

Which would prefer some base Medore 9
 And all your wit and titles slight,
 T'embrace a page before a knight.
 Then should some noble-minded friend,
 Astolpho-like, to Heaven ascend; 10
 (And, having searchèd near and far
 And found your most capacious jar), 11
 Then being with joy returned again
 You could not then snuff up your brain,
 Though all your strength you should expose—
 You want the organ called "a nose."
 Prodigious the *knight* remains, 12
 Without or nose, or fame, or brains. 13
 Then a bold ordnance struck the title off! 14
 Thus the proud Parcae sit and at us scoff. 15
 What now remains – the *man*, at least?
 No, surely: nothing left, but *beast*.
 Then royal favor glued it on again, 16
 And now the knight is bow-dyed and in grain. 17
 Then trample not that honor in the dust
 In being a slave to those are slaves to lust. (1643)

[50]



William Davenant, in wig, with his nose artfully restored by the engraver (pub. 1672)

⁹ *Medore*] In *Orlando Furioso*, Angelica falls in love and in bed with Medore, squire to Sir Cloridano

¹⁰ *Astolpho-like*] In *Orlando Furioso*, Astolpho travels to the Moon, to cure Orlando of his madness by returning with his lost wits, in a vial.

¹¹ *jar*] i.e., a jar, not of your lost wits, but full of snuff, pulverized tobacco leaves inhaled through the nose

¹² *Prodigious*] like a talented genius (*OED* 2); like a monstrous freak (*OED* 3)

¹³ *or ... or ... or*] either ... or ... or

¹⁴ *ordnance*] missile (with innuendo) which when fired destroys the knight's nose, reputation, sanity, and knighthood

¹⁵ *Parcae*] the Fates

¹⁶ *royal favor*] Davenant was knighted by the king in 1643

¹⁷ *bow-dyed and in grain*] dyed scarlet, indelibly red; in royal colors; blushing