THE LOVERS' SESSION
IN IMITATION OF SIR JOHN SUCKLING'S
"SESSION OF POETS"

[June, 1687]

"A Session of the Poets," by Sir John Suckling (1609–42), presented Apollo presiding over a gathering of verse writers, each claiming the laurel as his reward for wit. The winner is not a poet but an alderman, Apollo declaring that it is "the best sign/ Of good store of wit to have good store of coin."

"The Lovers' Session," with Venus presiding over a "High Commission Court," follows its famous model in form, but it is nearly three times as long. The poet represents Venus offering as a prize, not the laurel "that had been so long reserved," but a beautiful young prostitute, Mrs. Luck, "long held in reserve." She is to go to the contender who does "least deserve her"—that is, to the man who can prove that he has the smallest store of wit. The satirist gathers together a flock of well-known lackwits and amuses himself at their expense, only obliquely glancing at the social and political problems of the day.

Evidence in stanzas 45–47, dealing with events at Magdalen College, Oxford, suggests that the satire was written in June, 1687. The copy text, Add. MS. 34, 362, p. 154, is dated 1687. The satire is dated 1687 also in Firth MS. c. 25, p. 277; 1687/8 in Harleian MS. 7317, p. 136; 1688 in "A Choyce Collection," p. 256; and undated in Douce MS. 357, f.118; Add. MS. 29, 497, f. 115; and it is badly printed in POAS, 1716, II, 156.

A session of lovers was held t'other day,
And Venus in person was present they say;
The best in Christendom, long held in reserve,
Was now to be his who did least deserve.

175
2.

Therefore the fools of all parties came thither; 'Twas strange to see how the owls flocked together. There were fops of breeding and tonies of birth, Damned oafs of all kinds this fat island brings forth.

3.

Gentle fools of the flute and fools of the pen, Virtuosos twice married, turned bullies again, Dancing fools a vast crowd, and fools learned in arts, Fops finished in France, with good natural parts.

4.

Familiar dear hearts, who kiss all they salute, And out of mere dullness with no man dispute, Who think themselves welcome wherever they come, And call all they know, Harry, Jack, Will, and Tom.

5.

Sour fanatics, Christ's wealthy, ill-favored breed, With strong carnal itches and spiritual pride; Popish priests in the garb of a lewd lay brother, Still whoring in couples to absolve one another.

6.

Time-servers whose hopes all employments devour, Drunken brutes in the badges of absolute power, Cits apeing Court fops in debauchery and dress, And proud, ignorant statesmen, hard of access.
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7.
Dull blockheads in cassocks, law knaves dyed in grain,
Physicians in cuerpo and clowns in campaign,
Like bees they came swarming at Venus’s call;
There was fop of Fop Corner and fop of Fop Hall.

8.
Song Sackville with all the new beaus at his back,
Lewd rakehelly Spencer by finical Pack,
Warcup near Newburgh, for they kept no order,
Montrath and Frank Villiers a little farther.

9.
Harry Wharton fresh reeking from Norfolk’s lewd Moll,
Sham plot-maker Lumley and Colchester Vol,
Northumberland wrapped in his mother’s loved smock,
And Darcy kept lean with old Guy’s young hock.

10.
Harsh favored Scarborough with Scarsdale the stinking,
And Bridges created a wit for his drinking,
Soft Whitaker, fop Gerards—both the brothers—
Fop Hewitt, fop Baber, and divers others.

11.
Devonshire, who all his mistaken life long
Has delighted in show, public meetings, and throng,
And at fifty against all reason and rule
Seems resolved to persist in playing the fool,

12.

Ere this strange High Commission Court was well sat, 45
Came and knocked, with a lover's concern, at the gate,
And cozening the door keeper with his fop mien,
Without any ticket had like t'have got in.

13.

But Venus, who knew him much better than they, 50
With a frown like dead Lady Betty's they say,
Forbid his admittance and told him in short,
'Twas an old fundamental rule of the Court,

14.

Though some the best stored never any would use, 55
But lived as if Frampton their business did choose,
Though others dressed high and half stared out
their eyes,
Not one who had sense must pretend to the prize.

