

Classic Poetry Series

Erasmus Darwin
- poems -

Publication Date:
2012

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Erasmus Darwin(12 December 1731 – 18 April 1802)

Erasmus Darwin was an English physician who turned down George III's invitation to be a physician to the King. One of the key thinkers of the Midlands Enlightenment, he was also a natural philosopher, physiologist, abolitionist, inventor and poet. His poems included much natural history, including a statement of evolution and the relatedness of all forms of life. He was a member of the Darwin–Wedgwood family, which includes his grandsons Charles Darwin and Francis Galton. Darwin was also a founding member of the Lunar Society of Birmingham, a discussion group of pioneering industrialists and natural philosophers.

Early Life

Born at Elston Hall, Nottinghamshire near Newark-on-Trent, England, the youngest of seven children of Robert Darwin of Elston (12 August 1682–20 November 1754), a lawyer, and his wife Elizabeth Hill (1702–1797). The name Erasmus had been used by a number of his family and derives from his ancestor Erasmus Earle, Common Sergent of England under Oliver Cromwell. His siblings were:

Robert Darwin (17 October 1724–4 November 1816)

Elizabeth Darwin (15 September 1725–8 April 1800)

William Alvey Darwin (3 October 1726–7 October 1783)

Anne Darwin (12 November 1727–3 August 1813)

Susannah Darwin (10 April 1729–29 September 1789)

John Darwin, rector of Elston (28 September 1730–24 May 1805)

He was educated at Chesterfield Grammar School, then later at St John's College, Cambridge. He obtained his medical education at the University of Edinburgh Medical School. Whether Darwin ever obtained the formal degree of MD is not known. Darwin settled in 1756 as a physician at Nottingham, but met with little success and so moved the following year to Lichfield to try to establish a practice there. A few weeks after his arrival, using a novel course of treatment, he restored the health of a young man whose death seemed inevitable. This ensured his success in the new locale.

Darwin was a highly successful physician for more than fifty years in the Midlands. George III invited him to be Royal Physician, but Darwin declined. In Lichfield, Darwin wrote "didactic poetry, developed his system of evolution, and invented amongst other things, an organ able to recite the Lord's Prayer, the

Creed, and the Ten Commandments".

Darwin was a large man who gave up weighing himself when he reached 336 pounds (24.3 stones, 153 kg). When visiting patients, he would have his driver, also a very large man, walk ahead of him to make sure the floor of a house would hold him.

Marriages and Children

Darwin married twice and had 14 children, including two illegitimate daughters by an employee, and, possibly, at least one further illegitimate daughter.

In 1757, he married Mary (Polly) Howard (1740–1770). They had four sons and one daughter, two of whom (a son and a daughter) died in infancy:

Charles Darwin (1758-1778)

Erasmus Darwin II (1759–1799)

Elizabeth Darwin (1763, survived 4 months)

Robert Waring Darwin (1766–1848), father of the naturalist Charles Darwin

William Alvey Darwin (1767, survived 19 days)

The first Mrs. Darwin died in 1770. A governess, Mary Parker, was hired to look after Robert. By late 1771, employer and employee had become intimately involved and together they had two illegitimate daughters:

Susanna Parker (1772–1856)

Mary Parker Jr (1774–1859)

Susanna and Mary Jr later established a boarding school for girls. In 1782, Mary Sr (the governess) married Joseph Day (1745–1811), a Birmingham merchant, and moved away.

Darwin may have fathered another child, this time with a married woman. A Lucy Swift gave birth in 1771 to a baby, also named Lucy, who was christened a daughter of her mother and William Swift, but there is reason to believe the father was really Darwin.[6] Lucy Jr. married John Hardcastle in Derby in 1792 and their daughter, Mary, married Francis Boott, the physician.

In 1775, Darwin met Elizabeth Pole, daughter of Charles Colyear, 2nd Earl of Portmore, and wife of Colonel Edward Pole (1718–1780); but as she was married, Darwin could only make his feelings known for her through poetry. When Edward Pole died, Darwin married Elizabeth and moved to her home,

Radbourne Hall, four miles (6 km) west of Derby. The hall and village are these days known as Radbourne. In 1782, they moved to Full Street, Derby. They had four sons, one of whom died in infancy, and three daughters:

Edward Darwin (1782–1829)

Frances Ann Violetta Darwin (1783–1874)

Emma Georgina Elizabeth Darwin (1784–1818)

Sir Francis Sacheverel Darwin (1786–1859)

John Darwin (1787–1818)

Henry Darwin (1789–1790), died in infancy.

Harriet Darwin (1790–1825), married Admiral Thomas James Malling

Death

Darwin died suddenly on the 18 April 1802, weeks after having moved to Breadsall Priory, just north of Derby. His body is buried in All Saints Church, Breadsall.

Erasmus Darwin is commemorated on one of the Moonstones, a series of monuments in Birmingham.

Writing

Darwin formed the Lichfield Botanical Society in order to translate the works of the Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus from Latin into English. This took seven years. The result was two publications: *A System of Vegetables* between 1783 and 1785, and *The Families of Plants* in 1787. In these volumes, Darwin coined many of the English names of plants that we use today.

Darwin then wrote *The Loves of the Plants*, a long poem, which was a popular rendering of Linnaeus' works. Darwin also wrote *Economy of Vegetation*, and together the two were published as *The Botanic Garden*.

Zoonomia

Darwin's most important scientific work is *Zoonomia* (1794–1796), contains a system of pathology, and a chapter on 'Generation'. In the latter, he anticipated some of the views of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, which foreshadowed the modern theory of evolution. Erasmus Darwin's works were read and commented on by his grandson Charles Darwin the naturalist. Erasmus Darwin based his theories on David Hartley's psychological theory of associationism. The essence of his views is contained in the following passage, which he follows up with the

conclusion that one and the same kind of living filament is and has been the cause of all organic life:

Would it be too bold to imagine, that in the great length of time, since the earth began to exist, perhaps millions of ages before the commencement of the history of mankind, would it be too bold to imagine, that all warm-blooded animals have arisen from one living filament, which THE GREAT FIRST CAUSE endued with animality, with the power of acquiring new parts, attended with new propensities, directed by irritations, sensations, volitions, and associations; and thus possessing the faculty of continuing to improve by its own inherent activity, and of delivering down those improvements by generation to its posterity, world without end!

Erasmus Darwin also anticipated natural selection in *Zoönomia* mainly when writing about the "three great objects of desire" for every organism: "lust, hunger, and security." Another remarkable foresight written in *Zoönomia* that relates to natural selection is Erasmus' thoughts on how a species propagated itself. Erasmus' idea that "the strongest and most active animal should propagate the species, which should thence become improved" was almost identical to the future theory of survival of the fittest.

Erasmus Darwin was familiar with the earlier proto-evolutionary thinking of James Burnett, Lord Monboddo, and cited him in his 1803 work *Temple of Nature*.

Poem on Evolution

Erasmus Darwin offered the first glimpse of his theory of evolution, obliquely, in a question at the end of a long footnote to his popular poem *The Loves of the Plants* (1789), which was republished throughout the 1790s in several editions as *The Botanic Garden*. His poetic concept was to anthropomorphize the stamen (male) and pistil (female) sexual organs, as bride and groom. In this stanza on the flower *Curcuma* (also Flax and Turmeric) the "youths" are infertile, and he devotes the footnote to other examples of neutered organs in flowers, insect castes, and finally associates this more broadly with many popular and well-known cases of vestigial organs (male nipples, the third and fourth wings of flies, etc.)

Woo'd with long care, CURCUMA cold and shy
Meets her fond husband with averted eye:
Four beardless youths the obdurate beauty move
With soft attentions of Platonic love.

Darwin's final long poem, *The Temple of Nature*, was published posthumously in 1803. The poem was originally titled *The Origin of Society*. It is considered his best poetic work. It centres on his own conception of evolution. The poem traces the progression of life from micro-organisms to civilized society.

His poetry was admired by Wordsworth, although Coleridge was intensely critical, writing, "I absolutely nauseate Darwin's poem". It often made reference to his interests in science; for example botany and steam engines.

Education of Women

The last two leaves of Darwin's *A plan for the conduct of female education in boarding schools* (1797) contain a book list, an apology for the work, and an advert for "Miss Parkers School". The work probably resulted from his liaison with Mary Parker.[citation needed] The school advertised on the last page is the one he set up in Ashbourne, Derbyshire for their two illegitimate children, Susanna and Mary.

Darwin regretted that a good education had not been generally available to women in Britain in his time, and drew on the ideas of Locke, Rousseau, and Genlis in organising his thoughts. Addressing the education of middle class girls, Darwin argued that amorous romance novels were inappropriate and that they should seek simplicity in dress. He contends that young women should be educated in schools, rather than privately at home, and learn appropriate subjects. These subjects include physiognomy, physical exercise, botany, chemistry, mineralogy, and experimental philosophy. They should familiarize themselves with arts and manufactures through visits to sites like Coalbrookdale, and Wedgwood's potteries; they should learn how to handle money, and study modern languages. Darwin's educational philosophy took the view that men and women should have different, but complementary capabilities, skills, spheres, and interests. In the context of the times, this program may be read as a modernising influence.

Lunar Society

The Lunar Society: these dates indicate the year in which Darwin became friends with these people, who, in turn, became members of the Lunar Society. The Lunar Society existed from 1765 to 1813.

Before 1765:

Matthew Boulton, originally a buckle maker in Birmingham

John Whitehurst of Derby, maker of clocks and scientific instruments, pioneer of geology

After 1765:

Josiah Wedgwood, potter 1765

Dr. William Small, 1765, man of science, formerly Professor of Natural Philosophy at the College of William and Mary, where Thomas Jefferson was an appreciative pupil

Richard Lovell Edgeworth, 1766, inventor

James Watt, 1767, improver of steam engine

James Keir, 1767, pioneer of the chemical industry

Thomas Day, 1768, eccentric and author

Dr. William Withering, 1775, the death of Dr. Small left an opening for a physician in the group.

Joseph Priestley, 1780, experimental chemist and discoverer of many substances.

Samuel Galton, 1782, a Quaker gunmaker with a taste for science, took Darwin's place after Darwin moved to Derby.

Darwin also established a lifelong friendship with Benjamin Franklin, who shared Darwin's support for the American and French revolutions. The Lunar Society was instrumental as an intellectual driving force behind England's Industrial Revolution.

The members of the Lunar Society, and especially Darwin, opposed the slave trade. He attacked it in *The Botanic Garden* (1789–1791), and in *The Loves of Plants* (1789) and *The Economy of Vegetation* (1791).

Other Activities

In addition to the Lunar Society, Erasmus Darwin belonged to the influential Derby Philosophical Society, as did his brother-in-law Samuel Fox (see family tree below). He experimented with the use of air and gases to alleviate infections and cancers in patients. A Pneumatic Institution was established at Clifton in 1799 for clinically testing these ideas. He conducted research into the formation of clouds, on which he published in 1788. He also inspired Robert Weldon's Somerset Coal Canal caisson lock.

Cosmological Speculation

Contemporary literature dates the cosmological theories of the Big Bang and Big Crunch to the 19th and 20th centuries. However Erasmus Darwin had speculated on these sorts of events in *The Botanic Garden, A Poem in Two Parts: Part 1, The Economy of Vegetation*, 1791:

Roll on, ye Stars! exult in youthful prime,
Mark with bright curves the printless steps of Time;
Near and more near your beamy cars approach,
And lessening orbs on lessening orbs encroach; —

Flowers of the sky! ye too to age must yield,
Frail as your silken sisters of the field!
Star after star from Heaven's high arch shall rush,
Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush,
Headlong, extinct, to one dark center fall,
And Death and Night and Chaos mingle all!

— Till o'er the wreck, emerging from the storm,
Immortal Nature lifts her changeful form,
Mounts from her funeral pyre on wings of flame,
And soars and shines, another and the same

Inventions

Darwin was the inventor of several devices, though he did not patent any. He believed this would damage his reputation as a doctor, and encouraged his friends to patent their own modifications of his designs.

A carriage that would not tip over (1766).

A steering mechanism for his carriage that would be adopted by cars 130 years later (1759).

A speaking machine (at Clifton in 1799).

A canal lift for barges.

A minute artificial bird.

A copying machine (1778).

A variety of weather monitoring machines.

An artesian well (1783).

In notes dating to 1779, Darwin made a sketch of a simple hydrogen-oxygen rocket engine, with gas tanks connected by plumbing and pumps to an elongated combustion chamber and expansion nozzle, a concept not to be seen again until one century later

Eliza

Now stood Eliza on the wood-crowned height,
O'er Minden's plain, spectatress of the fight;
Sought, with bold eye, amid the bloody strife,
Her dearer self, the partner of her life;
From hill to hill the rushing host pursued,
And viewed his banner, or believed she viewed.
Pleased with the distant roar, with quicker tread,
Fast by the hand, one lispng boy she led;
And one fair girl, amid the loud alarm,
Slept on her kerchief, cradled on her arm:
While round her brows bright beams of honour dart,
And love's warm eddies circle round her heart.
Near and more near the intrepid beauty pressed,
Saw, through the driving smoke, his dancing crest,
Heard the exulting shout, 'they run! - they run!'
'He's safe!' she cried, 'he's safe! - the battle's won!'
A ball now hisses through the airy tides,
(Some Fury wings it, and some Demon guides,)
Parts the fine locks, her graceful head that deck,
Wounds her fair ear, and sinks into her neck;
The red stream, issuing from her azure veins,
Dyes her white veil, her ivory bosom stains -
'Ah me!' she cried, and sinking on the ground,
Kissed her dear babes, regardless of the wound;
'Oh, cease not yet to beat, thou vital urn!
Wait, gushing life - oh, wait my love's return!'
Hoarse barks the wolf, the vulture screams from far,
The angel Pity shuns the walks of war ;-
'Oh spare, ye war-hounds, spare their tender age!
On me, on me,' she cried, 'exhaust your rage!'
Then, with weak arms, her weeping babes caressed,
And, sighing, hid them in her blood-stained vest.

From tent to tent the impatient warrior flies,
Fear in his heart, and frenzy in his eyes;
Eliza's name along the camp he calls,
'Eliza' echoes the murmuring gloom his footsteps tread,
O'er groaning heaps, the dying and the dead,
Vault o'er the plain - and in the tangled wood -

Lo - dead Eliza - weltering in her blood!

Soon hears his listening son the welcome sounds;
With open arms and sparkling eyes, he bounds:
'Speak low,' he cries, and gives his little hand -
'Mamma's asleep upon the dew-cold sand;
Alas! we both with cold and hunger quake -
Why do you weep? - mamma will soon awake.'
'She'll wake no more!' the hopeless mourner cried,
Upturned his eyes, and clasped his hands, and sighed;
Stretched on the ground awhile entranced he lay,
And pressed warm kisses on the lifeless clay;
He then upsprang, with wild convulsive start,
And all the father kindled in his heart;
'O Heaven!' he cried, 'my first rash vow forgive!
These bind to earth - for these I pray to live!'
Round his chill babes he wrapped his crimson vest,
And clasped them sobbing to his aching breast.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden (Part IV)

The Economy Of Vegetation

Canto IV

As when at noon in Hybla's fragrant bowers
CACALIA opens all her honey'd flowers;
Contending swarms on bending branches cling,
And nations hover on aurelian wing;
So round the GODDESS, ere she speaks, on high
Impatient SYLPHS in gawdy circlets fly;
Quivering in air their painted plumes expand,
And coloured shadows dance upon the land.

I. 'SYLPHS! YOUR light troops the tropic Winds confine,
And guide their streaming arrows to the Line;
While in warm floods ecliptic breezes rise,
And sink with wings benumb'd in colder skies.
You bid Monsoons on Indian seas reside,
And veer, as moves the sun, their airy tide;
While southern gales o'er western oceans roll,
And Eurus steals his ice-winds from the Pole.
Your playful trains, on sultry islands born,
Turn on fantastic toe at eve and morn;
With soft susurrant voice alternate sweep
Earth's green pavilions and encircling deep.
OR in itinerant cohorts, borne sublime
On tides of ether, float from clime to clime;
O'er waving Autumn bend your airy ring,
Or waft the fragrant bosom of the Spring.

II. 'When Morn, escorted by the dancing Hours,
O'er the bright plains her dewy lustre showers;
Till from her sable chariot Eve serene
Drops the dark curtain o'er the brilliant scene;
You form with chemic hands the airy surge,
Mix with broad vans, with shadowy tridents urge.
SYLPHS! from each sun-bright leaf, that twinkling shakes
O'er Earth's green lap, or shoots amid her lakes,
Your playful bands with simpering lips invite,

And wed the enamour'd OXYGENE to LIGHT.-
Round their white necks with fingers interwove,
Cling the fond Pair with unabating love;
Hand link'd in hand on buoyant step they rise,
And soar and glisten in unclouded skies.
Whence in bright floods the VITAL AIR expands,
And with concentric spheres involves the lands;
Pervades the swarming seas, and heaving earths,
Where teeming Nature broods her myriad births;
Fills the fine lungs of all that
breathe
or
bud

,
Warms the new heart, and dyes the gushing blood;
With Life's first spark inspires the organic frame,
And, as it wastes, renews the subtile flame.
'So pure, so soft, with sweet attraction shone
Fair PSYCHE, kneeling at the ethereal throne;
Won with coy smiles the admiring court of Jove,
And warm'd the bosom of unconquer'd LOVE.-
Beneath a moving shade of fruits and flowers
Onward they march to HYMEN'S sacred bowers;
With lifted torch he lights the festive train,
Sublime, and leads them in his golden chain;
Joins the fond pair, indulgent to their vows,
And hides with mystic veil their blushing brows.
Round their fair forms their mingling arms they fling,
Meet with warm lip, and clasp with rustling wing.-
-Hence plastic Nature, as Oblivion whelms
Her fading forms, repeoples all her realms;
Soft Joys disport on purple plumes unfurl'd,
And Love and Beauty rule the willing world.

