SATIRE ON BOTH WHIGS AND TORIES

[July, 1683]

In March, 1683, a group of violent Whigs conspired to kill King Charles II and the Duke of York in an ambuscade at the Rye House, near Ware, when the royal brothers were on their way from Newmarket to London. A fire at Newmarket on March 22 forced the royal party to leave early, and the plot failed. In June, one conspirator, overcome by his conscience, confessed everything, and "the Rye House Plot" came unravelled. Twenty-one Whigs were indicted for high treason. Most of them escaped; five were executed, and one committed suicide.

The Rye House Plot seems to have been the immediate occasion for this satire, but it is not a true political poem. Although the poet detests Whigs more than Tories, his attitude seems to be "a plague o' both your houses," and his condemnation is more for folly and wickedness than for political dissent. Moreover, departing from his text, he vilifies a variety of nonpolitical sinners, both men and women.

The copy text, Harleian MS. 7319, p. 237, is dated 1682. The satire is dated 1683 in MS. Firth c. 15, p. 142; in Harleian MS. 7317, p. 21; and in "A Choyce Collection," p. 126. The earliest possible date is July 10, 1683, when the Earl of Essex was lodged in the Tower.

In vain the fulsome errors of the age
We strive to mend in satire or on stage.
Fools will be fools, cullies will be undone,
Though we still rail, and Nokes and Lee show on.
Satire may plead, of wholesome counsel boast;
Hardened in vice, their sense of feeling's lost;
How oft 't has lashed the fop and dull buffoon,
That nauseous nuisance of the Court and Town,
That beastly sink, through which all follies run,
Of whom even satire now is weary grown!

No mortal counsel's able to convince
Arran's incorrigible impudence,
Who sooner shall forget his northern tone,
His bawdry or his buggery disown,
Turn loyal, as ne'er he was, to have the lot,
Of being in manners or in notion Scot.

Name we the Whigs, we must the num'rous troop,
Like faggots, four for sixpence, bind 'em up;
Fools by the dozen, rascals by the gross,
Knaves, fops, and pardoned rebels, which are worse.
Show me the man (and lay the traitor by)
We cannot charge with knave or foppery.
Kent slavers, wittol Stamford is a tool,
Armstrong a rogue, Monmouth both knave and fool.
Lovelace a sot, Brandon a gaping traitor,
And lately married quondam footman's daughter,
Who, by the King enriched from scarce a groat,
Gives it to him who'd gladly cut his throat.
To exercise which talent he begins
With murd'ring boys to end with murd'ring kings.
Ungrateful blockhead! In thy race accursed;
From thy false sire thou learn'dst those maxims first.

Incestuous Grey, apostate Colchester,
Where knave and fool together blended are;
From pardoned rebel this, dull cuckold that,
Set up for politicians in the state.
Thou'dst better bullied on, thou held the door,
Than thus to jilt the nations o'er and o'er,
And pimp for Monmouth as for common whore
To satisfy his beastly lust of power.

But thou, dull Essex, who so oft has been
Obliged, enriched, and honored by the King,
What folly, or what madness, drove thee on
Into the hell of cursed rebellion?
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Thou, whose blest fortune needed no supply,
Misled by wife and old Presbytery,
'Gainst God's anointed and that cause art fled
For which thy noble father lost his head.
What pity 'tis thou shouldst degenerate,
And for unequal causes meet an equal fate!

Of Newport's dogs, Grayhound, that meagre spark,
Once tried his prowess, but 'twas in the dark.
Fat Turnspit never bites, though oft he bark.
His oft repeated jests do seldom hit,
As dull as the last libel Shadwell writ,

A teasing cur and only fit to nettle,
But dares no more fall on than Coysh's Settle.
Whene'er the reformation dogs engage
The monarch bull, he leaves 'em to its rage;
Sneaks off with threadbare jest, and swears his quarters
Shall ne'er increase the noble troop of martyrs.