15.

And though his French breeding still floated a-top, 60
And had taudered his outside over with fop;
Yet plainly appeared to all the world's wonder
The man of true wit and worth that lay under.

16.

When Mordaunt heard this he leaped up from the throng,
And in whimsical railing full three hours long,
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Which gross want of judgment, for Bedlam near fit,
He daily mistakes for abounding in wit,

17.

He excused his intruding and breaking their rules,
Protesting he did not know they were fools,
But took every member there by his mien
For as hopeful a wit as his pupil Gwin.

18.

This said, he would fain have slipped into the crowd,
But Venus recalled him and told him aloud
None there to a place had a better pretense,
For just talking not much was the mark of good sense.

19.

That his rambling vein, which for holding out well,
The ablest fanatics' new lights did excel,
Though no man could for wit or for reason approve,
Might pass with young women for passion or love.

20.

But she bid him beware when his throes did begin,
By his noise not to call the neighborhood in;
For his friends' expectation too oft had been bit
By the loud but false crying out of his wit.

21.

And therefore,
For a deal of vain love the fair sex did owe him,
As well as for the good of all who should know him,
She prayed that the Muses’ Lucina would deign
To deliver him of his no jests without pain.

While Mordaunt’s perfections she thus did display,
She perceived little Falkland sneaking away,
And vowed she admired how that frivolous chit
Ever came to pass on the Town for a wit.

His grandfather, honored by all, ’tis confessed,
Was with wisdom and riches like Solomon blessed,
But he left him nothing, and it was his hard fate
To inherit no more of his wit than estate.

A mimic he is, though a bad one at best,
Still plagued with an impotent itch to a jest;
In impertinent action he spared no expense;
He had all the ingredients of wit but the sense.

His face oft of laugh and of humor looks full,
But his talk is impertinent, empty and dull,
But if such low buffooning can merit our praise,
Frank Newport and Jevon and Haynes must have bays.

Or if French memoirs read from Broadstreet to Bow
Can make a man wise, then Falkland is so,
And for full confirmation of all she did say,
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She produced his damned prologue to Otway's best play.

27.

Some replied what her majesty said was most true, Yet to give this vain, ignorant devil his due, Though he made good judges but indifferent sport, He was the best fop of a statesman at Court.

28.

But Dorrington now started up in great wrath, "What, not Falkland a wit?" "No, sir, by my troth, Of which for the present clearer proof there needs none Than his taking your coxcombly worship for one."

29.

The sect of songsters here stirred up sedition, And in shoals preferred a tumultuous petition, Beseeching the court not to think 'em too wise To raffle their time and estate for the prize, Alleging,

30.

They used the Muses but as bawds do intrigues, Caring for 'em no more than for Cromwell or Meggs, And that but for their frantic, amorous fits, They had ne'er took upon 'em the business of wits.

31.

Humbly hoping that sense would not pass for a crime That was flattened to panegyrical rhyme,
And offering good proof from maids, widows, and 125 wives,
Of the inoffensive dullness of their lives,

32.

Proposing at last if the sex were in fears,
They could e'en use their names as bad as their ears,
That rather than the hopes of their favors they'd quit,
They'd lay by their impudent title to wit. 130

33.

But Venus, who all their adventures had learned,
With a gracious smile bid 'em not be concerned,
For that little they had, so void of all charm,
As it did 'em no good, so 'twould do 'em no harm.

34.

Young Griffin, apparent son of the old, 135
In whose bel air his booby father is told,
Just image of the pride with which he swells,
And in whom the fullness of his folly dwells,

35.

Not doubting success, first of any did rise
And in arrogant terms first demanded the prize; 140
But when told by the court, which his carriage did blame,
He a reason must give for his confident claim,

36.

He pertly replied that truth, reason, and wit
Were three things never asked of his family yet;
And though he loved whoring because 'twas a vice, 145
He ne'er should be able to pay such a price.

37.

Newburgh was the next stood up to his trial,
Not dreaming that face could e'er meet with denial,
That face which so oft in the circle was praised,
And dissentions among the Queen's virgins had 150 raised.

