3

Matches Made in Court, not in Heaven

As soon as James VI of Scotland added the Crowns of Ireland and England to his name, his two elder children became hotly desired marriage material, and proposals were received from all quarters. Some, such as Henri IV of France's offer of a double marriage in 1603, and the Duke of Savoy's proposal of his heir, the Prince of Piedmont Filippo Emmanuel, as a match for Elizabeth in the same year, were plainly moves designed to take advantage of any insecurity felt by the new king. Others, such as those of two English noblemen, Henry Howard, 1st Earl of Northampton, and Theophilus Howard, Baron de Walden (later 2nd Earl of Suffolk), also for Elizabeth's hand, were opportunistic.[1] There was 'some whispering' about a match for Henry with a Princess of Tuscany.[2] As the list of Elizabeth's unsuccessful suitors grew, many proposals were reiterated. In 1608, Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne, Duke of Bouillon, and the Palatine council, proposed the future Elector Palatine, Frederick, with negotiations continuing in 1610.[3] Further approaches were forthcoming from Karl IX of Sweden on behalf of his son and heir Gustavus Adolphus in 1609 (though, considering Sweden's frequent wars with Denmark, it is hard to imagine Anna not dismissing this proposal out of hand), Friedrich Ulrich, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, and the much older Maurice of Nassau in 1610, all of which were rebuffed, though these men, and especially Gustavus Adolphus and Maurice, were to play influential roles in her later life.[4]

Like Friedrich Ulrich, who was a mere German duke, Maurice was too lowly a match. True, the Princes of Orange enjoyed a quasi-monarchical status within the Dutch Republic, but one that derived from a mixture of happenstance and tradition. The name was taken from a small French principality that the House of Nassau had possessed since 1530, and that served

merely to ensure that, of the Dutch Republic's small cadre of noblemen, the Prince of Orange was the highest-ranking.[5] The House's prestige had been enhanced by the active role it had taken in the Republic's efforts to throw off the yoke of Spanish overlordship, while their political power had been built up as they came to possess an increasing proportion of the Republic's seven stadholderships. Each province was free to appoint its own stadholder, however, and so, while the title Prince of Orange was hereditary, the power and prestige that accompanied it were conditional.[6] The House of Nassau may have been in possession of the Stadholdership of Holland, which brought with it the title of Captain-General of the Army, and Zeeland, which brought with it the title of Admiral-General of the Fleet, since 1572, and Prince Maurice may have been appointed by Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel in 1590, but the politically contingent nature of their power in the Dutch Republic ensured that their status among the European heads of state in the early seventeenth century was very low, and certainly too low to allow a match with a daughter of the Royal House of Stuart (at least at this point in time).[7]

Early in 1611 there was yet another proposal for Elizabeth's hand, this time from Otto, hereditary Prince of Hesse, who appeared at court with an entourage numbering some thirty men,[8] followed by a revival of Charles Emmanuel of Savoy's proposal of the Prince of Piedmont (though this was now his younger son Vittoreo, as Filippo Emmanuel had died of smallpox in 1605). This time, however, Charles Emmanuel included his daughter Maria as part of the deal, as a spouse for Henry. Savoy was an interesting option, as, while Catholic, it was also one of the *stati liberi*, which meant it was not directly aligned to either France or Spain. Nevertheless, the duke had recently grown increasingly antagonistic towards the Habsburgs. James saw this as an opportunity to exert some influence on a dukedom that occupied an important strategic position, commanding as it did vital military supply routes. James and Charles Emmanuel were similar in several ways. Both were 'senior' princes on the European stage, having ruled for so long, and yet both wielded considerably less power than their Spanish or French counterparts. This and the fact that they both possessed geostrategic resources that could be exploited effectively against the major powers, and especially if they worked in concert, may well have drawn them closer. James might also have seen an alliance as a way of keeping the duke from threatening Geneva, which had declared itself a Protestant republic in 1536, at the expense of the Savoys, and had seen Jean Calvin become its spiritual

leader. The second double marriage proposal therefore received serious consideration, with the veteran diplomat Sir Henry Wotton acting as Stuart ambassador in Turin, and Claudio di Ruffia, Count of Cartignano, sent as Savoyard ambassador to England.[9] Savoy, knowing of James's collection of exotic wild animals, had primed Cartignano accordingly; he arrived with the gift of a snow leopard, which proceeded to cause much alarm by seizing a much-loved 'white red-deer calf'.[10] Negotiations proved equally problematic. Cartignano was informed in no uncertain terms that James would not allow his daughter to convert, even to make her queen.[11] (No such conversion would be expected of Henry, of course, as he was a man; his marriage to Maria was effectively scheduled for 1614.[12]) Writing in cipher, Marc' Antonio Correr, the Venetian ambassador in London, suggested, however, that while James expected Elizabeth to be allowed freedom of worship in private, he was not averse to his daughter attending Catholic services so long as this was voluntary. Correr added: '*It is thought that the fact that the Princess was brought up in the Catholic faith up to the age of six, will render it more easy to pass over.*'[13] Elizabeth's Catholic upbringing rarely went unnoticed by foreign ambassadors.

