

## Nv11 Our eagle is yett flowne, to a place unknowne

*Notes. This riotous song, set to a well-known contemporary ballad tune, imagines the effects of the great riches the Spanish Infanta was assumed to bring to England as a dowry.*

“Whope doe mee no harme”<sup>1</sup>

Our eagle is yett flowne,<sup>2</sup> to a place unknowne

To meete with the Phoenex of Spaine<sup>3</sup>

Fethered many moe, will after him goe

To waite & attend on his traine.<sup>4</sup>

I here some men say, the Dutchmen<sup>5</sup> must pay

5

Great summes to make matters even,

And wee shall have gold, more then London can hold

Were the walls built as high as heaven.

The Potents of Spaine will loade Charles his waine<sup>6</sup>

And fill up the Brittans with Glee

10

God knowes what pearle, will be given to that Girle<sup>7</sup>

By Ladys of every degree.

A Chappell<sup>8</sup> shall bee, new built you shall see

The walls shall be peeces of eight<sup>9</sup>

Within it the floore shall be paved all ore

15

With gold of I know not what weight.

The Citty shall thrive, there weomen shall swive,<sup>10</sup>

Exchange time<sup>11</sup> in the morne

I heard it right now, each Cuckold shall blowe

And Guild the tippe of his horne.

20

The Mayors of townes, in there Conny-skin<sup>12</sup> gownes,

Shall noddinge ride in the rout,  
It shall bee there grace, to ride the fooles pace,  
And at night see the sconce<sup>13</sup> be hunge out.

The Lawyers no more, shall coson the poore 25  
In Westminster hall,<sup>14</sup> nor in Towe.  
There Greene Earthen pitcher, shall be silver or Richer  
And each goose weare A Barristers gowne.

The Schollars<sup>15</sup> shall loath, chopt mutton in broth 30  
For Woodcocke in Plate shall be brought  
To every messe, there shall not bee lesse,  
Then a brace the colledge throughout.

The Gentry shall spend, even world without end, 35  
They all there meanes shall out live,  
Yett never bee poore, for there pockefyed<sup>16</sup> whore  
Shall helpe them to what shee can give.

Our state shall forgett, they ever had witt,  
Our councell shall now not bee grave, 40  
The clergy shall drinke like Dutchmen, I thinke  
Each shall a third benefice<sup>17</sup> have.

The Keeper of cash, shall count it as trash  
Great houses shall bigger be made,  
The chappell wherein, to laugh was a sin 45  
Shall be stord with bedds for the trade.<sup>18</sup>

At court they shall Quaffe, great whole blacke Jacks<sup>19</sup> off  
To Grandyes that shall come ore  
And After perhappe D. shall have a clappe<sup>20</sup>  
What can six & fifty doe more. 50

The reason of this, I take not amisse,  
Will in our clymate appeare  
When that our northpole shall bee putt in the hole  
Of the Southerne inferior beare.<sup>21</sup>

**Source.** Beinecke MS Osborn b.197, pp. 110-11

**Other known sources.** Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 398, fols. 188r and 229r; Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 160, fol. 176v

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- <sup>1</sup> *Whope doe mee no harm*: “Whoop! do me no harm good man” was a well-known ballad tune, and had been used for a libellous ballad on the Overbury murder (“There was an ould ladd rode on an ould padd”) in 1615-16. Simpson (777-780) gives a transcription of the tune.
- <sup>2</sup> *Our eagle is yett flowne*: Prince Charles (“Our eagle”) left for Spain in February 1623.
- <sup>3</sup> *Phoenex of Spaine*: the Spanish Infanta Maria.
- <sup>4</sup> *Fethered many moe...traine*: other courtiers followed Charles to Madrid in the weeks after the Prince’s departure.
- <sup>5</sup> *Dutchmen*: the Dutch, who were at war with Spain, had a great interest in seeing the Spanish Match fail, or in at least countering its diplomatic effects.
- <sup>6</sup> *waine*: wagon.
- <sup>7</sup> *that Girle*: the Spanish Infanta Maria.
- <sup>8</sup> *Chappell*: any marriage treaty with Spain would require the English to allow the construction of a Catholic chapel for the Infanta to worship in. Inigo Jones began construction of a chapel for the Infanta in May 1623.
- <sup>9</sup> *peeces of eight*: Spanish gold coins.
- <sup>10</sup> *swive*: have sex.
- <sup>11</sup> *Exchange time*: unclear; probably a reference to the morning hours of business at the Old and New Exchange, and hence a bawdy suggestion that city wives exploit the time when their husbands are out of

the house on business.

12 *Conny-skin*: rabbit skin.

13 *sconce*: lantern.

14 *Westminster hall*: location of a number of law courts.

15 *The Schollars*: i.e. of Oxford and Cambridge.

16 *pockefyed*: syphilitic.

17 *third benefice*: a third clerical living. The joke is that many clergymen already hold two benefices—the problem of pluralism was a matter of some dispute in the English Church.

18 *the trade*: prostitution.

19 *blacke Jacks*: large jugs of beer.

20 *D. shall have a clappe*: this line is a little obscure. A plausible reading is to take “D.” as an abbreviation for “Duke” and thus for Buckingham, and “have a clappe” as “have a misfortune”. This line and the one that follows then perhaps evoke the great celebratory drinking that might occur should Buckingham fall.

21 *When that our northpole...beare*: the merging of constellations offers a thin fig-leaf for a rather crude evocation of the consummation of a marriage between Prince Charles and the Spanish Infanta Maria.

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