

Nv17 The Prince is now come out of Spayne

Notes. This anti-Spanish poem is notable not only for its loyal praise for Charles and Buckingham, but also for its rather distanced perspective on the excesses of popular celebrations for the Prince's return.

“Of the Prince's returne from Spayne. 1623”

The Prince is now come out of Spayne,¹

God blesse his highnesse and his trayne

They all have seene Madrid.

Yet most of them came post before,

And happy hee gott first ashoare,

5

To tell us how hee did

They tolde us twenty thousand lyes,

To feede the peoples fantasies;

And put them in great feare.

But when the Prince to England came,

10

And brought not home the Spanish Dame,²

The Papists hung their eares.

They say the Pope cannot dispense,³

Nor will hee soyle his innocence

To match these two together:

15

But had wee knowne as much before,

The Cunnige of old Gundamore,⁴

Could not have gott him thither.

Some say, their victualls were but scant,⁵

But that's a lye, there was no want:

20

The Prince and Duke⁶ had guifts;

And so had everyone beside,

That could but ether runne or ride,
The rest made other shifts.

But when to London once hee came 25
To see the citie on a flame:⁷

The people did admire.
I speake it to the townes-mens prayse,
It's thought that since Queene Maries dayes,⁸
There was not such a fyre. 30

He was receiv'd with asmuch joy,
As was the wandering Prince of Troy,
When hee to Carthage went.⁹
Some Maudlinn drunke did weepe and swore,
That sweete Prince Charles should never more 35
Crosse seas without consent.

They vow'd they now would shew their care,
For they had all in him a share,
As well as had the King.
So to the taverne all they went, 40
And every foole his verdict spent,
And then the bells did ring.

The regent of that noble towne,¹⁰
Got up betimes, put on his gowne,
His service to have done: 45
But ere that hee to York house¹¹ came,
The Prince and Duke of Buckingham
Three houres before were gone.

I would it had my fortune beene,
Those strange adventures to have seene, 50

That others did in Spayne:
I might have then more honour wonne,
Then Archy¹² did, or els some one,
That wore a golden chayne.

But I am hee that have no hope, 55
To get by Spanyard or by Pope;
I like them both all one.
I love the Prince, and every name
That honours noble Buckingham,
and so my song is done. 60

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fol. 22r-v

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- ¹ *Prince...out of Spayne*: Prince Charles arrived in England on 5 October 1623.
- ² *Spanish Dame*: the Spanish Infanta Maria.
- ³ *Pope cannot dispense*: for the Spanish Infanta to marry the Protestant Charles, she required a dispensation from the pope.
- ⁴ *Gundamore*: Count Gondomar, Spanish ambassador to England (1613-18, 1620-22), and one of the architects of the Spanish Match.
- ⁵ *Victualls were but scant*: this news was noted by a number of libellers in 1623, and most memorably dismissed as false in Richard Corbett's "I've read of Ilands flotinge and removed".
- ⁶ *Duke*: the royal favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who accompanied Charles to Spain in February 1623.
- ⁷ *on a flame*: numerous bonfires were lit in London to celebrate Charles's return.
- ⁸ *since Queene Maries dayes*: a mordant allusion to the bonfires in which Queen Mary (1553-58) had had Protestant "heretics" burned.

⁹ *Prince of Troy...Carthage went*: alluding to Aeneas, whose arrival in Carthage is described in book 1 of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

¹⁰ *regent...towne*: presumably the Lord Mayor of London.

¹¹ *York house*: Buckingham's residence.

¹² *Archy*: Archie Armstrong, court jester, who, along with other courtiers, followed Prince Charles to Spain in early April. According to Redworth (100), Philip IV of Spain presented Archie with a golden chain.
