

UTILE DULCE

([*January*,] 1681)

This shotgun satire may be a joint product of the two men named in the last lines, Viscount Falkland and Jack Howe, or at least of the latter. In Howe's usual slashing style, the poet rails at almost everyone: Whig and Tory, fops, fools, poets, cuckolds, bullies, and jilting whores, from the orange wench to the King's chief mistress, meanwhile giving himself full credit for moral indignation. The title, implying "profit mingled with pleasure," is from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, "Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci." What may be, in lines 80–85, a reference to the trial of William Howard, Viscount Stafford, November 30 to December 7, 1680, places the satire not long after that event.

The copy text is Harleian MS. 6913, p. 151. The poem is dated 1681 in Harleian MS. 7319, p. 126; Bodleian MS. Firth c. 15, p. 96; and "A Choyce Collection," p. 82. It is undated in Dyce MS. 43, I, 304, and Douce MS. 357, f. 134v.

Muse, let us change our style and live in peace,
In our soft lines let biting satire cease.
Believe me, 'tis an evil trade to rail;
The angry poet's hopes do often fail,
Instead of bays a cudgel oft does find. 5
Some lines, for being praised when they were read,
Were once a cause of Dryden's broken head.
A tedious elegy may without fear
On Peters' table lie for seven year;
Not Henningham, nor any critic fop, 10
Scarce wry-mouthed Tyzard, deigns to take it up.
Bold Wharton hears it read without a frown,
And the author safe, unthreatened, walks the town;
But he that jeers and makes the reader smile,

Whom all find fault with, and yet read him still, While giddily without respect he flies, Even those he pleases makes his enemies. For who about this spacious town can hear A knave, a fop, a cuckold's character, But straight he thinks within his guilty mind One (if not all of these) for him designed? Describe a nauseous, false, and withered whore (As if there were but she), straight Nelly'll roar.	15
Might I as freely, as once Juvenal, In public at prevailing vices rail? What it't to me how Hewitt's cravats sit? Or that some greater fools think him a wit? Let Mordaunt copy Sir John Suckling's songs, Call 'em his own and have 'em set in throngs; Let Mulgrave be thought handsome, Poulteney brave, Bennet sincere and Sund[er]land no knave; Let Harry Wharton pass in Jermyn Street For honest, prudent, and a man of wit; Let circulating pox go round the House 'Till there be'nt left so much as a sound mouse; Let Deincourt, Nobbs, and 'foresaid Harry troll, And sacred ballocks 'bout their fingers roll; Let Gerard houses fire, Oglethrope fight, And swear each common health is drunk in spite; It ne'er shall trouble me. Why then complain? Henceforward, Muse, we must correct this vein. If you must rhyme, let's the great praises sing Of our most potent, just, and prudent King; His brother's conduct, wit, and policy, His gratitude and great sincerity, Unmatched by anything but's piety. Let's tell how true friend he proved to Coleman, And how unjustly he accused— In vain I labor; 'tis but losing time; When I would praise, I cannot find one rhyme.	25 30 35 40 45 50

Each line I write is empty and constrained;
 Th'unwilling pen and paper fly my hand;
 But when I rail, from off Parnassus' top
 Th'officious Sisters haste to help me up. 55
 Words of themselves do in order drop
 And smoothly say that St. Johns is a fop;
 Or would I of a famous cuckold tell,
 My hand inspired straight writes down Arundel;
 Of bombast poets which infest the town,
 There's Otway, Settle, D'Urfey, Lee, and Crowne; 60
 I find a dozen where I seek but one.
 Fruitful in mischief, thus my Muse prevails,
 Careless of what or who, when once she rails;
 Jenkins no more than Mustian she saves,
 Nor know I why she should, since both are knaves. 65
 To men of worth a just respect I bear;
 Their names are sacred, as their virtues are.
 None e'er shall in my loosest satires find
 A virtuous woman or an honest friend.
 Three creatures in the world I own I hate: 70
 A fop, a jilting whore, and flatt'ring cheat.
 Whilst thus I scribbling sit, methinks I hear
 The men in fury, ladies all o'er fear,
 "See, there's the censuring monster! Let's be grave,
 He'll libel you if he but hear you laugh." 75
 But what of that? Must I alone sit still?
 Shall all be mad, and I not dare to smile?
 When I see puking Portsmouth can I hold,
 Seeming to save what she long since has sold,
 Blocked up with bawds in humble manner set, 80
 Courting the senators with scraps of meat?
 Can I see Deincourt robed, resolved to save
 (With his no honor) each conspiring knave,
 His wife above with pocky Temple sit,
 Consulting to his face where next to meet, 85
 Hear him give's vote, and say he's just or wise?