III. 1. 'SYLPHS! Your bold myriads on the withering heath
Stay the fell SYROC'S suffocative breath;
Arrest SIMOOM in his realms of sand,
The poisoned javelin balanced in his hand;-
Fierce on blue streams he rides the tainted air,
Points his keen eye, and waves his whistling hair;
While, as he turns, the undulating soil
Rolls in red waves, and billowy deserts boil.

You seize TORNADO by his locks of mist,
 Burst his dense clouds, his wheeling spires untwist;
 Wide o'er the West when borne on headlong gales,
 Dark as meridian night, the Monster sails,
 Howls high in air, and shakes his curled brow,
 Lashing with serpent-train the waves below,
 Whirls his black arm, the forked lightning flings,
 And showers a deluge from his demon-wings.

2. 'SYLPHS! with light shafts YOU pierce the drowsy FOG,
 That lingering slumbers on the sedge-wove bog,
 With webbed feet o'er midnight meadows creeps,
 Or flings his hairy limbs on stagnant deeps.
 YOU meet CONTAGION issuing from afar,
 And dash the baleful conqueror from his car;
 When, Guest of DEATH! from charnel vaults he steals,
 And bathes in human gore his armed wheels.
 'Thus when the PLAGUE, upborne on Belgian air,
 Look'd through the mist and shook his clotted hair,
 O'er shrinking nations steer'd malignant clouds,
 And rain'd destruction on the gasping crouds.
 The beauteous AEGLE felt the venom'd dart,
 Slow roll'd her eye, and feebly throbb'd her heart;
 Each fervid sigh seem'd shorter than the last,
 And starting Friendship shunn'd her, as she pass'd.
 -With weak unsteady step the fainting Maid
 Seeks the cold garden's solitary shade,
 Sinks on the pillowy moss her drooping head,
 And prints with lifeless limbs her leafy bed.
 -On wings of Love her plighted Swain pursues,
 Shades her from winds, and shelters her from dews,
 Extends on tapering poles the canvas roof,
 Spreads o'er the straw-wove matt the flaxen woof,
 Sweet buds and blossoms on her bolster strows,
 And binds his kerchief round her aching brows;
 Soothes with soft kiss, with tender accents charms,
 And clasps the bright Infection in his arms.-
 With pale and languid smiles the grateful Fair
 Applauds his virtues, and rewards his care;
 Mourns with wet cheek her fair companions fled
 On timorous step, or number'd with the dead;
 Calls to its bosom all its scatter'd rays,
 And pours on THYRSIS the collected blaze;

Braves the chill night, caressing and caress'd,
And folds her Hero-lover to her breast.-
Less bold, LEANDER at the dusky hour
Eyed, as he swam, the far love-lighted tower;
Breasted with struggling arms the tossing wave,
And sunk benighted in the watery grave.
Less bold, TOBIAS claim'd the nuptial bed,
Where seven fond Lovers by a Fiend had bled;
And drove, instructed by his Angel-Guide,
The enamour'd Demon from the fatal bride.-
-SYLPHS! while your winnowing pinions fan'd the air,
And shed gay visions o'er the sleeping pair;
LOVE round their couch effused his rosy breath,
And with his keener arrows conquer'd DEATH.

IV. 1. 'You charm'd, indulgent SYLPHS! their learned toil,
And crown'd with fame your TORRICELL, and BOYLE;
Taught with sweet smiles, responsive to their prayer,
The spring and pressure of the viewless air.

-How up exhausted tubes bright currents flow
Of liquid silver from the lake below,
Weigh the long column of the incumbent skies,
And with the changeful moment fall and rise.
-How, as in brazen pumps the pistons move,
The membrane-valve sustains the weight above;
Stroke follows stroke, the gelid vapour falls,
And misty dew-drops dim the crystal walls;
Rare and more rare expands the fluid thin,
And Silence dwells with Vacancy within.-
So in the mighty Void with grim delight
Primeval Silence reign'd with ancient Night.

2. 'SYLPHS! your soft voices, whispering from the skies,
Bade from low earth the bold MONGULFIER rise;
Outstretch'd his buoyant ball with airy spring,
And bore the Sage on levity of wing;-
Where were ye, SYLPHS! when on the ethereal main
Young ROSIERE launch'd, and call'd your aid in vain?
Fair mounts the light balloon, by Zephyr driven,
Parts the thin clouds, and sails along the heaven;
Higher and yet higher the expanding bubble flies,
Lights with quick flash, and bursts amid the skies.-
Headlong He rushes through the affrighted air

With limbs distorted, and dishevel'd hair,
Whirls round and round, the flying croud alarms,
And DEATH receives him in his sable arms!-
So erst with melting wax and loosen'd strings
Sunk hapless ICARUS on unfaithful wings;
His scatter'd plumage danced upon the wave,
And sorrowing Mermaids deck'd his watery grave;
O'er his pale corse their pearly sea-flowers shed,
And strew'd with crimson moss his marble bed;
Struck in their coral towers the pausing bell,
And wide in ocean toll'd his echoing knell.

V. 'SYLPHS! YOU, retiring to sequester'd bowers,
Where oft your PRIESTLEY woos your airy powers,
On noiseless step or quivering pinion glide,
As sits the Sage with Science by his side;
To his charm'd eye in gay undress appear,
Or pour your secrets on his raptur'd ear.
How nitrous Gas from iron ingots driven
Drinks with red lips the purest breath of heaven;
How, while Conferva from its tender hair
Gives in bright bubbles empyrean air;
The crystal floods phlogistic ores calcine,
And the pure ETHER marries with the MINE.
'So in Sicilia's ever-blooming shade
When playful PROSERPINE from CERES stray'd,
Led with unwary step her virgin trains
O'er Etna's steeps, and Enna's golden plains;
Pluck'd with fair hand the silver-blossom'd bower,
And purpled mead,-herself a fairer flower;
Sudden, unseen amid the twilight glade,
Rush'd gloomy DIS, and seized the trembling maid.-
Her starting damsels sprung from mossy seats,
Dropp'd from their gauzy laps the gather'd sweets,
Clung round the struggling Nymph, with piercing cries,
Pursued the chariot, and invoked the skies;-
Pleased as he grasps her in his iron arms,
Frights with soft sighs, with tender words alarms,
The wheels descending roll'd in smoky rings,
Infernal Cupids flapp'd their demon wings;
Earth with deep yawn received the Fair, amaz'd,
And far in Night celestial Beauty blaz'd.

VI. 'Led by the Sage, Lo! Britain's sons shall guide
Huge SEA-BALLOONS beneath the tossing tide;
The diving castles, roof'd with spheric glass,
Ribb'd with strong oak, and barr'd with bolts of brass,
Buoy'd with pure air shall endless tracks pursue,
And PRIESTLEY'S hand the vital flood renew.-
Then shall BRITANNIA rule the wealthy realms,
Which Ocean's wide insatiate wave o'erwhelms;
Confine in netted bowers his scaly flocks,
Part his blue plains, and people all his rocks.
Deep, in warm waves beneath the Line that roll,
Beneath the shadowy ice-isles of the Pole,
Onward, through bright meandering vales, afar,
Obedient Sharks shall trail her sceptred car,
With harness'd necks the pearly flood disturb,
Stretch the silk rein, and champ the silver curb;
Pleased round her triumph wondering Tritons play,
And Seamaids hail her on the watery way.
-Oft shall she weep beneath the crystal waves
O'er shipwreck'd lovers weltering in their graves;
Mingling in death the Brave and Good behold
With slaves to glory, and with slaves to gold;
Shrin'd in the deep shall DAY and SPALDING mourn,
Each in his treacherous bell, sepulchral urn!-
Oft o'er thy lovely daughters, hapless PIERCE!
Her sighs shall breathe, her sorrows dew their hearse.-
With brow upturn'd to Heaven, 'WE WILL NOT PART!'
He cried, and clasp'd them to his aching heart,-
-Dash'd in dread conflict on the rocky grounds,
Crash the mock'd masts, the staggering wreck rebounds;
Through gaping seams the rushing deluge swims,
Chills their pale bosoms, bathes their shuddering limbs,
Climbs their white shoulders, buoys their streaming hair,
And the last sea-shriek bellows in the air.-
Each with loud sobs her tender sire caress'd,
And gasping strain'd him closer to her breast!-
-Stretch'd on one bier they sleep beneath the brine,
And their white bones with ivory arms intwine!

'VII. SYLPHS OF NICE EAR! with beating wings you guide
The fine vibrations of the aerial tide;

Join in sweet cadences the measured words,
 Or stretch and modulate the trembling cords.
 You strung to melody the Grecian lyre,
 Breathed the rapt song, and fan'd the thought of fire,
 Or brought in combinations, deep and clear,
 Immortal harmony to HANDEL'S ear.-
 YOU with soft breath attune the vernal gale,
 When breezy evening broods the listening vale;
 Or wake the loud tumultuous sounds, that dwell
 In Echo's many-toned diurnal shell.
 YOU melt in dulcet chords, when Zephyr rings
 The Eolian Harp, and mingle all its strings;
 Or trill in air the soft symphonious chime,
 When rapt CECILIA lifts her eye sublime,
 Swell, as she breathes, her bosoms rising snow,
 O'er her white teeth in tuneful accents slow,
 Through her fair lips on whispering pinions move,
 And form the tender sighs, that kindle love!
 'So playful LOVE on Ida's flowery sides
 With ribbon-rein the indignant Lion guides;
 Pleased on his brinded back the lyre he rings,
 And shakes delirious rapture from the strings;
 Slow as the pausing Monarch stalks along,
 Sheaths his retractile claws, and drinks the song;
 Soft Nymphs on timid step the triumph view,
 And listening Fawns with beating hoofs pursue;
 With pointed ears the alarmed forest starts,
 And Love and Music soften savage hearts.

VIII. 'SYLPHS! YOUR bold hosts, when Heaven with justice dread
 Calls the red tempest round the guilty head,
 Fierce at his nod assume vindictive forms,
 And launch from airy cars the vollied storms.-
 From Ashur's vales when proud SENACHERIB trod,
 Pour'd his swoln heart, defied the living GOD,
 Urged with incessant shouts his glittering powers;
 And JUDAH shook through all her massy towers;
 Round her sad altars press'd the prostrate crowd,
 Hosts beat their breasts, and suppliant chieftains bow'd;
 Loud shrieks of matrons thrill'd the troubled air,
 And trembling virgins rent their scatter'd hair;
 High in the midst the kneeling King adored,

Spread the blaspheming scroll before the Lord,
Raised his pale hands, and breathed his pausing sighs,
And fixed on Heaven his dim imploring eyes,-
'Oh! MIGHTY GOD! amidst thy Seraph-throng
'Who sit'st sublime, the Judge of Right and Wrong;
'Thine the wide earth, bright sun, and starry zone,
'That twinkling journey round thy golden throne;
'Thine is the crystal source of life and light,
'And thine the realms of Death's eternal night.
'Oh, bend thine ear, thy gracious eye incline,
'Lo! Ashur's King blasphemes thy holy shrine,
'Insults our offerings, and derides our vows,--
'Oh! strike the diadem from his impious brows,
'Tear from his murderous hand the bloody rod,
'And teach the trembling nations, 'THOU ART GOD!'-
-SYLPHS! in what dread array with pennons broad
Onward ye floated o'er the ethereal road,
Call'd each dank steam the reeking marsh exhales,
Contagious vapours, and volcanic gales,
Gave the soft South with poisonous breath to blow,
And rolled the dreadful whirlwind on the foe!-
Hark! o'er the camp the venom'd tempest sings,
Man falls on Man, on buckler buckler rings;
Groan answers groan, to anguish anguish yields,
And DEATH'S loud accents shake the tented fields!
-High rears the Fiend his grinning jaws, and wide
Spans the pale nations with colossal stride,
Waves his broad falchion with uplifted hand,
And his vast shadow darkens all the land.

IX. 1. 'Ethereal cohorts! Essences of Air!
Make the green children of the Spring your care!
Oh, SYLPHS! disclose in this inquiring age
One GOLDEN SECRET to some favour'd sage;
Grant the charm'd talisman, the chain, that binds,
Or guides the changeful pinions of the winds!
-No more shall hoary Boreas, issuing forth
With Eurus, lead the tempests of the North;
Rime the pale Dawn, or veil'd in flaky showers
Chill the sweet bosoms of the smiling Hours.
By whispering Auster waked shall Zephyr rise,
Meet with soft kiss, and mingle in the skies,

Fan the gay floret, bend the yellow ear,
 And rock the uncurtain'd cradle of the year;
 Autumn and Spring in lively union blend,
 And from the skies the Golden Age descend.
 2. 'Castled on ice, beneath the circling Bear,
 A vast CAMELION spits and swallows air;
 O'er twelve degrees his ribs gigantic bend,
 And many a league his leathern jaws extend;
 Half-fish, beneath, his scaly volutes spread,
 And vegetable plumage crests his head;
 Huge fields of air his wrinkled skin receives,
 From panting gills, wide lungs, and waving leaves;
 Then with dread throes subsides his bloated form,
 His shriek the thunder, and his sigh the storm.
 Oft high in heaven the hissing Demon wins
 His towering course, upborne on winnowing fins;
 Steers with expanded eye and gaping mouth,
 His mass enormous to the affrighted South;
 Spreads o'er the shuddering Line his shadowy limbs,
 And Frost and Famine follow as he swims.-
 SYLPHS! round his cloud-built couch your bands array,
 And mould the Monster to your gentle sway;
 Charm with soft tones, with tender touches check,
 Bend to your golden yoke his willing neck,
 With silver curb his yielding teeth restrain,
 And give to KIRWAN'S hand the silken rein.
 -Pleased shall the Sage, the dragon-wings between,
 Bend o'er discordant climes his eye serene,
 With Lapland breezes cool Arabian vales,
 And call to Hindostan antarctic gales,
 Adorn with wreathed ears Kampschatca's brows,
 And scatter roses on Zealandic snows,
 Earth's wondering Zones the genial seasons share,
 And nations hail him 'MONARCH OF THE AIR.'

X. 1. 'SYLPHS! as you hover on ethereal wing,
 Brood the green children of parturient Spring!-
 Where in their bursting cells my Embryons rest,
 I charge you guard the vegetable nest;
 Count with nice eye the myriad SEEDS, that swell
 Each vaulted womb of husk, or pod, or shell;
 Feed with sweet juices, clothe with downy hair,

Or hang, inshrined, their little orbs in air.
 'So, late descry'd by HERSCHEL'S piercing sight,
 Hang the bright squadrons of the twinkling Night;
 Ten thousand marshall'd stars, a silver zone,
 Effuse their blended lustres round her throne;
 Suns call to suns, in lucid clouds conspire,
 And light exterior skies with golden fire;
 Resistless rolls the illimitable sphere,
 And one great circle forms the unmeasured year.
 -Roll on, YE STARS! exult in youthful prime,
 Mark with bright curves the printless steps of Time;
 Near and more near your beamy cars approach,
 And lessening orbs on lessening orbs encroach;-
 Flowers of the sky! ye too to age must yield,
 Frail as your silken sisters of the field!
 Star after star from Heaven's high arch shall rush,
 Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush,
 Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,
 And Death and Night and Chaos mingle all!
 -Till o'er the wreck, emerging from the storm,
 Immortal NATURE lifts her changeful form,
 Mounts from her funeral pyre on wings of flame,
 And soars and shines, another and the same.
 2. 'Lo! on each SEED within its slender rind
 Life's golden threads in endless circles wind;
 Maze within maze the lucid webs are roll'd,
 And, as they burst, the living flame unfold.
 The pulpy acorn, ere it swells, contains
 The Oak's vast branches in its milky veins;
 Each ravel'd bud, fine film, and fibre-line
 Traced with nice pencil on the small design.
 The young Narcissus, in it's bulb compress'd,
 Cradles a second nestling on its breast;
 In whose fine arms a younger embryo lies,
 Folds its thin leaves, and shuts its floret-eyes;
 Grain within grain successive harvests dwell,
 And boundless forests slumber in a shell.
 -So yon grey precipice, and ivy'd towers,
 Long winding meads, and intermingled bowers,
 Green files of poplars, o'er the lake that bow,
 And glimmering wheel, which rolls and foams below,
 In one bright point with nice distinction lie

Plan'd on the moving tablet of the eye.

-So, fold on fold, Earth's wavy plains extend,
And, sphere in sphere, its hidden strata bend;-
Incumbent Spring her beamy plumes expands
O'er restless oceans, and impatient lands,
With genial lustres warms the mighty ball,
And the GREAT SEED evolves, disclosing ALL;
LIFE

buds

or

breathes

from Indus to the Poles,

And the vast surface kindles, as it rolls!

3. 'Come, YE SOFT SYLPHS! who sport on Latian land,

Come, sweet-lip'd Zephyr, and Favonius bland!

Teach the fine SEED, instinct with life, to shoot

On Earth's cold bosom its descending root;

With Pith elastic stretch its rising stem,

Part the twin Lobes, expand the throbbing Gem;

Clasp in your airy arms the aspiring Plume,

Fan with your balmy breath its kindling bloom,

Each widening scale and bursting film unfold,

Swell the green cup, and tint the flower with gold;

While in bright veins the silvery Sap ascends,

And refluent blood in milky eddies bends;

While, spread in air, the leaves respiring play,

Or drink the golden quintessence of day.

