A Discourse to prove that conjunction by alliance of marriage of England and Spain is the most safe, honorable and profitablest course for both the monarchies (September 1607)

Sir Charles Cornwallis

Transcript

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153r

A Discource written by S[i]r Charles Cornewallis Ambassador in Spayne, to proue that a Coniunction by Alyance of Marriag of England and Spaine is the most safe honorable and profitablest Course for both [th]e monarchies especially for Spaine. Dated the of September 1607

The suredst, most solid and honorable Meanes for a Continuance and Confirmac[i]on of a perpetuall peace on bothe partes were a Coniunction by Alyiance, the parties to bee, the Prince of England and the Infanta of Spayne./.

The dower of the princesse to be the vnited Prouinces that haue so longe seperated them selues from obedience to Spaine./.

The vtilitie honoure and safetie to spaine are Manyfeste by a freedom from so Chargeable and euerlastinge a warre, Bestowinge a daughter in a kingdom soe potent and proper to assist that Crowne in all their enterprises, w[i]thout Much emptyinge of theire Treasure, but w[i]th endinge the occasyo[n] that hath so longe exhausted them, Perfecte and perpetuall Consolidac[i]on, and securetie give to theire distracted dominions, w[hi]ch by a league offencive and defenciue w[i]th England wilbe made as secure as the inwardest pare of Spaine it selfe./.

This Alliance (Notw[i]thstandinge the difference in some points of Religeon) is on Neither syde Contrary to the Lawes of God Nor to the Rules and practise of the Romaine Church as I dare vndertake to Make ~~good~~ manifest, yf that be the point that shalbe Controuerted./.

The danger More on our parte, then on theirs both in generall and particuler./.

In generall for that More easie it is for one of the Romaine Church to make a Change of opinion in a protestant then for a Protestant to Converte a Romanist./.

The Protestant

154v

The Protestant fightes as a Champion in the plaine feild in his dublet and hose, vsinge only the weapons of the Scriptures and the practice of the first Churches: The Romanistes hathe his bulwarke and repayres, for beinge Convictted, by the first, he retyres to the Authoritie of the Churche, to the determinac[i]on of Councelles, and opinions of doctors and there restes, as in an invincible forteresse./.

In particuler More difficult it is for the Husband to change the opinione of the Wyfe, then the Wife of the Husband./.

The Woman is Comonly vncapeable of the force of an Argument, Weake in vnderstandinge such high Matters as questions of Faith, and by Meanes thereof Much More suspitious and fearefull to be deceaued, by those that knowe more, beinge Not able to reache to a discussion of Controuercie, they hould the implicit faith for surest, and rest in that w[hi]ch they haue receaued from their Cradle./.

From the tyme of Adame (who had the first tast of the force of a Womans perswasions) vntill this daye, Many More Wilbe founde, perswaded by their Wifes, then wives by theire Husbandes./.

Ad herevnto to that the Romane Religeon shall hereby receave No litle honor and those that professe it in England No small benefit where (as very likelie it is) libertie of Consyence, and vse of Religeon wilbe graunted to the princes and all her Retinewe, and that yeilded to in Courte, and soe Neere to the kinges presence Must Needes proue of great Consequence to drawe on a More easie hand to be Carried ouer other his Subiectes [tha]t are of like proffessyon./.

All other Circomstances and Necessary adiunctes (as exchange of Townes w[i]thin the limites of the inheritance to the issue only that shall succeed of the Prince and Infanta, and for defecte then to returne to Spaine, The League offencyve and defencyve and the lymited p[er]

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154r

p[er]petuall assistances to be given on either parte vpon occasions and to be advised vpon and agreed by suche as shall by both kinges be appointed to treat and Conclude the busines./.

By this Meanes shall the kinge of Spaine attaine an honour and in those ~~thinges~~ Warres W[hi]ch by experience hath given proofe to be otherwise likely to become imortall: Two Princes shall ioyne Who of all other the Monarke of the World haue Most aptnes to serve by entercourse and secure strength their Mutuall estates and dominions shall by that Meanes become inassalteable by others, and hable to give lawe to all theire Neighboures. The kinge shall spare the Many Millions of Money and the Multetude of bodies that he Nowe Consumeth in those warres and Converte the same to his More honoure vtillitie and safetie against the Com[m]on Ennemy, his further discouerys in the Indies Wilbe Made safe the Nauegation of his Subiectes thither and vnto all other partes of Christendome secured, his Charge of the Most parte of his garrisons in all partes of his dominions either ended or Much abated, A great ~~power~~ temper ~~brought~~ brought vpon discord in Matter of Religeon, Which When reasone of State shalbe seperated from that of opinion, verie probable it is that either in tyme it May please God to worke some good agreement, or at least breed Charitie in the heartes of all Christians who confessing all one Substance doe only differ in the Circomstance and Man[n]er./.