The King of Spain, Philip III, originally a supporter of the double marriage proposed by his nephew the Duke of Savoy, had a change of heart. Philip's wife Margaret had died in October 1611, and by November rumours reached the Stuart court that he was interested in making Elizabeth his own bride. Levinus Munck, secretary to Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, expressed his concern to William Trumbull, James's diplomat in Brussels, that, if not Savoy, then Spain would steal 'our jewel', and that they must hope that 'God has reserved her for some other match, more glorious to His Church and conducible for her own salvation'.[14] Munck was more concerned with the preservation of Elizabeth's soul than he was with the forming of a good political match. Such was Anna's enthusiasm, however, that, contrary to her husband's express statement, she hinted that Elizabeth might change religion to allow it.[15] Anna was not merely aware of her own dynastic links to the House of Habsburg, but she was proud of the fact that her father's ancestry included the sister of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, while her mother's boasted Elizabeth of Austria, Queen consort of Poland. She nurtured these Habsburg connections carefully, primarily through her relationship with Isabella Clara Eugenia, wife of Archduke Albert, ruler of the Spanish Netherlands, from whom she requested a miniature portrait in 1603 as a sign of their friendship.[16] What made this proposal all the more

attractive to Anna was that Philip III's interest also carried with it the possibility of a double marriage, as the Spanish king had been presenting his eldest daughter, Anna, as a possible wife for Henry ever since James had concluded peace with Spain in 1604. Rumours were still circulating as late as March 1612 that Elizabeth would marry the Spanish king, with Carleton, now ambassador to Venice, worrying that she would 'presently change religion'.[17]

While concluding a mutually binding double alliance by marriage with the European superpower Spain was plainly a great temptation, James had another possibility in mind for Henry and Elizabeth. He saw their marriages as a way of balancing power within Europe and thereby preventing the Continent from erupting into full-on confessional war.

Protestant Unions

The Holy Roman Empire, the pan-European realm that encompassed Germany, Bohemia, Austria, the Spanish Netherlands, and some of northern Italy, was to be the last great battlefield of the Reformation. While the Empire was officially under Catholic control in the form of the Habsburgs, the Peace of Augsburg of 1555 had provided for the advance of Protestantism by attempting to unite Catholicism and Lutheranism under a common legal framework. From around 1586 the legal principle of *cuius regio*, *eius religio* (whose region, their religion) was increasingly used to legitimize the spread of the rather more exacting Protestantism of Jean Calvin, not least following the conversion of the Elector Palatine in 1560—under this principle, individuals were obliged to follow their princes and rulers in matters or religion.[18] The coherence of the Empire was undermined by the increasing religious turmoil that these developments entailed. Moreover, the fact that the two main legal courts, the Chamber Court in Speyer and the Imperial Aulic Council in Prague, were predominantly Catholic meant that, in practice, the legal processes often worked against the interests of the Protestant States and religion, in spite of the law itself.

In one such instance, the Aulic Council in Prague went against normal legal procedure and imposed an Imperial ban on the town of Donauwörth in 1607 after persistent conflicts between Catholics and Protestants in the town could not be resolved. The decree forced the town's Protestant magistrates to step down, and Catholicism was re-established in the principal

churches.[19] Though formerly an Imperial Free City with a Protestant majority, Donauwörth was taken over by Maximilian I, Duke of Bavaria, who presented its Protestant inhabitants with a stark choice: convert or emigrate. Friedrich IV the Elector Palatine, who so recently had offered his son as a match for Elizabeth, used the crisis in Donauwörth as a catalyst to create the European confessional alliance he had sought for so long. The Protestant Union began as many of the minor princes accepted Friedrich's argument that the Empire's institutions were incapable of safeguarding the religious freedoms granted them at the Peace of Augsburg.[20]

Friedrich IV's intervention appeared highly significant, as his position as Elector Palatine was one of great influence within the Electoral College, the highest order of the Holy Roman Empire. The Electoral College could not only influence the Emperor's decision-making processes but, as the name suggests, was responsible for electing him. It consisted of three ecclesiastical electors, the Electors (and Archbishops) of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne—as well as four so-called secular electors—the King of Bohemia (who was often also the Emperor), the Elector Palatine, the Elector of Saxony, and the Elector of Brandenburg.

The Elector Palatine carried out his duties at meetings of three colleges, those of the electors, the princes and prelates, and the Imperial Free Cities, a meeting known as the Imperial Diet. It was at the Imperial Diet that the Elector Palatine could best wield his power: he was the only elector who could veto a decision made by the Emperor. He was also the ultimate arbiter of justice within the Empire, as any Emperor accused of violating the Imperial constitution was technically answerable to the Elector Palatine, who would hold him accountable at an Imperial Diet.[21] Furthermore, the Elector Palatine, along with the Elector of Saxony, served an important role following an Emperor's death: as Imperial Vicars, they functioned as interim Emperors until a new one was chosen. Friedrich IV's heading of the Protestant Union threatened quite a shift in the balance of power, but the Lutheran Elector of Saxony, among others, refused to join, and few saw it as anything other than a temporary alliance designed to guard against constitutional breakdown.[22]

In 1609, a counterbalance to the Union was nevertheless founded in Bavaria: the Catholic League.[23] While the Elector Palatine and the Duke of Bavaria both belonged to the House of Wittelsbach, they were now at opposite ends of the political and religious spectrum: the Holy Roman Empire was effectively divided by one dynasty. The Palatinate, the territory of the Palatine–Simmern branch of the Wittelsbach dynasty under the government of the

Calvinist Friedrich IV, led the Protestant princes in Germany, both Lutherans and Calvinists, and was oriented towards those Protestant powers with lands located in north-western Europe, including the Dutch Republic. Bavaria, the territory of the Bavaria–Munich branch of the same Wittelsbach dynasty, under the government of the Catholic Duke Maximilian I, gravitated towards Habsburg governments and the Catholic Princes of Germany. From James's perspective, the Union appeared to present an opportunity to counteract the threat posed by those princes who naturally looked to Vienna and the Habsburgs for protection, and events in Germany would force him closer to this religious and military alliance.