-So from his shell on Delta's shower-less isle

Bursts into life the Monster of the Nile;

First in translucent lymph with cobweb-threads

The Brain's fine floating tissue swells, and spreads;

Nerve after nerve the glistening spine descends,

The red Heart dances, the Aorta bends;

Through each new gland the purple current glides,

New veins meandering drink the refluent tides;

Edge over edge expands the hardening scale,

And sheaths his slimy skin in silver mail.

-Erewhile, emerging from the brooding sand,

With Tyger-paw He prints the brineless strand,

High on the flood with speckled bosom swims,

Helm'd with broad tail, and oar'd with giant limbs;

Rolls his fierce eye-balls, clasps his iron claws,

And champs with gnashing teeth his massy jaws;
Old Nilus sighs along his cane-crown'd shores,
And swarthy Memphis trembles and adores.

XI. 'Come, YE SOFT SYLPHS! who fan the Paphian groves,
And bear on sportive wings the callow Loves;
Call with sweet whisper, in each gale that blows,
The slumbering Snow-drop from her long repose;
Charm the pale Primrose from her clay-cold bed,
Unveil the bashful Violet's tremulous head;
While from her bud the playful Tulip breaks,
And young Carnations peep with blushing cheeks;
Bid the closed
Petals
from nocturnal cold
The virgin
Style
in silken curtains fold,
Shake into viewless air the morning dews,
And wave in light their iridescent hues;
While from on high the bursting
Anthers
trust
To the mild breezes their prolific dust;
Or bend in rapture o'er the central Fair,
Love out their hour, and leave their lives in air.
So in his silken sepulchre the Worm,
Warm'd with new life, unfolds his larva-form;
Erewhile aloft in wanton circles moves,
And woos on Hymen-wings his velvet loves.

XII. 1. 'If prouder branches with exuberance rude
Point their green gems, their barren shoots protrude;
Wound them, ye SYLPHS! with little knives, or bind
A wiry ringlet round the swelling rind;
Bisect with chissel fine the root below,
Or bend to earth the inhospitable bough.
So shall each germ with new prolific power
Delay the leaf-bud, and expand the flower;
Closed in the
Style
the tender pith shall end,

The lengthening Wood in circling
Stamens
bend;
The smoother Rind its soft embroidery spread
In vaulted
Petals
o'er their fertile bed;
While the rough Bark, in circling mazes roll'd,
Forms the green
Cup
with many a wrinkled fold;
And each small bud-scale spreads its foliage hard,
Firm round the callow germ, a
Floral Guard

.
2. 'Where cruder juices swell the leafy vein,
Stint the young germ, the tender blossom stain;
On each lop'd shoot a softer scion bind,
Pith press'd to pith, and rind applied to rind,
So shall the trunk with loftier crest ascend,
And wide in air its happier arms extend;
Nurse the new buds, admire the leaves unknown,
And blushing bend with fruitage not its own.
'Thus when in holy triumph Aaron trod,
And offer'd on the shrine his mystic rod;
First a new bark its silken tissue weaves,
New buds emerging widen into leaves;
Fair fruits protrude, enascent flowers expand,
And blush and tremble round the living wand.

XIII. 1. 'SYLPHS! on each Oak-bud wound the wormy galls,
With pigmy spears, or crush the venom'd balls;
Fright the green Locust from his foamy bed,
Unweave the Caterpillar's gluey thread;
Chase the fierce Earwig, scare the bloated Toad,
Arrest the snail upon his slimy road;
Arm with sharp thorns the Sweet-brier's tender wood,
And dash the Cynips from her damask bud;
Steep in ambrosial dew the Woodbine's bells,
And drive the Night-moth from her honey'd cells.
So where the Humming-bird in Chili's bowers
On murmuring pinions robs the pendent flowers;

Seeks, where fine pores their dulcet balm distill,
And sucks the treasure with proboscis-bill;
Fair CYPREEDIA with successful guile
Knits her smooth brow, extinguishes her smile;
A Spiders bloated paunch and jointed arms
Hide her fine form, and mask her blushing charms;
In ambush sly the mimic warrior lies,
And on quick wing the panting plunderer flies.

2. 'Shield the young Harvest from devouring blight,
The Smut's dark poison, and the Mildew white;
Deep-rooted Mould, and Ergot's horn uncouth,
And break the Canker's desolating tooth.
First in one point the festering wound confin'd
Mines unperceived beneath the shrivel'd rin'd;
Then climbs the branches with increasing strength,
Spreads as they spread, and lengthens with their length;
-Thus the slight wound ingraved on glass unneal'd
Runs in white lines along the lucid field;
Crack follows crack, to laws elastic just,
And the frail fabric shivers into dust.

XIV. 1. 'SYLPHS! if with morn destructive Eurus springs,
O, clasp the Harebel with your velvet wings;
Screen with thick leaves the Jasmine as it blows,
And shake the white rime from the shuddering Rose;
Whilst Amaryllis turns with graceful ease
Her blushing beauties, and eludes the breeze.-
SYLPHS! if at noon the Fritillary droops,
With drops nectareous hang her nodding cups;
Thin clouds of Gossamer in air display,
And hide the vale's chaste Lily from the ray;
Whilst Erythrina o'er her tender flower
Bends all her leaves, and braves the sultry hour;-
Shield, when cold Hesper sheds his dewy light,
Mimosa's soft sensations from the night;
Fold her thin foilage, close her timid flowers,
And with ambrosial slumbers guard her bowers;
O'er each warm wall while Cerea flings her arms,
And wastes on night's dull eye a blaze of charms.
2. Round her tall Elm with dewy fingers twine
The gadding tendrils of the adventurous Vine;
From arm to arm in gay festoons suspend

Her fragrant flowers, her graceful foliage bend;
 Swell with sweet juice her vermil orbs, and feed
 Shrined in transparent pulp her pearly seed;
 Hang round the Orange all her silver bells,
 And guard her fragrance with Hesperian spells;
 Bud after bud her polish'd leaves unfold,
 And load her branches with successive gold.
 So the learn'd Alchemist exulting sees
 Rise in his bright matrass DIANA'S trees;
 Drop after drop, with just delay he pours
 The red-fumed acid on Potosi's ores;
 With sudden flash the fierce bullitions rise,
 And wide in air the gas phlogistic flies;
 Slow shoot, at length, in many a brilliant mass
 Metallic roots across the netted glass;
 Branch after branch extend their silver stems,
 Bud into gold, and blossoms into gems.
 So sits enthron'd in vegetable pride
 Imperial KEW by Thames's glittering side;
 Obedient sails from realms unfurrow'd bring
 For her the unnam'd progeny of spring;
 Attendant Nymphs her dulcet mandates hear,
 And nurse in fostering arms the tender year,
 Plant the young bulb, inhume the living seed,
 Prop the weak stem, the erring tendril lead;
 Or fan in glass-built fanes the stranger flowers
 With milder gales, and steep with warmer showers.
 Delighted Thames through tropic umbrage glides,
 And flowers antarctic, bending o'er his tides;
 Drinks the new tints, the sweets unknown inhales,
 And calls the sons of science to his vales.
 In one bright point admiring Nature eyes
 The fruits and foliage of discordant skies,
 Twines the gay floret with the fragrant bough,
 And bends the wreath round GEORGE'S royal brow.
 -Sometimes retiring, from the public weal
 One tranquil hour the ROYAL PARTNERS steal;
 Through glades exotic pass with step sublime,
 Or mark the growths of Britain's happier clime;
 With beauty blossom'd, and with virtue blaz'd,
 Mark the fair Scions, that themselves have rais'd;
 Sweet blooms the Rose, the towering Oak expands,

The Grace and Guard of Britain's golden lands.

XV. SYLPHS! who, round earth on purple pinions borne,
Attend the radiant chariot of the morn;
Lead the gay hours along the ethereal hight,
And on each dun meridian shower the light;
SYLPHS! who from realms of equatorial day
To climes, that shudder in the polar ray,
From zone to zone pursue on shifting wing,
The bright perennial journey of the spring;
Bring my rich Balms from Mecca's hallow'd glades,
Sweet flowers, that glitter in Arabia's shades;
Fruits, whose fair forms in bright succession glow
Gilding the Banks of Arno, or of Po;
Each leaf, whose fragrant steam with ruby lip
Gay China's nymphs from pictur'd vases sip;
Each spicy rind, which sultry India boasts,
Scenting the night-air round her breezy coasts;
Roots whose bold stems in bleak Siberia blow,
And gem with many a tint the eternal snow;
Barks, whose broad umbrage high in ether waves
O'er Ande's steeps, and hides his golden caves;
-And, where yon oak extends his dusky shoots
Wide o'er the rill, that bubbles from his roots;
Beneath whose arms, protected from the storm
A turf-built altar rears it's rustic form;
SYLPHS! with religious hands fresh garlands twine,
And deck with lavish pomp HYGEIA'S shrine.
'Call with loud voice the Sisterhood, that dwell
On floating cloud, wide wave, or bubbling well;
Stamp with charm'd foot, convoke the alarmed Gnomes
From golden beds, and adamantine domes;
Each from her sphere with beckoning arm invite,
Curl'd with red flame, the Vestal Forms of light.
Close all your spotted wings, in lucid ranks
Press with your bending knees the crowded banks,
Cross your meek arms, incline your wreathed brows,
And win the Goddess with unwearied vows.
'Oh, wave, HYGEIA! o'er BRITANNIA'S throne
Thy serpent-wand, and mark it for thy own;
Lead round her breezy coasts thy guardian trains,
Her nodding forests, and her waving plains;

Shed o'er her peopled realms thy beamy smile,
And with thy airy temple crown her isle!
The GODDESS ceased,-and calling from afar
The wandering Zephyrs, joins them to her car;
Mounts with light bound, and graceful, as she bends,
Whirls the long lash, the flexile rein extends;
On whispering wheels the silver axle slides,
Climbs into air, and cleaves the crystal tides;
Burst from its pearly chains, her amber hair
Streams o'er her ivory shoulders, buoy'd in air;
Swells her white veil, with ruby clasp confined
Round her fair brow, and undulates behind;
The lessening coursers rise in spiral rings,
Pierce the slow-sailing clouds, and stretch their shadowy wings.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden (Part V)

THE LOVES OF THE PLANTS.

CANTO I.

Descend, ye hovering Sylphs! aerial Quires,
And sweep with little hands your silver lyres;
With fairy footsteps print your grassy rings,
Ye Gnomes! accordant to the tinkling strings;
While in soft notes I tune to oaten reed
Gay hopes, and amorous sorrows of the mead.-
From giant Oaks, that wave their branches dark,
To the dwarf Moss, that clings upon their bark,
What Beaux and Beauties crowd the gaudy groves,
And woo and win their vegetable Loves.
How Snowdrops cold, and blue-eyed Harebels blend
Their tender tears, as o'er the stream they bend;
The lovesick Violet, and the Primrose pale
Bow their sweet heads, and whisper to the gale;
With secret sighs the Virgin Lily droops,
And jealous Cowslips hang their tawny cups.
How the young Rose in beauty's damask pride
Drinks the warm blushes of his bashful bride;
With honey'd lips enamour'd Woodbines meet,
Clasp with fond arms, and mix their kisses sweet.-
Stay thy soft-murmuring waters, gentle Rill;
Hush, whispering Winds, ye ruffling Leaves, be still;
Rest, silver Butterflies, your quivering wings;
Alight, ye Beetles, from your airy rings;
Ye painted Moths, your gold-eyed plumage furl,
Bow your wide horns, your spiral trunks uncurl;
Glitter, ye Glow-worms, on your mossy beds;
Descend, ye Spiders, on your lengthen'd threads;
Slide here, ye horned Snails, with varnish'd shells;
Ye Bee-nymphs, listen in your waxen cells!-
BOTANIC MUSE! who in this latter age
Led by your airy hand the Swedish sage,
Bad his keen eye your secret haunts explore
On dewy dell, high wood, and winding shore;
Say on each leaf how tiny Graces dwell;

How laugh the Pleasures in a blossom's bell;
How insect Loves arise on cobweb wings,
Aim their light shafts, and point their little stings.
First the tall CANNA lifts his curled brow
Erect to heaven, and plights his nuptial vow;
The virtuous pair, in milder regions born,
Dread the rude blast of Autumn's icy morn;
Round the chill fair he folds his crimson vest,
And clasps the timorous beauty to his breast.
Thy love, CALLITRICHE,

two

Virgins share,
Smit with thy starry eye and radiant hair;-
On the green margin sits the youth, and laves
His floating train of tresses in the waves;
Sees his fair features paint the streams that pass,
And bends for ever o'er the watery glass.

Two

brother swains, of COLLIN'S gentle name,
The same their features, and their forms the same,
With rival love for fair COLLINIA sigh,
Knit the dark brow, and roll the unsteady eye.
With sweet concern the pitying beauty mourns,
And soothes with smiles the jealous pair by turns.
Sweet blooms GENISTA in the myrtle shade,

And

ten

fond brothers woo the haughty maid.

Two

knights before thy fragrant altar bend,
Adored MELISSA! and

two

squires attend.

MEADIA'S soft chains

five

suppliant beaux confess,
And hand in hand the laughing belle address;
Alike to all, she bows with wanton air,
Rolls her dark eye, and waves her golden hair.
Woo'd with long care, CURCUMA cold and shy

Meets her fond husband with averted eye:

Four

beardless youths the obdurate beauty move
With soft attentions of Platonic love.

With vain desires the pensive ALCEA burns,
And, like sad ELOISA, loves and mourns.

The freckled IRIS owns a fiercer flame,

And

three

unjealous husbands wed the dame.

CUPRESSUS dark disdains his dusky bride,

One

dome contains them, but

two

beds divide.

The proud OSYRIS flies his angry fair,

Two

houses hold the fashionable pair.

With strange deformity PLANTAGO treads,
A Monster-birth! and lifts his hundred heads;

Yet with soft love a gentle belle he charms,

And clasps the beauty in his hundred arms.

So hapless DESDEMONA, fair and young,

Won by OTHELLO'S captivating tongue,

Sigh'd o'er each strange and piteous tale, distress'd,

And sunk enamour'd on his sooty breast.

Two

gentle shepherds and their sister-wives

With thee, ANTHOXA! lead ambrosial lives;

Where the wide heath in purple pride extends,

And scatter'd furze its golden lustre blends,

Closed in a green recess, unenvy'd lot!

The blue smoak rises from their turf-built cot;

Bosom'd in fragrance blush their infant train,

Eye the warm sun, or drink the silver rain.

The fair OSMUNDA seeks the silent dell,

The ivy canopy, and dripping cell;

There hid in shades

clandestine
rites approves,
Till the green progeny betrays her loves.
With charms despotic fair CHONDRILLA reigns
O'er the soft hearts of
five
fraternal swains;
If sighs the changeful nymph, alike they mourn;
And, if she smiles, with rival raptures burn.
So, tun'd in unison, Eolian Lyre!
Sounds in sweet symphony thy kindred wire;
Now, gently swept by Zephyr's vernal wings,
Sink in soft cadences the love-sick strings;
And now with mingling chords, and voices higher,
Peal the full anthems of the aerial choir.

Five

sister-nymphs to join Diana's train
With thee, fair LYCHNIS! vow,-but vow in vain;
Beneath one roof resides the virgin band,
Flies the fond swain, and scorns his offer'd hand;
But when soft hours on breezy pinions move,
And smiling May attunes her lute to love,
Each wanton beauty, trick'd in all her grace,
Shakes the bright dew-drops from her blushing face;
In gay undress displays her rival charms,
And calls her wondering lovers to her arms.
When the young Hours amid her tangled hair
Wove the fresh rose-bud, and the lily fair,
Proud GLORIOSA led
three
chosen swains,
The blushing captives of her virgin chains.-
-When Time's rude hand a bark of wrinkles spread
Round her weak limbs, and silver'd o'er her head,

Three

other youths her riper years engage,
The flatter'd victims of her wily age.
So, in her wane of beauty, NINON won
With fatal smiles her gay unconscious son.-
Clasp'd in his arms she own'd a mother's name,-

'Desist, rash youth! restrain your impious flame,
'First on that bed your infant-form was press'd,
'Born by my throes, and nurtured at my breast.'-
Back as from death he sprung, with wild amaze
Fierce on the fair he fix'd his ardent gaze;
Dropp'd on one knee, his frantic arms outspread,
And stole a guilty glance toward the bed;
Then breath'd from quivering lips a whisper'd vow,
And bent on heaven his pale repentant brow;
'Thus, thus!' he cried, and plung'd the furious dart,
And life and love gush'd mingled from his heart.
The fell SILENE and her sisters fair,
Skill'd in destruction, spread the viscous snare.

The harlot-band

ten

lofty bravoes screen,
And frowning guard the magic nets unseen.-
Haste, glittering nations, tenants of the air,
Oh, steer from hence your viewless course afar!
If with soft words, sweet blushes, nods, and smiles,

The

three

dread Syrens lure you to their toils,
Limed by their art in vain you point your stings,
In vain the efforts of your whirring wings!-
Go, seek your gilded mates and infant hives,
Nor taste the honey purchas'd with your lives!
When heaven's high vault condensing clouds deform,
Fair AMARYLLIS flies the incumbent storm,
Seeks with unsteady step the shelter'd vale,
And turns her blushing beauties from the gale.-

Six

rival youths, with soft concern impress'd,
Calm all her fears, and charm her cares to rest.-
So shines at eve the sun-illumin'd fane,
Lifts its bright cross, and waves its golden vane;
From every breeze the polish'd axle turns,
And high in air the dancing meteor burns.

