Cant 2a - The Dutchesse of _Suffolkes_ Calamitie.

Or to the tune of Queene Dido.

When God had taken for our sinne,
that prudent Prince K. _Edward_ away:
Then bloudie _Bonner_ did begin
his raging mallice to bewray:
Al those that did the Gospell professe,
he persecuted more or lesse.

Thus when the Lord on vs did lower,
many in prison did he throwe:
Tormenting them in _Lollards_ tower,
whereby they might the truth forgoe:
Then _Cranmer, Ridlie_, and the rest,
were burnt in fire, that Christ profest.

Smithfield was then with Faggots fyld,
and many places more beside:
At _Couentry_ was _Sanders_ kild,
at _Gloster_ eke good _Hooper_ dyed:
And to escape this bloudie day,
beyond seas many fled away.

Among the rest that sought reliefe.
and for their faith in danger stood:
Lady _Elizabeth_ was cheefe.
King _Henries_ daughter of royall bloud:
Which in the tower prisoner did lye,
looking each day when she should die.

The Dutches of _Suffolke_ seeing this,
whose life likewise the Tyrant sought:

Who in the hope of heauenly blisse,
which in Gods word her comfort wrought:
For feare of death was faine to flye,
and leaue her house most secretly.

That for the loue of Christ alone,
her landes and goodes she left behinde:
Seeking still for that pretious stone,
the word of truth so rare to finde.
She with her nurse, her Husband and childe,
in poore aray their sights beguild.

Thus through _London_ they past along,
each one did take a seuerall streete:
Thus all vnknowne, escaping wrong,
at _Billinsgate_ they all did meet
Like people poore in _Grauesend_ Barge,
they simply went with all their charge.

And all along from _Grauesend_ Towne,
with easie iourneis on foote they went:
Vnto the sea coast they came downe,
to passe the seas was their intent:
And God prouided so that day,
that they tooke Ship and saild away.

And with a prosperous gale of wind,
in _Flaunders_ safe they did ariue.
This was to their great ease of mind
which from their harts much woe did driue,
And so with thankes to God on hie,
they tooke their way to _Germanie_.

Thus as they traueld thus disguisde,
vpon the hie waie sudainely:
By cruell theeues they were supprisde,
assailing[1] their small company:
And all their treasure and their store
they tooke away, and beat them sore.

The Nurse in middest of their fight,
laide downe the childe vpon the ground:
She ran away out of their sight,

[1] Assulting [1607]

and neuer after that was found:
Then did the Dutches make great mone,
with her good husband all alone.

The theeues had there their horses kilde,
and all their money quite had tooke:
The prettie babie almost spild,
was by their Nurse likewise forsooke:
And they farre from friends did stand,
all succourlesse in a strange land.

The skies likewise began to scowle,
it hailde and rainde in pittious sort:
The way was long and wonderous foule,
then may I now full[2] well report
Their griefe and sorrow was not small,
when this vnhappy chance did fall.

Sometime the Dutchesse bore the child,
as wet as euer she could be,
And when the Ladie kinde and milde
was wearie, then the childe bore he:
And thus they one another easde,
and with their fortunes were well pleasde.

And after many wearied steppes,
all wet-shod both in dyrt and myre:
After much griefe their heart it leapes,
for labour doth some rest require,
A towne before them they did see,
but lodgd therein they could not be.

From house to house they both did goe,
seeking where they that night might lie,
But want of money was their woe,
and still the babe with colde did crie.
With cap and knee they courtsey make,
but none on them would pitie take.

Loe here a Princesse of great blood
doth pray a Peasant for reliefe:
With teares bedewed as she stood,
yet few or none regards her grief:

[2] I full [1602]

Her speech they could not vnderstand,
but gaue her a penny in her hand.

When all in vaine the paines was spent,
and that they could not house-roome get:
Into a Church-porch then they went,
to stand out of the raine and wet:
Then said the Dutchesse to her deare,
O that we had some fier heere.

Then did her husband so prouide,
that fire and coales he got with speede:
Shee sate downe by the fires side,
to dresse her daughter that had neede:
And while she drest it in her lap,
ther husband made the Infant pap.

Anon the Sexten thither came,
and finding them there by the fire:
The drunken knaue all voyde of shame,
to driue them out was his desire:
And spuming forth this noble Dame,
her husbands wrath it did inflame.

And all in furie as he stood,
he wroung the Church keyes out of his hand:
And strooke him so that all of bloud,
his head ran downe where he did stand.
Wherefore the Sexten presently,
for helpe and aide aloud did crye,

Then came the Officers in hast,
and tooke the Duchesse and her child,
And with her husband thus they past,
like Lambs beset with Tigers wilde:
And to the Gouernour were they brought,
who vnderstood them not in ought.

Then Master _Bartue_ braue and bolde,
in Latine made a gallant speech,
Which all their miserie did vnfolde,
and their high fauour did beseech:
With that a Doctor sitting by,
did know the Dutchesse presently.

And thereupon arising straight,
with minde abashed at this sight
Vnto them all that there did waight,
he thus brake forth in words aright:
Beholde within your sight (quoth he)
a Princesse of most high degree.

With that the Gouernour and the rest,
were all amazde the same to heare,
And welcomed these new come guests,
with reuerence great and princely cheare:
And afterwarde conueyde they were,
vnto their friend Prince _Cassemere_

A sonne she had in _Germanie_,
Peregrine Bartue cald by name:
Surnamde the good Lord _Willobie_:
of courage great and worthie fame.
Her Daughter young which with her went,
was afterward Countesse of _Kent_.

For when Queene _Marie_ was deceast,
the Dutchesse home returnd againe:
Who was of sorrow quite releast,
by Queene _Elizabethes_ happie raigne
For whose life and prosperitie,
we may all pray continually[3].

[3] we may prayse God continually [1607]