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Revd W. Mason, M.A.

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THE

ENGLISH GARDEN:

A POEM.

IN FOUR BOOKS.

By WILLIAM MASON, M. A.

WITH

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

A Garden is the purest of human pleasures, it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handy-works. And a man shall ever see, that when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection.

LORD BACON'S ESSAYS.

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THE

LIFE

OF

WILLIAM MASON, M. A.

THIS excellent writer has been so many years in the observation of the public; his works have been so universally read, and so generally approved, that curiosity is naturally excited to enquire after those circumstances in his life, which distinguish him from the rest of the world, and give him a pre-eminence over the majority of his contemporaries, and, at least, an equality with the best of them.

The place of his birth is the same which derived celebrity from having produced another patriotic poet, the celebrated Andrew Marvell. This Mr. Mason himself mentions, in his admirable ODE TO INDEPEN-

DENCE, the scene of which he has laid at his native town:

Here, on my native shore reclin'd,
While Silence rules this midnight hour,
I woo thee, Goddess! on my musing mind
Descend, propitious power!

Again:

As now o'er this lone beach I stray,
Thy fav'rite swain oft stole along,
And artless wove his Dorian lay,
Far from the busy throng.

The favourite swain here alluded to was the incorruptible patriot of Charles the Second's time, who was born at Kingston upon Hull, where Mr. Mason likewise began his life; to which he alludes in the following lines:

" My infant eyes,
" First open'd on that bleak and boist'rous shore,
" Where Humber weds the nymphs of Trent and Ouse
" To his and Ocean's Tritons: thence full soon
" My youth retir'd, and left the busy strand
" To commerce and to care. In Margaret's grove,
" Beneath whose time-worn shade old Camus sleeps,
" Was next my tranquil station: Science there
" Sat musing; and to those that lov'd the lore
" Pointed, with mystic wand, to truths involv'd
" In geometric symbols, scorning those,
" Perchance too much, who woo'd the thriftless muse."

Vide ENGLISH GARDEN.

About the year 1725 or 1726, the father of our poet was a clergyman of that town; where his son received the early rudiments of his education. At a proper age he was sent to Cambridge, and admitted a scholar of St. John's College. Here he took the degree of Batchelor of Arts, and produced some of his earliest works. The first piece which presents itself is a poem called IL BELLICOSO, written in 1744, but not printed until some years afterwards. About the same time, the death of Mr. Pope (30th May, 1744) gave occasion to that excellent performance, MUSÆUS, which fixed our poet's reputation on the firmest basis, and was the means of introducing him to the notice of Mr. Gray.

It was in the year 1747, when this acquaintance began, "Some very juvenile imitations of Milton's Juvenile Poems, which our poet had written a year or two before, and of which the Monody on Mr. Pope's Death was the principal, Mr. Gray then, at the request of one of his friends, was so obliging as to revise." To the credit of both these gen-

tlemen, the friendship thus commenced, continued, without abatement, until they were divided by death.

In 1748, he printed his poem entituled, Isis, which, being an attack on the university of Oxford, was answered by Mr. Wharton, in a poem called, the Triumphs of Isis. In 1749, he was elected Fellow of Pembroke Hall, through the interest of his friend Mr. Gray. In 1754 he took orders, and through the patronage of the Earl of Holderness was appointed Chaplain to the King, and presented to the valuable living of Aston. He afterwards obtained the precentorship of York, which leading his mind to church music, he published a small volume on that subject. His intimate friend Gray, left him one of his joint executors, with Dr. Browne, Master of Pembroke Hall, who, together with R. Stonehewer, Auditor of the Exchequer, at their joint expence raised a monument to the memory of their departed friend in Westminster Abbey; to which Mason furnished the following epitaph:

No more the Grecian muse unrivall'd reigns,
To Britain let the nations homage pay!
She boasts a Homer's fire in Milton's strains,
A Pindar's rapture in the lyre of Gray.

He likewise wrote THE LIFE OF GRAY, in 4 vols. 8vo.

In his sacerdotal office he behaved with exemplary propriety, and was much esteemed as a preacher.

In 1765, he married a lady possessing every beauty of mind and person, who died in 1767, at Bristol Hot Wells, of a decline. This sorrowful event produced the following epitaph:

Take, holy earth, all that my soul holds dear;
Take that best gift which Heav'n so lately gave.
To Bristol's fount I bore with trembling care
Her faded form; she bow'd to taste the wave,
And died. Does youth, does beauty read the line,
Does sympathetic fear their breast alarm?
Speak, dead Maria! breathe a strain divine!
Ev'n from the grave thou shalt have power to charm.
Bid them be chaste, be innocent like thee;
Bid them in duty's sphere as meekly move;
And if so fair, from vanity as free,
As firm in friendship, and as fond in love;

Tell them, tho' 'tis an awful thing to die,
('Twas even to thee) yet the dread path once trod,
Heav'n lifts its everlasting portals high,
And bids "the pure in heart behold their God."

He was at one period a zealous Whig, but at the close of life his warmth abated, and the horrors of the French revolution made him less partial to levelling principles.—While getting out of his carriage his foot slipped, and he received a bruise, of which he took no notice for some days, but a mortification ensued, of which he died, April 5, 1797*. His ELFRIDA and CARACTACUS are esteemed the best of his performances. He translated into English verse DU FRESNOY'S ART OF PAINTING, to which Sir Joshua Reynolds added valuable notes.

* Shortly will be published, a volume of Poems, by the same author, which will contain his ELFRIDA, CARACTACUS, &c. &c. (printed uniform with this work.)

THE

ENGLISH GARDEN.

BOOK I.

To thee, divine Simplicity ! to thee,
Best arbitress of what is good and fair,
This verse belongs. O, as it freely flows,
Give it thy powers of pleasing ; else in vain
It strives to teach the rules, from Nature drawn,
Which all should follow, if they wish to add
To Nature's careless graces ; loveliest then
When, o'er her form, thine easy skill has taught
The robe of Spring in ampler folds to flow.
Haste, goddess ! to the woods, the lawns, the vales,
That lie in rude luxuriance, and but wait
Thy call to bloom with beauty. I, meanwhile,
Attendant on thy state serene, will mark
Its faery progress, wake the accordant string,
And tell how far, beyond the transient glare
Of fickle fashion, or of formal art,
Thy flowery works with charm perennial please.

Ye too, ye sister powers! that at my birth
Auspicious smil'd, and o'er my cradle drop'd
Those magic seeds of Fancy, which produce
A Poet's feeling, and a Painter's eye,
Come to your votary's aid; for well ye know
How soon my infant accents lisp'd the rhyme,
How soon my hands the mimic colours spread,
And vainly hop'd to snatch a double wreath
From Fame's unfading laurel; arduous aim,
Yet not inglorious: nor perchance devoid
Of fruitful use to this fair argument;
If so with lenient smiles, ye deign to cheer,
At * this sad hour, my desolated soul.
For deem not ye that I resume the lyre
To court the world's applause; my years mature
Have learn'd to slight the toy. No, 'tis to sooth
That agony of heart, which they alone,
Who best have lov'd, who best have been belov'd,
Can feel, or pity; sympathy severe!
Which she too felt, when on her pallid lip
The last farewell hung trembling, and bespoke
A wish to linger here, and bless the arms
She left for heaven. She died, and heav'n is her's!
Be mine, the pensive solitary balm

* This poem was begun in the year 1767, not long after the death of the amiable person here mentioned.

That recollection yields. Yes, angel pure!
While Memory holds her seat, thine image still
Shall reign, shall triumph there; and when, as now,
Imagination forms a nymph divine
To lead the fluent strain, thy modest blush,
Thy mild demeanor, thy unpractis'd smile
Shall grace that nymph, and sweet Simplicity
Be dress'd (ah, meek MARIA!) in thy charms.

Begin the song! and ye of Albion's sons
Attend; ye freeborn, ye ingenuous few,
Who heirs of competence, if not of wealth,
Preserve that vestal purity of soul,
Whence genuine taste proceeds. To you, blest youths,
I sing; whether in academic groves
Studious ye rove, or, fraught with learning's stores,
Visit the Latian plain, fond to transplant
Those arts which Greece did, with her liberty,
Resign to Rome. Yet know, the art I sing
Ev'n there ye shall not learn; Rome knew it not
While Rome was free; ah! hope not then to find
In slavish, superstitious Rome, the fair
Remains. Meanwhile, of old and classic aid,
Tho' fruitless be the search, your eyes entranc'd
Shall catch those glowing scenes, that taught a

CLAUDE

To grace his canvass with Hesperian hues,
And scenes like these, on Memory's tablet drawn,
Bring back to Britain ; there give local form
To each idea, and, if Nature lend
Materials fit of torrent, rock, and shade,
Produce new Tivolis. But learn to rein
Thy skill within the limit she allows.
Great Nature scorns control : she will not bear
One beauty foreign to the spot or soil
She gives thee to adorn ; 'tis thine alone
To mend, not change her features. Does her hand
Stretch forth a level lawn ? ah, hope not thou
To lift the mountain there. Do mountains frown
Around ? ah, wish not there the level lawn.
Yet she permits thine art, discreetly us'd,
To smooth or scoop the rugged and the plain.
But dare with caution ; else expect, bold man !
The injur'd Genius of the place to rise
In self-defence, and, like some giant fiend
That frowns in Gothic story, swift destroy
By night, the puny labours of thy day.

What then must he attempt, whom niggard fate
Has fixt in such an inauspicious spot
As bears no trace of beauty ? must he sit
Dull and inactive in the desert waste,
Since Nature there no happy feature wears

To wake and meet his skill? Believe the Muse,
She does not know that inauspicious spot
Where Beauty is thus niggard of her store;
Believe the Muse, thro' this terrestrial vast
The seeds of grace are sown, profusely sown,
Ev'n where we least may hope; the desert hills
Will hear the call of Art; the vallies dank
Obey her just behests, and smile with charms
Congenial to the soil, and all its own.

For tell me where's the desert? there alone
Where man resides not; or if chance resides,
He is not there the man his Maker form'd,
Industrious man, by heav'n's first law ordain'd
To earn his food by labour. In the waste
Place thou that man with his primæval arms,
His plough-share, and his spade, nor shalt thou long
Impatient wait a change; the waste shall smile
With yellow harvests; what was barren heath
Shall soon be verdant mead. Now then arise,
Now let thine art, in union with his toil,
Exert its powers, and give, with varying skill,
The soil, already tam'd, its finish'd grace.

Nor less obsequious to the hand of toil,
If Fancy guide that hand, will the dank vale
Receive improvement meet; but Fancy here

Must lead, not follow Labour ; she must tell
In what peculiar place the soil shall rise,
Where sink ; prescribe what form each sluice shall
wear,
And how direct its course ; whether to spread
Broad as a lake, or, as a river pent
By fringed banks, weave its irriguous way
Thro' lawn and shade alternate ; but if she
Preside not o'er the task, the narrow drains
Will run in tedious parallel, or cut
Each other in sharp angles ; call her then
Swift to thine aid, ere the remorseless spade
Too deeply wound the bosom of the soil.

Yet, in this lowly site, where all that charms
Within itself must charm, hard is the task
Impos'd on Fancy. Hence with idle fear !
Is she not Fancy ? and can Fancy fail
In sweet delusions, in concealments apt,
And wild creative power ? She cannot fail.
And yet, full oft, when her creative power,
Her apt concealments, her delusions sweet,
Have been profusely lavish'd ; when her groves
Have shot, with vegetative vigour strong,
Ev'n to their wish'd maturity ; when Jove
Has rang'd the changeful seasons o'er her lawns,
And each has left a blessing as it roll'd ;

Ev'n then, perchance, some vain fastidious eye
Shall rove, unmindful of surrounding charms,
And ask for prospect. Stranger! 'tis not here.
Go seek it on some garish turret's height,
Seek it on Richmond's, or on Windsor's brow;
There, gazing on the gorgeous vale below,
Applaud besure, with fashion'd pomp of phrase
The good and bad, which, in profusion, there
That gorgeous vale exhibits. Here, meanwhile
Ev'n in the dull, unseen, unseeing dell,
Thy taste contemns, shall Contemplation imp
Her eagle plumes; the Poet here shall hold
Sweet converse with his Muse; the curious sage,
Who comments on great Nature's ample tome,
Shall find that volume here. For here are caves,
Where rise those gurgling rills, that sing the song
Which Contemplation loves; here shadowy glades,
Where thro' the tremulous foliage darts the ray,
That gilds the Poet's day-dream; here the turf
Teems with the vegetating race, the air
Is peopled with the insect tribes, that float
Upon the noontide beam, and call the sage
To number and to name them. Nor if here
The painter comes, shall his enchanting art
Go back without a boon: for Nature here
Has, with her living colours, form'd a scene
Which Ruisdale best might rival. Crystal lakes,

O'er which the giant oak, himself a grove,
Flings his romantic branches, and beholds
His reverend image in th' expanse below.
If distant hills be wanting, yet our eye
Forgets the want, and with delighted gaze
Rests on the lovely foreground ; there applauds
The art, which, varying forms and blending hues,
Gives that harmonious force of shade and light,
Which makes the landscape perfect. Art like this
Is only art, all else abortive toil.

Thou then, the docile pupil of my song,
Attend ; and learn how much on Painting's aid
Thy sister art depends, learn now its laws :
Their practice may demand a future strain.

Of Nature's various scenes the painter culls
That for his fav'rite theme, where the fair whole
Is broken into ample parts, and bold ;
Where to the eye three well-mark'd distances
Spread their peculiar colouring. Vivid green,
Warm brown and black opake the foreground bears
Conspicuous ; sober olive coldly marks
The second distance ; thence the third declines
In softer blue, or, less'ning still, is lost
In faintest purple. When thy taste is call'd

To adorn a scene where Nature's self presents
All these distinct gradations, then rejoice
As does the painter, and like him apply
Thy colours; plant thou on each separate part
Its proper foliage. Chief, for there thy skill
Has its chief scope, enrich with all the hues
That flowers, that shrubs, that trees can yield, the sides
Of that fair path, from whence our sight is led
Gradual to view the whole. Where'er thou wind'st
That path, take heed between the scene, and eye,
To vary and to mix thy chosen greens.
Here for a while, with cedar or with larch,
That from the ground spread their close foliage, hide
The view entire. Then o'er some lowly tuft,
Where rose and woodbine bloom, permit its charms
To burst upon the sight; now thro' a copse
Of beech, that rear their smooth and stately trunks,
Admit it partially, and half exclude,
And half reveal its graces; in this path,
How long soe'er the wanderer roves, each step
Shall wake fresh beauties; each short point present
A different picture, new, and yet the same.

Yet some there are who deem this precept vain,
And fell each tree that intercepts the scene.

O great Poussin ! O Nature's darling, Claude !
What if some rash and sacrilegious hand
Tore from your canvass those umbrageous pines
That frown in front, and give each azure hill
The charm of contrast ! Nature suffers here
Like outrage, and bewails a beauty lost,
Which Time with tardy hand shall late restore.
Yet here the spoiler rests not ; see him rise
Warm from his devastation, to improve,
For so he calls it, yonder champaign wide.
There on each bolder brow in shapes acute
His fence he scatters ; there the Scottish fir
In murky file lifts his inglorious head,
And blots the fair horizon. So should art
Improve thy pencil's savage dignity,
Salvator ! if where, far as eye can pierce,
Rock pil'd on rock, thy Alpine heights retire,
She flung her random foliage, and disturb'd
The deep repose of the majestic scene.
This deed were impious. Ah, forgive the thought,
Thou more than painter, more than poet ! He,
Alone thy equal, who was " Fancy's child."

Does then the song forbid the planter's hand
To clothe the distant hills, and veil with woods
Their barren summits ? No, but it forbids
All poverty of clothing. Rich the robe,

And amply let it flow, that Nature wears
On her thron'd eminence : where'er she takes
Her horizontal march, pursue her step
With sweeping train of forest ; hill to hill
Unite with prodigality of shade.
There plant thy elm, thy chesnut ; nourish there
Those sapling oaks, which, at Britannia's call,
May heave their trunks mature into the main,
And float the bulwarks of her liberty :
But if the fir, give it its station meet,
Place it an outguard to th' assailing north,
To shield the infant scions, till possest
Of native strength, they learn alike to scorn
The blast and their protectors. Foster'd thus,
The cradled hero gains from female care
His future vigor ; but that vigor felt,
He springs indignant from his nurse's arms,
He nods the plumy crest, he shakes the spear,
And is that awful thing which heav'n ordain'd
The scourge of tyrants, and his country's pride.

If then thou still art dubious how to treat
Nature's neglected features, turn thine eye
To those, the masters of correct design,
Who, from her vast variety, have cull'd
The loveliest, boldest parts, and new arrang'd ;
Yet, as herself approv'd, herself inspir'd.

In their immortal works thou ne'er shalt find
Dull uniformity, contrivance quaint,
Or labour'd littleness; but contrasts broad,
And careless lines, whose undulating form
Plays thro' the varied canvass; these transplant
Again on Nature; take thy plastic spade,
It is thy pencil; take thy seeds, thy plants,
They are thy colours; and by these repay
With interest every charm she lent thy art.

