

## Speech to the King, attributed to the Duke of Lennox (1638)

Pseudo-Lennox and James Stewart, Duke of Lennox

### Transcript

British Library, Harley MS 4931, ff. 35r–36v

#### 35r

The Duke of Leonax. [*Right margin:* Its a fained thing, made & scattered abroad, An. 1639, w[he]n [th]e K[ing] first intended war ag[ains]t Scotland. ]

Most gracious Sovereigne,

I am not alltogether unsensible of [th]e businesse, wherin I am now called to giue my advise, I know [tha]t I shall suffer some disadvantage because I am a Scott by nation, & education, & [th]e best blood [tha]t runns in my veines I haue extraited from thence. What I shall now speake examine.

Some p[er]happs may impute as p[ro]ceeding from [th]e streame of affection to [th]e place, & people from whence I come, but I p[ro]test my zeale to yo[u]r Ma[jes]tie shall at this time suspend [th]e agitation of such principles, & I will sett aside all p[ar]ticular relation, & looke upon [th]e question as it is, & not as passion, or affection may sett it forth.

The question is concerning Warre, an unknowne subj[ec]t, sweete to yo[u]s [tha]t haue not tried it, [th]e worst of Warre is commonly in [th]e close, and in [th]e conclu-sion of [th]e most advantagious warre [tha]t ever was (all reckonings being cast up) the conqueror hath had little wherof to glory.

But this is not a warre betweene a king, & a stranger, but betweene a Sovereigne, & his subi[ec]ts, a neare relation, & there had neede bee weighty motives [tha]t shold dissolue this knott. Subj[ec]ts are easily lost, we see it in the worke of ev[er]y day, but once lost, hardly regained. Affections are like Chrystall glasses, w[hi]ch be-ing once broken, no art, or cement can soder againe.

But these are not such subj[ec]ts, as [th]e kingly p[ro]phett speakes of, A people w[ho]m I know not, shalbe subi[ec]t to me, but yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty may say of [the]m as Adam s[ai]d of Eue, This is bone of my bone, & flesh of my flesh; or rather as David of his Subj[ec]ts in [th]e day of his Inauguration, For my bretheren, & companions sake &c. yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty being theirs. & they yours by a double righte; you are not rex factus, but Rex natus; & [the]rfore [th]e union being so streight, [th]e motives had need be weighty to dissolue [th]e same, [th]e reasons had need be very solid. [tha]t should cause a wise, & sober man to sett his owne house on fire, or destroy [th]e worke of his owne hands.

Let us now consider of 2 things .1. The Necessity of [th]e Warre .2ly [th]e Motiues to it; whether any of [the]m be of such moment, [tha]t a king shold hazard [th]e uncertaine chance of warre, & [th]e miseries [tha]t do accompany [th]e same, rather [the]n to refuse it. For First it is a good observac[i]on of Tacitus [tha]t *Bellu[m]* shold be his *Ultimu[s] Re-fugeu[m]*, [th]e last, because [th]e worst refuge; And if we consider [th]e wisest kings [tha]t haue worne, or carried scepters w[i]thin latter times, we shall find how willing they haue beene to decline [th]e stroake of Warre allmost upon any termes. If yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty considers [th]e practice of Lewis [th]e 11th of France, & of Henry [th]e 7th of England, in [th]e large

list, & catalogue of all [th]e kings of latter times you cannot point out two of more deepe, & p[ro]found iudgm[en]t, & better versed in [th]e mysteries of governm[en]t

