A Prophecy Found in the Abbey of St Benedict in Norfolk (c.1623, but dated 1485)

Transcript

British Library, Harley MS 389, ff. 335r–335v

335r

31 May 1623

I received yours, iust as I was sitting downe to write. I thank you for the returne of what I sent. And still I wonder at our Academiane whom I obserue more & more to make no bones of communicating copying repeating of that I meane not shalbe euer found in my keeping; howsoeuer curiosity to vnderstand the times makes me sometimes listen; but I hope that is a pardonable fault &c. That which I receiued at seueral times since Saturday, whether by l[ette]r, report &or printing, I now send you. But for the petition you speake of, certainly be it not worthie to be called a Protestant that playd such an Idolatrous knaves part. And for the similitude of the argument, it puts me in mind of a Prophecie shall I call it or a libell, which I lately saw: others say they saw it long since but I cannot say so: but judge of it, when you heare it: If it be but 7 yeares old & I knew so much I should esteeme it more But thus I had it

A prophecie found in the Abbey of St Benedict in Norfolk

If Eightie eight#
[*Left margin:*# Tilbury. Camp. &c]
be past, then thriue
Thou mayst, till Fourty foure or five.#
[*Left margin:*# Q. Elizabeths raigne.]

After the Mayd#
[*Left margin:*# Q Elizabeth]
is dead, A Scott#
[*Left margin:*# K. James.]

Shall governe then; & if a Plott#
[*Left margin:*# Pouder plott]

Preuent him not, then sure his sway
Continue shall full many a day.
The Ninth#
[*Left margin:*# Pr. Henrie]
shall die, & then the First#
[*Left margin:*# Pr. Charles]

Perhaps shall raigne; but, oh, accurst
Shalbe the Time, when as you see
To Sixteene# joyned Twentie three#

[*Left margin:*# # 16|23 or Maria 16. Charles 23.]

For then the Eagle[#.]
[*Left margin:*# Rome or Romish state]
shall haue help
By craft to catch the Lyons Whelp[#]
[*Left margin:*# God bless [th]e Prince]

And hurt him sore, except the same
Be cur'd by one of the Mayds name.[#]
[*Left margin:*# Elizabeth.]

In Iulies month the selfe same yeare
Doth Saturne[μ] joyne with Iupiter.[μ]
[*Left margin:*μ. μ. The great conjunction of Saturne & Jupiter Anno 1623. July 8.]

Perhaps false Prophets shall arise,
And Mahomet shall play his prise;
But sure great alteration
Shall happen in Religion.

[*Left margin:*Dat: 1485]
Beleeue this true, when as you see
A'Spanyard Protestant to be

I know not whether this date belongs to the who{le} prophecie, or to the 2 last verses onely: nor wether the{ {*gap: illegible*} } be part of the Prophecie or some { {*gap: illegible*} } Howsoeve{r}

335v

31 May 1623
I will make that good vse of it as to devide ~~a book~~ a book betweene your selfe & me, called *Hispanus conversus* or *Texeda retextus*. I haue it both in latin (wherein the autor writes it) & the translation into English which I cutt of from the other, & here send it you/ as I had thought to haue done long a goe but could neuer think of it till now, that the prophecie putts me in mind thereof.

Mr. Ramsey sweares that he saw ~~afore~~ the prophecie afore Christmas at Court, & that they interpreted there the Lyons Whelp of the Palatine, the Eagle of the Emperour & But the Palatine is a Lyon but not a Lyons Whelp. his father not living. Mr Warner was with me this week & told me, that he had seene it halfe a yeare since: but when I expounded it to him, he began to doubt whether he saw it before the Prince went or not. This is all I know of it, & am sure the style is of no great antiquitie: yet you will not deny but my marginall notes guesse very neere his meaning, whoseover he were that made it. For without doubt he had a meaning & some skill too in Astronomie that he could point out the yeare & month of the great Conjunction to be in Iuly next. Yet for all this for any thing I know he might be

a libeller & perhaps he that made your ~~{*gap: illegible*}~~ petition to Q Eliz. had some litle acquaintance either with him or his poeme. If any man can say more ~~let~~ for his credit let him.

Thus with my best respect to your selfe & my Lady I rest, petitioning Almightie God to better the face of the times & to look upon all that are either in feare or distress, whether amongst us or wheresoever else

Christ Coll[ege] May 31

Yours most ready to be com[m]anded Joseph Meade

It is not yet time a yeare to talke of coming to Dalham but I shall trouble you time enough.

Other manuscript witnesses

- All Souls College, MS 242, f. 87v
- British Library, Sloane MS 1479, f. 8v
- British Library, Sloane MS 292, f. 1v
- British Library, Sloane MS 363, f. 17v
- British Library, Additional MS 34217, f. 41v
- Beinecke Library, Osborn b197, f. 189
- Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 47, f. 40r
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D 1092, f. 23r
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D 398, f. 162r
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson poetry 26, f. 15v
- Cambridge University Library, MS Ee.5.56, f. 2v
- Durham University Library, MSP 9, reversing the volume, 104
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.275
- UT Austin MS, BL Microfilm 751 Phillips MS 12341, p323

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