38.

But the Jewess who still of his purse stood in need,
Had privately ordered the bench to take heed
Not to judge by outsides howe'er likely and fair,
For though stiff in the back he was limber elsewhere.

39.

Harry Henningham thought himself sure of a grant, 155
But "Oh, foolish!" cries out villain Frank, "he's all cant.
His mistresses know not—so odd 'tis expressed—
Whether he means to make love or a jest."

40.

"He puts on so many several faces,
Is so full of his frank, familiar grimaces, 160
They cannot but think he is acting a part,
And his passion some speech he has gotten by heart."

41.

Besides Lady Bellamont had let the court know
That his person was good for just nothing but show,
That his slim, fine Barbary back was too long,
His stomach too weak, and his hectic too strong.

42.

When Kildare's name was called, all thought he would speed,
And sure he was fool enough to succeed;
But new Rochester straight—Oh, how unlike the first!—
Into terms of a Treasurer's insolence burst.

43.

And as Venus was going his suit to allow,
On the faith of a cast politician did vow
That of all men living he needed it least,
For his wife's, he knew well, was as good as the best.

44.

Huntington, that his wheaking whey visage might pass,
Pulled out the best thing that belonged to an ass,
But in Love's court, though one might use such a tool,
They abhorred an inconstant, weathercock fool.

45.

Villain Frank, well informed by a small pocket glass
Of his damned, disagreeable, vermin-like face,
And knowing what juster pretentions would be,
Brought the bench a mandamus subscribed S.P.

46.

The court on this dangerous practise reflecting,
Cried out, "We'll maintain our old way of electing."
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Cunts still have been free, nor can any confine ’em, 185
Or bring to the beck of their *jus divinum*.”

47,

Resolving however to show some respect
To the state whose commands they’d just cause to reject,
Like Maudlins they proved to th’assistants’ great joy
Sir Courtly unfit for the courted employ. 190

48.

To his shame and confusion, his friends swore point blank
To nun was so spotless a virgin as Frank,
And all, that it’s unjust the fair sexes’ pride
Should run any risk with a fuckster untried.

49.

The court, though against the strict rule of the laws, 195
Declared on that issue they’d put the whole cause;
Had he e’er *rem in re* he should now have the best,
But his guilty silence the scandal confessed.

50.

Here the Exchequer clerks, ere they let him retire,
Told the court ’twas not virtue but want of desire, 200
And though he was unable, they’d very good proof
Sister Nancy would for the whole name do enough.

51.

Montrath was in foppery conceived another
Of Whitehall’s true breed, Sir Nice’s twin brother;
None could tell (so like all their follies do seem) Whether he acted Mountfort or Mountfort him.

52.

But all cried at the sound of that Irish name, His birth was forever a bar to his claim; No Teague to his love could his blockishness shape; They had only the gift of murder and rape.

53.

Harry Lumley, some thought, for an elder beau By the help of his dress made a pretty good show; His back too was praised since he first found the trick To make rammish Williams content with one prick.

54.

But he had a blemish of his blighted look shown, Which in beauteous Adonis was never yet known; The pox that was given him by his own wife Was likely to last him as long as his life.

55.

When Montague appeared the court gave him a touch For affecting the wit and the bully so much; For the one neither nature had framed him nor art, And the other was ne'er thought a gentleman's part.

56.

He had faults too, which lost him so much with the fair As neither his face nor his youth could repair;
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They found the raw Templar with half sense accursed, 225
Too presuming at last and too bashful at first.

57.

Their eyes were more kindly on Constable cast,
For judging so ill and for prattling so fast;
He slightly skims o’er all that comes in his way,
With as hasty and shallow a fashion as they. 230

58.

But though his light humor most women’s did hit,
His parts have too near a resemblance of wit;
The court too declared they would first be assured
Whether yet the thrust in his groin was well cured.

59.

Little Rowley was missed, for the Whigs who did know 235
His wit nowhere else but in Dutchland would go,
Had there sent him lieger with full reputation
To make jests on the Court for the good of the nation.

60.

