Dear Julian, twice or thrice a year
I write to help thee in some gear;
For thou by nonsense liv'st, not wit,
As carps thrive best where cattle shit.
But now that province I resign,
And to my successor design,
Eland, whose pen as nimbly glides
As his good father changes sides;
His head's with thought as little vexed,
Or taking care what should come next.
But he a path much safer treads:
Poets live when statesmen lose their heads.
Though truth in prose may be a crime,
'Twas never known in any time
That one was hanged for writing rhyme.  
But should some poets be accused
That have the government abused
They'd scarce be by their neck-verse freed;
Some Whigs will write that cannot read.

But charity bids us suppose
That Mordaunt is not one of those;
Besides, that he can write 'tis known
By's making Suckling's songs his own.
He to the bays in time may rise
If Etherege will but supervise,
To make his verse more soft and tame,
That would be without life or flame;
Like the epilogue they jointly writ
To ridicule the well-horned pit,
A jest that Mordaunt well might spare
Unless he sat to hear it there.

Jack Howe, thy patron, 's left the town,
But first writ something he dare own,
A prologue lawfully begotten
And full nine months maturely thought on,
Born with hard labor and much pain;
Wolseley was Doctor Chamberlain;
At length from stuff and rubbish picked,
As bear cubs into shape are licked.
When Wharton, Etherege, and Soame,
To give it the last strokes were come,
Those critics differed in their doom.
Some were for embers quenched with pages,
And some for mending servants' wages.
Both ways were tried, but neither took,
And the fault's laid on Mrs. Cook;
Yet Swan says he admired it 'scaped,
Since 'twas Jack Howe's, without being clapped.
LETTER TO JULIAN

Our old friend Cutts has left the trade;
His muse is grown a very jade.  
Phillis did take him on his word,
And has his destiny so spurred,
Of love and verse he's weary grown,
His pen and passion both laid down;
And to his praise it may be said,
No love nor songs of late h'has made.  

But Mulgrave will not leave off so,
For to his industry we owe
That we the fate in English see
Of Orpheus and Eurydice.  

And 'tis an honor to the state
When a blue garter will translate,
Who bears the bell without dispute
From D'Urfey, Settle, Creech, or Duke.
I thought 'twould puzzle all the Nine
To spoil that poem so divine,
But he with pains and care doth show
It may be rendered mean and low,
So much can one great blockhead do.
Some say his lordship had done better
To answer Roger Martin's letter,
Or give Jack Howe his bellyfull,
Who justly calls him a dull owl
For quoting books he never read,
And basely railing at the dead.

Of ladies there's no need to tell,
Since they their own intrigues reveal:
As Norfolk with her prince outlandish,
And Isham with her beau, Lord Candish;
And Grov'ner with Dick Middleton
(Not Cholm'ley, who 'tis said has none),
How Walcop meets with Cartwright's spouse
At Sadler's, the painter's, house;
Or how the modest maid complained
That Talbot had her casement strained
For what he had before obtained;
How Mordaunt Grafton's virtue tries
More than King John does Ossory's.

But yet a line or two we'll spare
In gratitude to Lord Kildare,
Whose marrying Lady Betty Jones
For's killing his first wife atones;
A wife she'll be to him alone,
But a meet help to all the Town.

Oh, that kind Fate would order't so
That Bellingham might do so too,
And with his folly and estate
Oblige the world and marry Kate!
How many then full sail would enter,
That in the port now dare not venture?
But though he's fop enough to woo,
Present, and treat, and keep ado,
When he should wed, he wont come to.

But these affairs are known to all
That haunt the Park, plays, or Whitehall;
Besides, my labor I may save,
For an account you'll timely have,
Who are made cuckolds or make love,
From some o' th' authors named above.


18. *neck-verse*. A Bible verse read by a convicted felon when he pleaded benefit of clergy.


Let Mordaunt copy Sir John Suckling's songs,
Call 'em his own, and have 'em set in throngs."
LETTER TO JULIAN

25. Etherege. Sir George Etherege (1635–c. 1692). Collaboration between Mor-ndaunt (who lisped) and Etherege is earlier indicated in “A Letter to a Friend,” c. 1679 (Harleian MS. 6913, p. 63),

... the lisping lord who lately writ
With many words and with so little wit
Hath found more work for his correcting friend,
Who slyly laughs at what he seems to mend.

28. the epilogue. Apparently Mordaunt, assisted by Etherege, wrote the epilogue to Rochester’s Valentinian, described only as “Written by a Person of Quality.” The epilogue sneered at the leading character of the play, Maximus, as

A cuckold, daring to revenge his shame,
Surly, ill-natured Roman, wanting wit,
Angry, when all true Englishmen submit,
Witness the horns of the well headed pit.

32. Jack Howe. According to the satirist, “Libeling Jack” Howe was the author of “Prologue to Valentinian, spoken by Mrs. Cook the second Day.”

37. Wolseley. Robert Wolseley, a poetaster, was the eldest son of Sir Charles Wolseley of Wolseley, Staffordshire. Wolseley wrote a preface to Valentinian (published, Term Catalogues, November, 1684), defending Lord Rochester against Lord Mulgrave’s charges of obscenity and lack of wit, in his Essay Upon Satire, 1679. Chamberlain. Dr. Hugh Chamberlain was a famous obstetrician. In short, Wolseley acted as a midwife to bring Howe’s prologue to the expectant world.

