Elizabeth Tollet, â??The Portraitâ?•

Description

ELIZABETH TOLLET

â??The Portraitâ?•

Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita â??- â??â?? â??- â??â?? Hor.

On what wouâ??d I my Wishes fix?
â??Tis not upon a Coach and Six:
â??Tis not your rich Brocades to wear;
â??Tis not on Brilliants in my Ear.
â??Tis not to hurry up and down
To *Tunbridge*, *Epson*, *Kensington*;
Much less to rub my wakeful Eyes
At Basset, till the Sun shouâ??d rise:
Had I a Foe I meant to curse,
Nay, Rival, Iâ??d not wish her worse,
For once, to tell you whatâ??s the Lot
I like, Iâ??ve told you what â??tis not;
A lazy Life I first wouâ??d choose,
A lazy Life best suits the Muse:
A few choice Books of evâ??ry Sort;
But none that meddle with the Court.
Small Thoughts for Cloaths; â??tis all a Case:
Theyâ??ll neither mend nor spoil my Face.
Money! Enough to serve my Ends:
An Hackney to go see my Friends;
That I may laugh if Fops pass by,
And they not know my Livery,
Friends that in any Dress would come;
To whom Iâ??d always be at home:
My Table still shouâ??d coverâ??d be,
On this Side Books, on that Bohea;
While we sip on, and neâ??er debate
Matters of Scandal, or of State.
For *Horace* tells us, as you know,
â??Tis Sweet to fool it *a propos.*

Dulce est desipere in loco. Hor.

NOTES:

Epigraph *Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella* â??Life may be laid out as if it were depicted on a votive tabletâ?• (Horace, *Satires*, 2:1, ll. 3-4); Horaceâ??s *Satires* were â??published in 35 BCEâ?• (*Oxford Bibliographies).*

6 *Tunbridge* Affluent town in Kent, England; *Epsom* Market town in Surrey; *Kensington* Royal palace in London.

8 *Basset â??*An obsolete game of cards, resembling Faro, first played in Veniceâ?• (*OED*).

20 *Hackney â??*A horse-drawn carriage which is let out for hireâ?• (*OED*).

21 *Fops* â??One who is foolishly attentive to and vain of his appearance, dress, or mannersâ?• (*OED*).

22 *Livery* â??The dress, uniform, or insigniaâ?¦by which a family, etc., may be identifiedâ?• (*OED*).

26 *Bohea â??*Name given in the early eighteenth century to finest kind of black teaâ?• (*OED*).

29 *Horace* (65-8 BC), Latin lyric poet and satirist under the emperor Augustus.

30 *a propos* â??To the purposeâ?• (*OED*).

Postscript *Dulce est desipere in loco* â??It is sweet to be silly at the appropriate timeâ?• (Horace, *Odes*, 4:12, l. 27).

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions. With Ann Boleyn to King Henry VIII. An Epistle* (London, 1755), pp. 33-34. [*Google Books]*

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