

Nv9 Since Arthure, or his stable stood

Notes. Prince Charles and Buckingham arrived in Paris on 21 February 1623, on their way to Spain. Their temporary sojourn in France provides occasion for this mocking verse comparing Charles unfavourably to his more martial ancestors. Towards the end, the poem shifts its target to King James himself. Both P. Hammond (148) and Bellany (Politics 257) comment on the depiction of Buckingham as James's "spouse" in the penultimate stanza.

Since Arthure,¹ or his stable stood,
Or that black Prince² that was so good,
England could ne're advance,
A cronicle to fill with fame
Of him who onely has the name,
Alone in seeing France

5

Hee neither ridd his fathers fleete,
Nor mustered men his foes to meete;
As erst at Agincourt³
The mapcappe Prince of Wales⁴ once did;
Oh, no: such tumultes God forbidd;
He onely went in sporte.

10

Some say t'was love that drewe him out,
And then it followes out of doubt,
An errant Knight⁵ hee'l bee.
Which I confirme too by his store,
Two shirts hee tooke along no more
Perhappes hee'l bring home three

15

If safe hee passe in this disguise,⁶
As he was cunning whose advise
So ere provok'd him to it,

20

Has not hee farr more honour wonne,
Then hee which march'd with horrid drumme,
And came for to undoe it.

But if the French should chance to spye, 25
As they are plaguy knaves to prie,
The Marquesse⁷ and the Prince.
Should not wee subjects good dispayre,
For ever seeing Englands Heire,
without the French⁸ from thence. 30

Yet this for comfort still wee gather,
Two issues more⁹ his royall father
Conceald, has kept in store.
For whose rich matter every day,
The faithfull pastors¹⁰ truly pray: 35
And yet they still growe sore.

Nor have the people cause to hate
The King who ventured thus his state,
His care of thinges well knowne.
For Buckingham his spouse is gone, 40
And left the widowed King alone,
With sacke¹¹ and greefe upblowne.

And though the Counsell picke their teeth,
And with their nightcappes hide their greefe
Alas they are not blam'd. 45
For our safe Soveraighne ever chose,
Such heads to whom hee to disclose
His secretes was asham'd

Source. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 26, fols. 22v-23r

Other known sources. BL MS Harley 367, fol. 163r

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- ¹ *Arthure*: King Arthur, legendary British king.
 - ² *black Prince*: Edward, the Black Prince, son of Edward III, commander of English armies in France during the Hundred Years' War.
 - ³ *Agincourt*: Henry V defeated the armies of France at the battle of Agincourt in 1415.
 - ⁴ *mapcappe Prince of Wales*: Henry V had led a notoriously reckless youth.
 - ⁵ *errant Knight*: a wandering knight of chivalric romance.
 - ⁶ *disguise*: Charles left England disguised as the humble Jack Smith.
 - ⁷ *Marquesse*: the Marquis of Buckingham.
 - ⁸ *the French*: the pun here is on the common usage of "the French" as a synonym for the "French pox", or syphilis.
 - ⁹ *Two issues more*: probably referring to James's daughter Elizabeth and her husband Frederick V, Elector Palatine. Deposed as King and Queen of Bohemia by Imperial forces in 1620, then driven from the Palatinate by Spanish and Bavarian troops, Frederick and Elizabeth were refugees in The Hague.
 - ¹⁰ *faithfull pastors*: i.e. Protestant ministers, critical of the Spanish Match, and ardent supporters of the cause of the Elector Palatine.
 - ¹¹ *sacke*: wine.
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