But, while I thus to Imitation's realm
Direct thy steps, deem not I lead thee wrong;
Nor ask, why I forget great Nature's fount,
And bring thee not the bright inspiring cup
From her original spring? Yet, if thou ask'st,
Thyself shalt give the answer. Tell me why
Did RAFFAEL steal, when his creative hand
Imag'd the Seraphim, ideal grace
And dignity supernal from that store
Of Attic sculpture, which the ruthless Goth
Spar'd in his headlong fury? Tell me this;
And then confess that beauty best is taught
By those, the favor'd few, whom heav'n has lent
The power to seize, select, and reunite
Her loveliest features; and of these to form
One archetype complete of sovereign grace.
Here Nature sees her fairest forms more fair;

Owns them her own, yet owns herself excell'd
By what herself produc'd. Here Art and she
Embrace; connubial Juno smiles benign,
And from the warm embrace perfection springs.

Rouse, then, each latent energy of soul
To clasp ideal beauty. Proteus-like,
Think not the changeful nymph will long elude
Thy chase, or with reluctant coyness frown.
Inspir'd by her, thy happy art shall learn
To melt in fluent curves whate'er is straight,
Acute, or parallel. For, these unchang'd,
Nature and she disdain the formal scene.
'Tis their demand, that ev'ry step of Rule
Be quite eras'd. For know, their ev'ry charm
Springs from variety; but all the boast
Of Rule is irksome Uniformity.
That end to effect we own the cube, or cone,
Are well employ'd; but fair Variety
Lives only where she undulates and sports
In many a winding train. As Nature then
Avoids, disdains, abhors all equal lines,
So Mechanism pursues, admires, adores.
Hence is their enmity; and sooner hope
With hawk and dove to draw the Cyprian car,
Than reconcile these jarring principles.

Where then, alas! where shall the Dryads fly
That haunt yon ancient Vista? Pity, sure,
Will spare the long cathedral isle of shade
In which they sojourn; Taste were sacrilege,
If, lifting there the axe, it dar'd invade
Those spreading oaks that in fraternal files
Have pair'd for centuries, and heard the strains
Of Sidney's, nay, perchance, of Surry's reed.
Heav'ns! must they fall? They must, their doom is past.
None shall escape; unless mechanic skill,
To save her offspring, rouse at our command;
And, where we bid her move, with engine huge,
Each ponderous trunk, the ponderous trunk there move.
A work of difficulty and danger try'd,
Nor oft successful found. But if it fails,
Thine axe must do its office. Cruel task,
Yet needful. Trust me, tho' I bid thee strike,
Reluctantly I bid thee; for my soul
Holds dear an antient oak, nothing more dear,
It is an antient friend. Stay, then, thine hand,
And try by saplings tall, discreetly plac'd
Before, between, behind, in scatter'd groups,
To break th' obdurate line. So may'st thou save
A chosen few; and yet, alas, but few

Of these, the old protectors of the plain.
Yet shall these few give to thy opening lawn
That shadowy pomp, which only they can give;
For parted now, in patriarchal pride,
Each tree becomes the father of a tribe;
And, o'er the stripling foliage, rising round,
Towers with parental dignity supreme.

And yet, my Albion! in that fair domain
Which Ocean made thy dowry, when his love
Tempestuous tore thee from reluctant Gaul,
And bade thee be his Queen, there still remains
Full many a lovely unfrequented wild,
Where change like this is needless; where no lines
Of hedge-row, avenue, or of platform square
Demand destruction. In thy fair domain,
Yes, my lov'd Albion! many a glade is found,
The haunt of Wood-gods only: where, if Art
E'er dar'd to tread, 'twas with unsandal'd foot,
Printless, as if the place were holy ground.
And there are scenes, where, tho' she whilom trod,
Led by the worst of guides, fell Tyranny,
And ruthless Superstition, we now trace
Her footsteps with delight; and pleas'd revere
What once we should have hated. But to Time,
Not her, the praise is due: his gradual touch
Has moulder'd into beauty many a tower,

Which, when it frown'd with all its battlements,
Was only terrible: and many a fane
Monastic, which, when deck'd with all its spires,
Serv'd but to feed some pamper'd Abbot's pride,
And awe th' unletter'd vulgar. Generous youth!
Whoe'er thou art, that listen'st to my lay,
And feel'st thy soul assent to what I sing,
Happy art thou if thou can'st call thine own
Such scenes as these, where Nature and where Time
Have work'd congenial; where a scatter'd host
Of antique oaks darken thy sidelong hills;
While, rushing thro' their branches, rifted cliffs
Dart their white heads, and glitter thro' the gloom.
More happy still, if one superior rock
Bear on its brow the shiver'd fragment huge
Of some old Norman fortress; happier far,
Ah, then most happy, if thy vale below
Wash, with the crystal coolness of its rills,
Some mould'ring abbey's ivy-vested wall.

O how unlike the scene my fancy forms,
Did Folly heretofore with Wealth conspire
To plan that formal, dull, disjointed scene,
Which once was call'd a Garden. Britain still
Bears on her breast full many a hideous wound
Given by the cruel pair, when, borrowing aid

From geometric skill, they vainly strove
By line, by plummet, and unfeeling sheers,
* To form with verdure what the builder form'd

* Although this seems to be the principle upon which this false taste was founded, yet the error was detected by one of our first writers upon architecture. I shall transcribe the passage, which is the more remarkable as it came from the quaint pen of Sir Henry Wotton: "I must note "(says he) a certain contrariety between building and gardening: for as fabrics should be regular, so gardens should "be irregular, or at least cast into a very wild regularity. "To exemplify my conceit, I have seen a garden, for the "manner perchance incomparable, into which the first "access was a high walk like a terrace, from whence "might be taken a general view of the whole plot below, "but rather in a delightful confusion, than with any plain "distinction of the pieces. From this the beholder, descending many steps, was afterwards conveyed again by "several mountings and valings, to various entertainments "of his scent and sight; which I shall not need to decribe, for that were poetical: let me only note this, "that every one of these diversities was as if he had been "magically transported into a new garden." Were the terrace and the steps omitted, this description would seem to be almost entirely conformable to our present ideas of ornamental planting. The passage which follows is not less worthy of our notice. "But though other countries have "more benefit of the sun than we, and thereby more properly tied to contemplate this delight; yet have I seen "in our own, a delicate and diligent curiosity, surely without parallel among foreign nations, namely, in the gar-

With stone. Egregious madness! yet pursu'd
With pains unwearied, with expence unsumm'd,
And science doating. Hence the sidelong walls
Of shaven yew; the holly's prickly arms,
Trimm'd into high arcades; the tonsile box
Wove, in mosaic mode of many a curl,
Around the figur'd carpet of the lawn;
Hence, too, deformities of harder cure,
The terrace mound uplifted; the long line
Deep delv'd of flat canal; and all that toil,

" den of Sir Henry Fanshaw, at his seat in Ware Park;
" where, I well remember, he did so precisely examine
" the tinctures and seasons of his flowers, that in their set-
" tings, the inwardest of which that were to come up at
" the same time, should be always a little darker than the
" utmost, and so serve them for a kind of gentle shadow."
This seems to be the very same species of improvement which Mr. Kent valued himself for inventing, in later times, and of executing, not indeed with flowers, but with flowering shrubs and evergreens, in his more finished pieces of scenery. The method of producing which effect, has been described with great precision and judgment by a late ingenious writer. (See *Observations on Modern Gardening*, sect. 14th, 15th, and 16th). It may, however be doubted whether Sir Henry Fanshaw's garden were not too *delicate* and *diligent* a curiosity, since its panegyrist concludes the whole with telling us, that it was " like a piece " not of Nature, but of Art." See *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ*, page 64, edit. 4th.

Misled by tasteless fashion, could atchieve
To mar fair Nature's lineaments divine.
Long was the night of error, nor dispell'd
By him that rose at learning's earliest dawn,
Prophet of unborn Science. On thy realm,
Philosophy! his sovereign lustre spread,
* Yet did he deign to light with casual glance

* Lord Bacon [1], in the 46th of his essays, describes what he calls *the platform of a princely garden.* If the reader compares this description with that which Sir William Temple has given in his essay, entituled, *The Gardens of Epicurus,* written in a subsequent age, he will find the superiority of the former very apparent; for though both of them are much obscured by the false taste of the times in which they were written, yet the vigour of Lord Bacon's genius breaks frequently through the cloud, and gives us a very clear display of what the real merit of gardening would be when its true principles were ascertained. For instance, out of thirty acres which he allots for the whole of his pleasure-ground, he selects the first four for a lawn, without any intervention of plot or parterre, "because," says he, "nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass "kept finely shorn." And "as for the making of knots "or figures, with diverse coloured earths, that they may "lie under the windows of the house, on that side which "the garden stands, they be but toys; you may see as "good sights many times in tarts." Sir William Temple,

[1] A new and elegant edition of Lord Bacon's Essays, printed uniform with this work, 6s. boards, with his Life and Portrait.

The wilds of taste. Yes, sagest VERULAM,
'Twas thine to banish from the royal groves
Each childish vanity of crisped knot

on the contrary, tells us, that in the garden at Moor Park, which was his model of perfection, the first inlet to the whole was a very broad gravel walk, garnished with a row of laurels, which looked like orange-trees, and was terminated at each end by a summer-house. The parterre, or principal garden, which makes the second part in each of their descriptions, it must be owned, is equally devoid of simplicity in them both. "The garden (says his Lordship) "is best to be square, encompassed with a stately arched "hedge, the arches to be upon carpenters' work; over "every arch a little belly, enough to receive a cage of "birds; and, over every space between the arches, some "other little figure, with broad plates of round coloured "glass, gilt, for the sun to play upon." It would have been difficult for Sir William to make his more fantastic; he has, however, not made it more natural. The third part, which Lord Bacon calls the Heath, and the other the Wilderness, is that in which the genius of Lord Bacon is the most visible; "for this," says he, "I wish to be "framed as much as may be to a natural wildness." And accordingly, he gives us a description of it in the most agreeable and picturesque terms, insomuch, that it seems less the work of his own fancy, than a delineation of that ornamental scenery which had no existence till above a century after it was written. Such, when he descended to matters of mere elegance (for when we speak of Lord Bacon, to treat of these was to descend) were the amazing powers of his universal genius.

And sculptur'd foliage, to the lawn restore
Its ample space, and bid it feast the sight
With verdure pure, unbroken, unabridg'd;
For green is to the eye, what to the ear
Is harmony, or to the smell the rose.

So taught the sage, taught a degenerate reign
What in Eliza's golden day was taste.
Not but the mode of that romantic age,
The age of tourneys, triumphs, and quaint masques,
Glar'd with fantastic pageantry, which dimm'd
The sober eye of truth, and dazzled ev'n
The sage himself: witness his arched hedge,
In pillar'd state by carpentry upborne,
With colour'd mirrors deck'd, and caged birds:
But, when our step has pac'd his proud parterres,
And reach'd the heath, then Nature glads our eye,
Sporting in all her lovely carelessness.
There smiles in varied tufts the velvet rose,
There flaunts the gadding woodbine, swells the ground
In gentle hillocks, and around its sides
Thro' blossom'd shades the secret pathway steals.

Thus, with a poet's power, the sage's pen
Pourtray'd that nicer negligence of scene,
Which Taste approves. While he, delicious swain,

Who tun'd his oaten pipe by Mulla's stream,
Accordant touch'd the stops in Dorian mood;
What time he 'gan to paint the fairy vale,
Where stands the fane of Venus. Well I ween
That then, if ever, COLIN, thy fond hand
Did steep its pencil in the well-fount clear
Of true simplicity, and * " call'd in Art
" Only to second Nature, and supply
" All that the nymph forgot, or left forlorn."
Yet what avail'd the song, or what avail'd
Ev'n thine, thou chief of bards, whose mighty mind,
With inward light irradiate, mirror-like
Receiv'd, and to mankind with ray reflex
The sov'reign Planter's primal work display'd,
† That work, " where not nice Art in curious knots,
" But Nature boon pour'd forth on hill and dale
" Flowers worthy of Paradise; while all around

* See Spencer's Fairy Queen, book iv. canto x. the passage immediately alluded to is in the 21st stanza.

For all that Nature, by her mother wit,
Could frame in earth and form of substance base
Was there; and all that Nature did omit,
Art (playing Nature's second part) supplied it.

† See Milton's inimitable description of the Garden of Eden. Paradise Lost, book iv. part of which is here inserted.

" Umbrageous grots, and caves of cool recess,
" And murmuring waters down the slope dispers'd,
" Or held, by fringed banks, in crystal lakes,
" Compose a rural seat of various view."
'Twas thus great Nature's herald blazon'd high
That fair original impress, which she bore
In state sublime, e'er miscreated Art,
Offspring of Sin and Shame, the banner seiz'd,
And with adulterate pageantry defil'd.
Yet vainly, MILTON, did thy voice proclaim
These her primæval honours; still she lay
Defac'd, deflower'd, full many a ruthless year,
Alike, when Charles, the abject tool of France,
Came back to smile his subjects into slaves;
Or Belgic William, with his warrior frown,
Coldly declar'd them free; in fetters still
The goddess pin'd, by both alike opprest.

Go to the proof! behold what TEMPLE call'd
A perfect garden. There thou shalt not find
One blade of verdure, but with aching feet
From terrace down to terrace shalt descend,
Step following step, by tedious flight of stairs:
On leaden platforms now the noon-day sun
Shall scorch thee; now the dank arcades of stone
Shall chill thy fervour; happy, if at length

Thou reach the orchard, where * the sparing turf
Thro' equal lines all centring in a point
Yields thee a softer tread. And yet full oft
O'er TEMPLE's studious hour did Truth preside,
Sprinkling her lustre o'er his classic page,
There hear his candor own in fashion's spite,
In spite of courtly dullness, hear it own
" † There is a grace in wild variety

* The French, at present, seem to be equally sparing of this natural clothing of the earth, although they have done us the honour to adopt our bowling-greens, and to improve upon them. This appears from the following article of the Encyclopedie, translated verbatim.

" Boulingrin. N. S. In gardening is a species of parterre, " composed of pieces of divided turf, with borders sloping " (en glacis) and evergreens at the corners and other " parts of it. It is mowed four times a year, to make the " turf finer. The invention of this kind of parterre comes " from England, as also its name, which is derived from " *boule*, round, and *grin*, fine grass or turf. Boulingrins " are either simple or compound; the simple are all turf, " without ornament; the compound are cut into compart- " ments of turf, embroidered with knots, mixed with lit- " tle paths, borders of flowers, yew-trees, and flowering " shrubs. Sand also, of different colours, contributes greatly " to their value."

† The passage here alluded to is as follows: " What I " have said of the best forms of gardens is meant only of " such as are in some sort regular; *for there may be other* " *forms wholly irregular, that may, for ought I know, have*

" Surpassing rule and order." TEMPLE, yes,
There is a grace, and let eternal wreaths
Adorn their brows who fixt its empire here.
* The Muse shall hail the champions that herself

" *more beauty than any of the others :* but they must owe " it to some extraordinary dispositions of nature in the " seat, or some great race of fancy and judgment in the " contrivance, which may reduce many disagreeing parts " into some figure which shall yet, upon the whole, be " very agreeable. Something of this I have seen in some " places, and heard more of it from others who have lived " much among the Chinese." Sir William then gives us a kind of general account of the Chinese taste, and of their *Sharawadgi*, and concludes thus: " But I should hardly ad- " vise any of these attempts in the figure of gardens " among us, they are adventures of too hardy atchieve- " ment for any common hands; and though there may be " more honour if they succeed well, yet there is more dis- " honour if they fail, and it is twenty to one they will ; " whereas, in regular figures, it is hard to make any great " and remarkable faults." See Temple's Miscellanies, vol. i. page 186. fol. edit.

* I had before called Bacon the prophet, and Milton the herald of true taste in Gardening. The former, because in developing the constituent properties of a princely garden, he had largely expatiated upon that adorned natural wildness which we now deem the essence of the art. The latter, on account of his having made this natural wildness the leading idea in his exquisite description of Paradise. I here call Addison, Pope, Kent, &c. the champions of this

Led to the fair atchievement. ADDISON,
Thou polish'd sage, or shall I call thee bard?
I see thee come; around thy temples play
The lambent flames of humour, bright'ning mild
Thy judgment into smiles; gracious thou com'st,
With Satire at thy side, who checks her frown,
But not her secret sting. With bolder rage
POPE next advances; his indignant arm
Waves the poetic brand o'er Timon's shades,
And lights them to destruction; the fierce blaze
Sweeps thro' each kindred vista; groves to groves
* Nod their fraternal farewell, and expire.
And now, elate with fair-earn'd victory,

true taste, because they absolutely brought it into execution. The beginning, therefore, of an actual reformation, may be fixed at the time when the Spectator first appeared. The reader will find an excellent chapter upon this subject in the Pleasures of the Imagination, published in No. 414 of the Spectator; and also another paper written by the same hand, No. 447, but, perhaps, nothing went further towards destroying the absurd taste of clipped evergreens, than the fine ridicule upon them in the 173d Guardian, written by Mr. Pope.

* See Mr. Pope's Epistle on False Taste, inscribed to the Earl of Burlington. Few readers, I suppose, need be informed, that this line alludes to the following couplet:

> Grove nods to grove, each alley has a brother,
> And half the platform just reflects the other.

The bard retires, and on the bank of Thames
Erects his flag of triumph ; wild it waves
In verdant splendor, and beholds, and hails
The King of Rivers, as he rolls along.
KENT is his bold associate, KENT, who felt
The pencil's power * ; but, fir'd by higher forms
Of beauty, than that pencil knew to paint,
Work'd with the living hues that Nature lent,
And realiz'd his landscapes. Generous he,
Who gave to painting, what the wayward nymph
Refus'd her votary, those Elysian scenes,
Which would she emulate, her daring hand
Must lavish all its energy sublime.
On thee, too, SOUTHCOTE, shall the Muse bestow
No vulgar praise, for thou to humblest things
Could'st give ennobling beauties ; deck'd by thee,
The simple farm † eclips'd the garden's pride,
Ev'n as the virgin blush of Innocence,

* It is said that Mr. Kent frequently declared he caught his taste in gardening from reading the picturesque descriptions of Spenser. However this may be, the designs which he made for the works of that poet, are an incontestible proof that they had no effect upon his executive powers as a painter.