Obiections and their answers./.

If it be obiected that it is Neither Honorable, profitable Nor safe for his Ma[jes]tie of Spayne, to aparte so valuable, and important a parte of his dominions from his Crowne, and especially to Make the same an adiunct to

a Prince al=

154v

a Prince alredy soe potent by Sea wherein those prouinces Will bringe vnto him soe imeasurable an addic[i]on, It is easelie, and invincibly to be answered by these Reasons followinge./.

First it is apparant that the Crowne of Spaine, appartes Nothinge from it, but that whereof (w[i]t[h] so infinite an effusion both of Treasure and bloudd) the Soueraytie hath bene sought for the space of so many years and at this daye No Neerer the attayninge then att the first,/.

By the Emperor (this kinges grandfather) vpon the Marriage of kinge Phillipe w[i]th Mary Queene of England, and by this kines father vpon that of the Archeduke and the infanta the like was done of the Wholle .17. provinces, for the Emperors tyme when [th]e same were in his quiet and peaceable possessyon: In the late Kinges wher was Muche More hope of recouery then at this Instant./. To.

The kinge of great Brittaine Nothinge shalbe added but that which it is very likely (were he either soe Ambitious or desirous of acquiringe dominyons that appertayne Not to him) he Might obtaine w[i]thoute Contractinge W[i]th the kinge of Spaine, The like havinge heretofore ben offered to his predecessor a Woman and w[i]thout successyon and therefore Neither soe able to defend them, Nor soe likely if she had vndertook it to Continewe it./.

The strength encreased to the kinge of Great Brittany (so longe as the league and Condicons to be agreed on shall hould firme) shall accrue in as large a Measure to his perpetuall Confederat and allye the kinge of Spayne, who in regard thereof shalbe as well in Warre defencyve as offencyve soe greatlie fortefyed./.

Yf the same shall breake hereafter by any Manyfest de

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155r

defaut of the kinge of great Brittayn, then I Make No doubte but one Condicon will be that the Crowne of Spaine shalbe restored to the same right and titll that they Now pretende, Neither will it be more diffile to drawe it out of the handes of the kinge of great Brittaine: (vpon whome the envy and Ielousy of all his Neighbours wilbe cast vpon the accession of those Catryes to his other kingdoms) then from those that Nowe possesse it, sithence all other Confyninge Princes, in regard of Iellosie of Stat, ~~that Neither~~, and vphouldinge a people that give Spaine Neither Meanes Nor leysure to thinke of any other attempt against their dominions and Not likely to growe greater in them selues then May be tollerated by theire Neighbores) are in all reason likelie Neuer to leaue either ouertly or Couertly to fom[en]t them, whereas in the other case the greatest of them, for diueres both generall and particular interestes would become of other affection: Moreouer it hath Never ben read, that the kinges of great brittayne haue bene breakers of Faith and league Made w[i]th other princes or sought to vsurpe any thinge vpon their Neighbours, Now, with ~~what~~ lesse reason then euer, when suche should be the apte Coniunction, strength and Riches of theire domynions as they should Not Need to envy the greatest potentat vpon earth especially beinge Ioyned w[i]th soe Mightie and incomparable a Prince in Treasure and other power as the kinge of Spayne would ~~be~~ in fewe yeares be if such a coniunction and league were agreed: Besides the kinge of great Brittayne Must vpon a breach w[i]th him adventure Not only the losse of those proinces and

of so mightie & assured an alye and freinde but also drawe vpon them a dangerouse and perpetuall warre from this Crowne, hauinge such an imortaletie of meanes by

theire Indiane

155v

theire Indian Treasure./.

The honorablest ende of warre is the atayninge by Amytye and w[i]thout bloodshed that w[hi]ch hath bene sought by by force and furye. The kinge of Spaine is to be said to haue attayned those Countryes, because in this Contracte he gives and disposeth them, and therein he Cannot but be said to receyue Much Honour and Strength incomparable: The first by endinge, by soe peacible a Meane, soe bloudy and longe continued a warre, the braunches and dependencies whereof infest all Christendome. The Second by ioyninge vnto him soe potente a kinge and so apte to Supplie him w[i]th all thinges wherein ~~soeuer~~ his owne Countryes and forces are Most defectiue./.

