

Letter to the Marquess of Buckingham (June 1620)

Thomas Alured

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 28640, ff. 90r–91v

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why may we not thinke of you as Mordecai said of Esther who knowes whether you are come to the kingdome for such a time) endeavour both to prevent & to provide that there ensue not any famine or dearthe of spirituall breade in this land, neither that this we haue be ever mingled or made vnsavoury with the Romish leaven. We doe not reade of any servant almost better respected of his Lord & Maister then Eleazar of Damascus whom Abraham had meante, had he died childles to haue made his heire, & we reade not of any service he did Abraham more, at least greater, then in the choice of a wife for his sonne Isaac. Among the servants of our Patriarke (the defender of our faith) we observe none better respected then your selfe for the king hath manifested that he loves not your person only, but takes care for your soule, & labours to make you as good as greate, & as happie in another world as high in this. Yet we knowe not wherein you can doe him better service then with Eleazar to helpe to choose a Rebecca for our princely Isaac. Abrahams instruction is a good direction not to take her among the spirituall Canaanites. Princes in respecte of their happines & other mens miseries seeme placed in an earthly paradise having power to taste of every tree in the garden, where having also so many royall branches & principall stockes to graffe on, if they shall only meddle with the forbidden fruite, howe dangerous & wofull is their condition, For the serpent will not only beguile the woman, but the Philistins will entreate Dalilah & she will betray Sampson, so while they plough with our heifer they will vnfolde all our riddles, & vndoe all our State. Besides whatsoever language the father speaketh, the birth doth vsuallie followe the bellie, & children commonly speake the mother tongue, & wheresoever there is this Babell, there is confusion not of tongues only but of States; whereas Christes church is like his coate, closely woven & at vnitie within it selfe; though some ignorant itching separatists seeke to finde, or rather labour to make a hole in our coate & Church, which the Papist lyes in waite to make the rente worse, & the desperate Iesuite if he can will make paste mending, for wheresoever they come they turne Christs coate Deianiraes garment. As it set Hercules on a fire: so they set others in Combustio[n], the reason is their first founder was a Soldier & ever since the way of peace they haue not knowne, at least not loved. To instance in a particuler not vnfitte for the present purpose, We have not hearde of any Protestant king that ever matched with a Contrary religion, saue the late Henry of Navarre with the late Margaret of France, which marriage so vnfortunate to the parties having never issue & being afterward divorced was also so fatall to our religion, that there was more bloud

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spilte at those Nuptialles then there was coine^{wine} spent, For while the Protestants dreamed of the glory & security they should haue by that matche, they were most miserably massacred. And who doubteth that what the French Papists committed in their owne country vpon that colour & occasion, the Spanish Papists would not be gladde to see done in this kingdome vpon the like, for without breach of Charity we may doubt of their meaning. Though there be a Treatie of peace, their Armada came against vs. If therefore we either liue or^{be} ledde

by precept or example, we shall find it was forbidden the best people in the worlde, to marry with a differing religio[n]. [*Left margin*: Deut.7.3.] The Injunction the reason & the effecte are layd downe in Deuteronomie, to the Iewes, that they should not take any daughters of the neighboring nations (though greater & mightier then themselues) to be wives to their sonnes, for they will cause their sonnes to turne from God, & will serve other gods, then will the Lord &c. All which are verified in Salomon the wisest king that ever was, who married one of [*Left margin*: Eccles.47. 13-24.] the greatest kings daughters that then was, yet we see the weakest sexe withdrew the wisest man, For Salomon became an Idolater, his sonne a foole, his subjects rebelles, & the best parte of the kingdome was rente from his posteritie for ever. Though Israell sinne yet let not Iudah transgresse, though Salomon (even one of the sonnes of David) married & miscarried with Pharaohs daughter, yet let not Isaac (the only sonne of our Abraham) doe as some of the sonnes of god haue done who because they sawe^{see} that the daughters of men were^{be} for outwarde & publike respecte fayre, take themselues wives of them, from whence come monstrous enormities, which like the ould Giants fight against god & godlines. But as God hath doubtles made his covenante with the king as he did with Abraham, as he hath brought him out of his owne country into a better, as he did Abraham, & put into the kings hearte to take a late iourney as Abraham did, from the South to the place where his Courte had beene at the beginning, to giue thanks to the Lorde The same god put into the king the same minde he put into Abraham, to choose a Rebecca among those of the same spirituall kinred, who call only vpo[n] one god their father, & acknowledge one & the same Church to be their mother, that so it may be with the Prince as in other respects, so in this, as it was with Isaac who tooke Rebecca to wife &c & was comforted [*Left margin*: Gen.24.67] after his mothers death. Now if from the booke of God which settes downe the vnlawfulnes of these marriages, we descend to our owne Chronicles we shall find that god hath crossed if not cursed, our alliance & association particulerly with the Spanish Natio[n]. The position of that Country and dispositio[n] of that people being as it were so malignant & evill agreeing with vs. The Prince of the greatest performance that ever

