

Anonymous, "A Simile for the contending Poets at Dublin"

Description

ANONYMOUS

"A Simile for the contending Poets at Dublin"

So, in the streets, when trollops jar,
Contending high in wordy war;
With burning ire their venom fries,
Reproach and clamour rend the skies,
The hubbub fell, is heard aloud, 5
And round them rakes a blackguard crowd;
With scornfull hiss, the listening rabble,
And laughter loud, foment the squabble,
With fiercer rage, their sound inspire
To keener lust of vengeance fire; 10
Fresh peals of spite tumultuous rise,
New *Billingsgate* in volleys flies,
Foul on each other's fame, they fall,
Till each leaves either, none at all.
And when this inglorious rout expires, 15
Hiss'd, rail'd, and laugh'd at, each retires.

NOTES:

1 *trollops* A morally loose woman, especially suggesting slovenly dress and manners (*OED*).

2 *Jar* To make unpleasantly loud and inharmonious noises. To abruptly and violently effect, as in a fight.

6 *blackguard* A person, generally a man, who behaves in a dishonorable or otherwise despicable way (*OED*).

8 *foment* To encourage, incite or instigate.

12 *Billingsgate* Originally a fish market in London infamous for the vitriolic language of its fishmongers, at some point the term came to denote verbal abuse in general (*OED*).

16 *rail'd* Verbally attacked.

Source: *The Gentlemen's Magazine*, Vol. 5 (January 1735), p. 48.

Edited by Joseph Watkins