This Discours is Continued prouing the Lawfulnes of Coniunction on both sides notwithstandinge the differenc in Religeon./

In formore discourse had of this subiecte, I offered to prooue that the allyance betweene the Prince of greate Brittaine and the Infanta of Spayne (though different in Religeon) is on Neither side contrary either to the lawes of god or practise of theire owne Church: This I will indevoure, conforminge My selfe to the Condicon of those I haue to deale w[i]th, who although in their acc[i]ons ~~too~~ demonstrate to affecte Nothinge More then delaye and length of tyme, ~~{*gap: illegible*}~~ yet in wordes and writinge vse Muche brevitie them selues and desire the like in others./.

Yt will not I assure my selfe be denyed, that a Roman position it is, that Matrimony betweene a beleever and an vnbeleever is by No lawe Made void or vneffectuall./.

Not by lawe of Nature, as that w[hi]ch takes Not away [th]e ende of Matrymony; for Children May be borne vnto them, and by possibillitie also, brought vpp and instructed in true

Religeon; there

156r

Religeon, there is also hope of inducinge the other partie to the faith in w[hi]ch Case in reason it is Manyfest, that the Marriage is Not only Not evill but good./.

If in the Lawe of Nature such Marriages had bine reputed vnlawfull, Iacob would Not haue ioyned him selfe in Marryage w[i]th the daughter of Laban an Idolatrer: Ioseph w[i]th the daughter of Potipharr an egiptian; Nor Moses w[i]th Her of Iethro an ethiopian./.

If in the Lawe written, such coniunctions had Not bine held effectuall, Hester should Not by the especiall prouidence of God haue ben Marryed to Ahesuerus an Ethenike kinge of the Persians, Salomon to the daughter Pharae or david to her of the kinge of Geshur./.

Yf in the Lawe of grace Marryages of persons eyther differinge in faith or worshippe had bine disallowed, Monaca the Christian Mother of St Augostine should Not haue bine ioyned in Matrimony w[i]th his father beinge a pagan: Clolildis a Christian Princesse w[i]th Clodonevs kinge of Fraunce beinge then an infidell: Ema the daughter of Charles kinge of Fraunce (surnamed the Simple) w[i]th Rolo prince of Normandie a bitter persecutor of Christians:

Clotildis daughter of Clodonevs w[i]th Albaricus then kinge of Spaine an Aryan Heretyque: {Imia} the daughter of fortunio kinge of Navarr, w[i]th Abduramo[n] the second kinge of Cordoba a Moore: Teresa sister of don Alonso the first {tosebdalable} Kinge of Toledo, Nor the, ~~Nor~~ late Marriage in oure age, of the Lady Catherine daughter of the kinge of Polona, w[i]th Iohn kinge of Sweveland in Many of w[hi]ch the Pope either by playne dispensation, tacite Consent, or interpretiue Lycence is presumed to haue had his hand, as respecting More the publique good of Com[m]on wealth then the perill of particuler persons, especially where there is more hope of good then doubte of daunger: I omitt divers

other Moderne

156v

other Moderne examples as well of princes as of privat persons, Neither recite I more proofes, because I haue promysed brevitie: This one Maye suffise to demonstrate plainlie that euen in this Country of Spaine in tymes passed Marriages of such Condic[i]on were frequent and Muche practized, Ells would Not that Nac[i]onall Counsell of Toledo haue by espetiall Sanctions Comaunded a seperac[i]o[n] betweene Christians Marryed to Iewes, w[hi]ch in publique as well as sperituall regardes was held inconvnient: St Ierome also in his first booke against Iovinia[n] And St Augustine in his of faith and workes wittenesse that in their tymes, those sortes of ~~Tyme~~ Marryages were verie vsuall, the places and passages of Scripture, aswell in the Newe as olde Testament, [tha]t carry any apparance to contradicte and forbid suche Coniunctions were in those of the Newe rather Councells then preceptes; and those that were of St Paule only, w[hi]ch (were they preceptes) accordinge to ~~the~~ Cardinall Bellarmyne are dispensable by the Pope, In the olde only preceptes of the Iudiciall Lawe w[hi]ch is Abrogated or peculiar to the Iewes Not to Ioyne them selues w[i]th some especiall prohibited people: And if in any thinge they towched or tasted of the Morrall, the same was only in regard of the perrill of avertinge those of True faith to strange gods or erronyous Religeon, w[hi]ch in case where No perill is, (or soe litle as the same is ouerballanced either by assurance or hope) of a greater good) risethe No question./.

