Mary Masters, â??On seeing a Ladyâ?¦â?•

Description

MARY MASTERS

â??On seeing a Lady with a new fashionâ??d Riding-Dress, and a Hat cockâ??d upâ?•

The Round-earâ??d Cap (once worn with decent Pride)
And Velvet Bonnet both are thrown aside;
The Beaver, now, cockâ??d up with bolder Air,
And manly Habit, please the fickle Fair.
Yet, for Excuse, it justly may be said,
A Scheme with deepest Policy is laid:
Since, among Men, there is a stupid Race,
Who slight the Graces of the Female Face:
Since Fops so long have self-enamourâ??d been,
And view the Mirror with a rapturâ??d Mien;
They hope in this Disguise each *Beau* to charm,
And win thâ?? Apostates with a mimick Form.
With happy Art so justly they improve,
Sure all must now the Manlike Beauties love.

NOTES:

Title *Riding-Dress, and a Hat cockâ??d up* The female riding habit dates from the 1660s, and was usually comprised of a jacket and waistcoat in imitation of menâ??s fashion at the time, with a similar cravat worn at the neck, a periwig and cocked hat on the head, and full skirts and petticoats. Criticism of this androgynous female fashion came from influential literary men like Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, John Gay, Samuel Richardson, and Horace Walpole through the first half of the century, and popular periodicals like the *London Journal* and the *Gentlemanâ??s Magazine* inveighed against the practice in the 1730s.

1 *Round-earâ??d cap* Headwear for women, made of linen or cotton, that curved around the head to cover the ears and edged with lace or ruffles; fashionable in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

3 *Beaverâ?¦cockâ??d up* A hat made of felted beaver fur, with the brim folded up; probably a reference to the popular tri-corner style hat.

9 *Fops* A derogatory term for a vain, dandyish man.

11 *Beau* A handsome, fashionable young man; here a synonym for â??fop.â?•

12 *Apostates* Those who have abandoned their religious faith, political allegiances, or principles in general.

SOURCE: ***Poems on Several Occasions*** **(London, 1733), pp. 157-8.**

Edited by Bill Christmas