† Mr. Southcote was the introducer, or rather the inventor of the *Ferme ornè* ; for it may be presumed, nothing more than the term is of French extraction.

The harlotry of Art. Nor, SHENSTONE, thou
Shalt pass without thy meed, thou son of peace!
Who knew'st, perchance, to harmonize thy shades
Still softer than thy song; yet was that song
Nor rude, nor inharmonious, when attun'd
To pastoral plaint, or tale of slighted love.
HIM, too, the living leader of thy powers,
Great Nature! him the Muse shall hail in strains
Which antedate the praise to BROWN decreed
By thine immortal charter; latest bards
Shall pay that tuneful tribute, fitliest paid
In strains, the beauty of his scenes inspire.

Meanwhile, ye youths, whose sympathetic souls
Would taste those genuine charms, which faintly smile,
In my descriptive song, O visit oft
The finish'd scenes, that boast the forming hand
Of these creative Genii! feel ye there
What REYNOLDS felt, when first the Vatican
Unbarr'd her gates, and to his raptur'd eye
Gave Raffael's glories; feel what GARRICK felt,
When first he breath'd the soul of Shakspeare's page.
So shall your art, if call'd to grace a scene
Yet unadorn'd, with taste instinctive give
Each grace appropriate; so your active eye

Shall dart that glance prophetic, which awakes
The slumb'ring wood-nymphs; gladly shall they rise,
Oread and Dryad, from their verdurous beds,
And fling their foliage, and arrange their stems,
As you and beauty bid: the Naïad train,
Alike obsequious, from a thousand urns
Shall pour their crystalline tide: while, hand in hand,
Vertumnus and Pomona bring their stores,
Fruitage, and flowers of ev'ry blush and scent,
Each varied season yields; to you they bring
The fragrant tribute; ye, with generous hand,
Diffuse the blessing wide, till Albion smile
One ample theatre of sylvan grace.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE

ENGLISH GARDEN.

BOOK II.

HAIL to the art that teaches Wealth and Pride
How to possess their wish, the world's applause,
Unmixt with blame! that bids Magnificence
Abate its meteor glare, and learn to shine
Benevolently mild; like her, the Queen
Of Night, who sailing thro' autumnal skies,
Gives to the bearded product of the plain
Her rip'ning lustre, lingering as she rolls,
And glancing cool the salutary ray
Which fills the fields with plenty *: Hail that art,
Ye swains! for, hark! with lowings glad, your herds
Proclaim its influence, wand'ring o'er the lawns

* This simile, founded on the vulgar error concerning the Harvest Moon, however false in philosophy, may, it is hoped, be admitted in poetry.

Restor'd to them and Nature ; now no more
Shall Fortune's minion rob them of their right,
Or round his dull domain, with lofty wall,
Oppose their jocund presence. Gothic Pomp
Frowns and retires, his proud behests are scorn'd ;
Now Taste, inspir'd by Truth, exalts her voice,
And she is heard. " Oh, let not man misdeem ;
" Waste is not grandeur ; Fashion ill supplies
" My sacred place, and Beauty scorns to dwell
" Where Use is exil'd." At the awful sound
The terrace sinks spontaneous ; on the green,
Broider'd with crisped knots, the tonsile yews
Wither and fall ; the fountain dares no more
To fling its wasted crystal thro' the sky,
But pours salubrious o'er the parched lawn
Rills of fertility. Oh best of arts
That works this happy change ! true alchymy,
Beyond the Rosicrusian boast, that turns
Deformity to grace, expence to gain,
And pleas'd, returns to Earth's maternal lap
The long-lost stores of AMALTHEA's horn.

When such the theme, the poet smiles secure
Of candid audience, and with touch assur'd
Resumes his reed ASCRÆAN ; eager he
To ply its warbling stops of various note
In Nature's cause, that Albion's listening youths,

Inform'd erewhile to scorn the long-drawn lines
Of straight formality, alike may scorn
Those quick, acute, perplex'd, and tangled paths,
That, like the snake crush'd by the sharpen'd spade,
Writhe in convulsive torture, and full oft,
Thro' many a dank and unsunn'd labyrinth,
Mislead our step; till giddy, spent, and foil'd,
We reach the point where first our race began.
These Fancy priz'd erroneous, what time Taste,
An infant yet, first join'd her to destroy
The measur'd platform; into false extremes
What marvel if they stray'd, as yet unskill'd
To mark the form of that peculiar curve,
Alike averse to crooked and to straight,
Where sweet simplicity resides; which Grace
And Beauty call their own; whose lambent flow
Charms us at once with symmetry and ease.
'Tis Nature's curve, instinctively she bids
Her tribes of being trace it. Down the slope
Of yon wide field, see with its gradual sweep,
The ploughing steers conduct their fallow ridge;
The peasant, driving thro' each shadowy lane
His team, that bends beneath th' incumbent weight
Of laughing Ceres, marks it with his wheel;
At night, and morn, the milkmaid's careless step
Has, thro' yon pasture green, from stile to stile,

Imprest a kindred curve; the scudding hare
Draws to her dew-sprent seat, o'er thymy heaths
A path as gently waving; mark them well;
Compare, pronounce, that, varying but in size,
Their forms are kindred all; go then, convinc'd
That Art's unerring rule is only drawn
From Nature's sacred source; a rule that guides
Her ev'ry toil; or, if she shape the path,
Or scoop the lawn, or, gradual, lift the hill.
For not alone to that embellish'd walk,
Which leads to ev'ry beauty of the scene,
It yields a grace, but spreads its influence wide,
Prescribes each form of thicket, copse, or wood,
Confines the rivulet, and spreads the lake.

Yet shall this graceful line forget to please,
If border'd close by sidelong parallels,
Nor duly mix'd with those opposing curves
That give the charm of contrast. Vainly Taste
Draws thro' the grove her path in easiest bend,
If, on the margin of its woody sides,
The measur'd greensward waves in kindred flow;
Oft let the turf recede, and oft approach,
With varied breadth, now sink into the shade,
Now to the sun its verdant bosom bare.
As vainly wilt thou lift the gradual hill
To meet thy right-hand view, if, to the left,

An equal hill ascends; in this, and all
Be free, be various, as in Nature's self.

For in her wildness is there oft an art,
Or seeming art, which, by position apt,
Arranges shapes unequal, so to save
That correspondent poize, which, unpreserv'd,
Would mock our gaze with airy vacancy.
Yet fair Variety, with all her powers,
Assists the balance; 'gainst the barren crag
She lifts the pastur'd slope; to distant hills
Opposes neighb'ring shades; and, central oft,
Relieves the flatness of the lawn, or lake,
With studded tuft, or island. So to poize
Her objects, mimic Art may oft attain;
She rules the foreground; she can swell or sink
Its surface; here her leafy screen oppose,
And there withdraw; here part the varying greens,
And crowd them there in one promiscuous gloom,
As best befits the Genius of the scene.

Him then, that sov'reign Genius, monarch sole,
Who from creation's primal day derives
His right divine to this his rural throne,
Approach with meet obeisance; at his feet
Let our aw'd art fall prostrate. They of Ind,
The Tartar tyrants, Tamerlane's proud race,

Or they in Persia thron'd, who shake the rod
Of power o'er myriads of enervate slaves,
Expect not humbler homage to their pride
Than does this sylvan despot *. Yet to those
Who do him loyal service, who revere
His dignity, nor aim, with rebel arms,
At lawless usurpation, is he found
Patient and placable, receives, well pleas'd,
Their tributary treasures, nor disdains
To blend them with his own internal store.

Stands he in blank and desolated state,
Where yawning crags disjointed, sharp, uncouth,
Involve him with pale horror? in the clefts
Thy welcome spade shall heap that fost'ring mould
Whence sapling oaks may spring; whence clust'r-
ing crowds
Of early underwood shall veil their sides,
And teach their rugged heads above the shade
To tow'r in shapes romantic: nor, around
Their flinty roots, shall ivy spare to hang

* See book i. line 84. See also Mr. Pope's Epistle to Lord Burlington, line 57.

Consult the Genius of the place in all, &c.

A fundamental rule, which is here further enlarged upon from line 126.

Its gadding tendrils, nor the moss-grown turf,
With wild thyme sprinkled, there refuse to spread
Its verdure. Awful still, yet not austere,
The Genius stands; bold is his port, and wild,
But not forlorn, nor savage. On some plain
Of tedious length, say, are his flat limbs laid?
Thy hand shall lift him from the dreary couch,
Pillowing his head with swelling hillocks green,
While, all around, a forest curtain spreads
Its waving folds, and blesses his repose.
What, if perchance in some prolific soil,
Where Vegetation strenuous, uncontroll'd,
Has push'd her pow'rs luxuriant, he now pines
For air and freedom? soon thy sturdy axe,
Amid its intertwisted foliage driv'n,
Shall open all his glades, and ingress give
To the bright darts of day; his prison'd rills
That darkling crept amid the rustling brakes,
Shall glitter as they glide, and his dank caves,
Free to salubrious zephyrs, cease to weep.
Meanwhile his shadowy pomp he still retains,
His Dryads still attend him; they alone
Of race plebeian banish'd, who to crowd
Not grace his state, their boughs obtrusive flung.

But chief consult him ere thou dar'st decide
Th' appropriate bounds of Pleasure and of Use;

For Pleasure, lawless robber, oft invades
Her neighbour's right, and turns to idle waste
Her treasures; curb her then in scanty bounds,
Whene'er the scene permits that just restraint:
The curb restrains not Beauty; sov'reign she
Still triumphs, still unites each subject realm,
And blesses both impartial. Why then fear,
Lest, if thy fence contract the shaven lawn,
It does her wrong? She points a thousand ways
And each her own, to cure the needful ill.
Where'er it winds, and freely must it wind,
She bids, at ev'ry bend, thick-blossom'd tufts
Crowd their inwoven'd tendrils; is there still
A void? Lo Lebanon her cedar lends!
Lo all the stately progeny of pines
Come with their floating foliage richly rob'd,
To fill that void! meanwhile, across the mead
The wand'ring flocks, that browse between the shades,
Seem oft to pass their bounds; the dubious eye
Decides not if they crop the mead or lawn.

Browse then your fill, fond foresters! to you
Shall sturdy Labour quit his daily task
Well pleas'd; nor longer o'er his useless plots
Dip in the dew the splendor of his scythe.
He, leaning on that scythe, with carols gay

Salutes his fleecy substitutes, that rush
In bleating chase to their delicious task,
And, spreading o'er the plain, with eager teeth
Devour it into verdure. Browse your fill,
Fond foresters! the soil that you enrich
Shall still supply your morn and evening meal
With choicest delicates; whether you choose
The vernal blades, that rise with seeded stem
Of hue purpureal; or the clover white,
That in a spiked ball collects its sweets;
Or trembling fescue: ev'ry fav'rite herb
Shall court your taste, ye harmless epicures!
Meanwhile permit that with unheeded step
I pass beside you, nor let idle fear
Spoil your repast, for know the lively scene,
That you still more enliven, to my soul
Darts inspiration, and impels the song
To roll in bolder descant; while, within,
A gleam of happiness primæval seems
To snatch me back to joys my nature claim'd,
Ere vice defil'd, ere slavery sunk the world,
And all was faith and freedom: then was man
Creation's king, yet friend; and all that browse
The plain, or skim the air, or dive the flood,
Paid him their liberal homage; paid unaw'd
In love accepted, sympathetic love
That felt for all, and blest them with its smiles.

Then, nor the curling horn had learn'd to sound
The savage song of chase; the barbed shaft
Had then no poison'd point; nor thou, fell tube!
Whose iron entrails hide the sulphurous blast,
Satanic engine, knew'st the ruthless power
Of thundering death around thee. Then alike
Were ye innocuous thro' your ev'ry tribe,
Or brute, or reptile; nor by rage or guile
Had giv'n to injur'd man his only plea
(And that the tyrant's plea *) to work your harm.
Instinct, alas! like wayward Reason, now
Veers from its pole. There was a golden time
When each created being kept its sphere
Appointed, nor infring'd its neighbour's right.
The flocks, to whom the grassy lawn was giv'n,
Fed on its blades contented; now they crush
Each scion's tender shoots, and, at its birth,
Destroy, what, sav'd from their remorseless tooth,
Had been the tree of Jove. Ev'n while I sing,
Yon wanton lamb has cropt the woodbine's pride,
That bent beneath a full-blown load of sweets,
And fill'd the air with perfume; see, it falls;
The busy bees, with many a murmur sad,

* Alluding to Milton.

So spake the fiend, and with *necessity*,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.

PARADISE LOST, book iv. line 393

Hang o'er their honied loss. Why is it thus?
Ah, why must Art defend the friendly shades
She rear'd to shield you from the noontide beam?
Traitors, forbear to wound them! say, ye fools!
Does your rich herbage fail? do acrid leaves
Afford you daintier food? I plead in vain;
For now the father of the fleecy troop
Begins his devastation, and his ewes
Crowd to the spoil with imitative zeal.

Since then, constrain'd, we must expel the flock
From where our saplings rise, our flow'rets bloom,
The song shall teach, in clear perceptive notes,
How best to frame the fence, and best to hide
All its foreseen defects; defective still,
Tho' hid with happiest art. Ingrateful sure
When such the theme, beseems the Poet's task:
Yet must he try, by modulation meet
Of varied cadence, and selected phrase,
Exact, yet free, without inflation bold,
To dignify the subject; try to form
That magic sympathy of sense with sound
Which pictures all it sings; while grace awakes
At each blest touch, and, on the lowliest things,
Scatters her rainbow hues. The first and best
Is that which, sinking from our eye, divides,
Yet seems not to divide the shaven lawn,

And parts it from the pasture ; for if there
Sheep feed, or dappled deer, their wandering teeth
Will, smoothly as the scythe, the herbage shave,
And leave a kindred verdure. This to keep,
Heed that thy labourer scoop the trench with care ;
For some there are who give their spade repose,
When broad enough the perpendicular sides
Divide, and deep descend : to form, perchance,
Some vulgar drain, such labour may suffice,
Yet not for beauty : here thy range of wall
Must lift its height erect, and, o'er its head
A verdant veil of swelling turf expand,
While smoothly from its base, with gradual ease,
The pasture meets its level, at that point
Which best deludes our eye, and best conceals
Thy lawn's brief limit. Down so smooth a slope
The fleecy foragers will gladly browse ;
The velvet herbage, free from weeds obscene,
Shall spread its equal carpet, and the trench
Be pasture to its base. Thus form thy fence
Of stone, for stone alone, and pil'd on high,
Best curbs the nimble deer, that love to range
Unlimited ; but where tame heifers feed,
Or innocent sheep, an humbler mound will serve,
Unlin'd with stone, and but a greensward trench.
Here midway down, upon the nearer bank,
Plant thy thick row of thorns, and, to defend

Their infant shoots beneath, on oaken stakes,
Extend a rail of elm, securely arm'd
With spiculated pailing, in such sort
As, round some citadel, the engineer
Directs his sharp stoccade. But when the shoots
Condense, and interweave their prickly boughs
Impenetrable, then withdraw their guard,
They've done their office; scorn thou to retain,
What frowns like military art in scenes,
Where Peace should smile perpetual. These destroy'd,
Make it thy vernal care, when April calls
New shoots to birth, to trim the hedge aslant,
And mould it to the roundness of the mound,
Itself a shelving hill; nor need we here
The rule or line precise, a casual glance
Suffices to direct the careless sheers.

Yet learn, that each variety of ground
Claims its peculiar barrier. When the foss
Can steal transverse before the central eye,
'Tis duly drawn; but, up yon neighb'ring hill,
That fronts the lawn direct, if labour delve
The yawning chasm, 'twill meet, not cross our view;
No foliage can conceal, no curve correct
The deep deformity. And yet thou mean'st

Up yonder hill to wind thy fragrant way,
And wisely dost thou mean ; for its broad eye
Catches the sudden charms of laughing vales,
Rude rocks, and headlong streams, and antique oaks,
Lost in a wild horizon ; yet the path
That leads to all these charms expects defence :
Here then suspend the sportsman's hempen toils,
And stretch their meshes on the light support
Of hazel plants, or draw thy lines of wire
In fivefold parallel ; no danger then
That sheep invade thy foliage. To thy herds,
And pastur'd steeds an opener fence oppose,
Form'd by a triple row of cordage strong,
Tight drawn the stakes between. The simple deer
Is curb'd by mimic snares ; the slenderest twine *

* Linnæus makes this a characteristical property of the fallow deer; his words are, *arcetur filo horizontali.* (See Syst. Nat. art. *Dama.*) I have sometimes seen feathers tied to this line for greater security, though, perhaps, unnecessarily. They seem, however, to have been in use in Virgil's time, from the following passage in the Georgics:

Stant circumfusa pruinis
Corpora magna boum : confertoque agmine cervi
Torpent mole novâ, et summis vix cornibus extant.
Hos non emissis canibus, non cassibus ullis,
Puniceæve agitant pavidos formidine pennæ :

(If sages err not) that the beldame spins,
When by her wintry lamp she plies her wheel,
Arrests his courage; his impetuous hoof,
Broad chest, and branching antlers, nought avail;
In fearful gaze he stands; the nerves that bore
His bounding pride o'er lofty mounds of stone,
A single thread defies. Such force has fear,
When visionary fancy wakes the fiend
In brute or man; most powerful when most vain.