In the Marriage of Iacobe, Ioseph, Moses, Esher & others devines hould, there was No danger, the Reason, there ~~was~~ singuler vnderstandinges, perfecte instructions in the truith, and firmnes in theire faythe./.

To omitt the

157r

To omytt the rest, and to Make a more equall parralell what was there to be promysed of Ester that May Not be expected of the Princes we treate of, Ester was Not w[i]th more dilligent care instructed in the knowledg of the Livinge God by her kinsman Mordecheus then the Princesse is, and is like to be, in the faith professed by the Roman Church, by the kinge ~~p~~ her parentes./.

Yf Ester were indewed w[i]th the forceable attractives of vnderstandinge and bewtie exceedinge the proporc[i]on of other Women: of the first I cannot but take ample Notise by myne ears: of the second by myne eyes, that God beinge pleased to contynewe to her growinge yeares, that w[hi]ch Nature hath so bountifully begune in her infancye: the Princes will in Neither yeild her the least advantage, Neither can it be denyed but Ester was exposed to Much More perrill, Shee to the hande of Infidells that knewe Not God, seperated from her owne Nation, and from all Manner of vse of her Religeon and worshippe. The Infanta to those

Princes Christian, Clement, Pyous Charitable and endued w[i]th all Maner of virtues, And all thoughe differinge in some pointes of Cerimony and circomstance yet firmly and wholly agreeing in all or Most poy[n]tes of the fundamentall partes either of faith or doctrine, to the one in regarde of benefite she Might drawe to her people was denyed all Comforte to her owne Soule: To the other hauinge the like or More probable Meanes to releeve those of her owne professyon, yt is likely there will Not only be assured Meanes for the free vse of her Conscyence but an vnquestionable allowance to be euer served and accompanyed w[i]th those both of her owne Nac[i]on and professyon ~~for~~./.

For conclusion I cannot forgett an Auntient and authentique example of Myn owne Country, where in the yeare .621. [th]e

Most Christian

157v

Most Christian Lady Ethelburga daughter to the deuout and zelous king Ethelberte was given in Marry=age by her sayd father to Edwyn kinge of the Northumbers, then an Infidell only vpon hope of his Convertion to the faith, w[hi]ch after by her Meanes, and the preachinge of St Paiclynus ensued accordinge to his expectac[i]on: In this case there is Neither the like difficultie Nor difference. To be Ioyned to an infidell Might Raise a question of the validitie of the Marryage, for that, the one parte May be said Not to be Capeable of a Sacrament, in this ther can be No such, where both parties beinge Christians and bap^{b}tised, to Neither of them Can be denyed habillitie to enter in to Marryage, W[hi]ch by those of the Romane Church, is held a Sacrament: In this there is a vnyforme Consent in articles of faith: And only the Question Resteth Whether the Romane Church hath Not thorough her ease and accession of worldlie authoritie (out of her owne invention) added too much to the foundac[i]on or ours in too much vehemency and dislike of her surplusages to refuse ^{her} in some thinges ~~her~~ thinges she houldes, w[i]th reason: yet Must I confesse that Neuer was there duell of this kinde More evenly reported, for as to the princes cannot be denyed, a fulnes of all those Adamantine partes, that haue power to drawe affection to the highest stayre of extremetie, soe are the perfections of our Prince such, and soe incomparable as are hardlie resistable by any hearte of Flesh: It seemeth that God and Nature haue framed and fashioned in a Mould, Not Made to give shape or beinge to any other: such are their Concordancies and congruities, as they appeare to be the onlie equall Moyties that haue power to Make the highest, and most glorious Coniunction on earth Compleat in all perfection: Non other stringes there are vnder heaven to be found that can give the right sounde to these peereles Instrumentes: For Myne owne partyculere I freely acknowledge, that such is My affection to the good of

both Crownes

158r

both Crownes and Nac[i]ons, as Might I lyve to be partaker of soe blessed and sweete a Harmony, well coulde I bee Contented to singe My last him[m]e, of *Nuncke dimittas*./.

. Finis .

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https://mpese.ac.uk/t/CornwallisDiscourseSpanishEnglishMarriage1607.html