The first of these events was precipitated by the death of Johann Wilhelm, Duke of Jülich–Berg and Cleves, on 15 March 1609. Unfortunately, he had neglected to provide the united duchies with the all-important heir, and religious tensions threatened to get out of hand. Three Lutheran claimants emerged: Christian II, Elector of Saxony; John Sigismund of Hohenzollern, Elector of Brandenburg; and Wolfgang Wilhelm, Duke of Neuburg.[24] Christian II, supported by the Catholic Emperor Rudolf II, had not only refused to join but was openly hostile to the Protestant Union. John Sigismund and Wolfgang Wilhelm sought the Union's support for a joint claim, formalized in the Treaty of Dortmund. While John Sigismund and Wolfgang Wilhelm had initial success in occupying the territories,[25] the Catholic Archduke Leopold of Austria conquered the town of Jülich in July 1609 on behalf of his cousin Rudolf II, and eventually forced the Union out. The contested duchies bordered on both the Dutch Republic and the Spanish Netherlands: fearing Habsburg control, the States General, the body that represented the seven United Provinces that comprised the Dutch Republic, and Henri IV, King of France, prepared to intervene.

True to his sobriquet *Rex Pacificus* (Peacemaker King), in February 1610 James entered into discussions with various German princes in an attempt to resolve the conflict peacefully, but he also wrote to the States General seeking permission to recruit four thousand men from the British regiments of the Dutch army. The States General consented, and in March 1610 English and Scottish soldiers taken from the Dutch Republic's muster roll but paid for by the Stuart Crown stormed Jülich.[26] By the cruellest of ironies, events in Germany had led to the self-styled peacemaker, whose publicly expressed wish was to rule by the pen and not the pikestaff, to pay for British soldiers to fight in a foreign war. James was supporting the Protestant Union and, by implication, the Elector Palatine, albeit by proxy.

Two further deaths would bring the Stuart Crown even closer to the Protestant Union. The first was that of Henri IV, stabbed by a Catholic fanatic a day after the coronation of his wife Marie de' Medici in May 1610, the very day he was to lead his troops to the German duchies.[27] The murder rekindled memories of the Gunpowder Plot among the English, with the physician Francis Herring promptly dedicating an English translation of his 1609 Latin history, *Popish Pietie; or, The First Part of the Historie of that Horrible and Barbarous Conspiracie, Commonly Called the Powder-Treason*, to the young Elizabeth, now almost 13 years old. His dedication reminded Elizabeth just how close her own escape had been, and, by implication, just how dangerous and untrustworthy Catholics were.[28]

The second death, four months later, was that of Friedrich IV, Elector Palatine. A notorious alcoholic, he was only 36 years old; his son Frederick but 14. The designated regent, Duke Johann II of Zweibrücken-Veldenz, thus found himself both administering the Palatinate and at the helm of the Protestant Union.[29] When Frederick had first been proposed as a match for Elizabeth by the Duke of Bouillon in 1608, there was no particular reason to believe that his father would not live for another thirty years. Friedrich's death changed the status quo. Frederick would now accede to the Electorship and leadership of the Union in a mere four years; it had not gone unnoticed that he was also nephew to the Captain-General of the Dutch army, Stadholder Maurice of Nassau. James had already felt the need to intervene in the series of disasters that comprised the Jülich–Berg and Cleves crisis because of the Donauwörth affair, but the assassination of Henri IV emphasized the brutal necessity for him to forge an inseverable Protestant alliance to balance the Catholic one that would result from his heir's marriage to a Catholic power. The death of Friedrich IV presented him with the perfect opportunity—with profound and lasting implications for the life of his only daughter. In the race for Elizabeth's hand, Frederick was suddenly no also-ran; he was leader of the pack.

In the spring of 1611, James announced that Elizabeth was to marry the Elector Palatine-in-waiting. With this wedding, James would shift the centre of influence in the Protestant world decisively in his favour, as he might reasonably expect to wield no little control over his young son-in-law, and thus the Protestant Union itself.

A perfect example of how power centres could shift was playing out in France. The late Henri IV had feared Habsburg hegemony, protected the Huguenots, and proposed a double marriage for Henry and Elizabeth back

in 1603. His assassination precipitated a volte-face in France's political stance. Henri's wife, Marie de' Medici, now acting as regent for her son Louis, held starkly differing views from those of her late husband. Marie began strengthening ties with Spain, opening negotiations to marry Louis, once suitor to Elizabeth, to Anna of Austria, daughter of Philip III, King of Spain (whom Spain had previously offered as a match for Henry). This was negotiated as a double marriage, with the French Princess Elisabeth to be betrothed to Philip III's son and heir apparent, the Prince of Asturias, the future Philip IV. Neither marriage was concluded with any haste, with both finally solemnized by proxy in 1615, but the betrothals were celebrated at the French court as early as April 1612, with pageants featuring 'Atlas holding up a globe', symbolizing how the union of France and Spain was strong enough to hold the world.[30]

It was no coincidence that James joined the Protestant Union that very month, the Treaty of Wesel tying the Stuart Crown and the Union for six years.[31] His fixed-term association with the Union, and the match of his only daughter to its leader, was also undertaken as counterweight to France's tying of a double knot with Spain. To draw the Dutch into the marriage, thus reinforcing familial ties with the Stuart Crown, James proposed that both Frederick and his uncle Maurice, Prince of Nassau and leader of the Dutch army, be invested into the Order of the Garter, setting them alongside his heir Henry in terms of status. James's politicking was not without results, as Marie was, it appears,

> greatly disturbed at the close understanding between the English and the Dutch; she tried underhand, but without result, to prevent Prince Maurice from receiving the Garter; nor does she like the marriage of the Palatine to the Princess, and still less the marriage of the Infanta of Savoy to the Prince. She thinks that all these tend to render England head of that party which in the late King [Henri]'s lifetime depended entirely on France.[32]

James was unwilling to opt for an entirely anti-Catholic foreign policy, however, and the Treaty of Wesel was a defensive rather than an offensive alliance. His conciliatory stance would frustrate Elizabeth for the next decade.