The Whartons, who so great a reverence bear
To monarchy, to church, and Common Prayer—
Their sire, 'tis true, as ancient story goes,
In sawpit once did violate his nose;
But our more hopeful youth, to show their zeals,
In reverend pulpit laid their nasty tails,
Profaned the altar, in the font did spew,
And made their footmen frig in every pew.
We're like to have a hopeful reformation,
When saints like these shall come to rule the nation!

To name 'em all, with all their villainies,
Their follies, shams, their treasons, blasphemies,
Their fine amours, debauches, claps, and pox,
Would fill a volume like our history Fox.
Yet they're not fops alone; we've Tories too,
With vices full as numberless, and new.
How oft has Hewitt's cravat had the lash,
Who looks like puppet in a globe of glass,
So neat, so spruce, so finically set,
A moving thing without one grain of wit;
With whom as much our satire strives in vain
As love to wound his heart since Marshall's reign.
Sets up for quality, but his luck so ill is,
Mistakes for whore of honor old bawd Willis.  
Thus toils the purblind fop, thus dresses on;
The fool increases but the land is gone.

How oft has Howe (by Rochester undone,
Who soothed him first into opinion
Of being a wit) been told that he was none?
But found that art the surest way to glide
Not into's heart but his well shaped backside.
Not Nobs's bum more adoration found,
Though oft 'twas sung, his was more white and round.

How oft has Baber's foppery been the theme,
How oft the excrement of every pen!
Till, to complete his wondrous farce of life,
He ended with that lucky jest, a wife;
And, like Sir Martin, spoiling each design,
He cheats himself with his own plot, in fine.

Whorewood, whom Butler clapped and made a chiaux,
To save his stake, married, and clapped his spouse;
While witless cuckold May to sea is gone,
And left his wife with Barry to fuck on.

Lucy, that fool, ne'er thought the proverb o'er
When drab he married, once and still a whore.
Not all the Howards famous for the guilt
(Throughout the race) of wedding long-kept jilt,
But found some poor excuse for want of charms;
The baggages were humble in their arms.

His grace's bulker, Esme's kitchen maid,
Phil's player, and Sir Pos's common jade,
Ned's seamstress, Tom's mimic of strolling trade,
Had yet to fool and husband more pretense,
As wanting yet thy doxy's insolence.
Of Gerard and his spouse, since both accurst,
It scarce can be determined which is worst.
Of all the fops, thou hast pre-eminence;
To all the rest w'allow some commonsense;
But thou'rt a formal, stiff, vain, thoughtless fool,
Below a property or woman's tool,
Who hast no bauble fit for common use,
And only formed by nature for abuse;
A mere example; when we would agree
To sum up every folly, point out thee.
Thou thing made up of buttons, coach, and show,
The beasts that draw thee have more sense than thou.
Yet still thou mightst have fooled behind the scenes,
Have combed thy head and set thy cravat strings,
Made love to Slingsby when she played the queen—
The coxcomb in the crowd had passed unseen;
But thus to wed Falmouth's lewd bastard daughter
Has ridiculed the fop, even to loud laughter.
Be judge if man of all the animals
Has not the shallowest intellectuals,
Man who was born o'er all to bear a rule,
By wiser woman awed and made a fool.

Observe that sex and every action scan,
And see how they out-do vain, silly man!
Witness the sisters, so renowned by fame,
While every satire celebrates their name:
Herbert and Brownlow, whom each muse admires
For noble rules of life and lasting fires,
Whose heat like that in glass houses appears,
And has been kindling almost fifty years,
And charitably warmed the fools o'th'Town,
Where thousand hearts and pricks are melted down.
Youths of all sorts and sizes thither come
T'allay the heat that rages in her womb;
Young Inns of Court men, merchants spruce and neat,
Captains and gownmen, any that will treat,  
With whom they wisely serve their lechery,  
Then lay the o'er-drained hoping coxcomb by,  
That doted on their fop-call, quality.  

