Discourse Concerning the Marriage Propounded to Prince Henry with a Daughter of Florence (1610?)

Sir Charles Cornwallis

Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 11600, ff. 280v–279r

280v

A Discoure Concerninge The Marrige: Propounded to: Prince Henry w[i]th: a: Daughter of Florence Written by Sr: Charles: Cornewallis beinge: The: Princes: {Treasr}: att The Princes: Com[m]andement

The Alliance w[i]th Florance by Marriage of your highnes w[i]th a sister of that Duke: bring[es] w[i]th it neithr. to the kinge nor to your selfe aney Addition of streinght or diminution of doubt[es]; the two princapall markes that in all marriages and Coniunctions of that nature are Aymed att.

The Cuntrey of that Duke is farre remote & therefore of it selfe utterly un apte to yealde yow aney helpe if by acci dent you should haue occasion to use it.

His forces are hardly able to defende his owne estat[es] . if either by the kinge of Spaine or the Pope ioyned w[i]th aney other the princes of Italy they should bee att aney tyme invaded.

The Affections (of that Duke and estate are allredy espowsed to your most suspected freind[es] and Assuredst enemyes. The late workinge of these Conjunctions betweene them to the engreatinge of them & perrill of us haue made it manifest. They haue by those meanes weakned us a broade; and by this Coniunction theire designe may bee to doe the like att home.

Ther e pollices and plott[es] of fflore nce haue seldome or neur wanted an especiall regard . to the Chayre of Rome From that see they haue Receued there greatest honnor. & from that Tripple Crowne they still hope and . exspecte the diadem of a kinge; whereunto they haue all redy made a st eppe by acquiringe that of the great Duke of Hetearia.

Noe p[ar]te nor place the kinge your fathers Courte or your owne will bee free from the eyes & undrstanding[es] of some that shall from tyme to tyme bee shuffled into there trayne . and little doubte there is but from that Florentine fountyne & Source of practises whereof soe bitter an exsperiance hath bine had by our neighbour Cuntreys; both Intelligences will bee given & plottes used to putt us into faccions & Garboyles to searue ~~only~~{ends} abroad . & p[er]hapes those of our greatest enemyes.

In noe one thinge earthly can they more merrit either of that Romane ~~Chaire~~Chayre or of those king[es] whome they haue of late soe stroungly & streightley united . then by drawinge this mon[n]archey . haueinge soe maney yeares Continued the nurse & protector of the Religion reformed . into a devission W[i]thin

280r

W[i]th in it selfe and into a suspition w[i]th all those frynd[es] whome a greement in religion (the surest bound that a moungst men is to bee found) soe streightly united /

The Coniun[n] ction moued is Collaterall not Line all and therefore more then the portion prsently to bee given noe other ayde or Assistance to bee hereafter hoped.

That serpent of Corruption w[hi]ch not w[i]th standing the frost of soe maney yeares disgraced wherew[i]th it hath bine in these kingdomes, benumn ed hath yet lived & heald up the head . would nowe by receuinge a p[ar]te of her nowe into our bosome . recouer newe warmth and streinght and bee in abled againe to endaun[n]ger us w[i]th her poyson /

There can in Reason bee little Chasticement expected for receauinge of Jesuit[es] & preaist[es] the only mothes and myners of this Com[m]on Wealth or for saying or hearinge of Masse when undr. the roofe of the house of his Matie: & your highnes & soe neare unto your p[er]sons . both the one & the other shall bee daily tollerated.

His Maty that hath in all the tyme of his gouerm[en]t showed soe great an Intire regard to Justice cannot soe well w[i]th his honnor. demonstrate soe great an Inequalitey as to punish those thing[es] in his people abroad that hee alloweth and . p[er]mitteth in his Chamber att home.

Weare it that this Allyance might bee said to bring w[i]th it an enlargment of Dominion an Increase of revenew. or an honnor in it selfe in regard of an equalitey in blood . & dignitey . as was p[ro]iected in the marriage w[i]th Spaine / more approvable would it bee to our frynd[es] a broad whoe thereby might as occasion should require hope to p[ar]ticipate of what should bee added unto us & to the Sub:it[es] att home / to whom the streinght & glorey of there Cuntrey would bee a Countrpoize against the distast[es] of ioyninge hand[es] w[i]th a Religion they soe much abhorre.