In April 1612, the very month James effectively became a member of the Union, Elizabeth and Frederick V, both barely 15 years old, began exchanging letters in French, the only language in which they would communicate with each other. Considering the plethora of marriage proposals made to both Elizabeth and her elder brother, it is surprising that these letters were the first in which she so much as acknowledges the possibility of

marriage. Their tone reveals the clear understanding each had of the parts they were to play, so, when Frederick sent Elizabeth a gift along with the question 'would you honour me by wearing a very unworthy token of my service?', her answer was that of a dutiful daughter trained in diplomacy:

> I feel myself to be extremely honoured, and I give you most humble grace for the assurances you have given me of your love, which I will cherish the more affectionately because I am commanded to do so by the King, whose paternal wishes I regard as inviolable law.[33]

Elizabeth's affections, at least where they did not concern her brother, were the king's to command. She would cherish the token, a jewel or perhaps a miniature portrait, not because she was enamoured of her *Kurprinz*, but out of duty to her father. Theirs was less a courtship than the expression of mutual obligation, and certainly Frederick, from all the portraits of the time, appeared to be still more boy than man when he left his home to travel to England to meet his bride-to-be (Fig. 5).

Greetings and Farewells

In preparation for Frederick's arrival, Elizabeth's household would begin to move from Kew to Whitehall, where she was to become a permanent member of court. This change in status is both reflected and documented in the accounts kept by Lord Harington in 1612–13—that is, from the expected arrival of the Palatine to the moment Elizabeth left England for her new home in Heidelberg.[34]

The accounts detail the various logistical challenges facing Harington as he moved an entire household, not least because some of its members could not be trusted to make the journey under their own steam—those in her menagerie. Her monkeys needed milk, herbs, and cotton to make their beds; her parrots and parakeets needed canary seeds, and some of their cages needed mending; one of her dogs needed shearing, another great Irish dog needed his own footman, and a 'little bitch' had to be chased when it escaped.[35]

There were also challenges of the personal kind, such as the ever-changing demands of Elizabeth's laundress Mary Smith. Having first ordered starch for ruffs, and soap 'to washe her grace's body linnen at whitehall', Mary demanded monies for the carrying of water for Elizabeth's 'bodylinnen',

Fig. 5. When Frederick V arrived in London to collect his bride in 1613, he appeared no more than a child. © Mauritshuis, The Hague.

and her 'damaske table linnen' on which she took her breakfast, and for 'lines to hange her grace's small linnen on to be dried'. Presumably still unsatisfied, Mary ultimately decided that all Elizabeth's underwear and tablecloths must be returned to Kew for laundering before being transported all the way back to Whitehall again by boat.[36] Elizabeth's servants had their own standards, which were not met by the royal court itself.

Frederick, meanwhile, began the journey from Heidelberg on 17 September, travelling via Cologne and the Dutch Republic, from where he and his entourage of 150 individuals, including his uncle, Prince Maurice's half-brother Frederick Henry of Nassau, would set sail in eight ships. He had originally been set to arrive in England before the end of September,[37] but Frederick's departure from Heidelberg had been delayed by the death in August of a trusted advisor, the Count of Hanau-Münzenberg. Frederick wrote of further delay to Elizabeth, apologizing for his lack of agency: 'I will

therefore await a favourable wind with impatience since it is not desired that I set out earlier to come to you and to throw myself at your feet.'[38] Frederick was also being held back on account of the continued presence of the Spanish ambassador extraordinary to London, Pedro de Zúñiga. De Zúñiga was intent on securing a double marriage, proposing the second Infanta for Henry (the first now being engaged to the Dauphin), while gently suggesting that the Spanish king himself was still available for Elizabeth, should James be so inclined.[39] No boy prince wishes to arrive at court to find his intended bride being wooed, albeit by proxy, by a 35-year-old king.

In a ciphered letter sent to James a year later, John Digby, his ambassador to Spain, recounts the situation as he recalled it—namely, that though the Palatine match was settled, James would not allow Frederick to come to England until de Zúñiga had departed. Digby also suggested that the match was '*contrarie to the liking of the Lady Elizabeth and the greater part of the Nobilitie of England*'.[40] Whether to Elizabeth's liking or not, the marriage was, as she had already told Frederick in the only letter of hers to him that survives from this period, a matter of duty. The Spanish king and de Zúñiga might have found rare common ground with some of the English nobility (and perhaps even Elizabeth herself) in their attitudes towards the Palatine match, but that would not prevent it from going ahead.