Four

of the giant brood with ILEX stand,

Each grasps a thousand arrows in his hand;
A thousand steely points on every scale
Form the bright terrors of his bristly male.-
So arm'd, immortal Moore uncharm'd the spell,
And slew the wily dragon of the well.-
Sudden with rage their
injur'd
bosoms burn,
Retort the insult, or the wound return;

Unwrong'd
, as gentle as the breeze that sweeps
The unbending harvests or undimpled deeps,
They guard, the Kings of Needwood's wide domains,
Their sister-wives and fair infantine trains;
Lead the lone pilgrim through the trackless glade,
Or guide in leafy wilds the wand'ring maid.
So WRIGHT's bold pencil from Vesuvio's hight
Hurls his red lavas to the troubled night;
From Calpè starts the intolerable flash,
Skies burst in flames, and blazing oceans dash;-
Or bids in sweet repose his shades recede,
Winds the still vale, and slopes the velvet mead;
On the pale stream expiring Zephyrs sink,
And Moonlight sleeps upon its hoary brink.
Gigantic Nymph! the fair KLEINHOVIA reigns,
The grace and terror of Orixia's plains;
O'er her warm cheek the blush of beauty swims,
And nerves Herculean bend her sinewy limbs;
With frolic eye she views the affrighted throng,
And shakes the meadows, as she towers along,
With playful violence displays her charms,
And bears her trembling lovers in her arms.
So fair THALESTRIS shook her plumy crest,
And bound in rigid mail her jutting breast;
Poised her long lance amid the walks of war,
And Beauty thunder'd from Bellona's car;
Greece arm'd in vain, her captive heroes wove
The chains of conquest with the wreaths of love.
When o'er the cultured lawns and dreary wastes
Retiring Autumn flings her howling blasts,
Bends in tumultuous waves the struggling woods,

And showers their leafy honours on the floods,
In withering heaps collects the flowery spoil,
And each chill insect sinks beneath the soil;
Quick flies fair TULIPA the loud alarms,
And folds her infant closer in her arms;
In some lone cave, secure pavilion, lies,
And waits the courtship of serener skies.-
So, six cold moons, the Dormouse charm'd to rest,
Indulgent Sleep! beneath thy eider breast,
In fields of Fancy climbs the kernel'd groves,
Or shares the golden harvest with his loves.-
But bright from earth amid the troubled air
Ascends fair COLCHICA with radiant hair,
Warms the cold bosom of the hoary year,
And lights with Beauty's blaze the dusky sphere.

Three

blushing Maids the intrepid Nymph attend,
And
six
gay Youths, enamour'd train! defend.
So shines with silver guards the Georgian star,
And drives on Night's blue arch his glittering car;
Hangs o'er the billowy clouds his lucid form,
Wades through the mist, and dances in the storm.
GREAT HELIANTHUS guides o'er twilight plains
In gay solemnity his Dervise-trains;
Marshall'd in
fives
each gaudy band proceeds,
Each gaudy band a plumed Lady leads;
With zealous step he climbs the upland lawn,
And bows in homage to the rising dawn;
Imbibes with eagle-eye the golden ray,
And watches, as it moves, the orb of day.
Queen of the marsh, imperial DROSEREA treads
Rush-fringed banks, and moss-embroider'd beds;
Redundant folds of glossy silk surround
Her slender waist, and trail upon the ground;

Five

sister-nymphs collect with graceful ease,

Or spread the floating purple to the breeze;
And
five
fair youths with duteous love comply
With each soft mandate of her moving eye.
As with sweet grace her snowy neck she bows,
A zone of diamonds trembles round her brows;
Bright shines the silver halo, as she turns;
And, as she steps, the living lustre burns.
Fair LONICERA prints the dewy lawn,
And decks with brighter blush the vermil dawn;
Winds round the shadowy rocks, and pansied vales,
And scents with sweeter breath the summer-gales;
With artless grace and native ease she charms,
And bears the Horn of Plenty in her arms.

Five
rival Swains their tender cares unfold,
And watch with eye askance the treasured gold.
Where rears huge Tenerif his azure crest,
Aspiring DRABA builds her eagle nest;
Her pendant eery icy caves surround,
Where erst Volcanos min'd the rocky ground.
Pleased round the Fair

four
rival Lords ascend
The shaggy steeps,
two
menial youths attend.
High in the setting ray the beauty stands,
And her tall shadow waves on distant lands.
Stay, bright inhabitant of air, alight,
Ambitious VISCA, from thy eagle-flight!-
--Scorning the sordid soil, aloft she springs,
Shakes her white plume, and claps her golden wings;
High o'er the fields of boundless ether roves,
And seeks amid the clouds her soaring loves!
Stretch'd on her mossy couch, in trackless deeps,
Queen of the coral groves, ZOSTERA sleeps;
The silvery sea-weed matted round her bed,
And distant surges murmuring o'er her head.-
High in the flood her azure dome ascends,

The crystal arch on crystal columns bends;
Roof'd with translucent shell the turrets blaze,
And far in ocean dart their colour'd rays;
O'er the white floor successive shadows move,
As rise and break the ruffled waves above.-
Around the nymph her mermaid-trains repair,
And weave with orient pearl her radiant hair;
With rapid fins she cleaves the watery way,
Shoots like a diver meteor up to day;
Sounds a loud conch, convokes a scaly band,
Her sea-born lovers, and ascends the strand.
E'en round the pole the flames of Love aspire,
And icy bosoms feel the
secret
fire!-

Cradled in snow and fann'd by arctic air
Shines, gentle BAROMETZ! thy golden hair;
Rooted in earth each cloven hoof descends,
And round and round her flexile neck she bends;
Crops the grey coral moss, and hoary thyme,
Or laps with rosy tongue the melting rime;
Eyes with mute tenderness her distant dam,
Or seems to bleat, a
Vegetable Lamb

.
-So, warm and buoyant in his oily mail,
Gambols on seas of ice the unwieldy Whale;
Wide-waving fins round floating islands urge
His bulk gigantic through the troubled surge;
With hideous yawn the flying shoals He seeks,
Or clasps with fringe of horn his massy cheeks;
Lifts o'er the tossing wave his nostrils bare,
And spouts pellucid columns into air;
The silvery arches catch the setting beams,
And transient rainbows tremble o'er the streams.
Weak with nice sense, the chaste MIMOSA stands,
From each rude touch withdraws her timid hands;
Oft as light clouds o'er-pass the Summer-glade,
Alarm'd she trembles at the moving shade;
And feels, alive through all her tender form,
The whisper'd murmurs of the gathering storm;
Shuts her sweet eye-lids to approaching night;

And hails with freshen'd charms the rising light.
Veil'd, with gay decency and modest pride,
Slow to the mosque she moves, an eastern bride;
There her soft vows unceasing love record,
Queen of the bright seraglio of her Lord.-
So sinks or rises with the changeful hour
The liquid silver in its glassy tower.
So turns the needle to the pole it loves,
With fine librations quivering as it moves.
All wan and shivering in the leafless glade
The sad ANEMONE reclined her head;
Grief on her cheeks had paled the roseate hue,
And her sweet eye-lids dropp'd with pearly dew.
-'See, from bright regions, borne on odorous gales
The Swallow, herald of the summer, sails;
'Breathe, gentle AIR! from cherub-lips impart
Thy balmy influence to my anguish'd heart;
Thou, whose soft voice calls forth the tender blooms,
Whose pencil paints them, and whose breath perfumes;
O chase the Fiend of Frost, with leaden mace
Who seals in death-like sleep my hapless race;
Melt his hard heart, release his iron hand,
And give my ivory petals to expand.
So may each bud, that decks the brow of spring,
Shed all its incense on thy wafting wing!'-
To her fond prayer propitious Zephyr yields,
Sweeps on his sliding shell through azure fields,
O'er her fair mansion waves his whispering wand,
And gives her ivory petals to expand;
Gives with new life her filial train to rise,
And hail with kindling smiles the genial skies.
So shines the Nymph in beauty's blushing pride,
When Zephyr wafts her deep calash aside;
Tears with rude kiss her bosom's gauzy veil,
And flings the fluttering kerchief to the gale.
So bright, the folding canopy undrawn,
Glides the gilt Landau o'er the velvet lawn,
Of beaux and belles displays the glittering throng;
And soft airs fan them, as they roll along.
Where frowning Snowden bends his dizzy brow
O'er Conway, listening to the surge below;
Retiring LICHEN climbs the topmost stone,

And 'mid the airy ocean dwells alone.-
Bright shine the stars unnumber'd
o'er her head

,
And the cold moon-beam gilds her flinty bed;
While round the rifted rocks hoarse whirlwinds breathe,
And dark with thunder sail the clouds
beneath

.-
The steepy path her plighted swain pursues,
And tracks her light step o'er th' imprinted dews,
Delighted Hymen gives his torch to blaze,
Winds round the craggs, and lights the mazy ways;
Sheds o'er their
secret
vows his influence chaste,
And decks with roses the admiring waste.
High in the front of heaven when Sirius glares,
And o'er Britannia shakes his fiery hairs;
When no soft shower descends, no dew distills,
Her wave-worn channels dry, and mute her rills;
When droops the sickening herb, the blossom fades,
And parch'd earth gapes beneath the withering glades.
-With languid step fair DYPSCA retreats;
'Fall gentle dews!' the fainting nymph repeats;
Seeks the low dell, and in the sultry shade
Invokes in vain the Naiads to her aid.-

Four
silvan youths in crystal goblets bear
The untasted treasure to the grateful fair;
Pleased from their hands with modest grace she sips,
And the cool wave reflects her coral lips.
With nice selection modest RUBIA blends,
Her vermil dyes, and o'er the cauldron bends;
Warm 'mid the rising steam the Beauty glows,
As blushes in a mist the dewy rose.
With chemic art
four
favour'd youths aloof
Stain the white fleece, or stretch the tinted woof;
O'er Age's cheek the warmth of youth diffuse,

Or deck the pale-eyed nymph in roseate hues.
So when MEDEA to exulting Greece
From plunder'd COLCHIS bore the golden fleece;
On the loud shore a magic pile she rais'd,
The cauldron bubbled, and the faggots blaz'd;--
Pleased on the boiling wave old ÆSON swims,
And feels new vigour stretch his swelling limbs;
Through his thrill'd nerves forgotten ardors dart,
And warmer eddies circle round his heart;
With softer fires his kindling eye-balls glow,
And darker tresses wanton round his brow.
As dash the waves on India's breezy strand,
Her flush'd cheek press'd upon her lily hand,
VALLISNER sits, up-turns her tearful eyes,
Calls her lost lover, and upbraids the skies;
For him she breathes the silent sigh, forlorn,
Each setting-day; for him each rising morn.-
'Bright orbs, that light yon high ethereal plain,
Or bathe your radiant tresses in the main;
Pale moon, that silver'st o'er night's sable brow;-
For ye were witness to his parting vow!-
Ye shelving rocks, dark waves, and sounding shore,-
Ye echoed sweet the tender words he swore!-
Can stars or seas the sails of love retain?
O guide my wanderer to my arms again!'-
Her buoyant skiff intrepid ULVA guides,
And seeks her Lord amid the trackless tides;
Her
secret
vows the Cyprian Queen approves,
And hovering halcyons guard her infant-loves;
Each in his floating cradle round they throng,
And dimpling Ocean bears the fleet along.-
Thus o'er the waves, which gently bend and swell,
Fair GALATEA steers her silver shell;
Her playful Dolphins stretch the silken rein,
Hear her sweet voice, and glide along the main.
As round the wild meandering coast she moves
By gushing rills, rude cliffs, and nodding groves;
Each by her pine the Wood-nymphs wave their locks,
And wondering Naiads peep amid the rocks;
Pleased trains of Mermaids rise from coral cells,

Admiring Tritons sound their twisted shells;
Charm'd o'er the car pursuing Cupids sweep,
Their snow-white pinions twinkling in the deep;
And, as the lustre of her eye she turns,
Soft sighs the Gale, and amorous Ocean burns.
On DOVE'S green brink the fair TREMELLA stood,
And view'd her playful image in the flood;
To each rude rock, lone dell, and echoing grove
Sung the sweet sorrows of her
secret
love.

'Oh, stay!-return!'-along the sounding shore
Cry'd the sad Naiads,-she return'd no more!-
Now girt with clouds the sullen Evening frown'd,
And withering Eurus swept along the ground;
The misty moon withdrew her horned light,
And sunk with Hesper in the skirt of night;
No dim electric streams, (the northern dawn,)
With meek effulgence quiver'd o'er the lawn;
No star benignant shot one transient ray
To guide or light the wanderer on her way.
Round the dark craggs the murmuring whirlwinds blow,
Woods groan above, and waters roar below;
As o'er the steeps with pausing foot she moves,
The pitying Dryads shriek amid their groves;
She flies,-she stops,-she pants-she looks behind,
And hears a demon howl in every wind.
-As the bleak blast unfurls her fluttering vest,
Cold beats the snow upon her shuddering breast;
Through her numb'd limbs the chill sensations dart,
And the keen ice bolt trembles at her heart.
'I sink, I fall! oh, help me, help!' she cries,
Her stiffening tongue the unfinish'd sound denies;
Tear after tear adown her cheek succeeds,
And pearls of ice bestrew the glittering meads;
Congealing snows her lingering feet surround,
Arrest her flight, and root her to the ground;
With suppliant arms she pours the silent prayer;
Her suppliant arms hang crystal in the air;
Pellucid films her shivering neck o'erspread,
Seal her mute lips, and silver o'er her head,
Veil her pale bosom, glaze her lifted hands,

And shrined in ice the beauteous statue stands.
-DOVE'S azure nymphs on each revolving year
For fair TREMELLA shed the tender tear;
With rush-wove crowns in sad procession move,
And sound the sorrowing shell to hapless love.'
Here paused the MUSE,-across the darken'd pole
Sail the dim clouds, the echoing thunders roll;
The trembling Wood-nymphs, as the tempest lowers,
Lead the gay Goddess to their inmost bowers;
Hang the mute lyre the laurel shade beneath,
And round her temples bind the myrtle wreath.
-Now the light swallow with her airy brood
Skims the green meadow, and the dimpled flood;
Loud shrieks the lone thrush from his leafless thorn,
Th' alarmed beetle sounds his bugle horn;
Each pendant spider winds with fingers fine
His ravel'd clue, and climbs along the line;
Gay Gnomes in glittering circles stand aloof
Beneath a spreading mushroom's fretted roof;
Swift bees returning seek their waxen cells,
And Sylphs cling quivering in the lily's bells.
Through the still air descend the genials showers,
And pearly rain-drops deck the laughing flowers.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden (Part Vi)

THE LOVES OF THE PLANTS.

CANTO II.

Again the Goddess strikes the golden lyre,
And tunes to wilder notes the warbling wire;
With soft suspended step Attention moves,
And Silence hovers o'er the listening groves;
Orb within orb the charmed audience throng,
And the green vault reverberates the song.
'Breathe soft, ye Gales!' the fair CARLINA cries,
Bear on broad wings your Votress to the skies.
How sweetly mutable yon orient hues,
As Morn's fair hand her opening roses strews;
How bright, when Iris blending many a ray
Binds in embroider'd wreath the brow of Day;
Soft, when the pendant Moon with lustres pale
O'er heaven's blue arch unfurls her milky veil;
While from the north long threads of silver light
Dart on swift shuttles o'er the tissued night!
'Breathe soft, ye Zephyrs! hear my fervent sighs,
Bear on broad wings your Votress to the skies!'-
-Plume over plume in long divergent lines
On whale-bone ribs the fair Mechanic joins;
Inlays with eider down the silken strings,
And weaves in wide expanse Dædalian wings;
Round her bold sons the waving pennons binds,
And walks with angel-step upon the winds.
So on the shoreless air the intrepid Gaul
Launch'd the vast concave of his buoyant ball.-
Journeying on high, the silken castle glides
Bright as a meteor through the azure tides;
O'er towns and towers and temples wins its way,
Or mounts sublime, and gilds the vault of day.
Silent with upturn'd eyes unbreathing crowds
Pursue the floating wonder to the clouds;
And, flush'd with transport or benumb'd with fear,
Watch, as it rises, the diminish'd sphere.
-Now less and less!-and now a speck is seen!-

And now the fleeting rack obtrudes between!-
 With bended knees, raised arms, and suppliant brow
 To every shrine with mingled cries they vow.-
 'Save Him, ye Saints! who o'er the good preside;
 'Bear Him, ye Winds! ye Stars benignant! guide.'
 -The calm Philosopher in ether fails,
 Views broader stars, and breathes in purer gales;
 Sees, like a map, in many a waving line
 Round Earth's blue plains her lucid waters mine;
 Sees at his feet the forky lightnings glow,
 And hears innocuous thunders roar below.
 --Rife, great MONGOLFIER! urge thy venturous flight
 High o'er the Moon's pale ice-reflected light;
 High o'er the pearly Star, whose beamy horn.
 Hangs in the east, gay harbinger of morn;
 Leave the red eye of Mars on rapid wing;
 Jove's silver guards, and Saturn's dusky ring;
 Leave the fair beams, which, issuing from afar;
 Play with new lustres round the Georgian star;
 Shun with strong oars the Sun's attractive throne,
 The sparkling zodiack, and the milky zone;
 Where headlong Comets with increasing force
 Through other systems bend their blazing course.-
 For thee Cassiope her chair withdraws,
 For thee the Bear retracts his shaggy paws;
 High o'er the North thy golden orb shall roll,
 And blaze eternal round the wondering pole.
 So Argo, rising from the southern main,
 Lights with new stars the blue ethereal plain;
 With favoring beams the mariner protects,
 And the bold course, which first it steer'd, directs.
 Inventress of the Woof, fair LINA flings
 The flying shuttle through the dancing strings;
 Inlays the broider'd weft with flowery dyes,
 Quick beat the reeds, the pedals fall and rise;
 Slow from the beam the lengths of warp unwind,
 And dance and nod the massy weights behind.-
 Taught by her labours, from the fertile soil
 Immortal Isis clothed the banks of Nile;
 And fair ARACHNE with her rival loom
 Found undeserved a melancholy doom.-

Five

Sister-nymphs with dewy fingers twine
The beamy flax, and stretch the fibre-line;
Quick eddying threads from rapid spindles reel,
Or whirl with beaten foot the dizzy wheel.