Still must the swain, who spreads these corded guards,
Expect their swift decay. The noontide beams
Relax, the nightly dews contract the twist.
Oft too the coward hare, then only bold
When mischief prompts, or wintry famine pines,
Will quit her rush-grown form, and steal, with ear
Up-prick'd, to gnaw the toils; and oft the ram

Sed frustra oppositum trudentes pectore montem
Cominus obtruncant ferro.

GEORG. lib. iii. ver. 368.

Ruæus's comment on the fifth line is as follows: *linea, aut funiculus erat, cui plumæ implicabantur variis tinctæ coloribus, ad feras terrendas, ut in retia agerentur.* And a simile, which Virgil uses in the twelfth book of the Æneid, ver. 749, and another in Lucan, Phars. lib. iv. ver. 437, clearly prove that the learned jesuit has rightly explained the passage.

And jutting steer drive their entangling horns
Thro' the frail meshes, and, by many a chasm,
Proclaim their hate of thraldom. Nothing brooks
Confinement, save degenerate man alone,
Who deems a monarch's smile can gild his chains.
Tir'd then, perchance, of nets that daily claim
Thy renovating labour, thou wilt form,
With elm and oak, a rustic balustrade
Of firmest juncture; happy could thy toil
Make it as fair as firm; but vain the wish,
Aim not to grace, but hide its formal line.

Let those, who weekly, from the city's smoke,
Crowd to each neighb'ring hamlet, there to hold
Their dusty sabbath, tip with gold and red
The milk-white palisades, that Gothic now,
And now Chinese, now neither, and yet both,
Chequer their trim domain. Thy sylvan scene
Would fade, indignant at the tawdry glare.

Come then, thou handmaid of that sister Muse!
Who, when she calls to life and local form
Her mind's creation, on thy aid depends
For half her mimic power; sweet Colouring! come,
Lend thy delusive help, and pleas'd descend
Ev'n to thy meanest office; grind, compound,

Decide, what kindred hues may surest veil
The barrier rude, and lose it in the lawn.

She comes, and first, with snowy ceruse, joins
The och'rous atoms that chalybeate rills
Wash from their mineral channels, as they glide,
In flakes of earthly gold ; with these unites
A tinge of blue, or that deep azure grey,
Form'd from the calcin'd fibres of the vine ;
And, if she blends, with sparing hand she blends
That base metallic drug then only priz'd,
When, aided by the humid touch of Time,
It gives a Nero's or some tyrant's cheek
Its precious canker. These with fluent oil
Attemper'd, on thy length'ning rail shall spread
That sober olive green which Nature wears
Ev'n on her vernal bosom ; nor misdeem,
For that, illumin'd with the noontide ray,
She boasts a brighter garment, therefore Art
A livelier verdure to thy aid should bring.
Know when that Art, with ev'ry varied hue,
Pourtrays the living landscape ; when her hand
Commands the canvass plane to glide with streams,
To wave the foliage, or with flowers to breathe,
Cool olive tints, in soft gradation laid,
Create the general herbage : there alone,
Where darts with vivid force the ray supreme,

Unsullied verdure reigns ; and tells our eye
It stole its bright reflection from the sun.

The paint is spread ; the barrier pales retire,
Snatch'd, as by magic, from the gazer's view.
So, when the sable ensign of the night,
Unfurl'd by mist-impelling Eurus, veils
The last red radiance of declining day,
Each scatter'd village, and each holy spire
That deck'd the distance of the sylvan scene,
Are sunk in sudden gloom : the plodding hind,
That homeward hies, kens not the cheering site
Of his calm cabin, which, a moment past,
Stream'd from its roof an azure curl of smoke,
Beneath the sheltering coppice, and gave sign
Of warm domestic welcome from his toil.

Nor is that cot, of which fond Fancy draws
This casual picture, alien from our theme.
Revisit it at morn ; its opening latch,
Tho' Penury and Toil within reside,
Shall pour thee forth a youthful progeny,
Glowing with health and beauty : (such the dower
Of equal heav'n) see, how the ruddy tribe
Throng round the threshold, and, with vacant gaze,
Salute thee ; call the loiterers into use,
And form of these thy fence, the living fence

That graces what it guards. Thou think'st, perchance,
That, skill'd in Nature's heraldry, thy art
Has, in the limits of yon fragrant tuft,
Marshall'd each rose, that to the eye of June
Spreads its peculiar crimson ; do not err,
The loveliest still is wanting ; the fresh rose
Of Innocence, it blossoms on their cheek,
And, lo, to thee they bear it ! striving each,
In panting race, who first shall reach the lawn,
Proud to be call'd thy shepherds. Want, alas !
Has o'er their little limbs her livery hung,
In many a tatter'd fold, yet still those limbs
Are shapely ; their rude locks start from their brow,
Yet, on that open brow, its dearest throne,
Sits sweet Simplicity. Ah, clothe the troop
In such a russet garb as best befits
Their pastoral office ; let the leathern scrip
Swing at their side, tip thou their crook with steel,
And braid their hat with rushes, then to each
Assign his station ; at the close of eve,
Be it their care to pen in hurdled cote
The flock, and when the matin prime returns,
Their care to set them free ; yet watching still
The liberty they lend, oft shalt thou hear
Their whistle shrill, and oft their faithful dog
Shall with obedient barkings fright the flock

From wrong or robbery. The livelong day,
Meanwhile, rolls lightly o'er their happy heads;
They bask on sunny hillocks, or desport
In rustic pastime, while that loveliest grace,
Which only lives in action unrestrain'd,
To ev'ry simple gesture lends a charm.

Pride of the year, purpureal Spring! attend,
And, in the cheeks of these sweet innocents
Behold your beauties pictur'd. As the cloud
That weeps its moment from thy sapphire heav'n,
They frown with causeless sorrow; as the beam,
Gilding that cloud, with causeless mirth they smile.
Stay, pitying Time! prolong their vernal bliss.
Alas! ere we can note it in our song,
Comes manhood's feverish summer, chill'd full soon
By cold autumnal care, till wintry age
Sinks in the frore severity of death.

Ah! who, when such life's momentary dream,
Would mix in hireling senates, strenuous there
To crush the venal hydra, whose fell crests
Rise with recruited venom from the wound!
Who, for so vain a conflict, would forego
Thy sylvan haunts, celestial Solitude!
Where self-improvement, crown'd with self-content,

Await to bless thy votary. Nurtur'd thus
In tranquil groves, list'ning to Nature's voice,
That preach'd from whispering trees, and babbling brooks,
A lesson seldom learnt in Reason's school,
The wise Sidonian liv'd * : and, tho' the pest
Of lawless tyranny around him rag'd ;
Tho' Strato, great alone in Persia's gold,
Uncall'd, unhallow'd by the people's choice,
Usurp'd the throne of his brave ancestors ;
Yet was his soul all peace ; a garden's care
His only thought, its charms his only pride.

But now the conquering arms of Macedon
Had humbl'd Persia. Now Phænicia's realm
Receives the son of Ammon ; at whose frown
Her tributary kings or quit their thrones,
Or at his smile retain ; and Sidon, now
Freed from her tyrant, points the victor's step
To where her rightful sov'reign, doubly dear
By birth and virtue, prun'd his garden grove.

* Abdalominus. The fact on which this episode is founded, is recorded by Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Justin, and Q. Curtius ; the last is here chiefly followed. M. de Fontenelle and the Abbé Metastasio have both of them treated the subject dramatically.

'Twas at that early hour, when now the sun
Behind majestic Lebanon's dark veil
Hid his ascending splendour; yet thro' each
Her cedar-vested sides, his slaunting beams
Shot to the strand, and purpled all the main;
Where Commerce saw her Sidon's freighted wealth,
With languid streamers, and with folded sails,
Float in a lake of gold. The wind was hush'd;
And, to the beech, each slowly-lifted wave,
Creeping with silver curl, just kiss'd the shore,
And slept in silence. At this tranquil hour
Did Sidon's senate, and the Grecian host,
Led by the conqueror of the world, approach
The secret glade that veil'd the man of toil.

Now near the mountain's foot the chief arriv'd,
Where, round that glade, a pointed aloe screen,
Entwin'd with myrtle, met in tangled brakes,
That barr'd all entrance, save at one low gate,
Whose time-disjointed arch with ivy chain'd,
Bade stoop the warrior train. A path-way brown
Led thro' the pass, meeting a fretful brook,
And wandering near its channel, while it leap'd
O'er many a rocky fragment, where rude art,
Perchance, had help'd, but not prescrib'd its way.

Close was the vale and shady; yet, exelong,

Its forest sides retiring, left a lawn
Of ample circuit, where the widening stream
Now, o'er its pebbled channel, nimbly tript
In many a lucid maze. From the flower'd verge
Of this clear rill now stray'd the devious path,
Amid ambrosial tufts, where spicy plants,
Weeping their perfum'd tears of myrrh, and nard,
Stood crown'd with Sharon's rose; or where, apart,
The patriarch palm his load of sugar'd dates
Shower'd plenteous; where the fig, of standard strength,
And rich pomegranate wrapt, in dulcet pulp,
Their racy seeds; or where, with golden fruit
Mature, the citron wav'd its splendid bough.
Meanwhile, the lawn beneath the scatter'd shade
Spread its serene extent; a stately file
Of circling cypress mark'd the distant bound.

Now, to the left, the path ascending pierc'd
A smaller sylvan theatre, yet deck'd
With more majestic foliage. Cedars here,
Coeval with the sky-crown'd mountain's self,
Spread wide their giant arms; whence, from a rock
Craggy and black, that seem'd its fountain head,
The stream fell headlong; yet still higher rose,
Ev'n in th' eternal snow of Lebanon,
That hallow'd spring; thence, in the porous earth

Long while ingulph'd, its crystal weight here forc'd
Its way to light and freedom. Down it dash'd ;
A bed of native marble pure, receiv'd
The new-born Naïad, and repos'd her wave,
Till with o'erflowing pride it skimm'd the lawn.

Fronting this lake there rose a solemn grot,
O'er which an ancient vine luxuriant flung
Its purple clusters, and beneath its roof
An unhewn altar. Rich Sabæan gums
That altar pil'd, and there with torch of pine
The venerable sage, now first descry'd,
The fragrant incense kindled. Age had shed
That dust of silver o'er his sable locks,
Which spoke his strength mature beyond its prime,
Yet vigorous still, for from his healthy cheek
Time had not cropt a rose, or on his brow
One wrinkling furrow plow'd ; his eagle eye
Had all its youthful lightning, and each limb
The sinewy strength that toil demands and gives.

The warrior saw and paus'd : his nod withheld
The crowd at awful distance, where their ears,
In mute attention, drank the sage's prayer.
" Parent of Good (he cried) behold the gifts
" Thy humble votary brings, and may thy smile
" Hallow his custom'd offering. Let the hand

" That deals in blood, with blood thy shrines
" distain,
" Be mine this harmless tribute. If it speaks
" A grateful heart, can hecatombs do more?
" Parent of Good! they cannot. Purple pomp
" May call thy presence to a prouder fane
" Than this poor cave; but will thy presence
" there
" Be more devoutly felt? Parent of Good!
" It will not. Here, then, shall the prostrate heart,
" That deeply feels thy presence, lift its pray'r.—
" But what has he to ask who nothing needs,
" Save, what unask'd, is, from thy heav'n of
" heav'ns
" Giv'n in diurnal good? Yet, holy Power!
" Do all that call thee Father thus exult
" In thy propitious presence? Sidon sinks
" Beneath a tyrant's scourge. Parent of Good!
" Oh free my captive country!"—Sudden here
He paus'd and sigh'd. And now, the raptur'd
crowd
Murmur'd applause: he heard, he turn'd, and saw
The king of Macedon with eager step
Burst from his warrior phalanx. From the youth,
Who bore its state, the conqueror's own right hand
Snatch'd the rich wreath, and bound it on his brow.
His swift attendants o'er his shoulders cast

The robe of empire, while the trumpet's voice
Proclaim'd him king of Sidon. Stern he stood,
Or, if he smil'd, 'twas a contemptuous smile,
That held the pageant honours in disdain.
Then burst the people's voice, in loud acclaim,
And bade him be their father. At the word,
The honour'd blood that warm'd him flush'd his cheek;
His brow expanded; his exalted step
March'd firmer; graciously he bow'd the head,
And was the sire they call'd him. "Tell me,
"king,"
Young Ammon cried, while o'er his bright'ning form
He cast the gaze of wonder, "how a soul
"Like thine could bear the toils of penury?"
"Oh grant me, gods!" he answer'd, "so to bear
"This load of royalty. My toil was crown'd
"With blessings lost to kings; yet, righteous
"powers!
"If to my country ye transfer the boon,
"I triumph in the loss. Be mine the chains
"That fetter sov'reignty; let Sidon smile
"With your best blessings, liberty and peace."

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE

ENGLISH GARDEN.

BOOK III.

Clos'd is that curious ear, by Death's cold hand,
That mark'd each error of my careless strain
With kind severity; to whom my Muse
Still lov'd to whisper, what she meant to sing
In louder accent; to whose taste supreme
She first and last appeal'd, nor wish'd for praise,
Save when his smile was herald to her fame.
Yes, thou art gone; yet Friendship's fault'ring tongue
Invokes thee still; and still, by Fancy sooth'd,
Fain would she hope her Gray attends the call.
Why then, alas! place I the funeral urn,
The sculptur'd lyre, within this sylvan dome *,

* Mr. Gray died July 31, 1771. This book was begun a few months after. The three following lines allude to a rustic alcove the author was then building in his garden, in which he placed a medallion of his friend, and an urn. A

And fix this votive tablet, fair inscrib'd
With numbers worthy thee, for they are thine?
Why, if thou hear'st me still, these symbols sad
Of fond memorial? Ah! my pensive soul!
He hears not now, nor ever more shall hear
The theme his candour, not his taste, approv'd.

Oft, smiling as in scorn, oft would he cry,
" Why waste thy numbers on a trivial art,
" That ill can mimic even the humblest charms
" Of all majestic Nature?" At the word
His eye would glisten, and his accents glow
With all the poet's frenzy, " Sov'reign queen!
" Behold, and tremble! while thou view'st her
" state
" Thron'd on the heights of Skiddaw; call thy art
" To build her such a throne; that art will sink
" To its primæval nothing. Trace her march
" Amid the purple craggs of Borrowdale;

lyre over the entrance, with the motto from Pindar, which Mr. Gray had prefixed to his Odes, ΦΩΝΑΝΤΑ ΣΥΝΕΤΟΙΣΙ, and under it, on a tablet, this stanza, taken from the first edition of his elegy written in a Country Church-yard:

Here scatter'd oft, the loveliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of vi'lets found;
The red-breast loves to build and warble *here*,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

" And try like those to pile thy range of rock
" In rude tumultuous chaos. See ! she mounts
" Her Naïad car, and, down Lodore's dread cliff,
" Falls many a fathom with the headlong stream ;
" Falls, like the bard my fabling fancy hurl'd
" From the rough brow that frown'd o'er Conway's
" flood ;
" Yet not like him, to plunge in endless night ;
" For, on its boiling bosom, still she guides
" Her buoyant shell, and leads the wave along,
" Or spreads it broad, a river, or a lake,
" As suits her sov'reign pleasure ; will thy song
" E'er brace the sinews of enervate art
" To such dread daring ? will it ev'n direct
" Her hand to emulate those softer charms
" That deck the banks of Dove, or call to birth
" The bare romantic craggs, and copses green,
" That sidelong grace her circuit ? whence the
" rills,
" Bright in their crystal purity, descend
" To meet their sparkling queen, around each
" fount
" The hawthorns crowd, and knit their blossom'd
" sprays
" To keep their sources sacred. Here, even here,
" Thy art, each active sinew strain'd in vain,
" Would perish in its pride. Far rather thou

" Confess her scanty power, correct, controul,
" Tell her how far, nor farther, she may go,
" And rein with Reason's curb fantastic Taste."

Yes, I will hear thee, dear lamented shade,
Each accent shall retentive Memory stamp
On her true tablet; what remains unsung,
As if still guided by thy judgment sage,
As if still modell'd to thy curious ear,
Shall flow with varied cadence: so shall praise,
If ought of praise the verse I weave may claim,
From just Posterity reward my song.

Erewhile, to trace the path, to form the fence,
To mark the destin'd limits of the lawn,
The Muse, with measur'd step preceptive, pac'd.
Now from the surface with impatient flight
She mounts, Sylvanus! o'er thy world of shade,
To spread her pinions. Open all thy glades,
Greet her from all thy echoes. Orpheus like,
Arm'd with the spell of harmony, she comes,
To lead thy forests forth to lovelier scenes,
Where Fancy waits to fix them; from the dells
Where now they lurk she calls them to possess
Conspicuous stations; to their varied forms
Allots congenial place; selects, divides,
And blends anew in one Elysian whole.

Yet, while I thus exult, my weak tongue feels
The lack of antient phrase which, speaking, paints,
And is the thing it sings. Ah, Virgil! why
Left'st thou this theme to grate on modern reed?
Why not array it in the radiant robe
Of thy rich diction, give it to the guard
Of Fame thy handmaid, whose immortal plume
Had borne its praise beyond the bounds of Time?

