About the Learn'd Astronomer

In the poem proposed to us by the English teacher, the poet describes the sense of tiredness and boredom he felt in front of the learned astronomer who showed him the audience his graphs and diagrams in support of unspecified dissertations. Faced with this, the tired poet went out to observe the stars in silence and in perfect solitude.

I disagree with what these lines apparently convey to us. The sense of beauty is in no way affected by the work of science, as the poet seems to suggest. The starry sky is beautiful and may arouses vivid emotion for both astronomers and poets. Deepening our knowledge of nature does not cause the loss of the sense of wonder but, on the contrary, IT makes it more intense because it focuses on the mysteries that still remain unsolved.

However, I do not think that the poet wanted to argue that science prevents us from feeling emotion towards what surrounds us, but to criticize the astronomer who did not know how to convey his sense of wonder to the audience, as sometimes happens in front of those who limit themselves to transmitting notions and not to arouse rather than arousing interests. In these cases the final applause is justifiably liberating.

Good