

Oiii4 Excuse me Eliott if I heare name thee

Notes. The title of this poem alludes to the Commons' session of 11 June 1628, in which MPs debated whether the House should formally name the Duke of Buckingham in their Remonstrance to the King as the cause of the grievances afflicting the nation. Many of the speakers listed in the poem—and some of the language and arguments attributed to them—can also be found in the surviving parliamentary diaries' accounts of the 11 June debate (see *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.245 ff.). Some lines in the poem, however, allude to speeches made during earlier debates. The more common version of this poem does not include the final twelve lines found in our chosen source. *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* (6.245-246) prints a copy from University of Edinburgh Library MS Laing III 493, fols. 30-31, and cites another copy in Dr. Williams's Library, London, MS R.M. 31 E. The Laing copy lacks the final twelve lines of our chosen version, but does include extra passages (of eight and six lines respectively) at two points in the middle of the poem. We have included these lines in the notes.

“Upon the nameinge of the Duke of Buckingham the Remonstrance”

Excuse me Eliott¹ if I heare name thee

the tyme requires itt since fewe honest bee

and learned Selden² for thy pregnant witt

to be then named lett itt not seeme unfitt

I shall not spare to put you two in one,

since honest Longe hath made the motion³

tis due you to the world be understood

more then Roomes Cato,⁴ hee who dust⁵ be good

When Cesar must be badd for the greate duke

feares nothinge more then the severe rebuke

tis Buckingham wee doe not feare the woord

for Cooke⁶ to name him now hath found record

what though that Beecher⁷ will their words relate

and Spencer⁸ take exceptions to dilate

Jordane⁹ who neere did sweare nowe moveth that

Hele have a bill against his Spanish hatt

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hee doth not love his clothes, protests the man
was made the Dukes of an Armenian¹⁰
and doth beleve the tother will stay fort
before he getts the place hee seekes at Court 20
but May¹¹ makes mouthes, and tells you as a freind
to name the man were not to woorke your end
and why saith Mr. Bish¹² I never reade
but of one namelesse and hee indeed
to hell did goe, as you shall plainly finde 25
in Luke the Sixt one damned of the kinde
Quoth Captaine Charles¹³ you are mistooke that's flatt
his name was Dives I can tell you that
but Mr. Nicholas¹⁴ speakes uppon his word
twas those imployed, who did abuse his lord 30
brave Mansell¹⁵ tells them they were cowards all
Imploid to Calles and first their generall
not soe quoth Sir John Maynard¹⁶ I knowe more
and will you tell that you neere heard before
there was a forte built on a Nook of land 35
twas cald Pomfall¹⁷ bravely by Spaniards mand
hee at the fort as tis to many knowne
two thousand shott did make, nere hurt a stone
but they all runn away and to be shorte
bravely Wimbleton¹⁸ he then tooke the forte 40
Sir Edward Giles¹⁹ as angry said that hee
would have him named, as it was fitt to bee²⁰
and Valentine²¹ clappinge his hand on his brest
stoutly resolves that soe hee thinks itt best
this prejudiciall judgment Kinge afords 45
even as Sir Elliott²² did expresse his words
but pardon pray the rime for the pretence

and take his meaninge for his little sence
for sure it was, because hee had not dyn'd
which made him that his witts hee left behind 50
for there from 7 till 7 came againe
wee fastinge satt, which well might tame his braine
the dreames expired the flocks are safely kept
for ever since Sir Nethersall hath slept
longe may hee sleepe and never wake againe 55
untill that his Bellweather hath Conquerd Spaine²³
But Willy²⁴ Diggs,²⁵ alasse was sicke that day
his doubtfull minde could not indure the fray
And soe was Roringe Robin²⁶ for well hee did foresee
for speakinge truth that chidden he should bee 60
and honest Howtham²⁷ that some cake had gott
Cooke²⁸ angry dogge did eate itt every Jott
when hee inraged did fall uppon his skin
fearinge leaste else hee might have bitt his shin
then holy Lawrence²⁹ tells a heathen fable 65
of Jove and Junoes daughter marrigable³⁰
and still in zeale turnes upp the white ofs eye
as if he ment to fetch them from the sky
then Viscount Slygo tells us a longe story
of the supply,³¹ as if he sunge John Dory³² 70
thats not the pointe quoth Littleton³³ the stoute
read but the order himselfe will see hees out
up starts Ansley³⁴ at every turne and moved
will you condeme the D³⁵ befort be proved
Nay saith bawlinge Dawson³⁶ I will sacrafice 75
my life for him, and out of the dores hee flyes³⁷
For Mr. Speaker³⁸ you in danger are
and if the Dunkerks³⁹ come they will you scare

here att the windowes they will plucke you out
 if that on London bridge they keepe not scout 80
 all that longe while satt Wentworth⁴⁰ at the barr
 bravely expectinge the issue of the warr
 till att the last hee sawe that the report
 will keepe him longer att that hungry sport
 but lastly Wainsford⁴¹ the question well did frame 85
 and valliently put in his gracious name
 then little Jackson⁴² rored itt out well moved
 as if his sides were bell mettle approved
 tell mee who could say more then hee
 that range the forebell att the subsidy 90
 of pluckinge of the maske from the Kings eye
 thereby to see the Kingdoms missery
 But when the D⁴³ the cause should be exprest
 who could say lesse, his clapper was at rest
 when Sir Andrewe Corbett⁴⁴ had given him a sapp 95
 Sir Thomas Bromley⁴⁵ then threwe upp his capp
 But Robin Harley⁴⁶ cried soft I pray Sirs
 for on this point I thinke wee ought to stay Sirs
 And for Gods wisdome thinke uppou Ephestion⁴⁷
 whether itt be fitt to putt itt to the Question. 100

