

Pi23 Great Gorge, and art thou gonne

Notes. In the only known source, this poem is attributed to “ E.K. ”, the author of several other poems in William Davenport’s collection.

Great Gorge, and art thou gonne?

t’were childishe for a man to moane

for one soe well departed.

thou hast thy cuntryes free good wille

although it’s plaine, thou livinge still

to her was hollowe harted.

I will not slander one that’s dead

to saye that Buckinghame is fledd

to any place off reste,

Or that hees in cælestiall sleepe

or Christians true for him doe weepe

or holy crosse him bleste,

Yett I am sure hele ryse againe,

I will not saye to eternall paine

which he soe well deserved.

Could not the reliquices¹ off his Lambe²

or his owne deere Idolatrous Damme³

From Felton him preserve.

But I will leave this censure free

to any that will Judge for mee

how god hath him disposed;

I am pleased; he lived and dyed mounst French⁴

he wanted but a Madride wench⁵

his eyes, for to have closed.

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¹ *reliquices*: the relics of saints, and thus objects of specifically “popish” veneration.

² *Lambe*: Dr. John Lambe, astrologer-physician, convicted witch and presumed associate of Buckingham.

³ *own deere Idolatrous Damme*: Buckingham’s mother (“Damme”), Mary Compton, Countess of Buckingham, was a known Catholic convert and thus, in Protestant eyes, “Idolatrous”.

⁴ *he lived and dyed mounst French*: although this line refers generally to Buckingham’s moral foreignness, it may also allude specifically to his travels in France as a young man and during his court ascendancy, his military expedition to France in 1627, and to the fact that in the room with him when he was assassinated were several prominent Huguenots, there to consult with Buckingham about the relief of La Rochelle. The “french” was also common slang for syphilis.

⁵ *Madride wench*: like the similar allusion to the “Madrille wench” in “Oure crossrow’s turnd, a signe off monstrous luck” (like this poem, only found in William Davenport’s collection), this seems to refer to Buckingham’s alleged sexual adventures in Madrid in 1623.