Countless is Vegetation's verdant brood
As are the stars that stud yon cope of heaven;
To marshal all her tribes, in order'd file
Generic, or specific, might demand
His science, wond'rous Swede, whose ample mind,
Like antient Tadmor's philosophic king,
Stretch'd from the hyssop creeping on the wall
To Lebanon's proudest cedars. Skill like this,
Which spans a copious third of Nature's realm,
Our art requires not, sedulous alone
To note those general properties of shape,
Dimension, growth, duration, strength, and hue,
Then first impress'd, when, at the dawn of time,
The form-deciding life-inspiring word
Pronounc'd them into being. These prime marks,
Distinctive, docile Memory, makes her own,
That each their shadowy succour may supply
To her wish'd purpose; first, as first beseems,

To veil whate'er of wall, or fence uncouth
Offends the eye, which tyrant Use has rear'd,
And stern Necessity forbids to change.

Lur'd with their hasty sprouts and branching stems,
Planters there are who chuse the race of pine
For this great end, erroneous; witness they
That, as their arrowy heads assault the sky,
They leave their shafts unfeather'd; rather thou
Select the shrubs that, patient of the knife,
Will thank thee for the wound: the hardy thorn,
Holly, or box, privet, or pyracanth.
They, thickening from their base, with tenfold shade
Will soon replenish all thy judgment prun'd.

But chief, with willing aid, her glittering green
Shall England's laurel bring; swift shall she spread
Her broad-leav'd shade, and float it fair and wide,
Proud to be call'd an inmate of the soil.
Let England prize this daughter of the east *

* Our common laurel was first brought into the Low Countries, A. D. 1576, (together with the horse chesnut) from Constantinople, as a present from David Ungnad, the Imperial Ambassador in Turkey, to Clusius, the famous botanist. It was sent him by the name of Trabison-Curmasi, or the Date of Trebisond, but he named it Lauro-Cerasus.

Beyond that Latian plant, of kindred name,
That wreath'd the head of Julius; basely twin'd
Its flattering foliage on the traitor's brow
Who crush'd his country's freedom. Sacred tree
Ne'er be your brighter verdure thus debas'd!
Far happier thou, in this sequester'd bower,
To shroud thy poet, who, with fost'ring hand,
Here bade thee flourish, and with grateful strain
Now chaunts the praise of thy maturer bloom.
And happier far that poet, if, secure
His hearth and altars from the pilfering slaves
Of power, his little eve of lonely life
May here steal on, blest with the heartfelt calm
That competence and liberty inspire.

Nor are the plants which England calls her own
Few, or unlovely, that, with laurel join'd,
And kindred foliage of perennial green,
Will form a close-knit curtain. Shrubs there are
Of bolder growth, that, at the Spring's first call,
Burst forth in blossom'd fragrance. Lilacs rob'd
In snow-white innocence, or purple pride,
The sweet syringa, yielding but in scent
To the rich orange, or the woodbine wild,
That loves to hang on barren boughs remote
Her wreaths of flowery perfume. These, beside

Myriads, that here the Muse neglects to name,
Will add a vernal lustre to thy veil.

And what if chance collects the varied tribes,
Yet fear not thou but unexpected charms
Will from their union start. But if our song
Supply one precept here, it bids retire
Each leaf of deeper dye, and lift in front
Foliage of paler verdure, so to spread
A canvass, which, when touch'd by Autumn's hand,
Shall gleam with dusky gold, or russet rays.
But why prepare for her funereal hand
That canvass? she but comes to dress thy shades,
As lovelier victims for their wintry tomb;
Rather to flowery Spring, to Summer bright,
Thy labours consecrate; their laughing reign,
The youth, the manhood of the growing year,
Deserves thy labour, and rewards its pain.
Yet, heedful ever of that ruthless time
When Winter shakes their stems, preserve a file
With ever-during leaf to brave his arm,
And deepening spread their undiminish'd gloom.

But, if the tall defect demands a screen
Of forest shade high-tow'ring, some broad roof,
Perchance, of glaring tile that guards the stores

Of Ceres, or the patch'd disjointed choir
Of some old fane, whose steeple's Gothic pride
Or pinnacled, or spir'd, would bolder rise
" In tufted trees high bosom'd." Here allot
Convenient space to plant that lofty tribe
Behind thy underwood, lest, o'er its head
The forest tyrants shake their lordly arms,
And shed their baleful dew. Each plant that springs
Holds, like the people of some freeborn state,
Its rights fair franchis'd; rooted to a spot
It yet has claim to air; from liberal heav'n
It yet has claim to sunshine, and to showers:
Air, showers, and sunshine are its liberty.

That liberty secur'd, a general shade
Dense, and impervious to thy wish shall rise
To hide each form uncouth; and, this obtain'd,
All else we from the dryad race implore
Is grace, is ornament. For see our lawn,
Tho' cloth'd with softest verdure, tho' reliev'd
By many a gentle fall and easy swell,
Expects that harmony of light, and shade,
Which foliage only gives. Come, then, ye plants!
That, like the village troop when Maia dawns,
Delight to mingle social; to the crest
Of yonder brow we safely may conduct
Your numerous train, no eye obstructed there

Will blame your interpos'd society;
But, on the plain below, in single stems
Disparted, or in sparing groups distinct,
Wide must ye stand, in wild, disorder'd mood,
As if the seeds from which your scions sprang
Had there been scatter'd from the affrighted beak
Of some maternal bird, whom the fierce hawk
Pursued with felon claw. Her young, meanwhile,
Callow, and cold, from their moss-woven nest
Peep forth; they stretch their little eager throats
Broad to the wind, and plead to the lone spray
Their famish'd plaint importunately shrill.

Yet in this wild disorder Art presides,
Designs, corrects, and regulates the whole,
Herself the while unseen. No cedar broad
Drops his dark curtain where a distant scene
Demands distinction. Here the thin abele
Of lofty bole, and bare; the smooth-stemm'd beech,
Or slender alder give our eye free space
Beneath their boughs, to catch each lessening charm,
Ev'n to the far horizon's azure bound.

Nor will that sov'reign arbitress admit,
Where'er her nod decrees a mass of shade,
Plants of discordant sort, unequal size,
Or rul'd by Foliation's different law;

Studious, with just selection, those to join
That earliest flourish, and that latest fade.

Nor will that sov'reign arbitress devote
To strange and alien soils her seedling stems;
Fix the dank sallow on the mountain's brow,
Or to the moss-grown margin of the lake,
Bid the dry pine ascend. From Nature's laws
She draws her own: Nature and she are one.

Nor will that sov'reign arbitress select,
For objects interpos'd, the pigmy race
Of shrubs, or scatter with unmeaning hand
Their offspring o'er the lawn, scorning to patch
With many a meagre and disjointed tuft
Its sober surface: sidelong to her path
And polish'd foreground she confines their growth,
Where o'er their heads the liberal eye may range.

Nor will that sov'reign arbitress, intent
To form one perfect whole, forego that aim
To give exotic wonders to our gaze.
She knows and trusts not in the faithless train:
Sagely she calls on those of hardy class
Indigenous, who, patient of the change
From heat to cold, which Albion hourly feels,
Are brac'd with strength to brave it. These alone

She plants, and prunes, nor grieves if nicer eyes
Pronounce them vulgar. These she calls her friends,
That veteran troop who will not for a blast
Of nipping air like cowards quit the field.

Far to the north of thy imperial towers,
Augusta; in that wild and Alpine vale
Thro' which the Swale, by mountain torrents swell'd,
Flings his redundant stream, there liv'd a youth
Of polish'd manners; ample his domain,
And fair the site of his paternal dome.
He lov'd the art I sing, a deep adept
In Nature's story; well he knew the names
Of all her verdant lineage, yet that skill
Misled his taste; scornful of every bloom
That spread spontaneous, from remotest Ind
He brought his foliage; careless of its cost,
Ev'n of its beauty careless; it was rare,
And therefore beauteous. Now his laurel screen,
With rose and woodbine negligently wove,
Bows to the axe; the rich magnolias claim
The station; now Herculean beeches fell'd,
Resign their rights, and warm Virginia sends
Her cedars to usurp them; the proud oak
Himself, ev'n he, the sov'reign of the shade,
Yields to the fir that drips with Gilead's balm.
Now, Albion, gaze at glories not thy own!

Pause, rapid Swale! and see thy margin crown'd
With all the pride of Ganges: vernal showers
Have fix'd their roots, nutritious Summer suns
Favour'd their growth, and mildest Autumn smil'd
Benignant o'er them; vigorous, fair, and tall,
They waft a gale of spices o'er the plain.
But Winter comes, and with him watry Jove,
And with him Boreas in his frozen shroud:
The savage spirit of old Swale is rous'd;
He howls amid his foam. At the dread sight
The aliens stand aghast; they bow their heads;
In vain the glassy penthouse is supply'd,
The pelting storm with icy bullets breaks
Its fragile barrier; see, they fade, they die.

Warn'd by his error, let the planter slight
These shiv'ring rarities; or if, to please
Fastidious Fashion, he must needs allot
Some space for foreign foliage, let him chuse
A sidelong glade, shelter'd from east and north,
And free to southern and to western gales;
There let him fix their station, thither wind
Some devious path, that, from the general whole
Detach'd, may lead to where they safely bloom.
So in the web of epic song sublime
The bard Mæonian interweaves the charm

Of gentle episode, yet leaves unbroke
The golden thread of his majestic theme.

What else to shun of formal, false, or vain,
Of long-lin'd vistas, or plantations quaint,
Our former strains have taught: Instruction now
Withdraws; she knows her limits; knows that grace
Is caught by strong perception, not from rules;
That undrest Nature claims for all her limbs
Some simple garb peculiar, which, howe'er
Distant their size and shape, is simple still:
This garb to chuse, with clothing dense, or thin,
A part to hide, another to adorn,
Is Taste's important task; preceptive song
From error in the choice can only warn.

But vain that warning voice; vain ev'ry aid
Of genius, judgment, fancy, to secure
The planter's lasting fame. There is a power,
A hidden power, at once his friend and foe;
'Tis Vegetation. Gradual to his groves
She gives their wish'd effect. O! for an arm
Supernal there to check her—impious wish!
She is high Heaven's vicegerent; she must shape,
Must shoot, must swell each fibre as she lists,
Must reign in wild luxuriance. Happier far

Are you, ye sons of CLAUDE! who from the mine,
The earth, or juice of herb or flower concrete,
Mingle the mass whence your Arcadias spring;
The graceful outline of your pictur'd trees
Still keeps the bound you gave it; Time, that pales
Your vivid hues, respects your pleasing forms.
Not so our landscapes; tho' we paint like you,
We paint with glowing colours; ev'ry year,
O'erpassing that which gives the breadth of shade
We sought, by rude addition, mars our scene.

Rouse then, ye hinds! e'er yet yon closing boughs
Blot out the purple distance, rouse ye soon,
Prevent the spreading evil. Thin the glades,
While yet of slender size each stem will thrive
Transplanted. Twice repeat the annual toil;
Nor let the axe its beak, the saw its tooth
Refrain, whene'er some random branch has stray'd
Beyond the bounds of beauty; else full soon,
Ev'n ere the planter's life has past its prime,
Will Albion's garden frown an Indian wild.

Foreboding fears avaunt! be our's to urge
Each present purpose by what favouring means
May work its end design'd. Why deprecate
The change that waits on sublunary things,
Sad lot of their existence? Shall we pause

To give the charm of Water to our scene,
Because the congregated rains may swell
Its tide into a flood? because yon Sun
Now mounts the Lion; to his burning noon
Impels him; shaking from his fiery mane
A heat may parch its channel? O, ye caves,
Deepen your dripping roofs! this feverish hour *
Claims all your coolness. In your humid cells
Permit me to forget the planter's toil;
And, while I woo your Naïads to my aid,
Involve me in impenetrable gloom.

Blest be the man (if bliss be human boast)
Whose fertile soil is wash'd with frequent streams,
And springs salubrious. He disdains to toss
In rainbow dews their crystal to the sun:
Or sink, in subterranean cisterns deep;
That so, thro' leaden syphons upward drawn,
Those streams may leap fantastic. He his ear
Shuts to the tuneful trifling of the bard †,

* These lines were written in June 1778, when it was remarkably hot weather.

† René Rapin, a learned jesuit of the last century, who writ a didactic Latin poem on Gardens, in four books, by way of supplement to Virgil's Georgics. The third book treats the subject of water, or, more properly, of water-works, for it is entirely made up of descriptions of jet d'eaux, and such sort of artificial baubles.

Who trick'd a gothic theme with classic flowers,
And sung of fountains bursting from the shells
Of brazen tritons, spouting through the jaws
" Of gorgons, hydras, and chimæras dire."

Peace to his manes! let the nymphs of Seine
Cherish his fame. Thy Poet, Albion, scorns,
Ev'n for a cold unconscious element,
To forge the fetters he would scorn to wear.
His song shall reprobate each effort vile,
That aims to force the Genius of the stream
Beyond his native level; this first law,
That Nature to her world of waters gave,
Let Art revere, as does impartial Heaven;
The poise of Justice; let her scorn to press,
Above that destin'd line, the balanc'd wave.

Is there within the circle of thy view
Some sedgy flat, where the late-ripen'd sheaves
Stand brown with unblest mildew? 'tis the bed
On which an ample lake in crystal peace
Might sleep majestic. Pause we yet; perchance,
Some midway channel, where the soil declines,
Might there be delv'd, by levels duly led
In bold and broken curves: (for water loves
A wilder outline than the woodland path,

Ev'n to acute extremes. * To drain the rest
The shelving spade may toil, till wintry showers
Find their free course down each declining bank.
Quit then the thought; a river's winding form,
With many a sinuous bay, and island green,
At less expence of labour and of land,
Will give thee equal beauty; seldom art
Can emulate that magnitude sublime
Which spreads the native lake, and, failing there,
Her works betray their character and name,
And dwindle into pools. Not that our strain
Fastidious, shall disdain a small expanse
Of stagnant fluid, in some scene confin'd,
Circled with varied shade, where, through the leaves,
The half-admitted sunbeam trembling plays
On its clear bosom; where aquatic fowl
Of varied tribe and varied feather sail;
And where the finny race their glittering scales
Unwillingly reveal. There, there alone,
Where bursts the general prospect on our eye,

* See book ii. ver. 50 to ver. 78, where the curve of beauty, or a line waving very gently, is said not only to prevail in natural pathways, but in the course of rivulets and the outlines of lakes. It generally does so; yet in the latter it is sometimes found more abrupt. In artificial pieces of water, therefore, bolder curves may be employed, than in the formation of the sand or gravel walk.

We scorn these wat'ry patches; Thames himself,
Seen in disjointed spots, where sallows hide
His first bold presence, seems a string of pools,
A chart and compass must explain his course.

He who would seize the river's sov'reign charm
Must wind the moving mirror through his lawn
Ev'n to remotest distance; deep must delve
The gravelly channel that prescribes its course;
Closely conceal each terminating bound
By hill or shade oppos'd; and to its bank
Lift the true level of the equal stream,
In sparkling plenitude. But, if thy springs
Refuse this large supply, steel thy firm soul
With stoic pride, imperfect charms despise;
Beauty, like Virtue, knows no groveling mean.

Who but must pity that penurious taste,
Which down the quick-descending vale prolongs,
Slope below slope, a stiff and unlink'd chain
Of flat canals; then leads the stranger's eye
To some predestin'd station, there to catch
Their seeming union, and the fraud approve?
Who but must change that pity into scorn,
If down each verdant slope a narrow flight
Of central steps decline, where the spare stream
Steal trickling; or, withheld by cunning skill,

Hoards its scant treasures, till the master's nod
Decree its fall. Then down the formal stairs
It leaps with short-liv'd fury ; wasting there,
Poor prodigal ! what many a Summer's rain,
And many a Winter's snow shall late restore.

Learn, that whene'er in some sublimer scene
Imperial Nature of her headlong floods
Permits our imitation, she herself
Prepares their reservoir ; conceal'd, perchance,
In neighb'ring hills, where first it well behoves
Our toil to search, and studiously augment
With sidelong springs and sluices frequent drawn
From pools, that on the heath drink up the rain.
Be these collected, like the miser's gold,
In one increasing fund, nor dare to pour
Down thy impending mound the bright cascade,
Till richly sure of its redundant fall.

That mound to raise alike demands thy toil,
Ere Art adorn its surface. Here adopt
That facile mode which his inventive powers *
First plann'd, who led to rich Mancunium's mart

* Mr. Brindley, who executed the Duke of Bridgewater's canal, and invented a method of making dams to hold water, without clay, using for this purpose any sort of earth duly tempered with water.

His long-drawn line of navigated stream.
Stupendous task ! in vain stood towering hills
Oppos'd, in vain did ample Irwell pour
Her tide transverse ; he pierc'd the towering hill,
He bridg'd the ample tide, and high in air,
And deep through earth, his freighted barge he bore.
This mode shall temper ev'n the lightest soil
To thy firm purpose ; then let taste select
The unhewn fragments, that may give its front
A rocky rudeness ; pointed some, that there
The frothy spouts may break ; some slaunting smooth,
That there in silver sheet the wave may slide.
Here too infix some moss-grown trunks of oak
Romantic, turn'd by gelid lakes to stone,
Yet so dispos'd as if they owed their change
To what they now controul. Then open wide
Thy flood-gates : then let down thy torrent : then
Rejoice, as if the thund'ring Tees * himself
Reign'd there amid his cataracts sublime.

And thou hast cause for triumph ! kings themselves,
With all a nation's wealth, an army's toil,
If Nature frown averse, shall ne'er atchieve

* The fall of the Tees, near Middleton, is esteemed one of the greatest in England.