Source. BL MS Harley 6057, fols. 52v-53v

Other known sources. *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628*, 6.245-46; Bodleian MS Malone 23, p. 110; Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 100v; BL Add. MS 10309, fol. 40r; BL MS Sloane 826, fol. 154v; Folger MS V.b.277, fol. 98r; Houghton MS Eng. 1278, item 13

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¹ *Eliott*: Sir John Eliot, MP for Cornwall, a leading critic of Buckingham in 1626 and 1628, and the architect of the 1628 Remonstrance.

- ² *learned Seldon*: John Selden, MP for Ludgershall, Wiltshire, lawyer and antiquarian.
- ³ *Longe hath made the motion*: Walter Long, who made the motion to name Buckingham as the cause of the evils enumerated in the Remonstrance.
- ⁴ *Roomes Cato*: M. Porcius Cato, Roman politician and leading Stoic, who fought against Julius Caesar in the civil wars. Cato committed suicide rather than be captured by Caesar.
- ⁵ *dust*: probable scribal error; read “durst” or “darst”.
- ⁶ *Cooke*: Sir Edward Coke, leading MP and former Lord Chief Justice under James I.
- ⁷ *Beecher*: Sir William Beecher, MP and a Clerk of the Privy Council (and thus likely to report the speeches in the Commons to the King and Council).
- ⁸ *Spencer*: for Richard Spencer’s speeches against naming the Duke, see *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 6.248, 266.
- ⁹ *Jordane*: Ignatius Jordan, the notoriously Puritan MP for Exeter. None of the diarists records a Jordan speech in the 11 June debate on the naming of the Duke.
- ¹⁰ *Armenian*: i.e. Arminian; a follower of the anti-Calvinist Dutch theologian Arminius. The rise of Arminianism in the English Church was one of the evils attributed to Buckingham in the Remonstrance.
- ¹¹ *May*: Sir Humphrey May, who argued against naming the Duke (see, e.g., *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4. 246).
- ¹² *Mr. Bish*: Edward Bysshe.
- ¹³ *Captaine Charles*: Charles Price. One diarist’s report helps clarify the exchange between Bysshe and Price. In the report, Bysshe states that, “I think the Duke will take it for a dishonor if he be not named. I never heard of any man without a name but one, and that was the rich man in the Gospel”. Price counters, “The gentleman has mistaken his text, the man’s name was Dives” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.268). The two are alluding to the parable of Dives and Lazarus in Luke 16.19-31 (not “Luke the Sixt”).
- ¹⁴ *Mr. Nicholas*: Edward Nicholas, a Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Admiralty. Nicholas spoke in defence of Buckingham on 11 June and during other debates on the charges against him.
- ¹⁵ *Mansell*: Sir Robert Mansell, MP and former Vice-Admiral of the Narrow Seas. These lines refer to a speech Mansell made on 6 June 1628 during the Commons’ discussion of the failed Cadiz expedition of 1625. Mansell blamed the failure of the expedition on “error and want of judgment” in the planning,

and lack of “valor in the undertaking of the business” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.160).

¹⁶ *Sir John Maynard*: Maynard spoke on the Cadiz expedition during the debate on 6 June 1628. The details in the next seven lines mostly correspond to the diarist’s account of his speech in *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.160.

¹⁷ *Pomfall*: i.e. Puntal.

¹⁸ *Wimbleton*: Edward Cecil, Viscount Wimbledon, the commander of the Cadiz expedition.

¹⁹ *Sir Edward Giles*: the diarists do not record a speech by Sir Edward Giles on 11 June.

²⁰ *bee*: the Laing MS copy includes an extra eight lines at this point. They run as follows:

But Onslow, as engaged, often moved
For want of other sense, to have it proved.
When Marten failed in his philosophy,
Scudamore replied, it was necessity,
The cause of these effects, which if removed
(As for his honor sake it him behooved),
Favors should come alone; so Griffith spake,
Much to no purpose, few did notice take.

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(*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 6.245). The MPs named in these lines are Sir Richard Onslow, Sir Henry Marten, Sir John Scudamore and John Griffith (a client of Buckingham).

²¹ *Valentine*: Benjamin Valentine. The surviving diaries do not record Valentine speaking during the 11 June debate, but these lines might refer to his widely-copied speech of 5 June in which he “protests he fears this great man has soldiers every place to cut our throats” and moved the House “to have him voted...the common enemy of the kingdom” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.125).