Frederick's first attempt to set sail from The Hague ended with his flotilla beaten back by storms, but three English ships were sent to fetch him,[41] following which he had a 'very speedy and prosperous passage', leaving Maassluis late on 25 October and landing at Gravesend at 10 p.m. the following evening.[42] De Zúñiga left England the day after, having rather outstayed his welcome. Ten days earlier he had been ordered to conclude his mission in the face of continual rebuffs by James, who then presented him with a rather pointed farewell gift: 'thirty pieces of silver gilt […] worth about four thousand crowns.'[43] Taking exception at being given Judas's reward, the ambassador extraordinary attempted to salvage a little dignity before returning home, requesting that James pardon a dozen priests who lay imprisoned. Such a request might have appeared innocuous were it not for the fact that among these priests was one named William Baldwin, erstwhile companion to Henry Garnet, thought to be complicit in the Gunpowder Plot. Baldwin had been captured and sent to James in 1610 by Friedrich IV, the late Elector Palatine and Frederick's father. Whether or not James was outraged by the request to release a man who had been part of

the plot to assassinate himself and his son, and turn his daughter into a puppet Catholic queen, is unclear. His polite refusal to release Baldwin and four others on the list on account of their being Jesuits incensed de Zúñiga, who, like Pilate, would not stay for an answer. James then happily released the remaining seven Catholics to show his benevolence.[44]

Now that the potential embarrassment of de Zúñiga's continued presence at court had been dealt with, plans for Frederick's reception could swing into operation. James ordered that he be met by the court and 'five hundred of the richest citizens of London' when he was close to the city.[45] It is hard to estimate the number of ships that had accompanied Frederick from Dover to Gravesend, but at least three of them were Dutch warships. Frederick rested on the Saturday and on the following day set off upriver with the Earl of Lennox and a large group of gentlemen and nobles in royal barges who had travelled to meet him. When he left Gravesend on Sunday, 28 October, London's citizens were plainly eager to catch a glimpse of the man promised to their beloved princess:

> He was accompanied by about one hundred and fifty boats of various kinds, and the nearer he came to London the denser grew the throng. He passed straight to Whitehall […] saluted on his way by upwards of two hundred guns from the Tower of London, as well as by an infinity of salutes from the shipping, with which the river was full. The reverberating blare of trumpets, drums and other warlike music was immense; the echo of the cannon, the smoke, and the cheers with which he was saluted made a vast confusion.[46]

While the city's inhabitants made great efforts to catch sight of Frederick, Elector Palatine-in-waiting, as he made his cacophonous way up the Thames to Whitehall, Elizabeth was travelling to the same destination, albeit from the opposite direction and with rather less fanfare. She paid the men who rowed her from Kew to Whitehall the grand total of twenty shillings.[47] Frederick, perhaps aware of his bride-to-be's attachment to her elder brother, and no doubt intent on making a good impression, had already sent gifts to Prince Henry, notably 'a ring with a diamond worth thirty thousand crowns'.[48]

The populace may have been welcoming to Frederick, Prince Palatine of the Rhine, generally referred to as 'the Palatine' or 'the Palsgrave', but his future mother-in-law is reputed to have been less than impressed. Since she considered any candidate other than the King of Spain to be unworthy of her daughter's hand, she dismissively dubbed Elizabeth 'Goodwife Palsgrave',

only to receive the reply that her daughter 'would rather be the Palsgrave's Wife, than the greatest Papist Queen in Christendome'. This particular exchange forms part of the popular mythography that surrounds Elizabeth's wedding, but it derives from a 1697 text written by Roger Coke, grandson of the celebrated English common-law jurist Sir Edward Coke. While the family connection with a contemporary courtier adds some credibility to this report, it remains mere hearsay on account of the date of Roger's text, being published some sixty years after the death of Sir Edward.[49] What is more damning for this particular commonplace is that, rather than encouraging her to consider the Elector Palatine as of lower status than a Stuart princess, Queen Anna's own family history would have equipped her with a solid understanding of the make-up of the Holy Roman Empire, and thus the position of the Palatine within it.[50] While Anna might have favoured a Spanish match because her family had so many dynastic links to the House of Habsburg, it was no loss of prestige for her daughter to marry one of the Empire's most powerful princes, and, in any case, the Savoyard match was still going ahead for her eldest son Henry.

The young Palatine was still to meet his future mother-in-law, of course, and the Venetian ambassador in England, Antonio Foscarini, commented on the 'unusual' sight of the queen sitting beside her husband when Frederick was presented. This was an occasion no one wanted to miss: 'The guard were all in rich dresses of velvet and gold; the Hall was thronged with Lords and Ladies in the richest robes and laden with jewels; a display that this kingdom could not excel, nor was its like seen even at the coming of the King of Denmark' in 1606.[51] After Frederick had been embraced by James, his future mother-in-law 'entertained him with a fixed Countenance; and though her Posture might have seemed (as was judged) to promise him the Honour of a Kiss for his Welcome, his Humility carried him no higher than her hand'. Anna was apparently expecting a kiss, but Frederick bowed so low he missed his cue. Elizabeth, who until that point had not been observed to turn 'so much as a corner of an eye towards him', ensured that he would not make the same mistake twice, and as Frederick stooped to kiss the hem of her dress, 'she most gracefully courtesying lower than accustomed, and with her hand staying him from that humblest reverence, gave him, at his rising, a fair advantage (which he took) of kissing her'.[52] At the point that Frederick and Elizabeth were formally introduced, it would have been rather churlish of her to embarrass him, of course. The queen 'looked favourably', the king 'approvingly', at Elizabeth's 'spirit and grace' and 'at the blush which suffused

the Princess' face and enhanced her beauty'.[53] In order to dispel rumours that the German prince was afflicted by various hereditary diseases, James had insisted that he meet Frederick in person. This was to be no proxy marriage. His future son-in-law's vigour must have come as a relief.[54]