Whene'er they married, 'twas to hide the whore,  
And have the liberty to ramble more;  
But once the cuckold dead, and jointure got,  
The devil's in't if they'll again be yoked.  

'Tis this that makes brave Sarsfield sigh in vain,  
Whose passion arms the jilt with proud disdain;  
Sarsfield, whose every inch (and he has store)  
Deserves a younger, juster, kinder whore.  
This renders him the object of our pity,  
With little Tom, the brave, the gay, the witty.  

Before their nauseous, hideous feet they lie  
And whine and sigh and vow and sing and die.  
But sure the devil owes them not the shames  
To make 'em marry these experienced dames,  
Who so salaciously and lewd have lived,  
And have so oft from lord to footman swived.  

Mark but the lewdness of Gerard's wife,  
How well she understands the joys of life!  
No sooner wed but she th' uneasy yoke  
With all the force of generous lewdness broke,  
And every night a new-won lover took,  
Who, having served her pleasure and design,  
Supplied her ready wants with man and coin.  
Then for new prey, in vizor mask she plies,  
And a new fop, new want, new lust supplies;  
And when she scours the streets *en cavalière*,  
Stand all frail fops and all frail windows clear!  

But thee, kind Mall, we now had given o'er,  
Had not thy bawding quite disgraced the whore;  
But when an ale-house keeper's punk thou'lt own,  
And put her off a fortune in the town,  
An ugly, awkward, flat-faced dowdy sow,
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No humor nor no wit, even less than thou,
Who cheats the world with both, the devil knows how,
Like Ned thou fall'st below thy natural parts,
And with acquired jilting and dull arts
In vain endeavor'st to entrap our hearts.
For shame, give o'er, dear Mall, to play the bawd;
Thou yet has stock enough thyself to trade.


23. Kent. Anthony Grey (1645-1702), eleventh Earl of Kent. Stamford. Thomas Grey (1653-1720), second Earl of Stamford, was called a "wittol" because he knew himself to be a cuckold.

24. Armstrong. Sir Thomas Armstrong (1624—84), soldier and follower of the Duke of Monmouth. After the revelation of the Rye House Plot, Armstrong fled to Holland, was outlawed, captured, and illegally brought back to England, where he was hanged without the formality of a trial.


30. mur'd'ring boys. In May, 1676, Lord Brandon struck a footboy with such force that the boy died.

33. Incestuous Grey. In June, 1682, Ford, Lord Grey of Werke, seduced his wife's younger sister, Henrietta, daughter of George, Earl of Berkeley. On November 23 Grey was tried for the abduction and convicted, but never punished; see Appendix, Grey. Colchester. Richard Savage (1654—1712), Lord Colchester from 1680 to 1694, son of Thomas, third Earl Rivers, was called an "apostate" because in 1680 he changed from the Catholic to the Anglican faith. Grey was widely known as a "dull cuckold." Colchester may be called a "pardoned rebel" because in his youth he had stolen money from his father and had been forgiven. His enemies called Colchester "Tyburn Dick."

41. Essex. Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex (1632—83), was sent to the Tower on July 10, 1683, and cut his throat three days later. On July 12, 1683, John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, wrote to Lord Hatton, "One would have thought it impossible that the son of the Lord Capel, after wealth and honor heaped upon him, should design the subversion of the government" (Hatton, II, 26). On May 19, 1652, Essex had married Elizabeth, fifth daughter of Algernon Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

48. noble father. Arthur, Lord Capel, a royalist in the civil wars, was captured at Colchester, Essex, tried and condemned by the High Court of Justice, and executed March 9, 1649.

51. Grayhound. Richard Newport (1661—1723), elder son of Francis, Viscount Newport, Treasurer of the Household, was a tall thin man, hence "Grayhound." He was a Whig member of Parliament.
53. *Fat Turnspit.* Francis ("bold Frank") Newport, second son of Viscount Newport. A dog who turned a roasting spit by walking in a treadmill was likely to grow fat.