I could as soon think he no cuckold is.
 When I see ladies in the dead of night,
 Crammed up in hackney coach with each a knight,
 Scouring from house to house like drunk or mad, 90
 Plaguing the Town with noise and serenade,
 Force Lower from his bed, which h'has denied
 To many patients, though the wretches died;
 Or when at Potter's bawdy house, renowned
 As any of that quality i'th'town, 95
 I hear how ladies bred in godly way
 Have oft of late been known to go astray—
 With all good manners, I presume t'advise,
 Not that they be less merry, but more wise.
 But he who undertakes this Town to teach 100
 Does modesty to ranting Stamford preach,
 Who with more pride her tribe of fools discovers
 Than Richmond hides the number of her lovers.
 So long in vain have friendly poets taught
 To fly those pleasures which with shame are bought: 105
 The orange wench that prostrates at the door
 Would be thought chaste, and frowns at the name of whore.
 While ladies in the boxes seem at strife
 Whose reputation shall have shortest life.
 Just now I hear wise Harry Lumley say, 110
 "These satires all diversion do destroy.
 Such coxcombs know not, nor deserve the bliss
 Which a discreet, kind, faithful mistress gives."
 Now all the ladies' pride and chiefest joy
 Is to be ogled at the next new play; 115
 Fleering about, with softest looks they sit
 And give encouragement to all the pit;
 Then, filled with hopes, to the box the coxcombs crowd,
 Grin and speak powerful nonsense very loud.
 There's not a fool so awkward in the nation; 120
 Even Chute and St. Johns dare now talk of passion.
 Baber's a spark, and Hales a politician.

To strut in'th' pit Southerland leaves his duty;
 And Lady Warwick sets up for a beauty.
 Love, thus burlesqued, withdraws himself in rage, 125
 And wondrous seldom's seen on this our stage.
 But the young, discreet, the witty and the fair,
 He promises shall still his blessings share,
 And charged me these his last commands to give
 To all who in his favor wish to live: 130
 "Be fond in private, but in public grave;
 Avoid a fool, a coxcomb, and a knave;
 Be wise as maids which are in cloisters blest;
 Come veiled to the world, but naked to the priest.
 So Falkland will be forced to burn his pen, 135
 And peevish Jack will never write again."

7. *Dryden's broken head.* A reference to the beating suffered by John Dryden in Rose Alley, December 18, 1679, supposedly incited by someone reflected on in "An Essay upon Satyr," of which Dryden was suspected to be the author.

9. *Peters' table.* Peters' Coffeehouse in Covent Garden was a well-known Whig resort.

10. *Henningham.* Henry Heveningham of Heveningham, Sussex, wit and satirist.

11. *wry-mouthed Tyzard.* Apparently Henry Lumley, younger brother of Richard, Lord Lumley (see Appendix). In "A Satyr," c. 1680 (Add. MS. 34, 362, p. 131), we are told that "wry-mouthed Lumley does in judgment sit."

12. *bold Wharton.* Thomas and Henry Wharton were notably belligerent, but Thomas, the older brother, seems more likely here.

23. *Nelly.* Nell Gwyn.

26. *Hewitt.* Sneers at Sir George Hewitt's cravats are tiresomely frequent in Court satires.

28. *Mordaunt.* The charge that Charles, Viscount Mordaunt, plagiarized from Suckling is repeated in "To Julian. 1684" (Harleian MS. 7317, p. 181); Mordaunt has proved that he can write "By's making Suckling's songs his own."

30. *Mulgrave.* Because John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, had an overly long nose, he was not considered handsome. *Poultney.* For the reputed cowardice of John, second son of Sir William Pulteney, see Appendix, Pulteney.

31. *Bennet.* Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington and Lord Chamberlain. *Sund[er]-land.* Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, was dismissed from his post as Secretary of State on January 24, 1681, for advocating the exclusion of the Duke of York from the succession to the throne.

COURT SATIRES OF THE RESTORATION

36. *Deincourt*. Robert Leke, Lord Deincourt, inherited as Earl of Scarsdale on January 27, 1681. *Nobbs*. Probably George Porter, Junior; see Appendix. *troll*. Sing lustily.

38. *Gerard*. Sir Gilbert Gerard, Bart., of Fiskerton, was a fiery Whig, but there is no evidence that he fired houses; perhaps the poet implies that he fired (i.e., stirred up) the House of Commons at its various sessions. *Oglethorpe*. Major Theophilus Oglethorpe was a rabid Tory, apparently ready to fight over so small a matter as a "common health," a toast. On February 17, 1680, he challenged various Whigs who had spoken "words against the Duchess of Portsmouth, but the challenge was refused" (Newdigate Newsletter). On January 10, 1681, Oglethorpe, with Cornet Colt as his second, fought a duel with Captain Richardson and Captain Churchill. Oglethorpe killed the first, and Colt wounded the second. Found guilty of manslaughter, Oglethorpe pleaded his clergy, "asked for the book, read it, and was branded"—with a cold iron, no doubt (*Ormonde MS*, N.S., V, 55; *Middlesex County Records*, IV, 150).