For all the pomp and circumstance surrounding Frederick's arrival, and his initial *faux-pas*, he appears to have gained popularity with both the court and Princess Elizabeth with great speed. The day after his presentation, Frederick 'again visited the King and Queen, and saw the Princess separately in her apartments. He kissed her for the second time, and made advances in the general favour.' Within a matter of days they were on 'very familiar' terms.[55] Collector of news and court gossip John Chamberlain wrote that the Palatine 'plies his mistresse hard, and takes no delight in running at ring, nor tennis, nor riding with the Prince [of Wales] (as Count [Frederick] Henry [of Nassau] his uncle and others of his companie do), but only in her conversation'.[56]

The court revelled in preparations for the upcoming wedding. The 'English gentlemen' competed with Frederick and his entourage, who were 'covered with gold, chains and jewels' with such vigour that 'the whole city is full of animation'.[57] Chamberlain noted that 'the Count Palatin continues in favor and liking with all, specially at court, where he is now lodged in the late Lord treasurers lodgings: yesternight the Lady Elizabeth invited him to a solemne supper and a play, and they meet often at meales'.[58] The play itself was a comedy, Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Coxcomb*.[59] While 'solemne' in this instance means formal, things were not going altogether smoothly: Prince Henry had fallen ill.

According to Sir Theodore de Mayerne, the king's physician, Henry was prone to unhealthy activities such as plunging himself into the river following excessive indulgence in all manner of inappropriate foodstuffs, and had fallen ill following such behaviour on 20 October, before Frederick had arrived in the country, let alone at court. Ignoring the advice of his own physician, Dr John Hammond, to rest following initial treatment with enemas and laxatives, he continued to exert himself, even playing tennis on 3 November. The following day he appeared at a sermon looking 'pale and thin, his eyes hollow and dull'.[60] While dining with James and Frederick that night, Henry fainted.[61] Since the family were prone to fainting, he was taken to bed with little fuss.[62] No one suspected that Henry would not leave his chambers again.

By the Wednesday, 'looseness' (diarrhoea) had turned into quotidian fever—that is, one on a daily cycle. The day after, on 8 November, Frederick and Henry were to attend a feast at Cheapside and the Guildhall organized by the City of London, but, while Frederick saluted the Lady Mayoress and her train, sat through a handful of pageants, and was showered with gifts such as 'a faire standing cup, a curious bason and ewer, with two large liverie potts' worth £500, Henry was conspicuous by his absence. Elizabeth would visit him alone over the next two days, but by the Sunday his condition had worsened, and his doctors prescribed more aggressive treatment:

> he was let bloud, by advise of most phisicians, though [William] Butler of Cambridge was loth to consent: the bloud proved fowle, and that afternoone he grew very sicke, so that both King and Queen and Lady Elizabeth went severally to visit him: and revelling and playes appointed for that night were put of.

Thereafter, Henry was 'every day bettering', and when Elizabeth, Frederick, and her parents left his bedside on 11 November they did so full of confidence.[63]

Thoughts of recovery were premature. The very next day his condition worsened despite Mayerne's presence among the many physicians working ceaselessly to restore his health. Henry was bled in the arm and shoulder and his head was shaved, after which the assembled doctors applied 'warme cocks and pigeons newly killed, but with no successe'.[64] The prince was dying. Even as he ebbed away, thought was directed to the lack of a credible heir to the three crowns. If he recovered, he was to marry in haste 'in Germany or Savoy, and to a grown woman, so that he may soon become both husband and father and secure the succession to this Crown'.[65] This need to secure the succession quickly by having Henry marry a woman of childbearing age rather than an immature princess was a result of the generally perceived weakness of next-in-line Prince Charles. The 12-year-old was 'so slight and so gentle' that 'those who wish well to this Crown would fain see him stronger'.[66] It is interesting to note that, as well as Savoy's 18-year-old daughter Maria, an unidentified German princess was also seen as a viable option, suggesting that the plan was of Henry's devising, as he was rather less keen on the Catholic Savoy match than were his parents. The rumour was also that Henry would accompany Elizabeth on her journey to her new home in Germany.[67] It was not through lack of trying that Elizabeth was unable to comfort her brother in his final hours, donning disguise and

twice attempting to enter his bedchamber only to be recognized and refused entry in case his condition was contagious. Henry died on 16 November 1612, his last words reportedly being 'where is my deare sister?'.[68]

A Life Turned Black

Elizabeth was devastated by the loss of her brother, and she went 'two days without food', crying 'incessantly'. Her mother, Anna, whose long fight to win custody of Henry in Scotland nine years previously had led her to miscarry, was in an even worse state: 'The Queen's life has been in the greatest danger owing to her grief. She will receive no visits nor allow anyone in her room, from which she does not stir, nor does she cease crying.'[69] Foscarini's report is dated 23 November, the day on which the court went into mourning, a reminder that early modern grief was performative. Henry's body 'lay in state at St James's Palace for a month', attended by forty gentlemen servants who offered him 'the same service and order of meals as when he was alive'.[70] Elizabeth was distraught, but this did not detract from her duties. Mourning had an appreciable impact on her accounts, as £145 11*s*. 6*d*. was spent on black silks, satins, and other materials for her tailor, John Spence, to make her mourning gowns and petticoats, farthingales, 'whale bone bodies', 'blacke ribands', another gown (this one alone requiring 24 yards of 'blacke sattin with flowers of gould'), and gowns for her 'wemen attendants at the funerall of Prince Henry'. Just the tailoring of three mourning gowns, and two petticoats added £6 1*s*. 7*d*. to the bill.[71] The fact that Elizabeth's women attendants had been fitted with mourning gowns for the funeral suggest that she must have been among the two thousand individuals who attended the funeral procession, even though none of the accounts mentions the girl who had grown accustomed to reminding Henry that she was his only sister. Charles led the procession as chief mourner, with Frederick and his entourage following, but Elizabeth's parents did not attend, as was their habit: James and Anna also stayed away from the funerals of the other four children they lost—after the deaths of Margaret and Robert in their infancies, Sophia lived for only a day following her birth in 1606, and Mary died aged 2 in 1607.

