

A New Song

On the Parliament 1653

As Plutarch doth write, (a man of known Credit),
A Serpent there was had a mutinous Tayle ;
Rebell'd against the Head, that so oft had fed it,
And would not permit it to lead, or prevaile ;
It's not fit that by turns we leaders should be,
Quoth the Tayle? follow me, as I've followed thee,

Now the body, being grown too strong for the Head,
Quoth the Head, if it must be, then let it be so ;
For quietness sake I yield to be led,
But for fear that from hence some mischief will grow ;
A thing so un-natural never was read,
As the Head to turn Tayle, and the Tayle to turn Head.

A monster like this, but of stranger conditions,
Engendered there was in the year thirty-nine ;
Rebelle'd against the Head, but with fawning petitions,
To have him in his pow'r and his right to resign ;
This monster (the truth on't to speak) was begot,
By a mongrel parson, and that Hag the Scot.

So large and mighty this Tayle grow in length,
That where e'er it came, it swept all before it ;
There was no resisting so powerful a strenght,
The Head at last was forced to implore it ;
All our Castles and Town this Tayle did subdue,
A sad state to tell, but believe me 'tis true.

Above seven years Conflict this Head did endure,
With that mousterous Tayle, and the spawn it begot ;
During which time no mans life was serene,
Our goods and our cattle all went to the Pot ;
At last came a champion with an Iron flayle,
And ended the fight between the Head and the Tayle.

The Head being departed, the body began,
To consult with the Tayle, what was best to do ;
St. George (quoth the body) 'tis said was a man,
But what can this thing be is called St. O ;
Why he (quoth the Tayle) was one of our Rout,
And 'tis wonderous strange he should turn Tayle about.

While thus they did argue in rushed our St O.
With courage more keen than the sword that he wore ;
Quoth he, ye are vile things not fit here to grow,
Such fends ne'er was known in this place heretofore ;
The wealth and the fat of the country doth feed you,
And now I do think it is high time to bleed you.

Some say that this Tayle wore the mark of a P,
O is a letter in rank known before it ;
How e'er it makes no matter, 'tis all one to me,
Save this that I'm sure the O had the more wit ;
There's no man so blind but may easily see,
He hath added unto his small O, a tall P.

My story now ended comes viva St. George,
That old true blew lad and Hospitable Saint ;
Bring a butt of good Sack to fill up my Gorge,
At this tale of Head and Tayle I almost faint ;
Howe'er let it pass if you studdy upon it,
I hope you'll neither make Head or Tayle of it.