yet

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yet w[ha]t meanes they used, or rather left not ~~unf~~{unusued} to decline, & divert the course of warre, if at any times it came w[i]thin [thei]r channells, appears by [thei]r courses, in [tha]t they esteemed it noe dishonour to yield unto [thei]r subj[ec]ts demands, though sometimes uniuist, & unreasonable; Nay they are to be the first seekers, & propounders of peace, & so by those meanes when the storme hath beene over, & things came to be debated upon the greene carpet, they became M[aste]rs of their owne endes, & of [thei]r subj[ec]ts affections, & became victours w[i]thout striking These wise Kings did consider, [tha]t the end of warre was uncertaine, & [th]e event various, & he [tha]t com[m]itts one errour in warre, especially when [th]e seat [there]of is in his owne Kingdome, seldome liues to com[m]itt a 2d; we need not goe farre for instances, Richard [th]e 2d, & Edward [th]e 2d wilbe fresh pr[e]sidents for any [tha]t shall desire to buy [th]e experience [there]of from such deare termes as they did. It shold be in [th]e body politicke as in [th]e body naturall, phlebotomy shold never be used but when some humours are <sup>so</sup> pr[e]dominant, [tha]t no other course will remoue [the]m, & [tha]t they will occasi-on a dissolution unles they be expelled. But (blessed be [th]e Lord) here is no such necessity in this case; there are sundry rough, & crabbed humours in [th]e body politick, [tha]t cannot be denied, & some of [the]m (it may be) do worke obstructions in some of [th]e lesser pipes of governm[en]t, but *vena Basilica* and *vena Cava* are full, & [th]e royall spirits in [the]m haue [thei]r full current, & their proper influence, & motion w[i]thout any opposition; what is [the]n to be donne? force is not fitt for every subj[ec]t, some humours are expelled by lenitiues, when as purgations make [the]m more malignant.

There are 3 meanes to be used, [tha]t haue not yett beene tried, any of w[hi]ch is better [the]n [th]e meanes pr[e]scribed.

[*Left margin:1.*] First, remoue [th]e occasion. this can be no impeachm[en]t to [th]e sceptre, [th]e wisest Kings haue had [thei]r oversight in governm[en]t, w[hi]ch a wiser day hath taught [the]m to re-call; yo[u]r father raighned gloriously, & com[m]anded [th]e affections as well as the bodies of [th]e Scotts, & yet hee nev[er] sought [th]e obruding and yet no man was more zealous of kingly governm[en]t [tha]n he. It is an act of [th]e extreamest folly to hazard [th]e substance for [th]e shadow, not worthy [th]e contending for, & if yo[u]r Ma Ma[jes]ty w[e]r[e] maister of yo[u]r owne desine, it wold not add one cubite to yo[u]r stature.

[*Left margin:2.*] If this like not, [the]n let time worke it out, & by this meanes they will either swallow the hooke, or endure [th]e proposall w[i]th lesse regret. Distastfull things make most at first, lesse afterwards, by degrees yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty may worke [the]m to [tha]t, w[hi]ch for [th]e pr[e]sent they will rather dy [tha]n embrace, we see how [th]e Romans by degrees brought a roiall slavery upon [th]e whole world, w[hi]ch if they had first propounded in downrig[ht] termes, had hardly beene accomplished, if ever. So Norman William by degrees brought [th]e English to weare [th]e yoake, w[hi]ch if it had at first beene tendered, he either must haue missed his aime, or had no people on whom to impose it, So impatient then w[e]r[e][th]e English to heare of a conquerour, or to be branded w[i]th the name of a conquered Nation.

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Wee see the way to conquerre is somtimes to fly; what if yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty shold seeme to yeild in this matter to [th]e Scotts demands; & give [the]m [th]e ad-vantage of a faire game, cannott yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty remoue [th]e obstacle by degrees, turning [th]e humour some other wayes; waite [the]n a more seasonable opportunity to serue in these things w[i]th instrum[en]ts more fitt, & lesse subi[ec]t to exception. the proposall of this course I shold hold more safe, & more secure [the]n [th]e cru-ell one of [th]e sword, w[hi]ch knoweth no law but this, The Sword devoureth one as well as another; and I shold hold [th]e kingdome most miserable, [tha]t w[a]s forced to make use of a remedy worse [the]n [th]e desease.

Thus much for [th]e First thing, [tha]t [the]r[e] is no necessity of warre *Rebus sic stantibus*.