55. *Shadwell.* The "last libel" by Thomas Shadwell (1640–92), Whig poet, may be Shadwell's attack on Dryden, *The Medal of John Bayes,* May, 1682.

57. *Coysh's Settle.* Elkanah Settle (1648–1724), Whig poet, was associated with John Coysh, a member of the King's Company of Comedians, in producing plays and drolls for Coysh's traveling company. On November 11, 1682, for example, one Joshua Bowes stated that Settle "designed to carry down one Coish and others to act some plays or drolls at York" (*CSPD,* 1682, p. 536).


65. *In sawpit.* At the Battle of Edgehill, October 23, 1642, Lord Wharton's regiment of Roundheads was routed. Wharton is said to have taken refuge in a sawpit, a pit dug for the use of sawyers, but often employed as a latrine (Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses,* III, col. 177).

67. *reverend pulpit.* On July 2, 1682, it was reported that two of Lord Wharton's sons had played "a grievous prank in Burford Church" (*Seventh Report,* p. 497B). Their unseemly defecation is the episode referred to by Swift in *The Examiner,* no. 23 and no. 25. See Appendix, Wharton.

68. *spew.* Vomit.

69. *frig.* Masturbate.

75. *history Fox.* An ironic reference to John Foxe's *The Acts and Monuments* ("The Book of Martyrs"), 1563. Lord Wharton had been a Puritan, and his sons, Thomas and Henry, professed Puritanism, but both were wild libertines.


85. *Willis.* Sue Willis; see Appendix. A "whore of honor" was by birth a lady.


93. *Nobs.* Probably George Porter, Junior, often called "Nobs" and accused of unnatural practices.

95. *Baber.* John Baber, son of Sir John Baber, royal physician. On July 6, 1683, a search was made for Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Draper (a City knight), who was "taken by force" from her father's house (*CSPD,* 1683, p. 59). On July 14 it was reported that "Sir John Baber's son has run away with Sir Thomas Draper's daughter" (*Hatton,* II, 30).

99. *Sir Martin.* The bumbling knight in Dryden's eponymous *Sir Martin Mar­all,* or *The Feigned Innocence,* 1667.

101. *Whorwood.* Brome Whorwood of Halton, Oxon., a Whig M.P., had separated from his wife c. 1674, agreeing to pay her £300 a year alimony. In 1682 she petitioned for help in her extremity, claiming that she had never received more than £200 a year, and nothing at all for the past nine months (*CSPD,* 1682, p. 617). Whorwood died on April 12, 1682, leaving a natural son by his mistress, a servant named Katherine Allen (Wood, *Fasti Oxonienses,* II, 43). *Butler.* Charlotte Butler, a handsome, black-eyed singer and actress. *chaftaux.* Chiaus, a dupe or fool.
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103. *May.* The three men listed here—Whorwood, May, and Barry (properly Berry)—were linked by a common interest in Charlotte Butler. For May and Barry, see above, “On Three Late Marriages,” 1682. Conjecturally, the first was Richard May, the second Sir John Berry; both were captains in the Royal Navy.

105. *Lucy.* Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, captain of a troop of Guards, had married Katherine, daughter of Robert Wheatley of Brecknell, Berks. Captain Lucy was then High Sheriff of Wiltshire. According to “A New Ditty” (Harvard MS. Eng. 633, p. 17),

Tom Lucy, Lord bless us, sits on a sheriff’s bench,
Hey, ho, langle down ditty;
Because the jilt cried he has married his wench,
Without ever a penny of money.

Katherine was fond of cards and frequented the Duchess of Portsmouth’s apartments. After her husband’s death in November, 1684, she married George Fitzroy, Duke of Northumberland.

108. *all the Howards.* Of the six men listed below I can find only one who had certainly married his “long-kept jilt.”