Though Elizabeth's life, and that of her female attendants, had turned to black, it did not come to a standstill, as the princess sought to preserve both her brother's memory and some semblance of normality. An active literary

patron, she granted several authors money for their works, with James Maxwell receiving £3 for 'a booke', most certainly his eulogy collection, *The Laudable Life, and Deplorable Death of our Late Peerless Prince Henry*; and Josuah Sylvester £5 for verses upon the death of Prince Henry, his *Lauchrimæ lachrimarum or The Distillation of Teares*. The latter portrayed her upcoming 'marriage as a palliative to the nation's grief'.[72] Others were rewarded for bringing gifts or simply good cheer into her household, with the Countess of Bedford's man receiving payment for bringing a pheasant, messengers for bringing letters, and more charitable contributions such as those made 'to the northern boy that whistled to her grace', 'to a turkish Jugler that shewed tricks' to both her and Frederick, and 'to poore people as her grace travelled on the highe wayes'.[73]

Elizabeth appears to have had a sweet tooth, as further gifts undoubtedly meant to comfort included ounces of white sugar, sugar candies, dried pears and other fruits out of France, as well as exotic 'musk melons'.[74] The taste for musk melons would stay with her, perhaps because they conjured the sweet taste of consolation, and in 1628 she would write to her friend Sir Thomas Roe in Constantinople: 'pray send me as soon as you can some store of the white musk melon seeds […] the oulde Count of Tour brought some hither that prospered verie well and it is a frute that I love exceedinglie.'[75]

Her menagerie would also benefit from the court's generosity and attempts to console her. Frederick Henry of Nassau presented her with an 'Island Dogge', Roe with another parrot, and her father sent a horse that had been her late brother's.[76] She had her own stable 'for 18 sadle horse & geldings & 5 Caroch mares', with grooms and a yeoman of the horse.[77] Elizabeth loved both to ride and to hunt, and much like her mother did not baulk at the hunt's conclusion, the kill—perhaps she found the act helpful in assuaging her grief while also making the memory of her departed brother, himself a keen huntsman, all the more sharp. In the London parks she paid for the privilege, giving money to 'a huntsman that made her grace sport in hunting', and to 'the keeper of Nonesuch great parke for his fee her grace killing a doe there', as well as to the man who subsequently brought the doe to Kew.[78]

Nevertheless, the last weeks of 1612 were not just mourning gowns and hunting deer, as Elizabeth found other ways to take her mind off Henry's agonizing death. She gambled recklessly, losing a wager to courtier Edward Sackville that led to her paying for her players, the Lady Elizabeth's Men, to

perform a comedy at the cockfighting space at Whitehall, and spent evening after evening with her father: 'Her grace lost playing at Chardes with the King' from 26 December to 4 January, 'playing 9 nights at Whitehall—£9 18*s*.'.[79] She also attended theatrical performances not wrapped up in gambling. The Christmas revels made fun of her mother for having favoured a match with Spain: Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster* was revived and played twice. It would not have required much imagination for the audience to see Anna in the play's Calabrian king who 'tries to force his daughter into an unwilling match with a Spanish prince, only to be outwitted so that [she] marries the man of her desires'.[80] Elizabeth also enjoyed billiards, having three 'sticks' made expressly for the game, and commissioned artists such as Isaac Oliver to paint her portrait in miniature as a gift for Lady Chichester, and Master Marcus Gheeraets to paint a full-length portrait (as in Fig. 6) for John Murray, a Gentleman of her father's Bedchamber.[81] She sent Lady Cavendish to procure 'grete orientall garnetts', and 'an Ametist cut like A bunch of

Fig. 6. A young princess with long auburn hair displays some of her menagerie, including parrots, parakeets, a monkey and a dog. From the Woburn Abbey Collection.

grapes' for her. The greatest costs, however, were incurred hiring boats and oarsmen to take her on visits to her parents' courts at Greenwich, Hampton Court, and Royston.[82]

Her teachers had their own lodgings in Whitehall, and lessons continued through the period of mourning. Theodore Diodati, 'that learneth her grace the ffrench and Italien tongue', received £30 for six months' work. Her writing master Beau-Chesne received 29*s*. 7*d*. for 'gilt paper, inke well, skinnes [parchment] & paper bookes for her grace's service'. Payments made to bookseller Matthew Lownes, who would later share the office of King's Printer with John Bill, included monies for Foxe's 'booke of Martyrs', a 'great bible, and diverse other volumes of histories by her highnes speciallie appointed to be provided'.[83] That she ordered the 'histories' herself suggests that she was a voracious and considered reader, a quality that would stand her in good stead later in her life, when she would happily point out that she had read the chronicles of her ancestors.[84] Elizabeth may even have paid for a presentation copy of a book containing 'her grace's lessons for the virginalls', *Parthenia, or the Maydenhead of the first musicke that ever was printed for the Virginalls*.[85] *Parthenia* was compiled for Elizabeth and published in late 1612 or early 1613, possibly by Dorethie Evans (Fig. 7). The book's dedication suggests that the complex pieces of music within, composed by William Byrd, John Bull, and Orlando Gibbons, were actually performed by Elizabeth. This is not unthinkable, considering that one of the composers, John Bull, taught her the virginal, and that her Kew household included a dedicated tuner, Thomas Hazard, as well as a man 'who playeth to her grace when she danceth', Walter Tucker.[86]