But one of his friends swore he’d leave the queen’s cause
And turn rebel to love’s irresistible laws 240
If in all her wide empire she ever did see
A coxcomb so fit for a cully as he.

61.

But politics employed all his time, and ’twas said
Our pert Oxford scholar would ne’er be well bred
Nor brought, so vain is th’uniformable elf,  
To admire or mind anything else but himself.  

62.

Here the bench in Wem language their anger expressed,  
And told his Whig friends they should bid him at least  
Get so much sense in his maggoty pate  
To use his wife well till he had her estate.  

63.

Feversham, in his Sedgemoor garter and glory,  
Proud as the Treasurer and pettish as Lory,  
Forgetting how oft he had wrong took his aim,  
With a French assurance next put in his claim.  

64.

But fifty had brought a defeat of that sort  
As ne’er found forgiveness in Venus’s court;  
He was never in health, as himself did oft own,  
But “ven he did let dat business alone.”

65.

Mordaunt would be thought t’have already the best,  
But lets his wife’s covetous cunt be at rest;  
In vain his invention is still on the tenters,  
Don Quixote ne’er went on more luckless adventures.

66.

The damned tedious lies he tells in his own praise,  
That supreme adoration he to himself pays,
That contempt of his friends and that unsettled head,
An aversion in the most forward has bred.

67.

Had it his babbling tongue, St. James's large square
Could punctually tell forth the when and the where,
In the midst of all his vain towering hopes,
He was beaten with his own ladder of ropes.

68.

Sir James Hayes here his fluent flattery displayed
To the fair, and a thousand fair promises made,
If Falkland might pass a night with her in bed;
But Dapperwit had a trick worth two on't, he said.

69.

The sodomite's hole so his fancy did sway,
He would fain have used his own wife the wrong way;
But the slattern was restive and vowed she would ne'er
Give any man joy who grudged her a share.

70.

Northumberland now to his trial stood forth,
And pleaded the preference due to his birth.
"No fool," he said, "sure, howe'er eminent, would
Presume to compare with a fool of the blood."

71.

Appealing besides to his scandalous marriage,
His beautiful face and his dull stupid carriage,
To a soul without sense of true honor or wit,  
If e'er man was formed for a woman so fit.

72.

But his prince-like project to kidnap his wife,  
And a lady so free to make pris'ner for life,  
Was tyranny to which the sex ne'er would submit,  
And an ill-natured fool they liked worse than a wit.

73.

Grafton, backed by his officers, made an effort  
To have the new Venus seen naked in court,  
Urging whate'er fame in her favor had spoke,  
'Twas unfit men should buy a pig in a poke.

74.

But had she appeared, Duncomb swore by his life  
He had used her as once he did Eland's fair wife.  
No sooner was his rude request disallowed,  
But on the whole bench he looked big and talked loud.

75.

What his huff speech did mean they were all in suspense;  
Some said it was tarpaulin language and sense,  
But this was every tittle the court understood:  
It began with G--dam and closed with G--dsblood.

76.

An old ugly lawyer at last did appear,  
And brought in black boxes six thousand a year;
At which all the assembly murmured, contending
He had long since passed the age of pretending.

77.

But Venus, reproving 'em, bid him come nigher,
And when he was mounted a little higher,
She gently declared that wealth and estate
Was to catch womankind the infallible bait.

78.

The powerful temptation none e'er could oppose;
It covers all faults and all virtue bestows;
'Tis a lure which the highest-flown jilts can command,
Makes 'em stoop and brings the wild haggard to hand.

79.

Fifteen it can draw to the arms of three score,
Procure Apsley a wife and Clifford a whore;
It still carries with it (such philters are in it)
The canonical hour and the critical minute.

80.

'Twas this spell the fair Montague's eyes so put out
She could see neither Suffolk's age nor his gout,
And in spite of a humor yet worse than his face,
Brought long averse Newport to Herbert's embrace.

81.

This is the charm which yet never did fail
O'er beauty, youth, merit, and wit to prevail;
And without a syllable more or less said,
To young Luck she put the old fumbler to bed.

82.