But your highnes in this expect[es] . noe Amplifiinge of dominion nor Augmentacion of revenew' more our whatsoeuer shall bee given in redy money or the most p[ar]te of it must passe into the kinge your fathers purse. your selfe obliged to a newe charge w[hi]ch will bee looked for to become sutable to your owne high estate & the portion that shall bee given in marriage your owne meanes beeinge but little or nothinge att all enabled / nor your p[er]son honnored marryinge w[i]th a dowghter though of a great Duke and a prince absolute w[i]th out aney nomin[n]all subiection to aney yet not free from dependance in regard that for the principalest p[ar]t[es] of his territors hee is feeudatory to the

279v

Tto the Empire and receaueth the Investiture of other of his estat[es] from his mightey {near bour} the kinge of Spaine w[i]th out whose favour . hee shall euer haue cause to live w[i]th some feare /

Neather is that house much graced w[i]th theire towe ^{2} late mariages w[i]th Fraunce: (the first beeing $^{w[i]th}$ a younger sonne then not like to bee come a kinge;) and the successe such as will euer continewe a woefull memorey in the hart[es] of that nation: the second w[i]th a kinge whoe in regard of his havinge an oth[e]r wife then alive / & some other Contract[es] . challenged . att his hand[es] / to whose Children hee had avowed him selfe a father / was rather Contented to accepte of a valley offred him w[i]th ease / then to Aspire to a mountayne w[i]th $^{w[i]th}$ those his incumbars of estate & Conscience Considred, was not like^{ly} ~~wis~~ to stoope to him /

It is trewe that in all other forreigne p[ar]t[es] of Chrisendom. fitt for the regard~~[es]~~ of your highnes eyes / yow are either prouccupated by those late marriages . agreead upon in Fraunce or Spaine; or there arise alike doubt[es] & ~~ac~~ex ceptions for {mattrs } of differe nce in Religion / as of this in Flore nce (only those of (Germany excepted). whoe allthough in respecte of theire depende nces . upon the Empire may in some sort bee taken for sub[tes] . and not absolute in theire owne territoss; yet respectinge the Antiquity of theire houses . their Clearnes of blood. theire streinght by leagues & Confedracyes amoungst them selues & w[hi]ch is most Considerable theire Conformitey in Religion are in my weake Judgmt {more} p[ar]ties for your highnes to Joyne w[i]th then those of Florence /

Your Conj unction w[i]th those of your owne Religion will demonstrate your cleare & undowbted Resolution not to declyne in the cause of god. This will fasten unto yow through out all Christ endome the proffessors of ye Reformation & will make yow deare to the subiect[es] of this kingdome: out of whoses loves yow may exspecte a p[er]manent & Continuall treasure / not to bee equalled by the porcion of Florence weare it by maney degrees greater then can bee hoped: & whoes contrarey conceipt[es] upon a marriage in soe high a degree . distastfull unto them . is lickly to breed & in crease those obstructions , w[hi]ch haue lately bine sho wed uppon the demaund[es] of supply in Parlimt by the kinge your father.

Lastly might the estat[es] . of ye united provinces out of Considration how much it may import them selues . to haue yow Joyned w[i]th those of ye Popes obedience be wrought to bee come Actors aswell in Recomendinge to your highnes a marriage in there neighbour Cuntreyes . as they weare out of there owne loues & respect[es] assistances att your Christninge yt maye p[er]hapes drawe out an an Increase of some in Portion

279r

In portion and an obligation in them w[hi]ch may here after become of greater consequence & benefitte to your estate then what soeuer can be offered ~~by~~ be p[er]formed from Florence.

The like may bee wished and wrought w[i]th the subiect[es] att home if it shall please the kinge & yow soe much . to honnor . as to accqu a inte them w[i]th your Intencion to marey & w[i]th what the necessitey of the state will requi r tte in portion are not likely to suffer your choyce (agreeinge in regard of Conformitey in Religion w[i]th there likeinge to bee shorte in portion to aney other what soeuer . that shall bringe with them soe maney inconvenienc[es] . as out of a Conjunction w[i]th a sister of Florence or one of soe different an opinion are to bee expected.

Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 41613, ff. 215r–216v
- Beinecke Library, Osborn fb178, ff. 32r–33v

Modern print exemplars

- *Collectanea Curiosa* (Oxford, 1781), vol. 1, pp. 156–160

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https://mpese.ac.uk/t/CornwallisMarriageHenry1610.html