

David Mallet, "The Discovery"

Description

DAVID MALLET

•The Discovery•

*Upon reading some Verses, written by a young
Lady at a Boarding-School. Sept. 1760.*

Apollo lately sent to know,
If he had any sons below;
For, by the trash he long has seen
In male and female Magazine,
A hundred quires not worth a groat, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 5
The race must be extinct, he thought.

His messenger to court repairs;
Walks softly with the croud up stairs:
But when he had his errand told,
The courtiers sneerâ€™d, both young and old. Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 10
Augustus knit his royal brow,
And bade him let *Apollo* know it,
That from his infancy till now,
He lovâ€™d nor poetry nor poet.

His next adventure was the park, Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 15
When it grew fashionably dark:
There beauties, boobies, strumpets, rakes,
Talkâ€™d much of commerce, whist and stakes;
Who tips the wink, who drops the card:
But not one word of verse or bard. Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 20

The stage, APOLLOâ€™s old domain,
Where his true sons were wont to reign,
His courier now past frowning by:
Ye modern DURFEYS tell us why.

Slow, to the city last he went: Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â Â 25
There, all was prose, of cent per cent.
There, alley-omnium, script, and bonus,
(Latin, for which a Muse would stone us,
Yet honest GIDEONâ€™s classic stile)

27 *alleg-omnium* Possibly figurative for "all the marbles."

29 *GIDEON* Military leader, judge, and prophet in the Hebrew Bible; see Judges 6-8.

30 *Nuntio* Variant of "nuncio," a papal ambassador to a foreign court or government (QED).

34 *Queen-Square* A fashionable neighborhood in north London in the mid-century period.

38 *read* Corrected from "red" in the original text.

44 *vellum* A fine kind of parchment prepared from the skins of calves (lambs or kids) and used especially for writing, painting, or binding (QED).

50 *SOPHIA* Greek name meaning "wisdom," also referring to Athena, the goddess of wisdom.

SOURCE: *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1762), pp. 14-16. [Google Books]

Edited by Rafe Kassim