Much muttering there was, and some spared not the queen;
In every man’s face a displeasure was seen;
Each thought himself by the sentence ill used,
And the partial blindness of Fortune accused,

83.

But all cleared up at last; not a fop that was there
But hoped in his turn with the lawyer to share,
And that since for twenty good summers at least
He had left being a man, she would make him a beast.

19. *Popish priests*. In his *True Narrative . . . Relating to the Horrid Popish Plot*, 1679, Miles Prance told the story of a French priest who lay with a woman and afterward said Mass. Taxed with his sin, he declared that he had had absolution, that “another French priest and he both lay with her successively at that time, and that they mutually gave each other absolution, which is a notable religious way of whoring.”
28. *Fop Corner*. A section of a theatre pit where the fops congregated. *Fop Hall*. Whitehall?
29–32. Compare with Suckling:

There was Selden, and he sate hard by the chair;
Wenman not far off, which was very fair;
Sandys with Townshend, for they kept no order;
Digby and Shillingsworth a little further.

29. *Song Sackville*. Colonel Edward Sackville had succeeded Sir Palmes Fairborne as Governor of Tangier in 1681. He became a brigadier on July 8, 1685.
30. *Spencer*. Robert, Lord Spencer, eldest son of the Earl of Sunderland, was a noted rake. He died in France on September 5, 1688, of a surfeit of brandy (Ellis
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Correspondence, II, 165). Pack. Symond Pack, a musician and a captain in Princess Anne's Regiment of Foot (Dalton, II, 138), was called "finical" because he was overly fastidious in his choice of whores. On March 13, 1687, Etherege wrote from Ratisbon, "I find a convenience now and then in this Country, but can boast as little success in the pursuit of what I have loved as Captain Pack himself" (Letters, p. 101).

31. Warcup. Lenthal Warcup, lieutenant-colonel in Grafton's Royal Regiment of Footguards; he was killed at Steinkirk in 1692 (Dalton, I, 220, 315, 324). Newburgh. Charles Livingston, Earl of Newburgh (c. 1662–94).

32. Montrath. Charles Coote (c. 1655–1709), inherited as third Earl of Mountrath (Ireland) in 1672. Frank Villiers. "Villain Frank," see Appendix, Villiers (Grandison).

33. Wharton. Colonel Henry Wharton, third son of Philip, Lord Wharton. lewd Moll. Possibly the Duke of Norfolk's errant wife, Mary; however, her liaison with the Dutch gambler, John Germaine, was now well established, and she seems to have been true to him. Probably "Moll" is Mall Howard, the duke's cousin, who is frequently referred to as Harry Wharton's mistress. Perhaps there had been a temporary separation. On January 25, 1687, Thomas Maule wrote to Etherege, "he [Harry Wharton] has forsaken Mrs. Mary [Howard] and makes violent love to Mrs. Drumar" (Letters, p. 275).

34. Lumley. Richard, Viscount Lumley (1650–1721). It is not clear why he is called a "Sham plotmaker." The author of "Scandal Satired," c. 1682 (Harleian MS. 6913, p. 209) asserts that Lumley, "for low dissembling and by bribing high" was "preferred at last and raised to be a spy." Richard was created an English baron on May 21, 1681. Vol. Otherwise Vowell or Fowell. The only prominent gentleman by that name in 1687 was Sir John Fowell, Bart. (1665–92), of Fowellscombe, Devon., a Whig who on November 21, 1688, was mentioned as "newly gone to the Prince of Orange" (Hatton Correspondence, II, 110). Why he was called "Colchester's Vol" is not clear, unless he was a crony of Richard Savage (c. 1660–1712), who was called Lord Colchester until he inherited as fourth Earl Rivers in 1694.

35. Northumberland. George Fitzroy (1665–1712), third son of Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland, by Charles II.

36. Darcy. Colonel John D'Arcy (1659–89), eldest son of Conyers, Lord D'Arcy. Guy. Henry Guy (1631–1711) at this time was Secretary to the Treasury Commission.

37. Scarborough. Charles, son of the royal physician, Sir Charles Scarborough, was King James's envoy to Portugal in 1686. Scarsdale. Robert Leke, Earl of Scarsdale (1654–1707).