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this kingdome or Christiandome had was the blacke Prince, yet our Chronicles recorde that going into Spayne to settle Don Pedro in that kingdome (besides monstrous ingratitude & perfidiousnes of that Spanyard, who fayled the f performance of those Conditions he had promised, which caused that miserable revolte in France to the losse of our inheritance) the Prince was so poysoned in that iourney that he never had his healthe after. But to come neerer our purpose & to our times which are little better, For our Spanish frendship I beseech your Lordship observe, that all the marriages which the heires & princes of the Crowne haue made in England for these 6 score yeeres (except the severall second matches of Henry 8) haue beene only & no where else but with Spaine, which how litle god hath blessed, the successe shewes.

Prince Arthur married the Spanish kings daughter, we knowe god tooke him away suddenly within a small time, & without any issue. In a politike respecte we would make yet make a second matche; for Prince Henry afterwards king married the same daughter, but doubtlesse god was lesse pleased with that matche, which was lesse lawfull, & therefore god tooke away all the male children of it, & lefte only a daughter, in whose shorte reigne was shedde more bloud for the true religion in 6 yeeres, then for the false in these succeeding 60 yeeres. We made then a thirde adventure & marriage with Spaine Qu[een] Mary with k[ing] Philip which

was so discontenting to the people that it caused Wiets rebellion, so discomfortable to the Qu[een] that it broke her hearte, being left & neglected of her husband, & so dishonourable & prejudiciall to this kingdome, that meere for the Spanyards sake we haue no difference at all with the French, we lost Callis [*Left margin:* Calice] in 6 dayes which had beene aboue 200 yeeres in our possession. Nowe if I make bould to adde rather then applie, & for observacion of the contrary, rather then for imitatio[n] in the present (for though I haue not so much iudgment, nor so litle witte to presume to advise where to matche, I assume so much as to thinke a matche at home cannot be helde any way inconvenient) we finde the first & laste of o[u]r kings that ever matched with their subjects were Edward the 4th & Henry the 8th from which two matches God (as it were / to shewe, that the lesse we relie vpon others abroad, the more he will helpe vs himselfe at home) gaue two daughters two Elizabeths, two such Queenes then the which there were never two such blessed instruments of gods glory & this kingdomes good, by establishing peace in the land & religion in the Church vntill his Majesties happie comming who brought both with him. Thus my Lo[rd] haue I made bould to lay my pore single mite at yo[u]r feete. The many talents you haue cannot be better employed then thus to make you here & ever hereafter a good faithfull servant to both yo[u]r Maisters For if you wolde lay in waite for any opportunitie which is ~~hop~~=

happily

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happily purposedly offered you, for advancing gods glory & your honour, you cannot finde or invent any occasion more pleasing to god, or more plausible to the best & most men; then in dissuading privatelie by humble entreatie & opposing publikelie by your solide reasons this Spanish matche, since whatsoever the occasions & necessities of the Crowne be, it may find more supporte by casting it selfe into the armes of the subjects, which are the two houses of the Parliament, then by seeking to any forraine frowning foe, or envious enemie, wherevnto whensoever we leane or truste we shall find them Egiptian reeds & their intentions bent rather to supplant vs then supply vs./

By him that is not ambitious because not worthy, nor yet afraide because not ashamed to be knowne vnto yo[u]r Hon[o]r in this busines.

Tho. 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 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 4149, ff. 158r–162v
- 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