39. bear cubs. According to fable, bear cubs were born shapeless and were licked into shape by their mothers.

40. Wharton. Probably Thomas Wharton, eldest son of Philip, Lord Wharton; see Appendix. Soame. William Soame (c. 1645–86), of Thurlow, Suffolk, was knighted in 1674 and inherited as baronet February 5, 1684. In 1683 he translated Boileau’s Art of Poetry. Late in 1684 he was appointed Ambassador to Constantinople but died at Malta on his way to Turkey, June 12, 1686.

43. some were. From the “Prologue to Valentinian, Spoken by Mrs. Cook the second Day,” “our Author”

Desired the ladies of maturer ages,
If some remaining spark their hearts enrages,
At home to quench their embers with their pages.

46. Mrs. Cook. Sarah Cooke, a popular actress with the United Company, from 1677 to 1688.

47. Swan. Perhaps Richard Swan, a noted punster; see Dryden’s Letters, ed. C. E. Ward, p. 137.

49. Cutts. John Cutts (1661–1707), second son of Richard Cutts of Arkesden, Essex, became a famous soldier, and on December 12, 1690, he was created Baron Cutts of Gower. He was also a wit and a writer of songs and occasional verses. See, for example, his “On the Death of the Queen,” POAS, 1705, pp. 254–55.

57. Mulgrave. John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, was responsible for the translation of “Part of Virgil’s Fourth Georgick” in Dryden’s Miscellany Poems, April, 1684.
Mulgrave, A Knight Companion of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, was a mediocre poet and translator.


65. the Nine. The Nine Muses, daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne.

71. Roger Martin's letter. Probably “Advice in a Heroic Epistle to Mr. Fr. Villiers,” c. 1683 (see above), with its warning to Frank Villiers to look out for his sister Nancy, pursued by Mulgrave (“King John”).

73. a dull owl. In the second prologue to Valentinian is an obvious reference to Mulgrave, who, in his Essay Upon Satire (1679) had attacked the Earl of Rochester for “his want of wit” and for the obscenity of his poems. According to Jack Howe, then,

No fury's like a libeled blockhead's rage;
   Hence some despised him [Rochester] for his want of wit,
   And others said he too obscenely writ. . . .
   But all weak eyes are hurt by too much light.
   Let then these owls against the eagle preach,
   And blame those flights which they want wing to reach.
   Like Falstaff let 'em conquer heroes dead,
   And praise Greek poets they could never read.

78. Norfolk. Mary (Mordaunt), Countess of Arundell, became Duchess of Norfolk on January 11, 1684, when her husband, Henry, inherited as seventh duke. Her lover, the “prince outlandish,” was a Dutch gambler, John Germaine, said to be the illegitimate son of William II of Orange (Hatton, II, 170).


80. Grov'ner. The only lady who seems to fit here is Mary (Davies), who married Sir Thomas Grosvenor of Eaton, near Chester, October 19, 1677. She was a great heiress; see Charles T. Gatty, Mary Davies and the Manor of Ebury, 1929. Middleton. Probably Richard Middleton (1655–1716) of Chirk, Denbighshire, who inherited as baronet on February 5, 1684. For his marriage to widowed Frances Whitmore in 1686, see below, “Madam Le Croix.”


82. Walcop. Probably Warcup. The best known gentleman of that name was Lenthal Warcup, a captain in the Royal Regiment of Footguards. Cartwright's spouse. Grace, daughter of John Granville, Earl of Bath, married on March 18, 1675 (when she was six and the groom was eight) George Carteret (1667–95), son of Sir Philip Carteret. “Questionless,” said an observer, “they will carry themselves very gravely and love dearly” (Verney Memoirs, II, 316). They did neither. George succeeded to the baronetcy on January 13, 1680, and became Baron Carteret of Hawnes on October 19, 1681.
LETTER TO JULIAN

83. **Sadler.** Thomas Sadler, second son of John Sadler, a Master in Chancery, was a pupil of Lely and became a miniaturist and portrait painter. Possibly he was painting Lady Carteret at the time.

84. **the modest maid.** Unidentified, but obviously a *rara avis.*

85. **Talbot.** Probably John Talbot (1665–86), a frantic libertine, younger brother of Charles, Earl of Shrewsbury.

87. **Grafton.** Isabella (Bennet), wife of Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, natural son of King Charles II by the Duchess of Cleveland.

88. **King John.** Derisive name for John, Earl of Mulgrave. **Ossory.** Anne (Hyde), who, on July 15, 1682, married James, the young Earl of Ossory, died of a miscarriage in January, 1685, aged eighteen.

90. **Kildare.** John Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare (1661–1707), lost his first wife on November 24, 1683. "Lady Kildare is dead of the smallpox, which she got with being with her lord who has had it" (*Hatton*, II, 39). As his second wife, Kildare married on June 12, 1684, Elizabeth, a daughter of Richard Jones, Earl of Ranelagh.

96. **Bellingham.** "Spendthrift" Alan Bellingham of Levens, Helsington, Westmoreland, ruined his family by his extravagance and fled abroad to escape his creditors in October, 1688. For the account of a harmless duel between Bellingham and Major Orby (Arpe), December 18, 1683, see Reresby, *Memoirs*, p. 324.

98. **Kate.** Probably Katherine Villiers, a Maid of Honor to Queen Catherine. See above, "Satire. 1682,"

Kate Villiers, as they say, has got a notion,
To marry ere she puts her breech in motion.