38. Bridges. George Rodney Bridges married Anna-Maria, the widowed Countess of Shrewsbury, in 1677, and became a Groom of the Bedchamber. For his drinking, see, on January 7, 1684, the petition of "Crispe Granger, Brewer, against George Bridges, Esq., one and sixty pounds for ale and beer" (PRO, Lord Chamberlain 5/191, p. 120).


41. Devonshire. William Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire (1640–1707) was forty-seven.
45. Court. A hit at King James, who, on July 15, 1686, appointed an Ecclesiastical Commission, or “Court of High Commission,” which was given jurisdiction in cases touching spiritual or ecclesiastical matters.

47. cozening. Deceiving.

50. Lady Betty. For Devonshire’s relations with Lady Betty Felton, see above, “Ballad on Betty Felton,” 1680.

53. best stored. Those equipped with good sense, but who never used it and left everything to chance, as if they were guided by a famous gambler, Tregonwell Frampton.

58. taudered. Decked in tawdry garments.


67. Gwin. Francis Gwin, an Irishman, in 1679 became Clerk of the Privy Council; apparently he was Mordaunt’s protégé.

74. fanatics’ new lights. Mordaunt liked “to preach in Coffee Houses and public places.” See Appendix.

87. Falkland. Anthony Carey, Viscount Falkland (1656–94), Treasurer of the Navy; see Appendix.

90. grandfather. Lucius Carey, second Viscount Falkland (1610–43), a distinguished scholar, soldier, and poet.


105. prologue. To Otway’s The Soldier’s Fortune, March, 1680.

110. Dorrington. James Doddington, or Dorrington, a cornet in Plymouth’s Regiment of Horse, December 12, 1686. He was slain at the Battle of the Boyne.

120. Cromwell or Meggs. Jenny Cromwell and Mary Meggs, two famous bawds. Mary Meggs (“Orange Moll”) was fruitwoman at the Theatre Royal until at least November 10, 1682 (PRO, Lord Chamberlain 5/191, p.102). In 1687 she was said to have become a Roman Catholic (“The Converts,” POAS, Yale, IV, 157).

135. Young Griffin. James Griffin (1667–1715), M.P. for Brackly 1685–87, was the son of Edward Griffin, Treasurer of The Chamber to Charles II and James II. On December 3, 1688, King James created Edward Baron Griffin of Braybrooke, a title which his son never assumed. If the son was like the father, he was a very unpleasant person. In “A Supplement to the Late Heroic Poem,” c. 1681 (Harleian MS. 6913, p. 227), Edward is called “Clown Griffin,”

Griffin, with whom even Killigrew durst fight,
Whose horses lose their fellow servants’ right,
Griffin, the falsest that e’er friend deceived,
Yet by the best of friends too well believed.


156. villain Frank. Francis Villiers; see Appendix, Villiers (Grandison).

163. Lady Bellamont. Frances (born 1642, daughter of William, sixth Lord Willoughby of Parham, married (1) Sir John Harper of Swarkeston, Derby; (2) Charles-
Henry Kirkhoven, Earl Bellamont (Ireland); and (3) on July 3, 1684, Henry Heveningham. A countess who married a commoner retained her title.

166. hectic. Fever.

167. Kildare. John Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare (1661-1707), married his second wife, on June 2, 1684, Elizabeth, a daughter of Richard Jones, Earl of Ranelagh. According to the gossips, she became mistress to Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester.

169. Rochester. Hyde, Earl of Rochester (who suffered by comparison with the poet John Wilmot, second Earl of Rochester) was Lord Treasurer from 1685 to January 4, 1687, when he was "cast," i.e., dismissed by King James.

175. Huntington. Theophilus Hastings, seventh Earl of Huntington (1650-1701), was famed as the possessor of an overlarge penis. In "The Quarrel between Frank and Nan," 1681 (POAS, Yale, II, 235) he is described as

... Huntington with his long tool,
Not as the mark of man but fool.

Originally a Whig, in 1681 Huntington recanted and was accepted again at Court. wheaking whey visage. Whining pale face.