111. *his grace’s bulker.* Jane (Bickerton), Duchess of Norfolk, had long been the mistress of Henry Howard, sixth Duke of Norfolk, before she became his second wife (see Evelyn, January 23, 1678). A “bulker” was a whore who plied her trade at night on empty bulks, or stalls, in front of shops. *Esme.* According to Collins, the wife of Esmé Howard (1645-78), was named “Margaret -----.” She died January 11, 1716, aged seventy; perhaps she was his “kitchen-maid.”

112. *Phil.* In 1668, Sir Philip Howard, seventh son of the first Earl of Berkshire, had a player, Betty Hall, as his mistress (Pepys, December 19, 1668). According to Collins, Sir Philip married “Mary, daughter to ----Jennings.” A Mrs. Jennings was listed by John Downes among Davenant’s original eight actresses; after 1672, she was one of those who “by force of love were Erept the Stage” (Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. Montague Summers, 1928, pp. 20, 35). Of course there is no evidence that she became Sir Philip’s wife. *Sir Poz.* Sir Robert Howard, sixth son of the first Earl of Berkshire, was caricatured on the stage as Sir Positive At-all in Shadwell’s *The Sullen Lovers*, 1668. Susanna Uphill, a minor actress with the King’s Company, seems to have left the stage about 1675 to become Sir Robert’s mistress, but Howard’s third wife was Mary Uphill, probably a sister of the actress (Wilson, *All the King’s Ladies*, pp. 189-91).

113. *Ned.* According to Collins, Edward Howard, poet and playwright, fifth son of the Earl of Berkshire, “married two wives [in succession, of course] and died without issue.” Perhaps one of them was a seamstress. *Tom.* The most likely Tom Howard at this time would be Lord Thomas of Worksop, Notts., who married Mary Elizabeth Savile, an heiress. His *mimic* is unidentified.

116. *Gerard.* Gilbert Cosins Gerard; see Appendix.

130. *Slingsby.* By her second marriage, Mary Lee (Aldridge) became Lady Slingsby, perhaps as wife of Sir Charles Slingsby of Bifrons, near Canterbury. She was a leading actress with the Duke’s Company from 1670 to 1685 and played many queenly roles, notably Queen Gertrude in *Hamlet*.

132. *Falmouth’s daughter.* Mary (Berkeley), daughter of Charles, Earl of Falmouth, married Gerard on May 2, 1681, at the age of sixteen. Immediately she took
the full liberty of the town as a female rake. Gerard divorced her *(a mensa et thoro)* in 1684; see Appendix, Gerard, Gilbert Cosins.

142. *Herbert.* Elizabeth (Brydges), Lady Herbert (1651–1718), widow of Edward, third Lord Herbert of Cherbury; see Appendix, Herbert. *Brownlow.* Margaret (Brydges) Brownlow (1637–1732), Lady Herbert’s older sister and widow of William Brownlow of Humby, Linns.

159. *Sarsfield.* On March 24, 1683, Captain Patrick Sarsfield and his crony Sir John Parsons abducted Elizabeth, Lady Herbert. When she refused to marry Sarsfield, he returned her to London; see Appendix, Sarsfield.

164. *little Tom.* Thomas Skipwith of Metheringham (1652–1710) married Mrs. Margaret Brownlow in 1685. She was fifteen years his senior.

171. *Gerard’s wife.* Mary (Berkeley), wife of Gilbert Cosins Gerard.

180. *en cavalière.* Dressed as a man. Apparently Mary and her friends were accustomed to scouring the town in male attire. For a frolic in November, 1683, with serious consequences, see Appendix, Gerard, Gilbert Cosins.

182. *kind Mall.* Mall Howard, famous bawd and whore.

184. *punk.* Prostitute. A marginal note in the copy text identifies her as “Mrs Stacy at the Sugar Loaf in Henrietta Street.”

189. *like Ned.* That is, like Ned Howard, poet, author of *The British Princes*, 1669, an opus ridiculed by the Court wits. Here the satirist paraphrases a line from Dorset’s “On Mr. Edward Howard” *(POAS, Yale, I, 339), “Thou writ’st below e’en thy own nat’ral parts.”*