-Charm'd round the busy Fair

five

shepherds press,

Praise the nice texture of their snowy dress,

Admire the Artists, and the art approve,

And tell with honey'd words the tale of love.

So now, where Derwent rolls his dusky floods

Through vaulted mountains, and a night of woods,

The Nymph, GOSSYPPIA, treads the velvet sod,

And warms with rosy smiles the watery God;

His ponderous oars to slender spindles turns,

And pours o'er massy wheels his foamy urns;

With playful charms her hoary lover wins,

And wields his trident,-while the Monarch spins.

-First with nice eye emerging Naiads cull

From leathery pods the vegetable wool;

With wiry teeth

revolving cards

release

The tangled knots, and smooth the ravell'd fleece;

Next moves the

iron-band

with fingers fine,

Combs the wide card, and forms the eternal line;

Slow, with soft lips, the

whirling Can

acquires

The tender skeins, and wraps in rising spires;

With quicken'd pace

successive rollers

move,

And these retain, and those extend the

rove

;

Then fly the spoles, the rapid axles glow;-

And slowly circumvolves the labouring wheel below.

PAPYRA, throned upon the banks of Nile,

Spread her smooth leaf, and waved her silver style.

-The storied pyramid, the laurel'd bust,
The trophy'd arch had crumbled into dust;
The sacred symbol, and the epic song,
(Unknown the character, forgot the tongue,)
With each unconquer'd chief, or fainted maid,
Sunk undistinguish'd in Oblivion's shade.
Sad o'er the scatter'd ruins Genius sigh'd,
And infant Arts but learn'd to lisp and died.
Till to astonish'd realms POPYRA taught
To paint in mystic colours Sound and Thought.
With Wisdom's voice to print the page sublime,
And mark in adamant the steps of Time.
-Three favour'd youths her soft attention share,
The fond disciples of the studious Fair,
Hear her sweet voice, the golden process prove;
Gaze, as they learn; and, as they listen, love.

The first

from Alpha to Omega joins

The letter'd tribes along the level lines;
Weighs with nice ear the vowel, liquid, surd,
And breaks in syllables the volant word.

Then forms

the next

upon the marshal'd plain

In deepening ranks his dexterous cypher-train;
And counts, as wheel the decimating bands,
The dews of Ægypt, or Arabia's sands,

And then

the third

on four concordant lines

Prints the lone crotchet, and the quaver joins;
Marks the gay trill, the solemn pause inscribes,
And parts with bars the undulating tribes.

Pleased round her cane-wove throne, the applauding crowd
Clap'd their rude hands, their swarthy foreheads bow'd;

With loud acclaim 'a present God!' they cry'd,

'A present God!' rebelling shores reply'd-

Then peal'd at intervals with mingled swell

The echoing harp, shrill clarion, horn, and shell;

While Bards ecstatic, bending o'er the lyre,

Struck deeper chords, and wing'd the song with fire.
 Then mark'd Astronomers with keener eyes
 The Moon's refulgent journey through the skies;
 Watch'd the swift Comets urge their blazing cars,
 And weigh'd the Sun with his revolving Stars.
 High raised the Chemists their Hermetic wands,
 (And changing forms obey'd their waving hands,)

Her treasur'd gold from Earth's deep chambers tore,
 Or fused and harden'd her chalybeate ore.
 All with bent knee from fair POPYRA claim
 Wove by her hands the wreath of deathless fame.
 -Exulting Genius crown'd his darling child,
 The young Arts clasp'd her knees, and Virtue smiled.
 So now DELANY forms her mimic bowers,
 Her paper foliage, and her silken flowers;
 Her virgin train the tender scissors ply,
 Vein the green leaf, the purple petal dye:
 Round wiry stems the flaxen tendril bends,
 Moss creeps below, and waxen fruit impends.
 Cold Winter views amid his realms of snow
 DELANY'S vegetable statues blow;
 Smooths his stern brow, delays his hoary wing,
 And eyes with wonder all the blooms of spring.
 The gentle LAPSANA, NYMPHÆA fair,
 And bright CALENDULA with golden hair,
 Watch with nice eye the Earth's diurnal way,
 Marking her solar and sidereal day,
 Her slow nutation, and her varying clime,
 And trace with mimic art the march of Time;
 Round his light foot a magic chain they fling,
 And count the quick vibrations of his wing.-
 First in its brazen cell reluctant roll'd
 Bends the dark spring in many a steely fold;
 On spiral brass is stretch'd the wiry thong,
 Tooth urges tooth, and wheel drives wheel along;
 In diamond-eyes the polish'd axles flow,
 Smooth slides the hand, the ballance pants below.
 Round the white circlet in relievo bold
 A Serpent twines his scaly length in gold;
 And brightly pencil'd on the enamel'd sphere
 Live the fair trophies of the passing year.
 -Here

Time's

huge fingers grasp his giant-mace,
And dash proud Superstition from her base,
Rend her strong towers and gorgeous fanes, and shed
The crumbling fragments round her guilty head.

There the gay

Hours

, whom wreaths of roses deck,
Lead their young trains amid the cumberous wreck;
And, slowly purpling o'er the mighty waste,
Plant the fair growths of Science and of Taste.

While each light

Moment

, as it dances by

With feathery foot and pleasure-twinkling eye,
Feeds from its baby-hand, with many a kiss,
The callow nestlings of domestic Bliss.

As yon gay clouds, which canopy the skies,
Change their thin forms, and lose their lucid dyes;
So the soft bloom of Beauty's vernal charms
Fades in our eyes, and withers in our arms.

-Bright as the silvery plume, or pearly shell,
The snow-white rose, or lily's virgin bell,
The fair HELLEBORAS attractive shone,
Warm'd every Sage, and every Shepherd won.-

Round the gay sisters press the
enamour'd bands

,

And seek with soft solicitude their hands.

-Ere while how chang'd!-in dim suffusion lies
The glance divine, that lighten'd in their eyes;
Cold are those lips, where smiles seductive hung,
And the weak accents linger on their tongue;
Each roseate feature fades to livid green,-
-Disgust with face averted shuts the scene.

So from his gorgeous throne, which awed the world,
The mighty Monarch of the east was hurl'd,
To dwell with brutes beneath the midnight storm,
By Heaven's just vengeance changed in mind and form.

-Prone to the earth He bends his brow superb,
Crops the young floret and the bladed herb;
Lolls his red tongue, and from the reedy side

Of slow Euphrates laps the muddy tide.
Long eagle-plumes his arching neck invest,
Steal round his arms, and clasp his sharpen'd breast;
Dark brinded hairs in bristling ranks, behind,
Rise o'er his back, and rustle in the wind,
Clothe his lank sides, his shrivel'd limbs surround,
And human hands with talons print the ground.
Silent in shining troops the Courtier-throng
Pursue their monarch as he crawls along;
E'en Beauty pleads in vain with smiles and tears,
Nor Flattery's self can pierce his pendant ears.

Two

Sister-Nymphs to Ganges' flowery brink
Bend their light steps, the lucid water drink,
Wind through the dewy rice, and nodding canes,
(As
eight
black Eunuchs guard the sacred plains),
With playful malice watch the scaly brood,
And shower the inebriate berries on the flood.-
Stay in your crystal chambers, silver tribes!
Turn your bright eyes, and shun the dangerous bribes;
The trammel'd net with less destruction sweeps
Your curling shallows, and your azure deeps;
With less deceit, the gilded fly beneath,
Lurks the fell hook unseen,-to taste is death!-
-Dim your slow eyes, and dull your pearly coat,
Drunk on the waves your languid forms shall float,
On useless fins in giddy circles play,
And Herons and Otters seize you for their prey.-
So, when the Saint from Padua's graceless land
In silent anguish sought the barren strand,
High on the shatter'd beech sublime He stood,
Still'd with his waving arm the babbling flood;
'To Man's dull ear,' He cry'd, 'I call in vain,
'Hear me, ye scaly tenants of the main!'-
Misshapen Seals approach in circling flocks,
In dusky mail the Tortoise climbs the rocks,
Torpedoes, Sharks, Rays, Porpus, Dolphins, pour
Their twinkling squadrons round the glittering shore;

With tangled fins, behind, huge Phocæ glide,
 And Whales and Grampi swell the distant tide.
 Then kneel'd the hoary Seer, to heaven address'd
 His fiery eyes, and smote his sounding breast;
 'Bless ye the Lord!' with thundering voice he cry'd,
 'Bless ye the Lord!' the bending shores reply'd;
 The winds and waters caught the sacred word,
 And mingling echoes shouted 'Bless the Lord!'

The listening shoals the quick contagion feel,
 Pant on the floods, inebriate with their zeal,
 Ope their wide jaws, and bow their slimy heads,
 And dash with frantic fins their foamy beds.
 Sopha'd on silk, amid her charm-built towers,
 Her meads of asphodel, and amaranth bowers,
 Where Sleep and Silence guard the soft abodes,
 In sullen apathy PAPAVER nods.

Faint o'er her couch in scintillating streams
 Pass the thin forms of Fancy and of Dreams;
 Froze by enchantment on the velvet ground
 Fair youths and beauteous ladies glitter round;
 On crystal pedestals they seem to sigh,
 Bend the meek knee, and lift the imploring eye.

-And now the Sorceress bares her shrivel'd hand,
 And circles thrice in air her ebon wand;
 Flush'd with new life descending statues talk,
 The pliant marble softening as they walk;
 With deeper sobs reviving lovers breathe,
 Fair bosoms rise, and soft hearts pant beneath;
 With warmer lips relenting damsels speak,
 And kindling blushes tinge the Parian cheek;
 To viewless lutes aërial voices sing,
 And hovering Loves are heard on rustling wing.

-She waves her wand again!-fresh horrors seize
 Their stiffening limbs, their vital currents freeze;
 By each cold nymph her marble lover lies,
 And iron slumbers seal their glassy eyes.
 So with his dread Caduceus HERMES led
 From the dark regions of the imprison'd dead,
 Or drove in silent shoals the lingering train
 To Night's dull shore, and PLUTO'S dreary reign
 So with her waving pencil CREWE commands
 The realms of Taste, and Fancy's fairy lands;

Calls up with magic voice the shapes, that sleep
In earth's dark bosom, or unfathom'd deep;
That shrined in air on viewless wings aspire,
Or blazing bathe in elemental fire.
As with nice touch her plaistic hand she moves,
Rise the fine forms of Beauties, Graces, Loves;
Kneel to the fair Inchantress, smile or sigh,
And fade or flourish, as she turns her eye.
Fair CISTA, rival of the rosy dawn,
Call'd her light choir, and trod the dewy lawn;
Hail'd with rude melody the new-born May,
As cradled yet in April's lap she lay.

I.

'Born in yon blaze of orient sky,
'Sweet MAY! thy radiant form unfold;
'Unclose thy blue voluptuous eye,
'And wave thy shadowy locks of gold.

II.

'For Thee the fragrant zephyrs blow,
'For Thee descends the sunny shower;
'The rills in softer murmurs slow,
'And brighter blossoms gem the bower.

III.

'Light Graces dress'd in flowery wreaths
'And tiptoe Joys their hands combine;
'And Love his sweet contagion breathes,
'And laughing dances round thy shrine.

IV.

'Warm with new life the glittering throngs
'On quivering fin and rustling wing
'Delighted join their votive songs,
'And hail thee, GODDESS OF THE SPRING.'

O'er the green brinks of Severn's oozy bed,

In changeful rings, her sprightly troop She led;
PAN tripp'd before, where Eudness shades the mead,
And blew with glowing lip his sevenfold reed;
Emerging Naiads swell'd the jocund strain,
And aped with mimic step the dancing train.-

'I faint, I fall!'-

at noon

the Beauty cried,

'Weep o'er my tomb, ye Nymphs!'-and sunk and died.

-Thus, when white Winter o'er the shivering clime

Drives the still snow, or showers the silver rime;

As the lone shepherd o'er the dazzling rocks

Prints his steep step, and guides his vagrant flocks;

Views the green holly veil'd in network nice,

Her vermil clusters twinkling in the ice;

Admires the lucid vales, and slumbering floods,

Fantastic cataracts, and crystal woods,

Transparent towns, with seas of milk between,

And eyes with transport the refulgent scene:-

If breaks the sunshine o'er the spangled trees,

Or flits on tepid wing the western breeze,

In liquid dew descends the transient glare,

And all the glittering pageant melts in air.

Where Andes hides his cloud-wreath'd crest in snow,

And roots his base on burning sands below;

Cinchona, fairest of Peruvian maids

To Health's bright Goddess in the breezy glades

On Quito's temperate plain an altar rear'd,

Trill'd the loud hymn, the solemn prayer preferr'd:

Each balmy bud she cull'd, and honey'd flower,

And hung with fragrant wreaths the sacred bower;

Each pearly sea she search'd, and sparkling mine,

And piled their treasures on the gorgeous shrine;

Her suppliant voice for sickening Loxa raised,

Sweet breath'd the gale, and bright the censor blazed.

-'Divine HYGEIA! on thy votaries bend

Thy angel-looks, oh, hear us, and defend!

While streaming o'er the night with baleful glare

The star of Autumn rays his misty hair;

Fierce from his fens the Giant AGUE springs,

And wrapp'd in fogs descends on vampire wings;

'Before, with shuddering limbs cold Tremor reels,

And Fever's burning nostril dogs his heels;
Loud claps the grinning Fiend his iron hands,
Stamps with his marble feet, and shouts along the lands;
Withers the damask cheek, unnerves the strong,
And drives with scorpion-lash the shrieking throng.
Oh, Goddess! on thy kneeling votaries bend
Thy angel-looks, oh, hear us, and defend!
-HYGEIA, leaning from the blest abodes,
The crystal mansions of the immortal gods,
Saw the sad Nymph uplift her dewy eyes,
Spread her white arms, and breathe her fervid sighs;
Call'd to her fair associates, Youth, and Joy,
And shot all-radiant through the glittering sky;
Loose waved behind her golden train of hair,
Her sapphire mantle swam diffus'd in air.-
O'er the grey matted moss, and pansied sod,
With step sublime the glowing Goddess trod,
Gilt with her beamy eye the conscious shade,
And with her smile celestial bless'd the maid.
'Come to my arms,' with seraph voice she cries,
'Thy vows are heard, benignant Nymph! arise;
Where yon aspiring trunks fantastic wreath
Their mingled roots, and drink the rill beneath,
Yield to the biting axe thy sacred wood,
And strew the bitter foliage on the flood.'
In silent homage bow'd the blushing maid,-

Five

youths athletic hasten to her aid,
O'er the scar'd hills re-echoing strokes resound,
And headlong forests thunder on the ground.
Round the dark roots, rent bark, and shatter'd boughs,
From ocherous beds the swelling fountain flows;
With streams austere its winding margin laves,
And pours from vale to vale its dusky waves.
-As the pale squadrons, bending o'er the brink,
View with a sigh their alter'd forms, and drink;
Slow-ebbing life with refluent crimson breaks
O'er their wan lips, and paints their haggard cheeks;
Through each fine nerve rekindling transports dart,
Light the quick eye, and swell the exulting heart.
-Thus ISRAEL's heaven-taught chief o'er trackless lands

Led to the sultry rock his murmuring bands.
Bright o'er his brows the forky radiance blazed,
And high in air the rod divine He raised.-
Wide yawns the cliff!-amid the thirsty throng
Rush the redundant waves, and shine along;
With gourds and shells and helmets press the bands,
Ope their parch'd lips, and spread their eager hands,
Snatch their pale infants to the exuberant shower,
Kneel on the shatter'd rock, and bless the Almighty Power.
Bolster'd with down, amid a thousand wants,
Pale Dropsy rears his bloated form, and pants;
'Quench me, ye cool pellucid rills!' he cries,
Wets his parch'd tongue, and rolls his hollow eyes.
So bends tormented TANTALUS to drink,
While from his lips the refluent waters shrink;
Again the rising stream his bosom laves,
And Thirst consumes him 'mid circumfluent waves.
-Divine HYGEIA, from the bending sky
Descending, listens to his piercing cry;
Assumes bright DIGITALIS' dress and air,
Her ruby cheek, white neck, and raven hair;

Four

youths protect her from the circling throng,
And like the Nymph the Goddess steps along.-
-O'er Him She waves her serpent-wreathed wand,
Cheers with her voice, and raises with her hand,
Warms with rekindling bloom his visage wan,
And charms the shapeless monster into man.
So when Contagion with mephitic breath
And withered Famine urged the work of death;
Marseilles' good Bishop, London's generous Mayor,
With food and faith, with medicine and with prayer,
Raised the weak head and stayed the parting sigh,
Or with new life relumed the swimming eye.-
-And now, PHILANTHROPY! thy rays divine
Dart round the globe from Zembla to the Line;
O'er each dark prison plays the cheering light,
Like northern lustres o'er the vault of night.-
From realm to realm, with cross or crescent crown'd,
Where'er Mankind and Misery are found,
O'er burning sands, deep waves, or wilds of snow,

Thy HOWARD journeying seeks the house of woe.
 Down many a winding step to dungeons dank,
 Where anguish wails aloud, and fetters clank;
 To caves bestrew'd with many a mouldering bone,
 And cells, whose echoes only learn to groan;
 Where no kind bars a whispering friend disclose,
 No sunbeam enters, and no zephyr blows,
 HE treads, inemulous of fame or wealth,
 Profuse of toil, and prodigal of health;
 With soft assuasive eloquence expands
 Power's rigid heart, and opes his clenching hands;
 Leads stern-ey'd Justice to the dark domains,
 If not to fever, to relax the chains;
 Or guides awaken'd Mercy through the gloom,
 And shews the prison, sister to the tomb!-
 Gives to her babes the self-devoted wife,
 To her fond husband liberty and life!-
 -The Spirits of the Good, who bend from high
 Wide o'er these earthly scenes their partial eye,
 When first, array'd in VIRTUE'S purest robe,
 They saw her HOWARD traversing the globe;
 Saw round his brows her sun-like Glory blaze
 In arrowy circles of unwearied rays;
 Mistook a Mortal for an Angel-Guest,
 And ask'd what Seraph-foot the earth imprest.
 -Onward he moves!-Disease and Death retire,
 And murmuring Demons hate him, and admire.'
 Here paused the Goddess,-on HYGEIA'S shrine
 Obsequious Gnomes repose the lyre divine;
 Descending Sylphs relax the trembling strings,
 And catch the rain-drops on their shadowy wings.
 -And now her vase a modest Naiad fills
 With liquid crystal from her pebbly rills;
 Piles the dry cedar round her silver urn,
 (Bright climbs the blaze, the crackling faggots burn),
 Culls the green herb of China's envy'd bowers,
 In gaudy cups the steamy treasure pours;
 And, sweetly-smiling, on her bended knee
 Presents the fragrant quintessence of Tea.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden (Part VII)

THE LOVES OF THE PLANTS.

