

## Oii Parliament and Poison (1626)

### Oii1 when the uncivill civill peace of State

*Notes.* The date of this poem is difficult to establish with precision. It might have been written during the delays preceding the 1627 expedition to the Ile de Ré outside the besieged French Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle, or during the delays before the second expedition planned for the summer of 1628. But it may instead date from earlier in the La Rochelle crisis, perhaps from the period 1625-26. In any case, the political punch of the poem comes in its last line, lamenting the reversal of proper authority brought on by the excessive power of Buckingham in the late 1620s.

“Upon the slowed provision for Rochell”

when the uncivill civill peace of State  
makes such as live in peace unfortunate  
then men of warre are streight brought to this passe  
the stoutest Lion proves the Cravenest Asse  
and those wont fight<sup>1</sup> with men of all condicions  
nowe fight with none for they have no Commissions<sup>2</sup>  
who doubts this state let him on that state looke  
wheras the Duke’s a king the king a Duke.

5

**Source.** BL Add. MS 29492, fol. 55v

Oii1

<sup>1</sup> *those wont fight*: this phrase remains ambiguous. It could be read either as “those wont to fight”, or as “those won’t fight”.

<sup>2</sup> *Commissions*: i.e. commissions as officers. Buckingham’s awarding of commissions for the Ré expedition aroused a certain amount of criticism.

---