²² *Sir Elliott*: variant sources read “Sir Estcourt” or “Sir Escot” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 6.245). This is Sir Giles Estcourt who, during the 11 June debate, ventured that, “We go about to tax the King’s judgment in taxing this man thus”. Sir John Eliot rebuked Estcourt and demanded he go to the bar to answer for this imputed charge against the House. Estcourt offered a face-saving explanation for his words, and an apology (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.247).

²³ *the dreames...Conquerd Spaine*: allusion to Sir Francis Nethersole’s speech of 12 April 1628, in which he told the Commons of his dream of the previous night: “Methought I saw two fair and goodly pastures. The one an enclosure, the other common. The common had a fair flock of sheep in it. The enclosure had only a goodly bellwether [‘the leading sheep of a flock’ (*OED*)]. I found there was a

division betwixt these grounds by a great deep ditch, and a narrow, narrow bridge to join them together. I saw the bellwether hasting to the common to invite the sheep to eat with him, but the narrow bridge hindered his passage. Whereupon a poor sheep said, ‘There is no means for him to pass. Let us all lie down upon our bellies, that the bellwether may pass over us’” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 2.434-35).

²⁴ *Willy*: probable scribal error; read “wily”.

²⁵ *Diggs*: Sir Dudley Digges.

²⁶ *Roringe Robin*: Sir Robert Phelips (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 6.246 n.3). The allusion may be to Phelips’s speech of 5 June (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.119).

²⁷ *Howtham*: Sir John Hotham. The meaning of the anecdote in this and the following three lines is obscure.

²⁸ *Cookes*: it is not clear whether this is a reference to Sir Edward Coke.

²⁹ *holy Lawrence*: perhaps Lawrence Whitaker, MP and Clerk of the Privy Council. There appears to be no account of this “heathen fable” in the surviving diary reports of the Parliament. The poet uses anti-Puritan language—noting that Whitaker “in zeale turnes upp the white ofs eye”—and this fits with Whitaker’s reported speeches that indicate he was, at the least, a fervent anti-Papist (see, e.g., *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.151).

³⁰ *Jove and Junoes daughter marrigable*: Jove and Juno were king and queen of the gods, and their daughter Hebe or Juventas, goddess of youth, was married to Hercules. Without evidence of the actual speech, it is difficult to apply these mythological allusions to contemporary political circumstances. One possible link is that Hebe was displaced as cupbearer to the gods by Ganymede—to whom Buckingham was often compared in the early 1620s. Alternatively, the allusion could be to Elizabeth, the daughter of James I, who had married Frederick V, Elector Palatine, a leader of the beleaguered Protestant cause on the continent.

³¹ *Viscount Slygo...of the supply*: Sir John Scudamore held the Irish title of Viscount Sligo. This refers to Scudamore’s speech of 5 June, in which he argued that to win the King’s love the Commons should move ahead with the subsidy grant to the Crown (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.120).

³² *John Dory*: a popular ballad (see Simpson 398-400).

³³ *Littleton*: there were two Littletons in the Commons in 1628, Edward and Thomas. A “Mr. Littleton” responded to Scudamore’s attempt to move consideration of the subsidy on 5 June (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628* 4.121).

³⁴ *Ansley*: Sir Francis Annesley. The allusion is to his remarks on 5 June (*Proceedings in Parliament,*

1628 4.127).

³⁵ *the D*: the Duke of Buckingham.

³⁶ *Dawson*: Sir George Dalston.

³⁷ *flyes*: variant versions include the couplet, “And Valentine, clapping his hand on’s breast, / Stoutly resolves, yea now I thinke it best”, here rather than earlier in the poem (e.g. BL MS Sloane 826).

³⁸ *Mr. Speaker*: Sir John Finch was Speaker of the Commons in 1628.

³⁹ *Dunkerks*: pirates based in the Southern Netherlands port of Dunkirk, who preyed on English shipping in this period.

⁴⁰ *Wentworth*: Sir Thomas Wentworth, MP for Yorkshire.

⁴¹ *Wainsford*: Christopher Wandesford. These lines probably allude to Wandesford’s remarks on 11 June (see *Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.268*).

⁴² *Jackson*: Sir John Jackson. If Jackson spoke on 11 June, the diarists did not record his speech.

⁴³ *the D*: the Duke of Buckingham.

⁴⁴ *Sir Andrewe Corbett*: during the 11 June debate, Sir Andrew Corbet endorsed Wandesford’s conclusion that Buckingham’s excessive power “and the abuse of it has been the cause of those evils that have befallen us” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.268*).

⁴⁵ *Sir Thomas Bromley*: Sir Thomas Bromley was MP for Worcestershire. His speech (or cap-throwing) on 11 June is not recorded in the surviving diaries.

⁴⁶ *Robin Harley*: Sir Robert Harley, MP and Master of the Mint. During the 11 June debate, Harley was reluctant to name the Duke in the Remonstrance because he felt they could still reform him and “make him a good instrument of the good of the kingdom” (*Proceedings in Parliament, 1628 4.266*).

⁴⁷ *Ephestion*: the OED defines “ephestian” as domestic as opposed to foreign. Perhaps the meaning here is that Harley is asking MPs to ponder the domestic consequences of their actions.