CANTO III.

And now the Goddess founds her silver shell,
And shakes with deeper tones the enchanted dell;
Pale, round her grassy throne, bedew'd with tears,
Flit the thin forms of Sorrows, and of Fears;
Soft Sighs responsive whisper to the chords,
And Indignations half-unsheath their swords.
'Thrice round the grave CIRCÆA prints her tread,
And chaunts the numbers, which disturb the dead;
Shakes o'er the holy earth her sable plume,
Waves her dread wand, and strikes the echoing tomb!
-Pale shoot the stars across the troubled night,
The timorous moon withholds her conscious light;
Shrill scream the famish'd bats, and shivering owls,
And loud and long the dog of midnight howls!-
-Then yawns the bursting ground!- two imps obscene
Rise on broad wings, and hail the baleful queen;
Each with dire grin salutes the potent wand,
And leads the sorceress with his sooty hand;
Onward they glide, where sheds the sickly yew
O'er many a mouldering bone its nightly dew;
The ponderous portals of the church unbar,-
Hoarse on their hinge the ponderous portals jar;
As through the colour'd glass the moon-beam falls,
Huge shapeless spectres quiver on the walls;
Low murmurs creep along the hollow ground,
And to each step the pealing ailes resound;
By glimmering lamps, protecting saints among,
The shrines all tremble as they pass along,
O'er the still choir with hideous laugh they move,
(Fiends yell below, and angels weep above!)
Their impious march to God's high altar bend,
With feet impure the sacred steps ascend;
With wine unblest'd the holy chalice stain,
Assume the mitre, and the cope profane;
To heaven their eyes in mock devotion throw,

And to the cross with horrid mummery bow;
Adjure by mimic rites the powers above,
And plite alternate their Satanic love.
Avaunt, ye Vulgar! from her sacred groves
With maniac step the Pythian LAURA moves;
Full of the God her labouring bosom sighs,
Foam on her lips, and fury in her eyes,
Strong writhe her limbs, her wild dishevell'd hair
Starts from her laurel-wreath, and swims in air.-
While twenty Priests the gorgeous shrine surround
Cinctur'd with ephods, and with garlands crown'd,
Contending hosts and trembling nations wait
The firm immutable behests of Fate;
-She speaks in thunder from her golden throne
With words unwill'd , and wisdom not her own.
So on his NIGHTMARE through the evening fog
Flits the squab Fiend o'er fen, and lake, and bog;
Seeks some love-wilder'd Maid with sleep oppress'd,
Alights, and grinning fits upon her breast.
-Such as of late amid the murky sky
Was mark'd by FUSELI'S poetic eye;
Whose daring tints, with SHAKESPEAR'S happiest grace,
Gave to the airy phantom form and place.-
Back o'er her pillow sinks her blushing head,
Her snow-white limbs hang helpless from the bed;
While with quick sighs, and suffocative breath,
Her interrupted heart-pulse swims in death.
-Then shrieks of captured towns, and widows' tears,
Pale lovers stretch'd upon their blood-stain'd biers,
The headlong precipice that thwarts her flight,
The trackless desert, the cold starless night,
And stern-eye'd Murder with his knife behind,
In dread succession agonize her mind.
O'er her fair limbs convulsive tremors fleet,
Start in her hands, and struggle in her feet;
In vain to scream with quivering lips she tries,
And strains in palsy'd lids her tremulous eyes;
In vain she wills to run, fly, swim, walk, creep;
The WILL presides not in the bower of SLEEP.
-On her fair bosom sits the Demon-Ape
Erect, and balances his bloated shape;
Rolls in their marble orbs his Gorgon-eyes,

And drinks with leathern ears her tender cries.
 Arm'd with her ivory beak, and talon-hands,
 Descending FICA dives into the sands;
 Chamber'd in earth with cold oblivion lies;
 Nor heeds, ye Suitor-train , your amorous sighs;
 Erewhile with renovated beauty blooms,
 Mounts into air, and moves her leafy plumes.
 -Where HAMPS and MANIFOLD, their cliffs among,
 Each in his flinty channel winds along;
 With lucid lines the dusky Moor divides,
 Hurrying to intermix their sister tides.
 Where still their silver-bosom'd Nymphs abhor,
 The blood-smear'd mansion of gigantic THOR,-
 -Erst, fires volcanic in the marble womb
 Of cloud-wrapp'd WETTON raised the massy dome;
 Rocks rear'd on rocks in huge disjointed piles
 Form the tall turrets, and the lengthen'd ailes;
 Broad ponderous piers sustain the roof, and wide
 Branch the vast rain-bow ribs from side to side.
 While from above descends in milky streams
 One scanty pencil of illusive beams,
 Suspended crags and gaping gulphs illumes,
 And gilds the horrors of the deepen'd glooms.
 -Here oft the Naiads, as they chanced to play
 Near the dread Fane on THOR'S returning day,
 Saw from red altars streams of guiltless blood
 Stain their green reed-beds, and pollute their flood;
 Heard dying babes in wicker prisons wail,
 And shrieks of matrons thrill the affrighted Gale;
 While from dark caves infernal Echoes mock,
 And Fiends triumphant shout from every rock!
 --So still the Nymphs emerging lift in air
 Their snow-white shoulders and their azure hair;
 Sail with sweet grace the dimpling streams along,
 Listening the Shepherd's or the Miner's song;
 But, when afar they view the giant-cave,
 On timorous fins they circle on the wave,
 With streaming eyes and throbbing hearts recoil,
 Plunge their fair forms, and dive beneath the soil.-
 Closed round their heads reluctant eddies sink,
 And wider rings successive dash the brink.-
 Three thousand steps in sparry clefts they stray,

Or seek through sullen mines their gloomy way;
 On beds of Lava sleep in coral cells,
 Or sigh o'er jasper fish, and agate shells.
 Till, where famed ILAM leads his boiling floods
 Through flowery meadows and impending woods,
 Pleased with light spring they leave the dreary night,
 And 'mid circumfluent surges rise to light;
 Shake their bright locks, the widening vale pursue,
 Their sea-green mantles fringed with pearly dew;
 In playful groups by towering THORP they move,
 Bound o'er the foaming wears, and rush into the Dove.
 With fierce distracted eye IMPATIENS stands,
 Swells her pale cheeks, and brandishes her hands,
 With rage and hate the astonish'd groves alarms,
 And hurls her infants from her frantic arms.
 -So when MEDÆA left her native soil
 Unaw'd by danger, unsubdued by toil;
 Her weeping sire and beckoning friends withstood,
 And launch'd enamour'd on the boiling flood;
 One ruddy boy her gentle lips caress'd,
 And one fair girl was pillow'd on her breast;
 While high in air the golden treasure burns,
 And Love and Glory guide the prow by turns.
 But, when Thessalia's inauspicious plain
 Received the matron-heroine from the main;
 While horns of triumph sound, and altars burn,
 And shouting nations hail their Chief's return:
 Aghaft, She saw new-deck'd the nuptial bed,
 And proud CREUSA to the temple led;
 Saw her in JASON'S mercenary arms
 Deride her virtues, and insult her charms;
 Saw her dear babes from fame and empire torn,
 In foreign realms deserted and forlorn;
 Her love rejected, and her vengeance braved,
 By Him her beauties won, her virtues saved.-
 With stern regard she eyed the traitor-king,
 And felt, Ingratitude! thy keenest sting;
 'Nor Heaven,' She cried, 'nor Earth, nor Hell can hold
 'A Heart abandon'd to the thirst of Gold!'
 Stamp'd with wild foot, and shook her horrent brow,
 And call'd the furies from their dens below.
 -Slow out of earth, before the festive crowds,

On wheels of fire, amid a night of clouds,
Drawn by fierce fiends arose a magic car,
Received the Queen, and hovering flamed in air.-
As with raised hands the suppliant traitors kneel
And fear the vengeance they deserve to feel,
Thrice with parch'd lips her guiltless babes she press'd,
And thrice she clasp'd them to her tortur'd breast;
Awhile with white uplifted eyes she stood,
Then plung'd her trembling poniards in their blood.
'Go, kiss your sire! go, share the bridal mirth!'
She cry'd, and hurl'd their quivering limbs on earth.
Rebelling thunders rock the marble towers,
And red-tongued lightnings shoot their arrowy showers;
Earth yawns!-the crashing ruin sinks!-o'er all
Death with black hands extends his mighty Pall;
Their mingling gore the Fiends of Vengeance quaff,
And Hell receives them with convulsive laugh.
Round the vex'd isles where fierce tornados roar,
Or tropic breezes sooth the sultry shore;
What time the eve her gauze pellucid spreads
O'er the dim flowers, and veils the misty meads;
Slow, o'er the twilight sands or leafy walks,
With gloomy dignity DICTAMNA stalks;
In sulphurous eddies round the weird dame
Plays the light gas, or kindles into flame.
If rests the traveller his weary head,
Grim MANCINELLA haunts the mossy bed,
Brews her black hebenon, and, stealing near,
Pours the curst venom in his tortured ear.-
Wide o'er the mad'ning throng URTICA flings
Her barbed shafts, and darts her poison'd stings.
And fell LOBELIA'S suffocating breath
Loads the dank pinion of the gale with death.-
With fear and hate they blast the affrighted groves,
Yet own with tender care their kindred Loves! -
So, where PALMIRA 'mid her wasted plains,
Her shatter'd aqueducts, and prostrate sanes,
(As the bright orb of breezy midnight pours
Long threads of silver through her gaping towers,
O'er mouldering tombs, and tottering columns gleams,
And frosts her deserts with diffusive beams),
Sad o'er the mighty wreck in silence bends,

Lifts her wet eyes, her tremulous hands extends.-
 If from lone cliffs a bursting rill expands
 Its transient course, and sinks into the sands;
 O'er the moist rock the fell Hyæna prowls,
 The Leopard hisses, and the Panther growls;
 On quivering wing the famish'd Vulture screams,
 Dips his dry beak, and sweeps the gushing streams;
 With foamy jaws, beneath, and sanguine tongue,
 Laps the lean Wolf, and pants, and runs along;
 Stern stalks the Lion, on the rustling brinks
 Hears the dread Snake, and trembles as he drinks;
 Quick darts the scaly Monster o'er the plain,
 Fold after fold, his undulating train;
 And, bending o'er the lake his crested brow,
 Starts at the Crocodile, that gapes below.
 Where seas of glass with gay reflections smile
 Round the green coasts of Java's palmy isle;
 A spacious plain extends its upland scene,
 Rocks rise on rocks, and fountains gush between;
 Soft zephyrs blow, eternal summers reign,
 And showers prolific bless the soil,-in vain!
 -No spicy nutmeg scents the vernal gales,
 Nor towering plaintain shades the mid-day vales;
 No grassy mantle hides the sable hills,
 No flowery chaplet crowns the trickling rills;
 Nor tufted moss, nor leathery lichen creeps
 In russet tapestry o'er the crumbling steeps.
 -No step retreating, on the sand impress'd,
 Invites the visit of a second guest;
 No refluent fin the unpeopled stream divides,
 No revolant pinion cleaves the airy tides;
 Nor handed moles, nor beaked worms return,
 That mining pass the irremeable bourn.-
 Fierce in dread silence on the blasted heath
 Fell UPAS sits, the HYDRA-TREE of death.
 Lo! from one root, the envenom'd soil below,
 A thousand vegetative serpents grow;
 In shining rays the scaly monster spreads
 O'er ten square leagues his far-diverging heads;
 Or in one trunk entwists his tangled form,
 Looks o'er the clouds, and hisses in the storm.
 Steep'd in fell poison, as his sharp teeth part,

A thousand tongues in quick vibration dart;
 Snatch the proud Eagle towering o'er the heath,
 Or pounce the Lion, as he stalks beneath;
 Or strew, as marshall'd hosts contend in vain,
 With human skeletons the whiten'd plain.
 -Chain'd at his root two scion-demons dwell,
 Breathe the faint hiss, or try the shriller yell;
 Rise, fluttering in the air on callow wings,
 And aim at insect-prey their little stings.
 So Time's strong arms with sweeping scythe erase
 Art's cumbersome works, and empires, from their base;
 While each young Hour its sickle fine employs,
 And crops the sweet buds of domestic joys!
 With blushes bright as morn fair ORCHIS charms,
 And lulls her infant in her fondling arms;
 Soft play Affection round her bosom's throne,
 And guards his life, forgetful of her own.
 So wings the wounded Deer her headlong flight,
 Pierced by some ambush'd archer of the night,
 Shoots to the woodlands with her bounding fawn,
 And drops of blood bedew the conscious lawn;
 There hid in shades she shuns the cheerful day,
 Hangs o'er her young, and weeps her life away.
 So stood Eliza on the wood-crown'd height,
 O'er Minden's plain, spectatress of the sight,
 Sought with bold eye amid the bloody strife
 Her dearer self, the partner of her life;
 From hill to hill the rushing host pursued,
 And view'd his banner, or believed she view'd.
 Pleased with the distant roar, with quicker tread
 Fast by his hand one lisp'ing boy she led;
 And one fair girl amid the loud alarm
 Slept on her kerchief, cradled by her arm;
 While round her brows bright beams of Honour dart,
 And Love's warm eddies circle round her heart
 -Near and more near the intrepid Beauty press'd,
 Saw through the driving smoke his dancing crest,
 Heard the exulting shout, 'they run! they run!'
 'Great GOD!' she cried, 'He's safe! the battle's won!'
 -A ball now hisses through the airy tides,
 (Some Fury wing'd it, and some Demon guides!)
 Parts the fine locks, her graceful head that deck,

Wounds her fair ear, and sinks into her neck;
 The red stream, issuing from her azure veins,
 Dyes her white veil, her ivory bosom stains.-
 -'Ah me!' she cried, and, sinking on the ground,
 Kiss'd her dear babes, regardless of the wound;
 'Oh, cease not yet to beat, thou Vital Urn!
 'Wait, gushing Life, oh, wait my Love's return!-
 'Hoarse barks the wolf, the vulture screams from far!
 'The angel, Pity, shuns the walks of war!--
 'Oh, spare ye War-hounds, spare their tender age!-
 'On me, on me,' she cried, 'exhaust your rage!'-
 Then with weak arms her weeping babes caress'd,
 And sighing bid them in her blood-stain'd vest.
 From tent to tent the impatient warrior flies,
 Fear in his heart, and frenzy in his eyes;
 Eliza's name along the camp he calls,
 Eliza echoes through the canvas walls;
 Quick through the murmuring gloom his footsteps tread,
 O'er groaning heaps, the dying and the dead,
 Vault o'er the plain, and in the tangled wood,
 Lo! dead Eliza weltering in her blood!-
 -Soon hears his listening son the welcome sounds,
 With open arms and sparkling eyes he bounds:-
 'Speak low,' he cries, and gives his little hand,
 'Eliza sleeps upon the dew-cold sand;
 'Poor weeping Babe with bloody fingers press'd,
 'And tried with pouting lips her milkless breast;
 'Alas! we both with cold and hunger quake-
 'Why do you weep?-Mama will soon awake.'
 -'She'll wake no more!' the hopeless mourner cried
 Upturn'd his eyes, and clasp'd his hands, and sigh'd;
 Stretch'd on the ground awhile entranc'd he lay,
 And press'd warm kisses on the lifeless clay;
 And then unsprung with wild convulsive start,
 And all the Father kindled in his heart;
 'Oh, Heavens!' he cried, 'my first rash vow forgive!
 'These bind to earth, for these I pray to live!'-
 Round his chill babes he wrapp'd his crimson vest,
 And clasp'd them sobbing to his aching breast.
 Two Harlot-Nymphs, the fair CUSCUTAS, please
 With labour'd negligence, and studied ease;
 In the meek garb of modest worth disguised,

