizabethes 2. such Queenes, then w[hi]ch there was neuer such blissed Instru-mentes of Gods glorie and his Kingdomes good, by establishinge peace w[i]thin this [land] and Religion in the Church, vntill his Ma[jes]ties happie com[m]inge who brought both with him./

Thus my Lord haue I made bould to lay my poore single myte at yo[u]r feet, the [manie]~~may~~ talentes that yow haue cannot be better imployed then thus to make yow here & hereafter (ever) a faythfull servant to both yo[u]r masters; yf yow would lay in waite for an opper-tunitie (which is happilie purposely offered yow) for advan-cinge God his glorie & yo[u]r honor: yow cannot finde nor invent an occasion more pleasinge to God or more plausible to [th]e best & most men, then in disswadinge privately & opposinge publiquelie by your Solid reasons this Spannish match. Since whatsoeuer the occasions & necessities of the Crowne bee, it will finde more support, by castinge it selfe into the Armes of the Subiect (w[hi]ch are the howses of parlyament) then by seekinge to any forraine fawninge or inviouse enimye: where-unto whe[n]soeuer wee leaue and trust wee shall finde them Egiptiam reedes and their intenc[i]ons bent rather to supplant vs then supply vs.

By him that is not ambitious, because not worthey, nor yet not afraid, because not ashamed to bee knowen to your Lor[dshi]pp in this busines.

Thomas Alured./

Other manuscript witnesses

- Alnwick Castle, MS 556, pp127–132
- British Library, Additional MS 11049, ff. 25r–28v
- British Library, Additional MS 18201, ff. 20v–28r
- British Library, Additional MS 22473, ff. 74r–79r
- British Library, Additional MS 28640, ff. 90r–91v
- British Library, Additional MS 36444, f. 157v
- British Library, Additional MS 37999, ff. 52r–54v
- British Library, Additional MS 40629, ff. 117r–123v
- British Library, Additional MS 4108, ff. 78v–82v
- British Library, Additional MS 44848, ff. 131v–138v
- British Library, Additional MS 48044, ff. 223r–226v
- British Library, Additional MS 72329, f. 143v, 145r, 147r, 149r
- British Library, Additional MS 72358, ff. 9r–11r
- British Library, Additional MS 72387, ff. 71r–74v
- British Library, Egerton MS 2882, ff. 208x–209x
- British Library, Harley MS 4289, ff. 174v–178r
- British Library, Harley MS 4761, ff. 32v–39v
- British Library, Harley MS 6021, ff. 133r–137v
- British Library, Lansdowne MS 1232, ff. 5r–11r

- British Library, Lansdowne MS 498, ff. 136r–139v
- British Library, Sloane MS 1455, ff. 20r–23v
- British Library, Sloane MS 1710, ff. 25r–28v
- British Library, Additional MS 34217, ff. 18r–19r
- Beinecke Library, Osborn fb243
- Beinecke Library, Osborn fb57, ff. 15–21
- Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 830, ff. 135r–136v
- Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 966, ff. 544–552
- Bodleian Library, MS Carte 77, ff. 282–285
- Bodleian Library, MS Eng. hist. c. 319, ff. 34r–38v, 40v
- Bodleian Library, MS Eng. hist. e. 28, ff. 639–651
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson B 151, ff. 17v–19r
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D 181, ff. 1r–7r
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D 353, ff. 64r–65v
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson poetry 26, ff. 171–174r
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 205, ff. 1r–3v
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 227, ff. 11r–14
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 290, ff. 55r–57r
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 82, ff. 184v–192r
- Cambridge University Library, MS Dd.3.84, Part I, Item 3, 8r–9v
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS G.b.7, ff. 42r–46r
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.348, ff. 95r–100v
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.402, ff. 57r–65v
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS Z.e.1, item 18
- Gonville & Caius College, MS 393/613, pp351–357
- Houghton Library, fMS Eng 1266.2, ff. 129r–130v
- Houghton Library, fMS Eng 1278, Folder 1
- Inner Temple Library, Petyt MS 538/18, ff. 250r–254v
- Northamptonshire Record Office, FH2381, ff. 14r–16v
- Queen's College, MS 121, ff. 384–387
- Queen's College, MS 130, ff. 105–111
- Somerset Archives, DD\WO/56/6/39, ff. 1r–2v
- Surrey History Centre, LM/2041/1
- Surrey History Centre, LM/2041/2, ff. 1r–5r
- The National Archives, SP 14/115, /67 [ff.102r–106r]
- The National Archives, SP 14/121, /3 [ff.7v–16r]
- Trinity College, MS R.5.12, ff. 194r–197v
- University College, MS 152 [on deposit at the Bodleian], ff. 97–111
- Wellcome Library, MS 805, ff. 78v–87v

Modern print exemplars

- *Collectanea Curiosa* (Oxford, 1781), vol. 1, pp. 170–180

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