For these things in agitation are not tanti, of such alley as shold require such a desperate adventure, as to hazard a kingdome at a cast for [th]e gaining of it. Plutarch wisely compares those who know not how to proportion the meanes to the end to such as fish w[i]th a golden hooke, [th]e losse of [th]e hooke is of more consequence [the]n [th]e fish [tha]t is taken. Indeed to speake plainly what I thinke, they [tha]t advise warre in this kingdomes case, know not what it is to gett, nor greatly care for [th]e losse of a kingdome, so [tha]t they may play [thei]r owne game, & fish in troubled waters.

Such counsellors as these w[e]r[e][th]e B[isho]p of Rosse to [th]e Queene of Scotts, & [th]e B[isho]p of to Ladislaus that of Hungaria, who w[e]r[e][th]e occasion & [th]e cause to bring [th]e Turkes into Hungary, & [th]e French into Scotland, two guests [tha]t both [th]e nations may wish they never know [th]e way thither againe. Three reasons haue beene given to perswade to warre, w[hi]ch I will not now take upon me to answeare, but leaue it to him, who is better able, & more fully instructed for such a purpose; wherfore considering *Nulla salus bello, nulla necessitas belli*, my advise to yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty is, Not to use warre, but w[he]n the end of it is A certaine, or a probable peace, & w[he]n th[e]r[e] is no way left but [tha]t only./.

In this advise though I shall displease others, yet I shall please my selfe, be-cause I haue spoken as I thinke, & I hope w[he]n ever yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty is necessitated to draw yo[u]r sword in any quarrells, I shalbe as ready to doe yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty service, as they are, who now talke much of warre, but neither know where to be-~~ginne~~ ginne, nor greatly care when to end.

Finis./

## 36v

The Duke of Leonax his spee{ch}

### Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 23146, f. 78r
- British Library, Additional MS 28011, ff. 64r–65v
- British Library, Harley MS 1576, ff. 283r–v
- British Library, Harley MS 6284, ff. 10r–11r
- British Library, Lansdowne MS 1232, ff. 49r–51r
- British Library, Additional MS 69392, ff. 64r–65r
- British Library, Additional MS 72432, ff. 85r–86v
- British Library, Harley MS 1219, ff. 403r–408r

- British Library, Sloane MS 650, ff. 55r–58r
- British Library, Stowe MS 288, ff. 1r–4r
- Beinecke Library, OSB MSS 28, Box 2, Folder 24, item 34
- Beinecke Library, Osborn File 12601, ff. 1–7
- Beinecke Library, Osborn File 12602
- Beinecke Library, Osborn File 6557
- Beinecke Library, Osborn File 8986
- Beinecke Library, Osborn File 8987
- Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 830, ff. 211r–212v
- Bodleian Library, MS Nalson 19, ff. 1r–3v
- Cambridge University Library, MS Dd.3.64, ff. 125r–126v
- Durham University Library, MSP 9, reversing the volume, 31–33
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.248, ff. 63r–66r
- John Rylands Library, Mainwaring MS 15, loose bifolium
- Norfolk Record Office, HMN 7/307, 772X8, ff. 177r–179r
- Northamptonshire Record Office, FH854
- Northamptonshire Record Office, IC 3596
- Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/10/1/38, ff. 17r–18r
- Parliamentary Archives, WDR/1, ff. 38r–v
- St John's College, MS S.37, ff. 24v–26r
- The National Archives, SP 16/395, /56 [ff.117r–118v]
- The National Archives, SP 16/408, /110 [ff.222r–223v]
- The National Archives, SP 16/408, /111 [ff.224r–225r]
- The National Archives, SP 16/408, /112 [ff.225r–v]
- The National Archives, SP 16/537, /147 [ff.199r–200v]
- The National Archives, SP 16/537, /148 [ff.201r–202v]
- The National Archives, SP 16/537, /149 [ff.204r–205r]
- Trinity College, MS R.5.4, item 26

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<https://mpese.ac.uk/t/PseudoLennox1638v1.html>