The eye averted, and the smile chastised,
 With sly approach they spread their dangerous charms,
 And round their victim wind their wiry arms.
 So by Scamander when LAOCOON stood,
 Where Troy's proud turrets glitter'd in the flood,
 Raised high his arm, and with prophetic call
 To shrinking realms announced her fatal fall;
 Whirl'd his fierce spear with more than mortal force,
 And pierced the thick ribs of the echoing horse;
 Two Serpent-forms incumbent on the main,
 Lashing the white waves with redundant train,
 Arch'd their blue necks, and (hook their towering crests,
 And plough'd their foamy way with speckled breasts;
 Then darting fierce amid the affrighted throngs,
 Roll'd their red eyes, and shot their forked tongues,-
 -Two daring Youths to guard the hoary fire
 Thwart their dread progress, and provoke their ire.
 Round sire and sons the scaly monsters roll'd,
 Ring above ring, in many a tangled fold,
 Close and more close their writhing limbs surround,
 And fix with foamy teeth the envenom'd wound.
 -With brow upturn'd to heaven the holy Sage
 In silent agony sustains their rage;
 While each fond Youth, in vain, with piercing cries
 Bends on the tortured Sire his dying eyes.
 'Drink deep, sweet youths' seductive VITIS cries,
 The maudlin tear-drop glittering in her eyes;
 Green leaves and purple clusters crown her head,
 And the tall Thyrsus stays her tottering tread.
 - Five hapless swains with soft assuasive smiles
 The harlot meshes in her deathful toils;
 'Drink deep,' she carols, as she waves in air
 The mantling goblet, 'and forget your care.'-
 O'er the dread feast malignant Chemia scowls,
 And mingles poison in the nectar'd bowls;
 Fell Gout peeps grinning through the flimsy scene,
 And bloated Dropsy pants behind unseen;
 Wrapp'd in his robe white Lepra hides his stains,
 And silent Frenzy writhing bites his chains.
 So when PROMETHEUS braved the Thunderer's ire,
 Stole from his blazing throne ethereal fire,
 And, lantern'd in his breast, from realms of day

Bore the bright treasure to his Man of clay;-
 High on cold Caucasus by VULCAN bound,
 The lean impatient Vulture fluttering round,
 His writhing limbs in vain he twists and strains
 To break or loose the adamantine chains.
 The gluttonous bird, exulting in his pangs,
 Tears his swoln liver with remorseless fangs.
 The gentle CYCLAMEN with dewy eye
 Breathes o'er her lifeless babe the parting sigh;
 And, bending low to earth, with pious hands
 Inhumes her dear Departed in the sands.
 'Sweet Nursling! withering in thy tender hour,
 'Oh, sleep,' She cries, 'and rise a fairer flower!'
 -So when the Plague o'er London's gasping crowds
 Shook her dank wing, and steer'd her murky clouds;
 When o'er the friendless bier no rites were read,
 No dirge slow-chanted, and no pall out-spread;
 While Death and Night piled up the naked throng,
 And Silence drove their ebon cars along;
 Six lovely daughters, and their father, swept
 To the throng'd grave CLEONE saw, and wept;
 Her tender mind, with meek Religion fraught,
 Drank all-resigned Affliction's bitter draught;
 Alive and listening to the whisper'd groan
 Of others' woes, unconscious of her own!-
 One smiling boy, her last sweet hope, she warms
 Hushed on her bosom, circled in her arms,-
 Daughter of woe! ere morn, in vain caress'd,
 Clung the cold Babe upon thy milkless breast,
 With feeble cries thy last sad aid required,
 Stretch'd its stiff limbs, and on thy lap expired!-
 -Long with wide eye-lids on her Child she gazed,
 And long to heaven their tearless orbs she raised;
 Then with quick foot and throbbing heart she found
 Where Chartreuse open'd deep his holy ground;
 Bore her last treasure through the midnight gloom,
 And kneeling dropp'd it in the mighty tomb;
 'I follow next!' the frantic mourner said,
 And living plunged amid the festering dead.
 Where vast Ontario rolls his brineless tides,
 And feeds the trackless forests on his sides,
 Fair CASSIA trembling hears the howling woods,

And trusts her tawny children to the floods.-
 Cinctured with gold while ten fond brothers stand,
 And guard the beauty on her native land,
 Soft breathes the gale, the current gently moves,
 And bears to Norway's coasts her infant-likes.
 -So the sad mother at the noon of night
 From bloody Memphis stole her silent flight;
 Wrapp'd her dear babe beneath her folded vest,
 And clasp'd the treasure to her throbbing breast,
 With soothing whispers hushed its feeble cry,
 Pressed the soft kiss, and breathed the secret sigh.-
 -With dauntless step she seeks the winding shore,
 Hears unappall'd the glimmering torrents roar;
 With Paper-flags a floating cradle weaves,
 And hides the smiling boy in Lotus-leaves;
 Gives her white bosom to his eager lips,
 The salt tears mingling with the milk he sips;
 Waits on the reed-crown'd brink with pious guile,
 And trusts the scaly monsters of the Nile.-
 -Erewhile majestic from his lone abode,
 Ambassador of Heaven, the Prophet trod;
 Wrench'd the red Scourge from proud Oppression's hands,
 And broke, curst Slavery! thy iron bands.
 Hark! heard ye not that piercing cry,
 Which shook the waves and rent the sky!-
 E'en now, e'en now, on yonder Western shores
 Weeps pale Despair, and writhing Anguish roars:
 E'en now in Afric's groves with hideous yell
 Fierce SLAVERY stalks, and slips the dogs of hell;
 From vale to vale the gathering cries rebound,
 And sable nations tremble at the sound!-
 -YE BANDS OF SENATORS! whose suffrage sways
 Britannia's realms, whom either Ind obeys;
 Who right the injured, and reward the brave,
 Stretch your strong arm, for ye have power to save!
 Throned in the vaulted heart, his dread resort,
 Inexorable CONSCIENCE holds his court;
 With still small voice the plots of Guilt alarms,
 Bares his mask'd brow, his lifted hand disarms;
 But, wrapp'd in night with terrors all his own,
 He speaks in thunder, when the deed is done.
 Hear him ye Senates! hear this truth sublime,

'HE, WHO ALLOWS OPPRESSION, SHARES THE CRIME.'

No radiant pearl, which crested Fortune wears,
No gem, that twinkling hangs from Beauty's ears,
Not the bright stars, which Night's blue arch adorn,
Nor rising suns that gild the vernal morn,
Shine with such lustre as the tear, that breaks
For other's woe down Virtue's manly cheeks.'
Here ceased the MUSE, and dropp'd her tuneful shell,
Tumultuous woes her panting bosom swell,
O'er her flush'd cheek her gauzy veil she throws,
Folds her white arms, and bends her laurel'd brows;
For human guilt awhile the Goddess sighs,
And human sorrows dim celestial eyes.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden (Part Viii)

THE LOVES OF THE PLANTS

CANTO IV.

Now the broad Sun his golden orb unshrouds,
Flames in the west, and paints the parted clouds;
O'er heaven's wide arch refracted lustres flow,
And bend in air the many-colour'd bow.-
-The tuneful Goddess on the glowing sky
Fix'd in mute extacy her glistening eye;
And then her lute to sweeter tones she strung,
And swell'd with softer chords the Paphian song.
Long ailes of Oaks return'd the silver sound,
And amorous Echoes talk'd along the ground;
Pleas'd Lichfield listen'd from her sacred bowers,
Bow'd her tall groves, and shook her stately towers.
'Nymph! not for thee the radiant day returns,
Nymph! not for thee the golden solstice burns,
Refulgent CEREA!-at the dusky hour
She seeks with pensive step the mountain-bower,
Bright as the blush of rising morn, and warms
The dull cold eye of Midnight with her charms.
There to the skies she lifts her pencill'd brows,
Opes her fair lips, and breathes her virgin vows;
Eyes the white zenyth; counts the suns, that roll
Their distant fires, and blaze around the Pole;
Or marks where Jove directs his glittering car
O'er Heaven's blue vault,-Herself a brighter star.
-There as soft Zephyrs sweep with pausing airs
Thy snowy neck, and part thy shadowy hairs,
Sweet Maid of Night! to Cynthia's sober beams
Glow's thy warm cheek, thy polish'd bosom gleams.

In crowds
around thee gaze the admiring swains,
And guard in silence the enchanted plains;
Drop the still tear, or breathe the impassion'd sigh,
And drink inebriate rapture from thine eye.
Thus, when old Needwood's hoary scenes the Night

Paints with blue shadow, and with milky light;
Where MUNDY pour'd, the listening nymphs among,
Loud to the echoing vales his parting song;
With measured step the Fairy Sovereign treads,
Shakes her high plume, and glitters o'er the meads;
Round each green holly leads her sportive train,
And little footsteps mark the circled plain;
Each haunted rill with silver voices rings,
And Night's sweet bird in livelier accents sings.
Ere the bright star, which leads the morning sky,
Hangs o'er the blushing east his diamond eye,
The chaste TROPAEO leaves her secret bed;
A saint-like glory trembles round her head;

Eight

watchful swains along the lawns of night
With amorous steps pursue the virgin light;
O'er her fair form the electric lustre plays,
And cold she moves amid the lambent blaze.
So shines the glow-fly, when the sun retires,
And gems the night-air with phosphoric fires;
Thus o'er the marsh aërial lights betray,
And charm the unwary wanderer from his way.
So when thy King, Assyria, fierce and proud,
Three human victims to his idol vow'd;
Rear'd a vast pyre before the golden shrine
Of sulphurous coal, and pitch-exsuding pine;-
-Loud roar the flames, the iron nostrils breathe,
And the huge bellows pant and heave beneath;
Bright and more bright the blazing deluge flows,
And white with seven-fold heat the furnace glows.
And now the Monarch fix'd with dread surprize
Deep in the burning vault his dazzled eyes.
'Lo! Three unbound amid the frightful glare,
Unscorch'd their sandals, and unsing'd their hair!
And now a fourth with seraph-beauty bright
Descends, accosts them, and outshines the light!
Fierce flames innocuous, as they step, retire!
And slow they move amid a world of fire!
He spoke,-to Heaven his arms repentant spread,
And kneeling bow'd his gem-incircled head.

Two

Sister-Nymphs, the fair AVENAS, lead
Their fleecy squadrons on the lawns of Tweed;
Pass with light step his wave-worn banks along,
And wake his Echoes with their silver tongue;
Or touch the reed, as gentle Love inspires,
In notes accordant to their chaste desires.

I.

'Sweet ECHO! sleeps thy vocal shell,
'Where this high arch o'erhangs the dell;
'While Tweed with sun-reflecting streams
'Chequers thy rocks with dancing beams?-

II.

'Here may no clamours harsh intrude,
No brawling hound or clarion rude;
Here no fell beast of midnight prowls,
And teach thy tortured cliffs to howl!

III.

'Be thine to pour these vales along
Some artless Shepherd's evening song;
While Night's sweet bird, from yon high spray
Responsive, listens to his lay.

IV.

'And if, like me, some love-lorn maid
'Should sing her sorrows to thy shade,
'Oh, sooth her breast, ye rocks around!
'With softest sympathy of sound.'

From ozier bowers the brooding Halcyons peep,
The Swans pursuing cleave the glassy deep,
On hovering wings the wondering Reed-larks play,
And silent Bitterns listen to the lay.-

Three

shepherd-swains beneath the beechen shades
Twine rival garlands for the tuneful maids;
On each smooth bark the mystic love-knot frame,
Or on white sands inscribe the favour'd name.
From Time's remotest dawn where China brings
In proud succession all her Patriot-Kings;
O'er desert-sands, deep gulfs, and hills sublime,
Extends her massy wall from clime to clime;
With bells and dragons crests her Pagod-bowers,
Her silken palaces, and porcelain towers;
With long canals a thousand nations laves;
Plants all her wilds, and peoples all her waves;
Slow treads fair CANNABIS the breezy strand,
The distaff streams dishevell'd in her hand;
Now to the left her ivory neck inclines,
And leads in Paphian curves its azure lines;
Dark waves the fringed lid, the warm cheek glows,
And the fair ear the parting locks disclose;
Now to the right with airy sweep she bends,
Quick join the threads, the dancing spole depends.

-

Five

Swains attracted guard the Nymph, by turns
Her grace enchants them, and her beauty burns;
To each She bows with sweet assuasive smile,
Hears his soft vows, and turns her spole the while.
So when with light and shade, concordant strife!
Stern CLOTHO weaves the chequer'd thread of life;
Hour after hour the growing line extends,
The cradle and the coffin bound its ends;
Soft cords of silk the whirling spoles reveal,
If smiling Fortune turn the giddy wheel;
But if sweet Love with baby-fingers twines,
And wets with dewy lips the lengthening lines,
Skein after skein celestial tints unfold,
And all the silken tissue shines with gold.
Warm with sweet blushes bright GALANTHA glows,
And prints with frolic step the melting snows;
O'er silent floods, white hills, and glittering meads

Six

rival swains the playful beauty leads,
 Chides with her dulcet voice the tardy Spring,
 Bids slumbering Zephyr stretch his folded wing,
 Wakes the hoarse Cuckoo in his gloomy cave,
 And calls the wondering Dormouse from his grave,
 Bids the mute Redbreast cheer the budding grove,
 And plaintive Ringdove tune her notes to love.
 Spring! with thy own sweet smile, and tuneful tongue,
 Delighted BELLIS calls her infant throng.
 Each on his reed astride, the Cherub-train
 Watch her kind looks, and circle o'er the plain;
 Now with young wonder touch the siding snail,
 Admire his eye-tipp'd horns, and painted mail;
 Chase with quick step, and eager arms outspread,
 The pausing Butterfly from mead to mead;
 Or twine green oziars with the fragrant gale,
 The azure harebel, and the primrose pale,
 Join hand in hand, and in procession gay
 Adorn with votive wreaths the shrine of May.
 -So moves the Goddess to the Idalian groves,
 And leads her gold-hair'd family of Loves.
 These, from the flaming furnace, strong and bold
 Pour the red steel into the sandy mould;
 On tinkling anvils (with Vulcanian art),
 Turn with hot tongs, and forge the dreadful dart;
 The barbed head on whirling jaspers grind,
 And dip the point in poison for the mind;
 Each polish'd shaft with snow-white plumage wing,
 Or strain the bow reluctant to its string.
 Those on light pinion twine with busy hands,
 Or stretch from bough to bough the flowery bands;
 Scare the dark beetle, as he wheels on high,
 Or catch in silken nets the gilded fly;
 Call the young Zephyrs to their fragrant bowers,
 And stay with kisses sweet the Vernal Hours.
 Where, as proud Maffon rises rude and bleak,
 And with mishapen turrets crests the Peak,
 Old Matlock gapes with marble jaws, beneath,
 And o'er fear'd Derwent bends his flinty teeth;
 Deep in wide caves below the dangerous soil
 Blue sulphurs flame, imprison'd waters boil.
 Impetuous steams in spiral columns rise

Through rifted rocks, impatient for the skies;
 Or o'er bright seas of bubbling lavas blow,
 As heave and toss the billowy fires below;
 Condensed on high, in wandering rills they glide
 From Maffon's dome, and burst his sparry side;
 Round his grey towers, and down his fringed walls,
 From cliff to cliff, the liquid treasure falls;
 In beds of stalactite, bright ores among,
 O'er corals, shells, and crystals, winds along;
 Crusts the green mosses, and the tangled wood,
 And sparkling plunges to its parent flood.
 -O'er the warm wave a smiling youth presides,
 Attunes its murmurs, its meanders guides,
 (The blooming FUCUS), in her sparry coves
 To amorous Echo sings his
 secret
 loves,
 Bathes his fair forehead in the misty stream,
 And with sweet breath perfumes the rising steam.
 -So, erst, an Angel o'er Bethesda's springs,
 Each morn descending, shook his dewy wings;
 And as his bright translucent form He laves,
 Salubrious powers enrich the troubled waves.
 Amphibious Nymph, from Nile's prolific bed
 Emerging TRAPA lifts her pearly head;
 Fair glows her virgin cheek and modest breast,
 A panoply of scales deforms the rest;
 Her quivering fins and panting gills she hides
 But spreads her silver arms upon the tides;
 Slow as she sails, her ivory neck she laves,
 And shakes her golden tresses o'er the waves.
 Charm'd round the Nymph, in circling gambols glide

Four

Nereid-forms, or shoot along the tide;
 Now all as one they rise with frolic spring,
 And beat the wondering air on humid wing;
 Now all descending plunge beneath the main,
 And lash the foam with undulating train;
 Above, below, they wheel, retreat, advance,
 In air and ocean weave the mazy dance;
 Bow their quick heads, and point their diamond eyes,