The accounts and the Christmas cheer might give the impression that life at court continued much as normal despite its officially being in mourning. This was most definitely not the case. The death of the much-loved Prince Henry had brought more than mere grief, as the succession was now mired in uncertainty, resting, as Foscarini put it, 'on one single child of ten years, [Charles] the Duke of York, though it is true that the law does not exclude the Princess'.[87] Though Charles was in fact 12 years old, his health was still poor enough to be problematic, leaving 'doubt in many minds whether it is expedient to allow the Princess to leave England, now that there is only the Duke of York remaining'.[88] For many in the three kingdoms, Elizabeth was now heiress presumptive, and her safety took on an even greater significance. To make matters worse, rumours that Henry had been poisoned were gaining traction, despite the lack of evidence found at

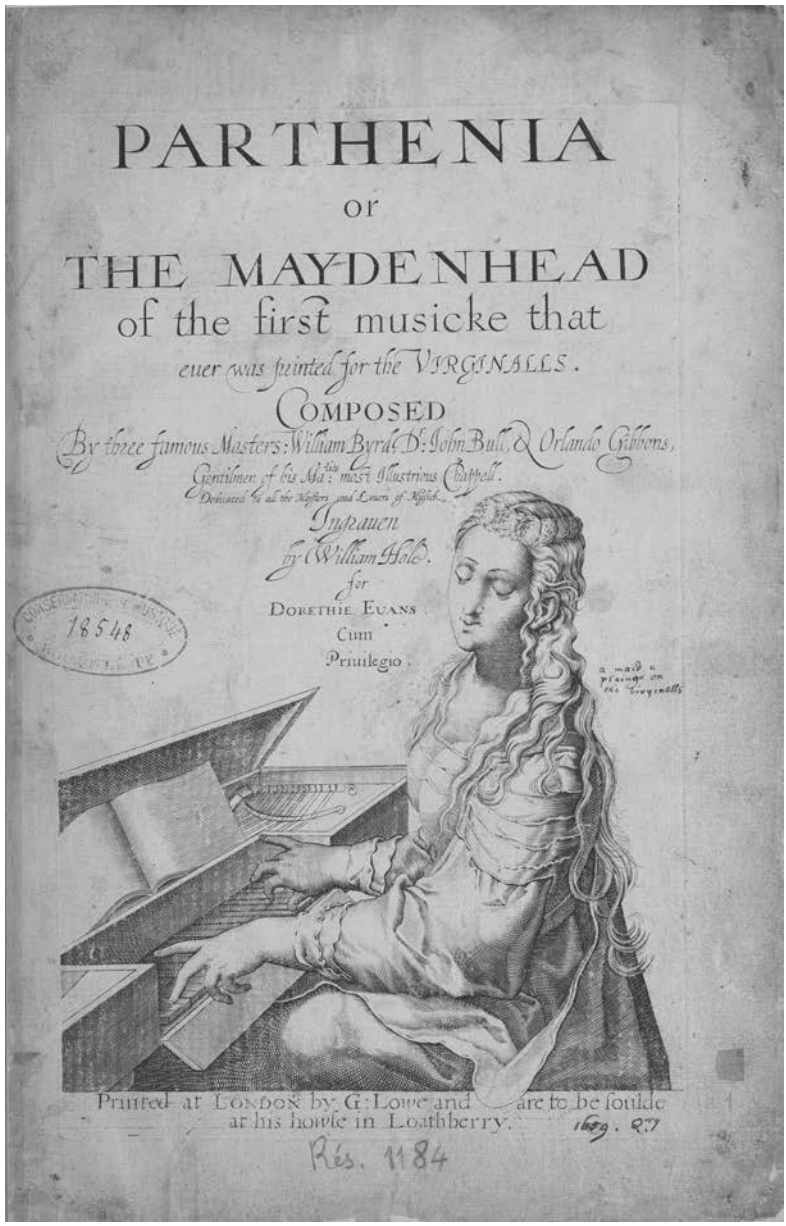

Fig. 7. 'A maid is playinge on the virginalls', writes the owner of this collection, the first printed for the instrument, comprising pieces composed by Elizabeth's teachers. ©BnF.

autopsy.[89] The seriousness with which these rumours were taken, with some versions casting James himself as complicit, is reflected in Harington's accounts. An entry made early in 1613 details supplies bought from an apothecary including 'unicornes horne & Cardines benedictus water for her grace's service at severall times'.[90] Unicorn's horn (actually a narwhal's tusk) was a well-known prophylactic against poison, while Cardus benedictus, or blessed thistle, was noted by the herbalist Nicholas Culpeper as 'good against all sorts of poison'.[91] Both substances can be found in the recipe book of Elizabeth's personal physician, Mathias Hulsbos, who attended her daily.[92] Unicorn horn was also something of a family tradition, as Elizabeth's grandmother, Mary, Queen of Scots, used it to guard against poison while imprisoned: 'I am not out of danger if my food is not closely watched […] [I must] have recourse to […] a bit of fine unicorn's horn, as I am in great want of it.'[93] The horn was supposedly reactive, so, if food were poisoned, it would change colour or develop beads of sweat: the same horn, if introduced into a drink that was poisoned, would make the liquid fizz. Mary would later bequeath James 'a peece of an unicornes horne with a little pendant of gold'.[94] Decades later, in 1633, when a cabinet of curiosities from Elizabeth's household was itemized, unicorn horn would be among its most valuable contents.[95] The court was keen to ensure its princess remained healthy enough to fulfil what many still felt was her destiny, to become their queen.