Such wonders. Nature's was the glorious gift ;
Thy art her menial handmaid. Listening youths !
To whose ingenuous hearts I still address
The friendly strain, from such severe attempt
Let Prudence warn you. Turn to this clear rill,
Which, while I bid your bold ambition cease,
Runs murmuring at my side. O'er many a rood
Your skill may lead the wanderer : many a mound
Of pebbles raise, to fret her in her course
Impatient : louder then will be her song :
For she will 'plain, and gurgle, as she goes,
As does the widow'd ring-dove. Take, vain Pomp !
Thy lakes, thy long canals, thy trim cascades,
Beyond them all true taste will dearly prize
This little dimpling treasure. Mark the cleft,
Through which she bursts to day. Behind that rock
A naïad dwells : Ligea is her name ;
And she has sisters in contiguous cells,
Who never saw the sun. Fond Fancy's eye,
That loves to give locality and form
To what she prizes best, full oft pervades
Those hidden caverns, where pale chrysolites,
And glittering spars dart a mysterious gleam
Of inborn lustre, from the garish day
Unborrow'd. There, by the wild goddess led,
Oft have I seen them bending o'er their urns,
Chaunting alternate airs of Dorian mood,

While smooth they comb'd their white cerulean
locks
With shells of living pearl. Yes, let me own,
To these, or classic deities like these,
From very childhood was I prone to pay
Harmless idolatry. My infant eyes
First open'd on that bleak and boist'rous shore,
Where Humber weds the nymphs of Trent and Ouse
To his and Ocean's tritons: thence full soon
My youth retir'd, and left the busy strand
To Commerce and to Care. In Margaret's grove *,
Beneath whose time-worn shade old Camus sleeps,
Was next my tranquil station: Science there
Sate musing; and to those that lov'd the lore
Pointed, with mystic wand, to truths involv'd
In geometric symbols, scorning those,
Perchance too much, who woo'd the thriftless muse.
Here, though in warbling whisper oft I breath'd
The lay, were wanting, what young Fancy deems
The life-springs of her being, rocks, and caves,
And huddling brooks, and torrent-falls divine.
In quest of these, at summer's vacant hour,
Pleas'd would I stray, when in a northern vale
(So chance ordain'd) a naïad sad I found,

* St. John's College, in Cambridge, founded by Margaret Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry the Seventh.

Robb'd of her silver vase: I sooth'd the nymph
With song of sympathy, and curst the fiend,
Who stole the gift of Thetis *. Hence the cause,
Why, favour'd by the blue-ey'd sisterhood,
They sooth with songs my solitary ear.

Nor is Ligea silent—" Long," she cries,
" Too long has man wag'd sacrilegious war
" With the vex'd elements, and chief with that,
" Whom elder Thales, and the bard of Thebes
" Held first of things terrestrial; nor misdeem'd:
" For, when the Spirit creative deign'd to move,
" He mov'd upon the waters. O revere
" Our power: for was its vital force withheld,
" Where then were Vegetation's vernal bloom,
" Where its autumnal wealth? but we are kind,
" As powerful; O let reverence lead to love,
" And both to emulation! Not a rill,
" That winds its sparkling current o'er the plain,
" Reflecting to the sun bright recompence
" For ev'ry beam he lends, but reads thy soul
" A generous lecture. Not a pansy pale,
" That drinks its daily nurture from that rill,
" But breathes in fragrant accents to thy soul;

* Alluding to the Ode to a Water Nymph, which the author writ a year or two after his admission into the university. See his Poems, ode ii.

" 'So should'st thou feed the poor.' Whoe'er beheld
" Our humble train forsake their native mead
" To climb the haughty hill? Ambition, speak,
" —He blushes, and is mute. When did our streams,
" By force unpent, in dull stagnation sleep?
" Let Sloth unfold his arms and tell the time.
" Or, if the tyranny of Art infring'd
" Our rights, when did our patient floods submit
" Without recoil? Servility retires,
" And clinks his gilded chain. O learn from us,
" And tell it to thy nation, British bard!
" Ambition, Sloth, and Slav'ry are the fiends
" That pull down mighty empires. If they scorn
" The awful truth, be thine to hold it dear.
" So, through the vale of life, thy flowing hours
" Shall glide serene; and, like Ligea's rill,
" Their free, yet not licentious course fulfill'd,
" Sink in the ocean of Eternity."

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

THE

ENGLISH GARDEN.

BOOK IV.

Nor yet withdraw thy aid, thou Nymph divine *!
That aid auspicious, which, in Art's domain,
Already has reform'd whate'er prevail'd
Of foreign, or of false; has led the curve
That Nature loves thro' all her sylvan haunts;
Has stol'n the fence unnotic'd that arrests
Her vagrant herds; giv'n lustre to her lawns,
Gloom to her groves, and, in expanse serene,
Devolv'd that wat'ry mirror at her feet,
O'er which she loves to bend and view her charms.

* Simplicity. See the beginning of the poem. The following lines recapitulate the subject of the three preceding books. The first, to the pause in ver. 4; the second, from thence to that in ver. 7; and the third finishes with the paragraph.

And tell me thou, whoe'er hast new-arrang'd
By her chaste rules thy garden, if thy heart
Feels not the warm, the self-dilating glow
Of true Benevolence. Thy flocks, thy herds,
That browse luxurious o'er those very plots
Which once were barren, bless thee for the change;
The birds of air (which thy funereal yews
Of shape uncouth, and leaden sons of earth,
Antæus and Enceladus, with clubs
Uplifted, long had frighted from the scene)
Now pleas'd return, they perch on ev'ry spray,
And swell their little throats, and warble wild
Their vernal minstrelsy; to Heav'n and thee
It is a hymn of thanks: do thou, like Heav'n,
With tutelary care reward their song.

Ere-while the Muse, industrious to combine
Nature's own charms, with these alone adorn'd
The Genius of the scene; but other gifts
She has in store, which gladly now she brings,
And he shall proudly wear. Know, when she broke
The spells of Fashion, from the crumbling wreck
Of her enchantments, sagely did she cull
Those relics rich of old Vitruvian skill,
With what the sculptor's hand in classic days
Made breathe in brass or marble; these the hag
Had purloin'd, and dispos'd in Folly's fane;

To him these trophies of her victory
She bears; and where his awful nod ordains
Conspicuous means to place. He shall direct
Her dubious judgment, from the various hoard
Of ornamental treasures, how to chuse
The simplest and the best; on these his seal
Shall stamp great Nature's image and his own,
To charm for unborn ages.—Fling the rest
Back to the beldame, bid her whirl them all
In her vain vortex; lift them now to day,
Now plunge in night, as, thro' the humid rack
Of April cloud, swift flits the trembling beam.

But precepts tire, and this fastidious age
Rejects the strain didactic: try we then
In livelier narrative the truths to veil
We dare not dictate. Sons of Albion, hear!
The tale I tell is full of strange event,
And piteous circumstance; yet deem not ye,
If names I feign, that therefore facts are feign'd:
Nor hence refuse (what most augments the charm
Of storied woe) that fond credulity
Which binds th' attentive soul in closer chains.

At manhood's prime ALCANDER's duteous tear
Fell on his father's grave. The fair domain,
Which then became his ample heritage,

That father had reform'd ; each line destroy'd
Which Belgic dulness plann'd ; and Nature's self
Restor'd to all the rights she wish'd to claim.

Crowning a gradual hill his mansion rose
In antient English grandeur : turrets, spires,
And windows, climbing high from base to roof
In wide and radiant rows, bespoke its birth
Coëval with those rich cathedral fanes,
(Gothic ill-nam'd) where harmony results
From disunited parts ; and shapes minute,
At once distinct and blended, boldly form
One vast majestic whole. No modern art
Had marr'd with misplac'd symmetry the pile.
Alcander held it sacred. On a height,
Which westering to its site the front survey'd,
He first his taste employ'd : for there a line
Of thinly scattered beech too tamely broke
The blank horizon. " Draw we round yon knowl,"
Alcander cry'd, " in stately Norman mode,
" A wall embattled ; and within its guard
" Let every structure needful for a farm
" Arise in castle-semblance ; the huge barn
" Shall with a mock portcullis arm the gate,
" Where Ceres entering, o'er the flail-proof floor
" In golden triumph rides ; some tower rotund
" Shall to the pigeons and their callow young

" Safe roost afford ; and ev'ry buttress broad,
" Whose proud projection seems a mass of stone,
" Give space to stall the heifer, and the steed.
" So shall each part, tho' turn'd to rural use,
" Deceive the eye with those bold feudal forms
" That Fancy loves to gaze on." This atchiev'd,
Now nearer home he calls returning Art
To hide the structure rude where Winter pounds
In conic pit his congelations hoar,
That Summer may his tepid beverage cool
With the chill luxury ; his dairy too
There stands of form unsightly : both to veil,
He builds of old disjointed moss-grown stone
A time-struck abbey *.' An impending grove
Screens it behind with reverential shade ;
While bright in front the stream reflecting spreads,
Which winds a mimic river o'er his lawn.

* It was said in the first book, ver. 384, that of those architectural objects which improved a fine natural *English* prospect, the two principal ones were a *castle* and an *abbey*. In conformity with this idea, ALCANDER first begins to exercise his taste, by forming a resemblance of those two capital artificial features, *uniting them*, however, *with utility*. The precept is here meant to be conveyed by description, which had before been given more directly in book ii. ver. 21.

Beauty scorns to dwell
Where *Use* is exil'd.

The fane conventual there is dimly seen,
The mitred window, and the cloister pale,
With many a mouldering column ; ivy soon
Round the rude chinks her net of foliage spreads ;
Its verdant meshes seem to prop the wall.

One native glory, more than all sublime,
ALCANDER's scene possest : 'twas Ocean's self—
He, boist'rous king, against the eastern cliffs
Dash'd his white foam ; a verdant vale between
Gave splendid ingress to his world of waves.
Slanting this vale the mound of that clear stream
Lay hid in shade, which slowly lav'd his lawn :
But there set free, the rill resum'd its pace,
And hurried to the main. The dell it past
Was rocky and retir'd : here Art with ease
Might lead it o'er a grot, and filter'd there,
Teach it to sparkle down its craggy sides,
And fall and tinkle on its pebbled floor.
Here then that grot he builds, and conchs with spars,
Moss petrified with branching corallines
In mingled mode arranges : all found here
Propriety of place ; what view'd the main
Might well the shelly gifts of Thetis bear.
Not so the inland cave : with richer store
Than those the neighb'ring mines and mountains
yield

To hang its roof, would seem incongruous pride,
And fright the local Genius from the scene *.

One vernal morn, as urging here the work,
Surrounded by his hinds, from mild to cold
The season chang'd, from cold to sudden storm,
From storm to whirlwind. To the angry main
Swiftly he turns, and sees a laden ship
Dismasted by its rage. "Hie, hie we all,"
ALCANDER cry'd, "quick to the neighb'ring beach!"
They flew; they came, but only to behold,
Tremendous sight! the vessel dash its poop
Amid the boiling breakers. Need I tell
What strenuous arts were us'd, when all were us'd,
To save the sinking crew? One tender maid
Alone escap'd, sav'd by ALCANDER's arm,
Who boldly swam to snatch her from the plank
To which she feebly clung; swiftly to shore,
And swifter to his home, the youth convey'd
His clay-cold prize, who at his portal first
By one deep sigh a sign of life betray'd.
A maid so sav'd, if but by Nature blest

* A precept is here rather more than hinted at; but it appeared to be so well founded, and yet so seldom attended to by the fabricators of grottos, that it seemed necessary to slide back a little from the narrative into the didactic, to inculcate it the more strongly.

With common charms, had soon awak'd a flame
More strong than pity, in that melting heart
Which pity warm'd before. But she was fair
As poets picture Hebe, or the Spring;
Graceful withal, as if each limb were cast
In that ideal mould whence RAPHAEL drew
His Galatea *. Yes, th' impassion'd youth
Felt more than pity when he view'd her charms.
Yet she, (ah, strange to tell!) tho' much he lov'd,
Suppress as much that sympathetic flame
Which love like his should kindle: did he kneel
In rapture at her feet—she bow'd the head,
And coldly bade him rise; or did he plead
In terms of purest passion for a smile—
She gave him but a tear: his manly form,
His virtues, ev'n the courage that preserv'd
Her life, beseem'd no sentiment to wake
Warmer than gratitude; and yet the love
Withheld from him she freely gave his scenes;

* Alluding to a letter of that famous painter, written to his friend Count Baltaser Castiglione, when he was painting his celebrated picture of Galatea, in which he tells him, "essendo carestia di belle donne, io mi servo di certa idea "che viene alla mente." See Bellori *Discriz. delle imagini dipinte da Raffaelo d'Urbino*, or the Life of B. Castiglione, prefixed to the London edition of his book entitled, *Il Cortegiano.*

On all their charms a just applause bestow'd ;
And, if she e'er was happy, only then
When wand'ring where those charms were most
display'd.

As thro' a neighb'ring grove, where antient beech
Their awful foliage flung, ALCANDER led
The pensive maid along, " Tell me," she cry'd,
" Why, on these forest features all-intent,
" Forbears my friend some scene distinct to give
" To Flora and her fragrance ? Well I know
" That in the general landscape's broad expanse
" Their little blooms are lost ; but here are glades,
" Circled with shade, yet pervious to the sun,
" Where, if enamell'd with their rainbow hues,
" The eye would catch their splendor : turn thy taste,
" Ev'n in this grassy circle where we stand,
" To form their plots; there weave a woodbine
" bower,
" And call that bower NERINA's." At the word
ALCANDER smil'd ; his fancy instant form'd
The fragrant scene she wish'd ; and Love, with art
Uniting, soon produc'd the finish'd whole.

Down to the south the glade by Nature lean'd
Art form'd the slope still softer, opening there
Its foliage, and to each Etesian gale
Admittance free dispensing ; thickest shade

Guarded the rest. His taste will best conceive
The new arrangement, whose free footsteps, us'd
To forest haunts, have pierc'd their opening dells,
Where frequent tufts of sweetbriar, box, or thorn,
Steal on the greensward, but admit fair space
For many a mossy maze to wind between.
So here did Art arrange her flow'ry groups
Irregular, yet not in patches quaint *,
But interpos'd between the wand'ring lines
Of shaven turf which twisted to the path,
Gravel or sand, that in as wild a wave
Stole round the verdant limits of the scene;
Leading the eye to many a sculptur'd bust
On shapely pedestal, of sage, or bard,
Bright heirs of fame, who living lov'd the haunts

* There is nothing in picturesque gardening which should not have its archetype in unadorned nature. Now, as we never see any of her plains dotted with dissevered patches of any sort of vegetables, except, perhaps, some of her more barren heaths, where even furze can grow but sparingly, and which form the most disagreeable of her scenes, therefore, the present common mode of dotting clumps of flowers or shrubs on a grass-plat, without union, and without other meaning than that of appearing irregular, ought to be avoided. It is the form and easy flow of the grassy interstices (if I may so call them) that the designer ought first to have a regard to; and if these be well formed, the spaces for flowers or shrubbery will be at the same time ascertained.

So fragrant, so sequester'd, Many an urn
There too had place, with votive lay inscrib'd
To Freedom, Friendship, Solitude, or Love.

And now each flow'r that bears transplanting change,
Or blooms indigenous, adorn'd the scene :
Only NERINA's wish, her woodbine bower,
Remain'd to crown the whole. Here, far beyond
That humble wish, her lover's genius form'd
A glittering fane, where rare and alien plants
Might safely flourish * ; where the citron sweet,
And fragrant orange, rich in fruit and flowers,
Might hang their silver stars, their golden globes,
On the same odorous stem. Yet scorning there
The glassy penthouse of ignoble form,
High on Ionic shafts he bade it tower
A proud rotunda ; to its sides conjoin'd
Two broad piazzas in theatric curve,

* *M. Le Giradin*, in an elegant French essay, written on the same subject, and formed on the same principles with this poem, is the only writer that I have seen (or at least recollect) who has attempted to give a stove or hothouse a picturesque effect. It is his hint, pursued and considerably dilated, which forms the description of ALCANDER's conservatory. See his essay, *De la Composition des Paysages. Geneva*, 1777.

Ending in equal porticos sublime.
Glass roof'd the whole, and sidelong to the south,
'Twixt ev'ry fluted column, lightly rear'd
Its wall pellucid. All within was day,
Was genial Summer's day, for secret stoves
Thro' all the pile solstitial warmth convey'd.

These led thro' isles of fragrance to the dome,
Each way in circling quadrant. That bright space
Guarded the spicy tribes from Afric's shore,
Or Ind, or Araby, Sabæan plants
Weeping with nard, and balsam. In the midst
A statue stood, the work of Attic art;
Its thin light drapery, cast in fluid folds,
Proclaim'd its antientry; all, save the head,
Which stole (for Love is prone to gentle thefts)
The features of NERINA; yet that head,
So perfect in resemblance; all its air
So tenderly impassion'd; to the trunk,
Which Grecian skill had form'd, so aptly join'd,
PHIDIAS himself might seem to have inspir'd
The chissel, brib'd to do the am'rous fraud.
One graceful hand held forth a flow'ry wreath,
The other prest her zone; while round the base
Dolphins, and triton shells, and plants marine
Proclaim'd, that Venus, rising from the sea,
Had veil'd in Flora's modest vest her charms.