47. *Coleman*. Edward Coleman, the Duchess of York's secretary, was executed on December 3, 1678, for complicity in the Popish Plot. According to Burnet (II, 167), "It was given out at that time, to make the Duke [of York] more odious, that Coleman was kept up from making confessions by the hopes the Duke sent him of a pardon at Tyburn."

56. *St. Johns*. Henry (1652–1742), son of Sir Walter St. John of Lydiard, Wilts. On April 16, 1679, Henry Savile wrote from Paris that Mr. St. John was there "fattening his horses for sale." He concluded, "I have already been asked if, besides not speaking the language, he be not *un peu fol*" (*Rochester-Savile Letters*, p. 67).

58. *Arundel*. Henry Howard, Earl of Arundel, inherited as Duke of Norfolk in 1684; see Appendix, Norfolk.

59. *bombast poets*. Five playwrights: Thomas Otway (1652–85), Elkanah Settle (1648–1724), Thomas D'Urfey (1653–1723), Nathaniel Lee (1640–92), and John Crowne (1640–1712).

64. *Jenkins*. Probably Sir Leoline Jenkins (1623–85), Principal Secretary of State from April, 1680, to April, 1684. *Mustian*. Unidentified.

78. *Portsmouth*. In 1680–81, Louise, Duchess of Portsmouth and the King's chief mistress, was dabbling in politics, partly with the hope that if York was excluded from the succession, her own son by the King, the Duke of Richmond, might be named as the King's heir.

82. *Deincourt*. Robert Leke, Lord Deincourt, was called to the House of Lords on October 22, 1680. On November 30, 1680, William Howard, Viscount Stafford, was tried for conspiring to bring about the death of King Charles. His judges and jury were the members of the House of Lords, all in their robes. His prosecutors represented the House of Commons. On December 7 the peers were asked to give their verdicts as their names were called. Then (wrote Evelyn) "the peer spoken to standing up and laying his right hand upon his heart said 'Guilty,' or 'Not guilty, upon my honor.'" Stafford was convicted by a vote of 55 to 31; he was beheaded on December 29.

84. *his wife*. In February, 1672, Deincourt married Mary, daughter of Sir John Lewis, Bart., of York. She became notorious for her affairs and died February 17, 1684. *Temple*. Probably Sir Richard ("Timber") Temple (1634–97), a Whig member of the House of Commons.

92. *Lower*. Sir Richard Lower (1631–91), a famous London physician.

94. *Potter's*. An "India House," or shop for the sale of goods from India, kept by Mrs. Jane Potter. According to the author of "Satyr," c. 1681 (Harleian MS. 6913, p. 233), the bawdy houses in Whetstones Park were closed because

De Vett and Potter have usurped the trade,
With Indy trinkets many cuckolds made,
And in their stuff love letters oft conveyed.

It was said that Mrs. Potter had a part in arranging Thomas Thynne's ill-fated marriage with Lady Elizabeth Ogle in the autumn of 1681 (see Appendix, Ogle).

101. *Stamford*. At this time Elizabeth (Harvey), the wanton Countess of Stamford, was separated from her husband, Thomas Gray, Earl of Stamford.

103. *Richmond*. Frances, Duchess of Richmond; see Appendix.

106. *the orange wench*. A girl who sold oranges in the theatres and, as a side line, her own delectable person.

108. *boxes*. Side boxes in the theatres.

116. *fleering*. Grinning.

121. *Chute*. Chaloner Chute, a minor wit and courtier.

122. *Baber*. John Baber, a poetaster, son of the Court physician, Sir John Baber. *Hales*. Sir Edward Hales, Bart., of Woodchurch, Kent, became a Roman Catholic in 1685, and by King James II was appointed successively lieutenant of Dover Castle, lieutenant of the Tower, and colonel of a regiment of foot. He joined James in exile and died c. 1695 (Dalton, II, 35).

123. *Southerland*. Probably Hugh Southerland, who in 1678 was commissioned captain in the First Footguards (Dalton, I, 289). See "Satyr," c. 1680 (*POAS*, Yale, II, 206).

Shall Howe and Brandon politicians prove,
And Sutherland presume to be in love?

124. *Warwick*. Anne (Montague), elderly widow of Robert Rich, sixth Earl of Warwick (1620-75). She died in July, 1689.

135. *Falkland*. Anthony Carey, Viscount Falkland; see Appendix.

136. *peevish Jack*. John Grubham Howe; see Appendix.