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Title: De Beurs Lacht

Author: Heinrich Heine

Release date: September 1, 2001 [EBook #2838]

Most recently updated: January 1, 2021

Language: Dutch

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De Beurs lacht

De veldtocht naar België, de blokkade van Lissabon en de inname van Ancona zijn de drie karakteristieke heldendaden waarmee onze JUSTE-MILIEU-regering naar buitenuit haar kracht, haar wijsheid en haar heerlijkheid heeft laten gelden; in het binnenland plukte zij al even roemrijke lauweren, onder de pijlers van het PALAIS ROYAL, en in Lyon en Grenoble. Nooit stond Frankrijk lager aangeschreven in het buitenland, zelfs niet in de tijd van MADAME DE POMPADOUR of MADAME DUBARRY. Men kan tegenwoordig wel zien dat er ergere dingen bestaan dan een maitressenbewind. In het BOUDOIR van een galante dame valt er nog altijd meer eer te vinden dan aan de COMPTOIR van een bankier.

En de aanhangers van het ministerie - dat is te zeggen, de ambtenaren, de bankiers, de gezette burgers en de BOUTIQUIERS - die maken het alleen maar erger als ze ons weer eens al lachend verzekeren dat we met ons allen in de allervreedzaamste toestand leven; dat de thermometer van het volksgeluk - namelijk de koers van de staatspapieren - gestegen is; dat de OPÉRA nog nooit zo gebloeid heeft, en dat we deze winter in Parijs meer bals gezien hebben dan ooit tevoren. Dat laatste, nu, was werkelijk het geval; die lui hebben dan ook de middelen om bals te geven, en ze dansten daar

om te tonen hoe gelukkig Frankrijk wel was; ze dansten voor hun systeem, voor de vrede, voor de rust in Europa; ze wilden de beurskoersen de hoogte in dansen, ze dansten À LA HAUSSE. Het moet nochtans gezegd worden dat tijdens hun luchtsprongen, tijdens hun vrolijkste ENTRECHATS, het CORPS DIPLOMATIQUE wel eens kwam aandraven met allerlei Jobstijdingen uit België, Spanje, uit Engeland en Italië -- maar ze lieten geen ontsteltenis blijken, en dansten vertwijfeld-vrolijk verder. Die mensen dansten voor hun renten, en hoe gematigder ze gezind waren, des te vuriger dansten ze: zelfs de dikste en deugdzaamste bankiers waagden zich aan de beruchte Nonnenwals uit "ROBERT LE DIABLE", de beroemde opera van Meyerbeer. Ik erger mij altijd weer als ik de Beurs betreed, dat mooie marmeren huis, gebouwd in de edelste Griekse stijl, en toegewijd aan het meest waardelooze handeltje. Hier, in die enorme ruimte van de hooggewelfde Beurshal, hier is het, dat het gesjacher met staatspapieren plaats heeft; al die rondstuivende personages met hun doordringend gekrijt: ze deinen heen en weer, als een zee van eigennut, en de bankiers schieten dan uit die woeste mensengolven als haaien naar voren, en hâppen. Het ene monster verslindt het andere. Boven in de GALERIE kan men zelfs speculerende Dames zien, als loerende roofvogels op een klip. Hier is het ook, dat de Belangen wonen, die in deze tijd over oorlog en vrede beslissen.

Het valt nochtans niet mee om de aard van die belangen juist in te schatten, en hun werking te begrijpen, of om de gevolgen te overzien. Zeer zeker, de koers van de staatspapieren en de discontovoet zijn een politieke thermometer; maar het zou een vergissing zijn om te geloven dat die thermometer de vooruitgang kan tonen van de ene of de andere grote vraag die de mensheid tegenwoordig beweegt. Het stijgen en dalen van de koersen bewijst niet het stijgen of dalen van de liberalen of de reactionairen. Het gaat hem veeleer over de grotere, of juist de geringere hoop die men heeft; op de pacificatie in Europa; op het instandhouden van de bestaande orde; of, liever nog, over de hoop dat alles, waar de terugbetaling van de staatsschuld van afhangt, bij het oude blijft.

En - bij al de bedenkingen die men kan hebben - in dit beperkte opzicht zijn beursspeculanten bewonderenswaardig. Niet gestoord door enige overweging van geestelijke aard, richten zij al hun zinnen op de platte feiten, en met de dierlijke zekerheid van de weerkikvors voelen zij aan of een bepaalde gebeurtenis, die er op het eerste gezicht misschien geruststellend uitziet, niet óóit een bron van stormen zou kunnen worden - en omgekeerd, of een groot onheil niet ten langen leste de rust zou kunnen consolideren. In het geval van Warschau vroegen zij niet: hoeveel ongeluk er nu voor de mensheid zou uit voortkomen; maar: of de zege van Kantschu niet de onruststokers zou ontmoedigen - zij bedoelen natuurlijk de vrijheidsgezinden. Ze dachten van wel, en de koersen gingen omhoog.

Veronderstel nu dat er op de beurs een telegram zou aankomen, met de boodschap dat mijnheer Talleyrand in een vergelding nà de dood gelooft: dan zouden de Franse staatspapieren direct tien procent zakken; de speculanten zouden er dan rekening mee houden dat hij zich misschien met God zou willen verzoenen. Hij zou dan vast LOUIS-PHILIPPE en het hele JUSTE-MILIEU laten vallen, hen sacrificiëren, en daarbij de schone rust die wij nu genieten op het spel zetten. TO BE OR NOT TO BE is niet de grote vraag aan de Beurs, maar - rust of onrust? Daar houdt de disconto rekening mee. In onrustige tijden is het geld angstig, en het trekt zich terug in de koffers van de rijken, zoals in een vesting, en het houdt zich gedeisd; de disconto stijgt. In rustiger dagen wordt het geld weer zorgeloos, biedt zich te koop aan, toont zich in het openbaar, en doet erg uit de hoogte; de disconto staat laag. Zo'n ouwe LOUIS-D'OR heeft meer verstand dan een mens, en die weet beter of het nu oorlog wordt of vrede.

Toen ik gisteren? naar de Beurs ging, om daar een brief op de post te doen, toen stond daar dat hele speculantenvolk onder de kolonnen, voor de brede trappen van het Beursgebouw. Net was het bericht aangekomen dat de nederlaag van de vrijheidsgezinde patriotten zo goed als zeker was - de zoetste tevredenheid straalde van alle gezichten; men kon zeggen dat de hele Beurs lachte. Onder het gebulder van de kanonnen gingen de fondsen tien stuivers omhoog. Er werd namelijk geschoten tot vijf uur; omstreeks zessen was de hele revolutiepoging onderdrukt.

Heinrich Heine Französische Zustände in: Sämtliche Werke, Meyers Klassiker-Ausgaben, Ernst Elster, 1893 vertaald als radiotekst door Marc Vanfraechem

? dat was de zesde juni 1832 (nvdv)

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