

Order of Saint Lazarus: Primary sources

De Frater Hypocratici dated to mid-16th century. Original document part of the Burton Cartulary (British Library). vide Huntington Library, San Marino (California), ms HM 160, fol.129-129 verso.

- Transcribed in: R. Hyacinthe. L'Ordre de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem au Moyen Age. Études & Communication Édition, Bez-et-Esparon, 2003, +253p. [doc XVII]

Register cover of the collected documents from the Burton Lazar cartulary (British Library) 178x246 mm. Huntington Library. San Marino (California), ms HM 160. fol. 129-vo. - A satirical poem composed after the dissolution of the Order in England in 1544. It denounced the naïve compassion of those who, seeing the suffering, eagerly donate to the Order. These "worthless brothers", who playing the image of Lazarus have accumulated wealth throughout the world on the basis of the false superstition of humble. But God has just sent a just king (Henry VIII) who came to update and restore a sincere religion. If his son and successor (Edward VI) completes his work, this restoration will be even more fulfilled.

De Fratre hypochritico

*Non enim in conspectu eius venit omnis hypochrita * Job 13 v.13.*

*Divinae mentes hominis miserentur egeni
Afflictisque vivis munera nulla negant;
Quamvis pauperibus nil confert vilis avarus
Cuius mens nullus est satiata bonis;
Hunc pudor atque metus faciunt impendere multa,
Cum se commoveat nil pietatis opus.
Hac spe commoti quam raro fallere constat,
Illico nos inopes finximus esse viros.
Quare contulerant procures, terrasque domosque.
Rustica plebs nobis munera larga dedit.
Contendunt reliquis qui possum reddere plura
Hincque solemnatis, relinquere pauca suis.*

Indignos tandem fratres nos finximus esse:
Quod pauper nomen. Lazarus ille tenet.
Divitibus terror, fuit haec historia tristis.
Quam mire reprobos, terruit ista viros.
Quilibet usura, tentavit quaerere nummos:
Largius ut nobis, munera quisque daret.
Hoc nos prestigio, totum seduximus orbem.
Haec fuerat miseros mens spoliare viros.
His spoliis manet augeturque superbia nostra.
Augetur passim falsa superstitio.

Sed Deus omnipotens infandum scaelus ademit.
Cum nostri summe floruit impietas,
Caelitus emisit regem, prosternere tecta,
Qui se sincera religione colit.
Illius auxilio, patuit simulatio nostra,
Nota fuit mundo falsa superstitio
Ne tamen actores fidi mercede carerent.
Nobilibus dederat praedia nostra viris.
Splendida si proles studeat compellere regnum
Ut sancta Christum religione colat,
Tunc pater hic foelix, proles foelicioꝛ illo:
Regnum ter foelix nobile semper erit.