

Oliver Goldsmith (?1730-74)

2 *An Elegy on the Glory of her Sex, Mrs. Mary Blaize*

Good people all, with one accord,  
Lament for Madam Blaize,  
Who never wanted a good word —  
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom passed her door, 5  
And always found her kind;  
She freely lent to all the poor —  
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighbourhood to please  
With manners wondrous winning; 10  
And never followed wicked ways —  
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new,  
With hoop of monstrous size;  
She never slumbered in her pew — 15  
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,  
By twenty beaux and more;  
The king himself has followed her —  
When she has walked before. 20

But now her wealth and finery fled,  
Her hangers-on cut short all;  
The doctors found, when she was dead —  
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament in sorrow sore, 25  
For Kent Street well may say  
That had she lived a twelvemonth more —  
She had not died to-day.

1759

(From George Barnett Smith, ed. *Illustrated British Ballads, Old and New*. Vol. 2. London, 1881)