Such was the fane, and such the deity
Who seem'd, with smile auspicious, to inhale
That incense which a tributary world
From all its regions round her altar breath'd:
And yet, when to the shrine ALCANDER led
His living goddess, only with a sigh,
And starting tear, the statue and the dome
Reluctantly she view'd. "And why," she cry'd,
"Why would my best preserver here erect,
"With all the fond idolatry of love,
"A wretch's image whom his pride should scorn,
"(For so his country bids him). Drive me hence,
"Transport me quick to Gallia's hostile shore,
"Hostile to thee, yet not, alas! to her
"Who there was meant to sojourn: there, per-
"chance,
"My father, wafted by more prosp'rous gales,
"Now mourns his daughter lost; my brother there
"Perhaps now sooths that venerable age
"He should not sooth alone. Vain thought! per-
"chance,
"Both perish'd at Esopus—do not blush,
"It was not thou that lit the ruthless flame;
"It was not thou, that, like remorseless Cain,
"Thirsted for brother's blood: thy heart disdains
"The savage imputation. Rest thee there,
"And, tho' thou pitiest, yet forbear to grace,

" A wretched alien, and a rebel deem'd,
" With honours ill-beseeming her to claim.
" My wish, thou know'st, was humble as my state;
" I only begg'd a little woodbine bower,
" Where I might sit and weep, while all around
" The lilies and the blue-bells hung their heads
" In seeming sympathy." " Does then the scene
" Displease?" the disappointed lover cry'd;
" Alas! too much it pleases," sigh'd the fair;
" Too strongly paints the passion which stern Fate
" Forbids me to return." " Dost thou then love
" Some happier youth?" " No, tell thy generous soul
" Indeed I do not." More she would have said,
But gushing grief prevented. From the fane
Silent he led her; as from Eden's bower
The sire of men his weeping partner led,
Less lovely, and less innocent than she.

Yet still ALCANDER hop'd what last she sigh'd
Spoke more than gratitude: the war might end;
Her father might consent; for that alone
Now seem'd the duteous barrier to his bliss.
Already had he sent a faithful friend
To learn if France the reverend exile held:
That friend return'd not. Meanwhile, ev'ry sun
Which now (a year elaps'd) diurnal rose
Beheld her still more pensive; inward pangs,

From grief's concealment, hourly seem'd to force
Health from her cheek, and quiet from her soul.
ALCANDER mourn'd the change, yet still he hop'd ;
For Love to Hope his flickering taper lends,
When Reason with his steady torch retires :
Hence did he try by ever-varying arts,
And scenes of novel charm her grief to calm.

Nor did he not employ the Syren powers
Of Music and of Song ; or Painting thine,
Sweet source of pure delight ! But I record
Those arts alone, which form my sylvan theme.

At stated hours, full oft had he observed,
She fed with welcome grain the household fowl
That trespassed on his lawn ; this wak'd a wish
To give her feather'd fav'rites space of land,
And lake appropriate : in a neighb'ring copse
He plann'd the scene ; for there the crystal spring,
That form'd his river, from a rocky cleft
First bubbling broke to day ; and spreading there,
Slept on its rushes. " Here, my delving hinds,"
He cry'd, " shall soon the marshy soil remove,
" And spread, in brief extent, a glittering lake
" Chequer'd with isles of verdure ; on yon rock
" A sculptur'd river-god shall rest his urn ;
" And thro' that urn the native fountain flow.

" Thy wish'd-for bower, NERINA, shall adorn
" The southern bank ; the downy race, that swim
" The lake, or pace the shore, with livelier charms,
" Yet no less rural, here will meet thy glance,
" Than flowers inanimate." Full soon was scoopt
The wat'ry bed, and soon, by margin green,
And rising banks, inclos'd ; the highest gave
Site to a rustic fabric, shelving deep
Within the thicket, and in front compos'd
Of three unequal arches, lowly all
The surer to expel the noontide glare,
Yet yielding liberal inlet to the scene ;
Woodbine with jasmine carelessly entwin'd
Conceal'd the needful masonry, and hung
In free festoons, and vested all the cell.
Hence did the lake, the islands, and the rock,
A living landscape spread ; the feather'd fleet,
Led by two mantling swans, at ev'ry creek
Now touch'd, and now unmoor'd ; now on full sail,
With pennons spread and oary feet they ply'd
Their vagrant voyage ; and now, as if becalm'd,
'Tween shore and shore at anchor seem'd to sleep.
Around those shores the fowl that fear the stream
At random rove : hither hot Guinea sends
Her gadding troop ; here, midst his speckled dames,
The pigmy chanticleer of Bantam winds
His clarion ; while, supreme in glittering state,

The peacock spreads his rainbow train, with eyes
Of sapphire bright, irradiate each with gold.
Meanwhile from ev'ry spray the ringdoves coo,
The linnets warble, captive none *, but lur'd
By food to haunt the umbrage: all the glade
Is life, is music, liberty, and love.

And is there now, to pleasure or to use,
One scene devoted in the wide domain
Its master has not polish'd? Rumour spreads
Its praises far, and many a stranger stops
With curious eye to censure or admire.
To all his lawns are pervious; oft himself
With courteous greeting will the critic hail,
And join him in the circuit. Give we here
(If Candour will with patient ear attend)
The social dialogue ALCANDER held
With one, a youth of mild yet manly mein,
Who seem'd to taste the beauties he survey'd.

* See Rousseau's charming description of the Garden of Julie, *Nouvelle Eloise*, 4 partie, lett. 11. In consequence of pursuing his idea, no birds are introduced into ALCANDER's menagerie, but such as are either domesticated, or chuse to visit it for the security and food they find there. If any of my more delicate readers wish to have theirs stocked with rarer kind of fowls, they must invent a picturesque bird-cage for themselves.

" Little, I fear me, will a stranger's eye
" Find here to praise, where rich Vitruvian art
" Has rear'd no temples, no triumphal arcs;
" Where no Palladian bridges span the stream,
" But all is homebred Fancy." " For that cause,
" And chiefly that," the polish'd youth reply'd,
" I view each part with rapture. Ornament,
" When foreign or fantastic, never charm'd
" My judgment; here I tread on British ground;
" With British annals all I view accords.
" Some Yorkist, or Lancastrian baron bold,
" To awe his vassals, or to stem his foes,
" Yon massy bulwark built; on yonder pile,
" In ruin beauteous, I distinctly mark
" The ruthless traces of stern HENRY's hand."

" Yet," cry'd ALCANDER, (interrupting mild
The stranger's speech) " if so yon antient seat,
" Pride of my ancestors, had mock'd repair,
" And by Proportion's Greek or Roman laws
" That pile had been rebuilt, thou would'st not
" then,
" I trust, have blam'd, if, there on Doric shafts
" A temple rose; if some tall obelisk
" O'ertopt yon grove, or bold triumphal arch
" Usurpt my castle's station."—" Spare me yet
" Yon solemn ruin," the quick youth return'd,

" No mould'ring aqueduct, no yawning crypt
" Sepulchral, will console me for its fate."

" I mean not that," the master of the scene
Reply'd; " tho' classic rules to modern piles
" Should give the just arrangement, shun we here
" By those to form our ruins; much we own
" They please, when, by PANINI's pencil drawn,
" Or darkly 'grav'd by PIRANESI's hand,
" And fitly might some Tuscan garden grace;
" But Time's rude mace has here all Roman piles
" Levell'd so low, that who, on British ground
" Attempts the task, builds but a splendid lie
" Which mocks historic credence. Hence the cause
" Why Saxon piles or Norman here prevail:
" Form they a rude, 'tis yet an English whole."

" And much I praise thy choice," the stranger
" cry'd;
" Such chaste selection shames the common mode,
" Which, mingling structures of far distant times,
" Far distant regions, here, perchance, erects
" A fane to Freedom, where her BRUTUS stands
" In act to strike the tyrant; there a tent,
" With crescent crown'd, with scymitars adorn'd,
" Meet for some BAJAZET; northward we turn,

" And lo! a pigmy pyramid pretends
" We tread the realms of PHARAOH; quickly thence
" Our southern step presents us heaps of stone
" Rang'd in a DRUID circle. Thus from age
" To age, from clime to clime incessant borne,
" Imagination flounders headlong on,
" Till, like fatigu'd VILLARIO *, soon we find
" We better like a field." " Nicely thy hand
" The childish landscape touches," cries his host,
" For Fashion ever is a wayward child;
" Yet sure we might forgive her faults like these,
" If but in separate or in single scenes
" She thus with Fancy wanton'd: should I lead
" Thy step, my friend, (for our accordant tastes
" Prompt me to give thee that familiar name)
" Behind this screen of elm, thou there might'st find
" I too had idly play'd the truant's part,
" And broke the bounds of judgment." " Lead
" me there,"
Briskly the youth return'd, " for having prov'd
" Thy epic genius here, why not peruse
" Thy lighter ode or eclogue?" Smiling thence,
ALCANDER led him to the woodbine bower
Which last our song describ'd, who seated there,
In silent transport view'd the lively scene.

* See Pope's Epistle to Lord Burlington, ver. 88.

" I see," his host resum'd, " my sportive art
" Finds pardon here ; not ev'n yon classic form,
" Pouring his liquid treasures from his vase,
" Tho' foreign from the soil, provokes thy frown *.
" Try we thy candor farther : higher art,
" And more luxurious, haply too more vain,
" Adorns yon southern coppice." On they past
Thro' a wild thicket, till the perfum'd air
Gave to another sense its prelude rich
On what the eye should feast. But now the grove
Expands ; and now the rose, the garden's queen,
Amidst her blooming subjects' humbler charms,
On ev'ry plot her crimson pomp displays.
" Oh Paradise !" the ent'ring youth exclaim'd,
" Groves whose rich trees weep odorous gums and
" balm,
" Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,

* It is hoped that, from the position of this river-god in the menagerie ; from the situation of the busts and vases in the flower garden, and that of the statue in the conservatory, the reader will deduce the following general precept ; " that all adventitious ornaments of sculpture ought either " to be accompanied with a proper back-ground, (as the " painters term it) or introduced as a part of architectural " scenery ; and that when, on the contrary, they are " placed in open lawns or parterres, according to the old " mode, they become, like Antæus and Enceladus, men- " tioned in the beginning of this book, mere *scare-crows*."

" Hang amiable, Hesperian fables true,
" If true, here only *." Thus, in Milton's phrase
Sublime, the youth his admiration pour'd,
While passing to the dome: his next short step
Unveil'd the central statue: " Heav'ns! just
" Heav'ns,"
He cry'd, " 'tis my NERINA!" " Thine, mad youth!
" Forego the word," ALCANDER said, and paus'd;
His utterance fail'd; a thousand clust'ring thoughts,
And all of blackest omen to his peace,
Recoil'd upon his brain, deaden'd all sense,
And at the statue's base him headlong cast,
A lifeless load of being.—Ye whose hearts
Are ready at Humanity's soft call
To drop the tear, I charge you weep not yet,
But fearfully suspend the bursting woe:
NERINA's self appears; the further isle
She, fate-directed, treads. Does she too faint?
Would Heav'n she could! it were a happy swoon
Might soften her fix'd form, more rigid now
Than is her marble semblance. One stiff hand
Lies leaden on her breast; the other rais'd
To heav'n, and half-way clench'd; stedfast her eyes,
Yet viewless; and her lips, which op'd to shriek,
Can neither shriek nor close: so might she stand

* See Milton's Paradise Lost, book iv. ver. 248, &c.

For ever. He, whose sight caus'd the dread change,
Tho' now he clasps her in his anxious arms,
Fails to unbend one sinew of her frame;
'Tis ice, 'tis steel. But see, ALCANDER wakes;
And waking, as by magic sympathy,
NERINA whispers, "All is well, my friend;
"'Twas but a vision; I may yet revive——
"But still his arm supports me; aid him, friend,
"And bear me swiftly to my woodbine bower;
"For there indeed I wish to breathe my last."

So saying her cold cheek, and parched brow,
Turn'd to a livid paleness; her dim eyes
Sunk in their sockets; sharp contraction prest
Her temples, ears, and nostrils: signs well known
To those that 'tend the dying*. Both the youths
Perceiv'd the change; and had stern Death himself
Wav'd his black banner visual o'er their heads,

* These lines are taken from the famous passage in Hippocrates, in his book of Prognostics, which has been held so accurately descriptive, that dying persons are from hence usually said to have the *facies Hippocratica*. The passage is as follows: Ρις οξεια, οφθαλμοι κοιλοι, κροταφοι ξυμπεπτωκοτες, ωτα ψυχρα και ξυνεσταλμενα, και ὁ λοβοι των ωτων απεστραμμενοι, και το δερμα το περι το μετωπον, σκληρον τε και περιτεταμενον και καρφαλεον εον, και το χρωμα τε ξυμπαντος προσωπου χλωρον τε η και μελαν εον και πελιον η μολιβδωδες.

It could not more appal. With trembling step,
And silent, both convey'd her to the bower.

Her languid limbs there decently compos'd,
She thus her speech resum'd : " Attend my words,
" Brave CLEON ! dear ALCANDER ! generous pair :
" For both have tender interest in this heart,
" Which soon shall beat no more. That I am thine
" By a dear father's just commands I own,
" Much honour'd CLEON ! take the hand he gave,
" And with it, Oh, if I could give my heart,
" Thou wert its worthy owner. All I can,
" (And that preserv'd with chastest fealty)
" Duteous I give thee, CLEON it is thine ;
" Not ev'n this dear preserver e'er could gain
" More from my soul than friendship—that be his ;
" Yet let me own, what, dying, sooths the pang,
' That, had thyself and duty ne'er been known,
" He must have had my love." She paus'd, and dropt
A silent tear ; then prest the stranger's hand ;
Then bow'd her head upon ALCANDER's breast,
And " bless them both, kind Heav'n !" she pray'd
and died.

" And blest art thou," cry'd CLEON (in a voice
Struggling with grief for utterance) blest to die
" Ere thou hadst question'd me, and I perforce

" Had told a tale which must have sent thy soul
" In horror from thy bosom. Now it leaves
" A smile of peace upon those pallid lips,
" That speaks its parting happy. Go, fair saint!
" Go to thy palm-crown'd father! thron'd in bliss,
" And seated by his side, thou wilt not now
" Deplore the savage stroke that seal'd his doom;
" Go hymn the Fount of Mercy, who, from ill
" Educing good, makes ev'n a death like his,
" A life surcharg'd with tender woes like thine,
" The road to joys eternal. Maid, farewell!
" I leave the casket that thy virtues held
" To Him whose breast sustains it; more belov'd,
" Perhaps more worthy, yet not loving more
" Than did thy wretched CLEON." At the word
He bath'd in tears the hand she dying gave,
Return'd it to her side, and hasty rose.
ALCANDER, starting from his trance of grief,
Cry'd, " stay, I charge thee stay;" " and shall he
" stay,"
CLEON reply'd, " whose presence stabb'd thy peace?
" Hear this before we part: that breathless maid
" Was daughter to a venerable sage,
" Whom Boston, when with peace and safety blest,
" In rapture heard pour from his hallow'd tongue
" Religion's purest dictates. 'Twas my chance,
" In early period of our civil broils,

" To save his precious life : and hence the sire
" Did to my love his daughter's charms consign ;
" But, till the war should cease, if ever cease,
" Deferr'd our nuptials. Whither she was sent
" In search of safety, well, I trust thou know'st ;
" He meant to follow ; but those ruthless flames,
" That spar'd nor friend nor foe, nor sex nor age,
" Involv'd the village, where on sickly couch
" He lay confin'd, and whither he had fled
" Awhile to sojourn. There (I see thee shrink)
" Was he that gave NERINA being burnt !
" Burnt by thy countrymen ! to ashes burnt !
" Fraternal hands and christian lit the flame.—
" Oh thou hast cause to shudder. I meanwhile,
" With his brave son a distant warfare wag'd ;
" And him, now I have found the prize I sought,
" And finding lost, I hasten to rejoin ;
" Vengeance and glory call me." At the word,
Not fiercer does the tigress quit her cave
To seize the hinds that robb'd her of her young,
Than he the bower. " Stay, I conjure thee, stay,"
ALCANDER cry'd, but ere the word was spoke
CLEON was seen no more. " Then be it so,"
The youth continu'd, clasping to his heart
The beauteous corse, and smiling as he spoke,
(Yet such a smile as far out-sorrows tears)
" Now thou art mine entirely—Now no more

" Shall Duty dare disturb us—Love alone—
" But hark ! he comes again—Away, vain fear !
" 'Twas but the fluttering of thy feather'd flock.
" True to their custom'd hour, behold they troop
" From island, grove, and lake. Arise, my love,
" Extend thy hand—I lift it, but it falls.
" Hence then, fond fools, and pine ! NERINA's hand
" Has lost the power to feed you. Hence and die."

Thus 'plaining, to his lips the icy palm
He lifted, and with ardent passion kiss'd,
Then cry'd in agony, " on this dear hand,
" Once tremblingly alive to Love's soft touch,
" I hop'd to seal my faith." This thought awak'd
Another sad soliloquy, which they,
Whoe'er have lov'd, will from their hearts supply,
And they who have not will but hear and smile.

