Matthew Pilkington, â??The Lost Museâ?•

Description

MATTHEW PILKINGTON
â??The Lost Museâ?•

Clio the sweetest *Muse* of Nine
Who charm the Gods with Lays divine,
Private and unperceivâ??d withdrew,
And swift from sacred *Pindus* flew,
On some exalted Project bent,
But told no Creature her Intent.

The *God of Numbers* heard it said,
His favâ??rite, sweet-tonguâ??d Muse was fled,
And he had oft observâ??d, of late
That she was absent from her Seat,
When all her tuneful Sister-Train
Were forming some immortal Strain.

He usâ??d to send her, now and then,
With Hints to some peculiar Men,
To *Pope, Delany, Gay,* or *Swift,*
But now he couâ??d not guess her Drift,
And wonders much, that she wouâ??d venture
To visit *Bards,* except he sent her;
So, half-provokâ??d, away he flies,
Takes *Hermes* with him in Disguise,
Resolvâ??d to roam the World around,
â??Till *Clioâ??s* private Haunt is found.

The Gods, impatient of Delay,
To famâ??d *Eblana* wing their Way,
And prudent, first at *Swiftâ??s* descend,
Apolloâ??s best-regarded Friend,
And whom the God of Verse and Wit,
Inspirâ??d in evâ??ry Line he writ;
There might they hope their Prize to gain
Where evâ??ry *Muse* delights to Reign;
But she, to execute her Scheme,
Had left him just before they came.

Quick as descending Rays of Light,
To *Delville* next they take their Flight:
Delville, where all the Wise resort,

Where oft the Muses keep their Court;
And veilâ??d from evâ??ry mortal Eye
Throâ?? all the *Doctorâ??s* Rooms they pry,
They search his arbourâ??d Seats, and Garden,
(Fit Place to find a *Muse* or *Bard* in:)
Then turnâ??d his Papers oâ??er with Care,
And plainly found she had been there,
Such Learning, Elegance, and Ease,
Appear in all *Delanyâ??s* Lays,
Such Beauties in his Numbers shine,
As prove their Origin divine.

With these their Disappointments vext,
They fly to fair *Saphiraâ??s* next,
And found her, forming into *Rhime*
A Thought exalted and Sublime,
Perceivâ??d such Excellence and Wit,
Such Charms in all she spoke and writ,
As soon convincâ??d their wondâ??ring Eyes,
The *Muse* was with her in Disguise,
And, fond the rising Age to bless,
Assumâ??d a *mortal* Form and Dress.

The *God*, delighted, calms his Rage,
And crys, there Live, to charm the Age,
Be thou a gay inspiring Guest,
And fill, the soft Delights, her Breast,
That Breast with all thatâ??s good replete,
But Clio, this will be thy Fate,
Thou shalt contrive the deathless Lays,
But see *Saphira* win the Praise.

NOTES:

1 *Clio* â??Proper name of the Muse of epic poetry and historyâ?• (*OED*).

4 *Pindus* A range of mountains in west central Greece, stretching from the border with Albania southwards to the Gulf of Corinth (*OED*).

7 *God of Numbers* Apollo, God of poetry (*OED*).

15 *Pope* Alexander Pope (1688â??1744), an English poet and a major figure of the Augustan age who is famous for his caustic wit and metrical skill, in particular his use of the heroic couplet (*OED*); *Delany* Patrick Delany (?1685â??1768) an Irish clergyman and writer, friend of Jonathan Swift (*OED*); *Gay* John Gay (1685â??1732) an English poet and playwright who is chiefly known for The Beggarâ??s Opera (1728) (*OED*); *Swift* Jonathan Swift (1667â??1745) an Irish satirist, poet, and Anglican cleric; known as Dean Swift. He is best known for Gulliverâ??s Travels (1726) (*OED*).

18 *Bards* Poets (*OED*).

20 *Hermes* â??In Greek mythology, a deity, the son of Zeus and Maia, represented as the messenger of the gods, the god of science, commerce, eloquence, and many of the arts of lifeâ?• (*OED*).

24 *Eblana* Name recorded in Ptolemyâ??s geography (2nd cent. ad) for the site of what is now Dublin (*OED*).

26 *Apollo* The god of the sun, truth, music, poetry, dance and healing. Poets and bards put themselves under his protection (*OED*).

34 *Delville* The Delany estate located in Glasnevin, Ireland; a separate village in the eighteenth century, now part of Dublin.

48 *Saphira* Mary Barber (c. 1685-c.1755), poet and friend of Swift and Delany (*Memoirs of Laetitia Pilkington*, vol. I, ed. A.C. Elias, Jr, 393).

49 *Rhime* â??Metre, measureâ?• (in verse) (*OED*).

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions* (1730), pp. 52-58. [Google Books]

Edited by August Braddock