179. villain Frank. Francis Villiers was appointed one of the four Tellers of the Exchequer in February, 1685 (CTB, 1681–85, p. 1524).

182. a mandamus. A mandamus was an order issued in the King's name, usually under the Great Seal. S.P. The initials may stand for Lord Sunderland, who usually signed the King's orders with "Sunderland P.", i.e., President of the Council.

186. jus divinum. Divine right; a hit at King James II.

189. Maudlins. Magdalen. On April 13, 1687, King James ordered the fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, to elect as their new president a young convert to Catholicism, Anthony Farmer, noted for his debauchery. He had never been a fellow of the college, and as a Catholic he was disqualified by law. On April 15, refusing the King's command, the fellows elected a qualified man, John Hough. In June the Ecclesiastical Commission declared Hough's election invalid, but said no more about Farmer. This seems to be where matters stood when the present satire was written. In August James ordered the fellows to elect Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford and a crypto-Catholic. They refused, saying that they had made their election. In September James installed Parker, deprived the fellows of their appointments, and replaced them with Roman Catholics (David Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 1955, pp. 183–85). assistants. The Exchequer clerks.

190. Sir Courtly. Sir Courtly Nice, the fool in John Crowne's Sir Courtly Nice, 1685.

197. rem in re. Coition. This is surely an exaggeration, yet on August 23, 1688, Etherege wrote of the ladies of Ratisbon, where he was stationed, "the Devil's in't, marriage is so much their buisness that they cannot satisfy a Lover who has desires more fervent than Franck Villars" (Letters, p. 232).

202. Sister Nancy. On April 13, 1687, Anne Villiers and Edward Rumbolt took out a license to marry; see Villiers (Grandison).

204. Sir Nice. Sir Courtly Nice.

206. Mountfort. William Mountfort, a popular actor, had created and continued to play the character of Sir Courtly Nice.

209. Teague. A common pejorative name for an Irishman.
211. **Lumley.** Henry Lumley, younger brother of Richard, Viscount Lumley; see Appendix.

214. *rammish Williams.* Lascivious, lustful Susannah Williams, a widow; see Appendix, Skipwith.


219. **Montagu.** Charles Montagu (1661—1713), fourth son of George Montagu (a younger son of Henry, first Earl of Manchester). In July, 1687, Montagu joined with Matthew Prior in writing a famous parody, *The Hind and the Panther Transversed* (see *POAS*, Yale, IV, 116). In 1688 Montagu was successful "with the fair," marrying (c. February) Anne, Dowager Countess of Manchester (Luttrell, I, 432). In the next reign, Montagu, as a Lord of the Treasury, was largely responsible for the founding of the Bank of England and the National Debt. Arrogant, vain, and ambitious, Montagu was created Earl of Halifax on October 19, 1714.


235. **Little Rowley.** I have found no courtier named Rowley. Perhaps the poet meant to suggest that his victim was a libertine, a diminutive version of "Old Rowley," King Charles II, and, like that king in his younger days, was now living in exile on the continent. Of the many exiled Whigs in Holland ("Dutchland") at this time, only one fits most of the circumstances: Dr. Gilbert Burnet, a Whig clergyman (1643—1715), often accused of lechery. It is possible, too, that the poet may have had in mind's Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther,* published in May, 1687. In Part II, lines 2547 to 2630, "the noble Buzzard"—Burnet—is crowned king of the Doves—the intransigent Anglican clergy. Burnet is described as

> A portly prince and goodly to the sight,
> He seemed a son of Anach for his height,
> Like those whom stature did to crowns prefer;
> Black-browed and bluff, like Homer's Jupiter,
> Broad-backed and brawny, built for love's delight,
> A prophet formed to make a female proselyte.

Dr. Burnet (not an "Oxford scholar") had fled from England in May, 1685, and, after a year of travel, had arrived at The Hague, where he became an unofficial "lieger," or resident envoy, from the English Whigs to the Court of William of Orange. Certainly "politics employed all his time," and his written blasts against Catholicism so enraged King James that he had Burnet outlawed in Scotland for treason, and tried to get him sent back to England for execution. As for his wife, in March, 1687, Burnet married (as his second wife) one Mary Scott, a lady who was heiress to a considerable fortune (*Portland MS*, III, 398).