And let them smile, but let the scorners learn
There is a solemn luxury in grief
Which they shall never taste; well known to those,
And only those, in Solitude's deep gloom
Who heave the sigh sincerely : Fancy there
Waits the fit moment ; and, when Time has calm'd
The first o'erwhelming tempest of their woe,
Piteous she steals upon the mourner's breast
Her precious balm to shed : Oh, it has power,

Has magic power to soften and to sooth,
Thus duly minister'd. ALCANDER felt
The charm, yet not till many a ling'ring moon
Had hung upon her zenith o'er his couch,
And heard his midnight wailings. Does he stray
But near the fated temple, or the bower?
He feels a chilly monitor within,
Who bids him pause. Does he at distance view
His grot? 'tis darken'd with NERINA's storm
Ev'n at the blaze of noon. Yet there are walks
The lost one never trod, and there are seats
Where he was never happy by her side,
And these he still can sigh in. Here at length,
As if by chance, kind Fancy brought her aid,
When wand'ring thro' a grove of sable yew,
Rais'd by his ancestors; their Sabbath-path
Led thro' its gloom, what time too dark a stole
Was o'er Religion's decent features drawn
By puritanic zeal. Long had their boughs
Forgot the sheers; the spire, the holy ground
They banish'd by their umbrage. "What if here,"
Cry'd the sweet soother, in a whisper soft,
"Some open space were form'd, where other shades,
"Yet all of solemn sort, cypress and bay
"Funereal, pensive birch its languid arms
"That droops, with waving willows deem'd to weep,
"And shiv'ring aspens mixt their varied green;

" What if yon trunk, shorn of its murky crest,
" Reveal'd the sacred fane ?" ALCANDER heard
The charmer ; ev'ry accent seem'd his own,
So much they touch'd his heart's sad unison.
" Yes, yes," he cry'd, " Why not behold it all ?
" That bough remov'd shews me the very vault
" Where my NERINA sleeps, and where, when
" Heav'n
" In pity to my plaint the mandate seals,
" My dust with her's shall mingle." Now his hinds,
Call'd to the task, their willing axes wield ;
Joyful to see, as witless of the cause,
Their much-lov'd lord his sylvan arts resume.
And next, within the centre of the gloom,
A shed of twisting roots and living moss,
With rushes thatch'd, with wattled oziers lin'd,
He bids them raise * : it seem'd a hermit's cell ;

* If this building is found to be in its right position, structures of the same kind will be thought improperly placed when situated, as they frequently are, on an eminence commanding an extensive prospect. I have either seen or heard of one of this kind, where the builder seemed to be so much convinced of its incongruity, that he endeavoured to atone for it by the following ingenious motto:

Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ.

LUC. lib. ii. ver. 9.

But it may be said, that real hermitages are frequently

Yet void of hour-glass, scull, and maple dish,
Its mimic garniture: ALCANDER's taste
Disdains to trick with emblematic toys
The place where he and Melancholy mean
To fix NERINA's bust, her genuine bust,
The model of the marble. There he hides,
Close as a miser's gold, the sculptur'd clay;
And but at early morn and latest eve
Unlocks the simple shrine, and heaves a sigh;
Then does he turn, and thro' the glimm'ring glade
Cast a long glance upon her house of death;
Then views the bust again, and drops a tear.
Is this idolatry, ye sage ones say?——
Or, if ye doubt, go view the num'rous train
Of poor and fatherless his care consoles;
The sight will tell thee, he that dries their tears
Has unseen angels hov'ring o'er his head,
Who leave their Heav'n to see him shed his own.

Here close we, sweet SIMPLICITY, the tale,
And with it let us yield to youthful bards
That Dorian reed we but awak'd to voice

found on high mountains. Yet there the difficulty of access gives that idea of retirement, not easily to be conveyed by imitations of them in a garden scene, without much accompanying shade and that lowness of situation which occasions a seclusion from all gay objects.

When Fancy prompted, and when Leisure smil'd;
Hopeless of general praise, and well repaid,
If they of classic ear, unpall'd by rhyme,
Whom changeful pause can please, and numbers free,
Accept our song with candour. They, perchance,
Led by the Muse to solitude and shade,
May turn that art we sing to soothing use,
At this ill-omen'd hour, when Rapine rides
In titled triumph; when Corruption waves
Her banners broadly in the face of day,
And shews th' indignant world the host of slaves
She turns from Honour's standard. Patient there,
Yet not desponding, shall the sons of Peace
Await the day, when, smarting with his wrongs,
Old England's Genius wakes; when with him wakes
That plain Integrity, Contempt of gold,
Disdain of slav'ry, liberal Awe of rule,
Which fixt the rights of People, Peers, and Prince,
And on them founded the majestic pile
Of British Freedom; bade fair Albion rise
The scourge of tyrants; sovereign of the seas;
And arbitress of empires. Oh return,
Ye long-lost train of Virtues! swift return
To save ('tis Albion prompts your Poet's prayer)
Her throne, her altars, and her laureat bowers.

THE END.

GENERAL POSTSCRIPT.

FEW Poems, in the course of their composition, have been laid aside and resumed more casually, or, in consequence, published more leisurely, than the foregoing; on which account, while it does not pretend to the Horatian merit of a nine-years scrutiny under the correcting hand of its author, it will not thence, he may perhaps hope, be found to have that demerit which arises from ill-connected parts and an indigested plan. For, as a scheme was formed for the whole four books before even the first was written; and as that scheme has since been pursued with very little, if any deviation, it is presumed that the three latter books will be found strictly consonant with the general principles advanced in the former; which, as it contained the principles, and ended episodically with a kind of historic deduction of the rise and progress of the art, might have been considered in the light of an entire work, (as the advertisement

before it hinted) had the succeeding books been never written.

However, as the whole design is at length completed, it may not be amiss to give in this place a short analysis of the several books, in their order, to shew their connection one with another, and to obviate a few objections which have been made to certain parts of each, by some persons, whose opinions I highly respect; objections which, I flatter myself, might arise from their having examined those parts separately, as the separate publication of the books necessarily led them to do; and which, perhaps, had they seen the whole together, they would not have found of so much importance.

I. The first book, as I have said, contains the general principles of the art, which are shewn to be no other than those which constitute beauty in the sister art of landscape painting; beauty which results from a well-chosen variety of curves, in contradistinction to that of architecture, which arises from a judicious symmetry of right lines, and which is there shewn to have afforded the principle on which that formal disposition of garden ground, which our ancestors borrowed from

the French and Dutch, proceeded: a principle never adopted by nature herself, and therefore constantly to be avoided by those whose business it is to embellish nature.

I know of no objection that has been made to any thing that I have asserted on this head, except to that part in which I have exploded vistas and avenues, which, it has been said, have in themselves a considerable share of intrinsic beauty. I am myself far from denying this; I only assert that their beauty is not picturesque beauty: and therefore, that it is to be rejected by those who follow picturesque principles. It is architectural beauty, and accords only with architectural works. Where the artist follows those principles, vistas are certainly admissible; and the French, who have so long followed them, have therefore not improperly (though one cannot help smiling at the title) given us in their Dictionary of Sciences, an article of *Architecture du Jardinage*. But did Gaspar Poussin, or Claude Lorrain, ever copy these beauties on their canvass? or would they have produced a picturesque effect by their means if they had? I think this single consideration will induce every person of common taste to allow that these

two principles oppose one another, and that, whenever they appear together, they offend the eye of the beholder by their heterogeneous beauty. If therefore, vistas are ever to be admitted, or rather to be retained, it is only where they form an approach to some superb mansion, so situated, that the principal prospect and ground allotted to picturesque improvement lie entirely on the other side; so much so, that the two different modes of planting can never appear together from any given point of view, and this is the utmost that I can concede on this subject.

II. The picturesque principle being thus established in the first book, as well by proofs of its beauty when followed, as of the deformity which results from its being deserted, the second book proceeds to a more practical discussion of the subject, but confines itself to one point only, the disposition of the ground plan, and, that very material business immediately united with it, the proper disposition and formation of the paths and fences. The necessity of attending constantly to the curvilinear principle is first shewn, not only in the formation of the ground plan, with respect to its external boundary, but in its internal swellings and

sinkings, where all abruptness or angular appearances are as much to be avoided, as in the form of the outline that surrounds the whole.

The path-ways or walks are next considered, and that peculiar curve recommended for their imitation, which is so frequently found in common roads, foot-paths, &c. and which, being casually produced, appears to be the general curve of nature.

The rest of the book is employed in minutely describing the method of making sunk fences, and other necessary divisions of the pleasure ground or lawn from the adjacent field or park; a part of the art which is of most essential consequence, and which is frequently very difficult both to design and execute.

The dryness of this part of the subject led me to enliven the book with a concluding Episode, and also to throw into other places of it as much as I could of poetical embellishment; in one instance perhaps improperly, because I have found it has generally been blamed. It is the apostrophe which I have made to the genius or muse of painting, when I am about to teach the best colour

for concealing upright fences. It has been said, "Why all this parade about daubing a rail?" Now, though I believe I might defend myself by the practice of my masters in didactic poetry, who frequently by such apostrophes endeavour to bestow consequence on little matters, to which they think it necessary to call the attention, yet I rather chuse to give the objection its full force, and promise to soften the passage in the next edition; taking leave, however, here to assert in prose, that it is highly necessary to observe the rule in question; because if such means be not taken for concealment, fences of that kind create much deformity in the general scene.

III. The third book proceeds to add natural ornament to that ground plan which the second book had ascertained, in its two capital branches, wood and water.

The formation of the outline and position of the latter might indeed have been treated in the former book: but as water, though the greatest ornament of any rural scene, is certainly but an ornament, inasmuch as the scene may exist without it; and as there are many beautifully adorned places where this additional grace cannot be produced, I

thought proper to consider it only as an adjunct. Somebody has said (perhaps rather quaintly, yet certainly not without good meaning) that " water " is the eye, and wood the eye-brow of nature ;" and if so, there is surely no impropriety in treating the two features together. Certain it is, that when united, they contribute more than any thing else to what may be called scenical expression, without which the picturesque beauty we treat of loses much of its value.

With respect to the judicious arrangement of wood, considered separately, I treat it under two distinct heads, that of planting it with a view of concealing defects, and introducing beauty in their place, and for the purpose of ornamenting the opener lawns. On the former of these I am more diffuse, because it is a subject which admits of precise rules. On the latter, as it is the peculiar province of taste, and depends chiefly on the eye of the planter, who must necessarily vary his mode of planting as peculiar situations vary, more could not be said with propriety : for, where the only thing needful is to avoid formality, and to treat nature (as Mr. Pope excellently expresses it)

like a modest fair,
Not over dress, nor leave her wholly bare !'

explicit rules rather tend to mislead tkan to direct. I have, however, from ver. 209 to ver. 250, ventured to prescribe a few material precepts, which are incapable of being misapplied; and if to these be added, what I have said in the first book concerning the false taste of planting distances, I am in hopes I shall not be thought to have treated this part of my subject superficially.

For I would wish my reader to consider that the plan of this poem differs very materially in one respect from that of the Georgics of Virgil; and when I speak merely of plan, I may hope, without appearing arrogant, to bring them to a comparison. His four books treat of four distinct subjects; tillage, planting, breeding of cattle, and bees. He has no introductory book which treats of the general art of agriculture: whereas this poem, as appears from the analysis here given, employs the first book entirely on that general subject, of which the three following are to be considered only as illustrations and amplifications: where, therefore, that book had sufficiently explained any topic, more could not be added in any succeeding one without tautology. And this, I hope, will sufficiently obviate the objection which has been made to this part of the third book.

As to the second general topic, water, as I have heard no objections made to what I have there asserted, and believe every assertion consonant to the general principles of the art, I shall here add nothing. Yet in the little episode at the end of it, I have been frequently questioned whom I meant by Ligea, and it has been thought that I ought not to have run away with one of Virgil's Sea-Nymphs *, to transport her into an English inland scene. There is some weight in this objection; and to shew that I think so, I will here discover what I have hitherto kept as a sort of secret. The lines where this nymph is mentioned, were written in a very retired grove belonging to Mr. Frederic Montagu, who has long honoured me with his friendship, where a little clear trout-stream (dignified, perhaps, too much by the name of a river) gurgles very deliciously. The name of this stream is the Lin, and the spring itself rises but a little way from his plantations†. I seem to find

* Drymoque, Zanthoque, *Ligeaque*, Phyllodoceque.
Geor. iv. ver. 336.

† At Papplewick, in Nottinghamshire, on the edge of the Forest of Sherwood. The village itself has not been without poetical notice before, Ben Jonson having taken some of his *personæ dramatis* from it, in his unfinished pastoral comedy, called *The Sad Shepherd.*

myself asked here pretty abruptly, Why then did you not call your nymph LINEA? I will own the truth. I had resolved, when I first planned my poem, to bring no instances from any individual scene: for I thought the nature of its composition, as it excluded particular satire, would not, with more propriety, admit of particular panegyric; and therefore, by a slight alteration in the name, and by some other as slight deviations from the scenery, I cautiously masked the naïad in question.

I will here give the reader another instance of similar caution. Finding, in the same book, occasion to explode the too great fondness for exotic plants, I thought that the most poetical way of doing it was, to exhibit an instance somewhat in the same manner in which Virgil introduces his old Corycian gardener: but to prevent all possible application, as I thought, I laid my scene on the banks of the remote Swale, where I imagined the taste for exotics had not yet reached, or at least had not yet been carried to any excess; yet I have been since told, that the neighbourhood immediately pointed out a certain very worthy gentleman as the undoubted object of my satire, whose improvements I had never seen, nor even heard, that, from the inclemency of the climate, his

plantations had ever suffered in the way that I have described. I have, therefore, only to desire that my readers, now possessed of one of my secrets, would substitute an N for a G where the name LIGEA occurs; and that the respectable gentleman, now acquainted with the other, would acquit me of any premeditated ridicule on his subject.

IV. Factitious or artificial ornaments, in contradistinction to natural ones last treated, form the general subject of the Fourth Book, and conclude the plan. By these is meant not only every aid which the art borrows from architecture, but those smaller pieces of separate scenery appropriated either to ornament or use, which do not make a necessary part of the whole; and which, if admitted into it, would frequently occasion a littleness ill suiting with that unity and simplicity which should ever be principally attended to in an extensive pleasure ground.

Though this subject was in itself as susceptible of poetical embellishment as any that preceded it, and much more so than those contained in the second book; yet I was apprehensive that descriptive poetry, however varied, might pall when con-

tinued through so long a poem: and therefore, by interweaving a tale with the general theme, I have given the whole a narrative, and in some places, a dramatic cast. The idea was new, and I found the execution of it somewhat difficult. However, if I have so far succeeded as to have conveyed, through the medium of an interesting story, those more important principles of taste which this part of my subject required; and if those rules only are omitted which readily result from such as I have descriptively given; if the judicious place and arrangement of those artificial forms, which give the chief embellishment to a finished garden scene, be distinctly noticed, I am not without hope that this conclusion will be thought (as Sir Henry Wotton said of Milton's juvenile poems at the end of a miscellany) to leave the reader in some small degree *con la bocca dolce.*

With respect to the criticisms which may be made on this last book, there is one so likely to come from certain readers, that I am inclined to anticipate it; and taking for granted that it will be said to breathe too much of the spirit of party, to return the following ready answer: the word *party*, when applied to those men, who, from private and personal motives, compose either a ma-

jority or minority in a house of parliament, or to those who out of it, on similar principles, approve or condemn the measures of any administration, is certainly in its place: but in a matter of such magnitude as the present American war, in which the dearest interests of mankind are concerned, the puny term has little or no meaning. If, however, it be applied to me on this occasion, I shall take it with much complacency, conscious that no sentiment appears in my poem which does not prove its author to be of THE PARTY OF HUMANITY.

The whole of the plan being now explained, I might here finish, did not a general objection remain, which I have heard made to the species of versification in which I chose to compose it. I must, therefore, beg the reader's patience while I inform him why I preferred blank verse to rhyme on this occasion.

When I first had the subject in contemplation, I found it admitted of two very different modes of composition: one was that of the regular didactic poem, of which the Georgics of Virgil afford so perfect an example; the other that of the preceptive epistolary essay, the model of which Horace has given in his Epistles *ad Augustum & ad Pi-*

sones. I balanced sometime which of these I should adopt, for both had their peculiar merit. The former opened a more ample field for picturesque description and poetical embellishment; the latter was more calculated to convey exact precept in concise phrase *. The one furnished better means of illustrating my subject, and the other of defining it; the former admitted those ornaments only which resulted from lively imagery and figurative diction, the latter seemed rather to require the seasoning of wit and satire; this, therefore, appeared best calculated to expose false taste, and that to elucidate the true. But false taste, on this subject, had been so inimitably ridiculed by Mr. Pope, in his Epistle to Lord Burlington, that it seemed to preclude all other authors (at least it precluded me) from touching it after him; and therefore, as he had left much unsaid on that part of the art on which it was my purpose principally

* See Mr. Pope's account of his *design* in writing the Essay on Man, in which the peculiar merit of that way, in which he so greatly excelled, is most happily explained. He chose, as he says, "verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons: verse, because precepts, so written, strike more strongly, and are retained more easily: rhyme, because it expresses arguments or instructions more concisely than even prose itself."

to enlarge, I thought the didactic method not only more open but more proper for my attempt. This matter once determined, I did not hesitate as to my choice between blank verse and rhyme; because it clearly appeared, that numbers of the most varied kind were most proper to illustrate a subject *whose every charm springs from variety,* and which painting nature as *scorning control,* should employ a versification for that end as unfettered as nature itself. Art, at the same time, in rural improvements, pervading the province of nature, unseen and unfelt, seemed to bear a striking analogy to that species of verse, the harmony of which results from measured quantity and varied cadence, without the too studied arrangement of final syllables, or regular return of consonant sounds. I was, notwithstanding, well aware, that by choosing to write in blank verse, I should not court popularity, because I perceived it was growing much out of vogue; but this reason, as may be supposed, did not weigh much with a writer, who meant to combat fashion in the very theme he intended to write upon; and who was also convinced that a mode of English versification, in which so many good poems, with Paradise Lost at their head, have been written, could either not

long continue unfashionable; or, if it did, that fashion had so completely destroyed taste, it would not be worth any writer's while, who aimed at more than the reputation of the day, to endeavour to amuse the public.

FINIS.

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