247. **Wem language.** Intemperate, like the wild speech of George Jeffreys (1645—89), lawyer and judge who was created Baron Jeffreys of Wem in 1685.

251. **Feversham.** Lewis de Duras, Marquis de Blanquefort and Earl of Feversham (1641—1709), a Frenchman who was naturalized in 1673. He was technically in command of the King's army at the Battle of Sedgemoor, the climax of Monmouth's rebellion. In 1687 he was Master of the Horse and Lord Chamberlain to Dowager Queen Catherine.
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252. the Treasurer. Lawrence ("Lory") Hyde, Earl of Rochester, was noted for his arrogance and petulance. He was no longer Lord Treasurer; after his dismissal on January 4, 1687, the Treasury was put into commission.

259. Mordaunt. The poet seems to have had a special spite against Charles, Viscount Mordaunt, a rabid Whig. Stanzas 65 through 67 hint at an erotic adventure in St. James's Square (between Pall Mall and Piccadilly), in which the boastful hero met defeat. For a comparable adventure see "A Faithful Catalogue of Our Most Eminent Ninnies," 1687 (POAS, Yale, IV, 200).

271. Hayes. Sir James Hayes was a Privy Councillor and Lord Falkland's stepfather.

274. Dapperwit. A character in Wycherley's Love in a Wood, 1671, Dapperwit was "a brisk, conceited, half-witted fellow of the Town." The name is applied to Falkland.

279. Northumberland. George Fitzroy (1665–1716), third son of the Duchess of Cleveland by King Charles II, in 1686 married Catherine, widow of Sir Thomas Lucy, and, regretting his folly, kidnapped her to Flanders and placed her in a nunnery. See above, "The Two Tom Lucys," 1686.

291. Grafton. Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton (1663–90), a rough, uneducated fellow, took to the sea and was appointed Vice-Admiral of England.

295. Duncomb. Duncan Abercromy (see Appendix), a captain in Grafton’s Royal Regiment of Footguards, was Grafton’s follower and and crony.


298. he. i.e., Grafton, often called “tarpaulin.”


314. haggard. An untamed hawk.

316. Apsley. Sir Peter Apsley, Cofferer to King James II, lost his first wife, Anne, on September 5, 1681. Finally, in September, 1687, he married Catherine Fortrey, a Maid of Honor to Queen Marie. The use of “can” instead of “could” in line 315 suggests that the satire was written before Apsley’s marriage. Clifford. Probably Charles Boyle (1639–94), styled Viscount Dungarvan but commonly called Lord Clifford. He was forty-eight years old and long a widower.

319. fair Montague. Anne, aged twenty-two, eldest daughter of Robert Montague, third Earl of Manchester, became c. June, 1682, the third wife of James Howard, Earl of Suffolk (1620–89).

322. Newport. In December, 1681, Katherine, daughter of Francis, Lord Newport, married Henry Herbert, fourth Baron Herbert of Cherbury (1640–91). The author of “Satire,” 1682 (Harleian MS. 6913, p. 237) had a different view:

Let Herbert be a slave to Newport’s brat,
Charmed with the siren’s base seducing chatt. (pudendum)

326. young Luck. This temptress has eluded me. In “The Session of the Ladies,” 1688 (below) her name is marginally given as “Mrs. Luke,” with the notation “Sir
John Maynard’s Lady.” In “A Letter to Julian,” 1687 (Harleian MS. 7319, p. 522), Julian is asked,

What dost thou hear of Mrs. Luck?
Will she for love or money truck?
Shall Willoughby, as people say,
Get her by over-bidding Grey?

In “A Letter to Lady Osbourn,” 1688 (POAS, Yale, V, 80), we learn that “that pigmy, Grey” (of Ruthin) had been pursuing Mrs. Luck, but

... Nancy Luck refused [the] wicked chit,
She liked his gold, but not his childish wit.