And twinkle to the sun with ever-changing dyes.
 Where Andes, crested with volcanic beams,
 Sheds a long line of light on Plata's streams;
 Opes all his springs, unlocks his golden caves,
 And feeds and freights the immeasurable waves;
 Delighted OCYMA at twilight hours
 Calls her light car, and leaves the sultry bowers;-
 Love's rising ray, and Youth's seductive dye,
 Bloom'd on her cheek, and brighten'd in her eye;
 Chaste, pure, and white, a zone of silver graced
 Her tender breast, as white, as pure, as chaste;--
 By
 four
 fond swains in playful circles drawn,
 On glowing wheels she tracks the moon-bright lawn,
 Mounts the rude cliff, unveils her blushing charms,
 And calls the panting zephyrs to her arms.
 Emerged from ocean springs the vaporous air,
 Bathes her light limbs, uncurls her amber hair,
 Incrusts her beamy form with films saline,
 And Beauty blazes through the crystal shrine.-
 So with pellucid studs the ice-flower gems
 Her rimy foliage, and her candied stems.
 So from his glassy horns, and pearly eyes,
 The diamond-beetle darts a thousand dyes;
 Mounts with enamel'd wings the vesper gale,
 And wheeling shines in adamantine mail.
 Thus when loud thunders o'er Gomorrah burst,
 And heaving earthquakes shook his realms accurst,
 An Angel-guest led forth the trembling Fair
 With shadowy hand, and warn'd the guiltless pair;
 'Haste from these lands of sin, ye Righteous! fly,
 Speed the quick step, nor turn the lingering eye!'-
 -Such the command, as fabling Bards indite,
 When Orpheus charm'd the grisly King of Night;
 Sooth'd the pale phantoms with his plaintive lay,
 And led the fair Assurgent into day.-
 Wide yawn'd the earth, the fiery tempest flash'd,
 And towns and towers in one vast ruin crash'd;-
 Onward they move,--loud horror roars behind,
 And shrieks of Anguish bellow in the wind.
 With many a sob, amid a thousand fears,

The beauteous wanderer pours her gushing tears;
 Each soft connection rends her troubled breast,
 -She turns, unconscious of the stern behest!-
 'I faint!-I fall!-ah, me!-sensations chill
 Shoot through my bones, my shuddering bosom thrill!
 I freeze! I freeze! just Heaven regards my fault,
 Numbs my cold limbs, and hardens into salt!-
 Not yet, not yet, your dying Love resign!-
 This last, last kiss receive!-no longer thine!'-
 She said, and ceased,-her stiffen'd form He press'd,
 And strain'd the briny column to his breast;
 Printed with quivering lips the lifeless snow,
 And wept, and gazed the monument of woe.-
 So when Aeneas through the flames of Troy
 Bore his pale fire, and led his lovely boy;
 With loitering step the fair Creusa stay'd,
 And Death involved her in eternal shade.-
 Oft the lone Pilgrim that his road forsakes,
 Marks the wide ruins, and the sulphur'd lakes;
 On mouldering piles amid asphaltic mud
 Hears the hoarse bittern, where Gomorrah stood;
 Recalls the unhappy Pair with lifted eye,
 Leans on the crystal tomb, and breathes the silent sigh..
 With net-wove sash and glittering gorget dress'd,
 And scarlet robe lapell'd upon her breast,
 Stern ARA frowns, the measured march assumes,
 Trails her long lance, and nods her shadowy plumes;
 While Love's soft beams illumine her treacherous eyes,
 And Beauty lightens through the thin disguise.
 So erst, when HERCULES, untamed by toil,
 Own'd the soft power of DEJANIRA'S smile;-
 His lion-spoils the laughing Fair demands,
 And gives the distaff to his awkward hands;
 O'er her white neck the bristly mane she throws,
 And binds the gaping whiskers on her brows;
 Plaits round her slender waist the shaggy vest,
 And clasps the velvet paws across her breast.
 Next with soft hands the knotted club she rears,
 Heaves up from earth, and on her shoulder bears.
 Onward with loftier step the Beauty treads,
 And trails the brinded ermine o'er the meads;
 Wolves, bears, and bards, forsake the affrighted groves,

And grinning Satyrs tremble, as she moves.
CARYO'S sweet smile DIANTHUS proud admires,
And gazing burns with unallow'd desires;
With sighs and sorrows her compassion moves,
And wins the damsel to illicit loves.
The Monster-offspring heirs the father's pride,
Mask'd in the damask beauties of the bride.
So, when the Nightingale in eastern bowers
On quivering pinion woos the Queen of flowers;
Inhales her fragrance, as he hangs in air,
And melts with melody the blushing fair;
Half-rose, half-bird, a beauteous Monster springs,
Waves his thin leaves, and claps his glossy wings;
Long horrent thorns his mossy legs surround,
And tendril-talons root him to the ground;
Green films of rind his wrinkled neck o'espread,
And crimson petals crest his curled head;
Soft-warbling beaks in each bright blossom move,
And vocal Rosebuds thrill the enchanted grove!-
Admiring Evening stays her beamy star,
And still Night listens from his ebon ear;
While on white wings descending Houries throng,
And drink the floods of odour and of song.
When from his golden urn the Solstice pours
O'er Afric's sable sons the sultry hours;
When not a gale flits o'er her tawny hills,
Save where the dry Harmattan breathes and kills;
-Fair CHUNDA smiles amid the burning waste,
Her brow unturban'd, and her zone unbrac'd;

Ten

brother-youths with light umbrella's shade,
Or fan with busy hands the panting maid;
Loose wave her locks, disclosing, as they break,
The rising bosom and averted cheek;
Clasp'd round her ivory neck with studs of gold
Flows her thin vest in many a gauzy fold;
O'er her light limbs the dim transparence plays,
And the fair form, it seems to hide, betrays.
Where leads the northern Star his lucid train
High o'er the snow-clad earth, and icy main,
With milky light the white horizon streams,

And to the moon each sparkling mountain gleams.-
Slow o'er the printed snows with silent walk
Huge shaggy forms across the twilight stalk;
And ever and anon with hideous sound
Burst the thick ribs of ice, and thunder round.-
There, as old Winter slaps his hoary wing,
And lingering leaves his empire to the Spring,
Pierced with quick shafts of silver-shooting light
Fly in dark troops the dazzled imps of night-
'Awake, my Love!' enamour'd MUSCHUS cries,
'Stretch thy fair limbs, resurgent Maid! arise;
Ope thy sweet eye-lids to the rising ray,
And hail with ruby lips returning day.
Down the white hills dissolving torrents pour,
Green springs the turf, and purple blows the flower;
His torpid wing the Rail exulting tries,
Mounts the soft gale, and wantons in the skies;
Rise, let us mark how bloom the awaken'd groves,
And 'mid the banks of roses
hide
our loves.'

Night's tinsel beams on smooth Lock-lomond dance,
Impatient ÆGA views the bright expanse;-
In vain her eyes the parting floods explore,
Wave after wave rolls freightless to the shore.
-Now dim amid the distant foam she spies
A rising speck, -"tis he! 'tis he!' She cries;
As with firm arms he beats the streams aside,
And cleaves with rising chest the tossing tide,
With bended knee she prints the humid sands,
Up-turns her glistening eyes, and spreads her hands;
-"Tis he, 'tis he!-My Lord, my life, my love!-
Slumber, ye winds; ye billows, cease to move!
beneath his arms your buoyant plumage spread,
Ye Swans! ye Halcyons! hover round his head!'-
-With eager step the boiling surf she braves,
And meets her refluent lover in the waves;
Loose o'er the flood her azure mantle swims,
And the clear stream betrays her snowy limbs.
So on her sea-girt tower fair HERO stood
At parting day, and mark'd the dashing flood;
While high in air, the glimmering rocks above,

Shone the bright lamp, the pilot-star of Love.
-With robe outspread the wavering flame behind
She kneels, and guards it from the shifting wind;
Breathes to her Goddess all her vows, and guides
Her bold LEANDER o'er the dusky tides;
Wrings his wet hair, his briny bosom warms,
And clasps her panting lover in her arms.
Deep, in wide caverns and their shadowy ailes,
Daughter of Earth, the chaste TRUFFELIA smiles;
On silvery beds, of soft asbestus wove,
Meets her Gnome-husband, and avows her love.

-
High
o'er her couch impending diamonds blaze,
And branching gold the crystal roof inlays;
With verdant light the modest emeralds glow,
Blue sapphires glare, and rubies blush,
below
;
Light piers of lazuli the dome surround,
And pictured mochoes tessellate the ground;
In glittering threads along reflective walls
The warm rill murmuring twinkles, as it falls;
Now sink the Eolian strings, and now they swell,
And Echoes woo in every vaulted cell;
While on white wings delighted Cupids play,
Shake their bright lamps, and shed celestial day.
Closed in an azure fig by fairy spells,
Bosom'd in down, fair CAPRI-FICA dwells;-
So sleeps in silence the Curculio, shut
In the dark chambers of the cavern'd nut,
Erodes with ivory beak the vaulted shell,
And quits on filmy wings its narrow cell.
So the pleased Linnet in the moss-wove nest,
Waked into life beneath its parent's breast,
Chirps in the gaping shell, bursts forth erelong,
Shakes its new plumes, and tries its tender song.-
-And now the talisman she strikes, that charms
Her husband-Sylph,-and calls him to her arms.-
Quick, the light Gnat her airy Lord bestrides,
With cobweb reins the flying courser guides,
From crystal steeps of viewless ether springs,

Cleaves the soft air on still expanded wings;
Darts like a sunbeam o'er the boundless wave,
And seeks the beauty in her
secret
cave.

So with quick impulse through all nature's frame
Shoots the electric air its subtle flame.
So turns the impatient needle to the pole,
Tho' mountains rise between, and oceans roll.
Where round the Orcades white torrents roar,
Scooping with ceaseless rage the incumbent shore,
Wide o'er the deep a dusky cavern bends
Its marble arms, and high in air impends;
Basaltic piers the ponderous roof sustain,
And steep their massy sandals in the main;
Round the dim walls, and through the whispering ailes
Hoarse breathes the wind, the glittering water boils.
Here the charm'd BYSSUS with his blooming bride
Spreads his green sails, and braves the foaming tide;
The star of Venus gilds the twilight wave,
And lights her votaries to the
secret

cave;
Light Cupids flutter round the nuptial bed,
And each coy sea-maid hides her blushing head.
Where cool'd by rills, and curtain'd round by woods,
Slopes the green dell to meet the briny floods,
The sparkling noon-beams trembling on the tide,
The PROTEUS-LOVER woos his playful bride,
To win the fair he tries a thousand forms,
Basks on the sands, or gambols in the storms.
A Dolphin now, his scaly sides he laves,
And bears the sportive damsel on the waves;
She strikes the cymbal as he moves along,
And wondering Ocean listens to the song.
-And now a spotted Pard the lover stalks,
Plays round her steps, and guards her favour'd walks;
As with white teeth he prints her hand, caress'd,
And lays his velvet paw upon her breast,
O'er his round face her snowy fingers strain
The silken knots, and fit the ribbon-rein.
-And now a Swan, he spreads his plumy sails,

And proudly glides before the fanning gales;
Pleas'd on the flowery brink with graceful hand
She waves her floating lover to the land;
Bright shines his sinuous neck, with crimson beak
He prints fond kisses on her glowing cheek,
Spreads his broad wings, elates his ebon crest,
And clasps the beauty to his downy breast.

A

hundred

virgins join a

hundred

swains,

And fond ADONIS leads the sprightly trains;

Pair after pair, along his sacred groves

To Hymen's fane the bright procession moves;

Each smiling youth a myrtle garland shades,

And wreaths of roses veil the blushing maids;

Light joys on twinkling feet attend the throng,

Weave the gay dance, or raise the frolic song;

-Thick, as they pass, exulting Cupids fling

Promiscuous arrows from the sounding string;

On wings of gossamer soft Whispers fly,

And the sly Glance steals side-long from the eye.

-As round his shrine the gaudy circles bow,

And seal with muttering lips the faithless vow,

Licentious Hymen joins their mingled hands,

And loosely twines the meretricious bands.-

Thus where pleased VENUS, in the southern main,

Sheds all her smiles on Otaheite's plain,

Wide o'er the isle her silken net she draws,

And the Loves laugh at all, but Nature's laws.'

Here ceased the Goddess,-o'er the silent strings

Applauding Zephyrs swept their fluttering wings;

Enraptur'd Sylphs arose in murmuring crowds

To air-wove canopies and pillowy clouds;

Each Gnome reluctant sought his earthy cell,

And each bright Floret clos'd her velvet bell.

Then, on soft tiptoe, NIGHT approaching near

Hung o'er the tuneless lyre his sable ear;

Gem'd with bright stars the still ethereal plain,

And bad his Nightingales repeat the strain.

The Botanic Garden(Part I)

The Economy Of Vegetation

Canto I

STAY YOUR RUDE STEPS! whose throbbing breasts infold
The legion-fiends of Glory, or of Gold!
Stay! whose false lips seductive simpers part,
While Cunning nestles in the harlot-heart!-
For you no Dryads dress the roseate bower,
For you no Nymphs their sparkling vases pour;
Unmark'd by you, light Graces swim the green,
And hovering Cupids aim their shafts, unseen.
'But THOU! whose mind the well-attemper'd ray
Of Taste and Virtue lights with purer day;
Whose finer sense each soft vibration owns
With sweet responsive sympathy of tones;
So the fair flower expands it's lucid form
To meet the sun, and shuts it to the storm;-
For thee my borders nurse the fragrant wreath,
My fountains murmur, and my zephyrs breathe;
Slow slides the painted snail, the gilded fly
Smooths his fine down, to charm thy curious eye;
On twinkling fins my pearly nations play,
Or win with sinuous train their trackless way;
My plumy pairs in gay embroidery dress'd
Form with ingenious bill the pensile nest,
To Love's sweet notes attune the listening dell,
And Echo sounds her soft symphonious shell.
'And, if with Thee some hapless Maid should stray,
Disasterous Love companion of her way,
Oh, lead her timid steps to yonder glade,
Whose arching cliffs depending alders shade;
There, as meek Evening wakes her temperate breeze,
And moon-beams glimmer through the trembling trees,
The rills, that gurgle round, shall soothe her ear,
The weeping rocks shall number tear for tear;
There as sad Philomel, alike forlorn,
Sings to the Night from her accustomed thorn;
While at sweet intervals each falling note

Sighs in the gale, and whispers round the grot;
 The sister-woe shall calm her aching breast,
 And softer slumbers steal her cares to rest.-
 'Winds of the North! restrain your icy gales,
 Nor chill the bosom of these happy vales!
 Hence in dark heaps, ye gathering Clouds, revolve!
 Disperse, ye Lightnings! and, ye Mists, dissolve!
 -Hither, emerging from yon orient skies,
 BOTANIC GODDESS! bend thy radiant eyes;
 O'er these soft scenes assume thy gentle reign,
 Pomona, Ceres, Flora in thy train;
 O'er the still dawn thy placid smile effuse,
 And with thy silver sandals print the dews;
 In noon's bright blaze thy vermil vest unfold,
 And wave thy emerald banner star'd with gold.'
 Thus spoke the GENIUS, as He stept along,
 And bade these lawns to Peace and Truth belong;
 Down the steep slopes He led with modest skill
 The willing pathway, and the truant rill,
 Stretch'd o'er the marshy vale yon willowy mound,
 Where shines the lake amid the tufted ground,
 Raised the young woodland, smooth'd the wavy green,
 And gave to Beauty all the quiet scene.-
 She comes!-the GODDESS!-through the whispering air,
 Bright as the morn, descends her blushing car;
 Each circling wheel a wreath of flowers intertwines,
 And gem'd with flowers the silken harness shines;
 The golden bits with flowery studs are deck'd,
 And knots of flowers the crimson reins connect.-
 And now on earth the silver axle rings,
 And the shell sinks upon its slender springs;
 Light from her airy seat the Goddess bounds,
 And steps celestial press the pansied grounds.
 Fair Spring advancing calls her feather'd quire,
 And tunes to softer notes her laughing lyre;
 Bids her gay hours on purple pinions move,
 And arms her Zephyrs with the shafts of Love,
 Pleased GNOMES, ascending from their earthy beds,
 Play round her graceful footsteps, as she treads;
 Gay SYLPHS attendant beat the fragrant air
 On winnowing wings, and waft her golden hair;
 Blue NYMPHS emerging leave their sparkling streams,

And FIERY FORMS alight from orient beams;
Musk'd in the rose's lap fresh dews they shed,
Or breathe celestial lustres round her head.
First the fine Forms her dulcet voice requires,
Which bathe or bask in elemental fires;
From each bright gem of Day's refulgent car,
From the pale sphere of every twinkling star,
From each nice pore of ocean, earth, and air,
With eye of flame the sparkling hosts repair,
Mix their gay hues, in changeful circles play,
Like motes, that tenant the meridian ray.-
So the clear Lens collects with magic power
The countless glories of the midnight hour;
Stars after stars with quivering lustre fall,
And twinkling glide along the whiten'd wall.-
Pleased, as they pass, she counts the glittering bands,
And stills their murmur with her waving hands;
Each listening tribe with fond expectance burns,
And now to these, and now to those, she turns.

I. 'NYMPHS OF PRIMEVAL FIRE! YOUR vestal train
Hung with gold-tresses o'er the vast inane,
Pierced with your silver shafts the throne of Night,
And charm'd young Nature's opening eyes with light;
When LOVE DIVINE, with brooding wings unfurl'd,
Call'd from the rude abyss the living world.
'-LET THERE BE LIGHT!' proclaim'd the ALMIGHTY LORD,
Astonish'd Chaos heard the potent word;-
Through all his realms the kindling Ether runs,
And the mass starts into a million suns;
Earths round each sun with quick explosions burst,
And second planets issue from the first;
Bend, as they journey with projectile force,
In bright ellipses their reluctant course;
Orbs wheel in orbs, round centres centres roll,
And form, self-balanced, one revolving Whole.
-Onward they move amid their bright abode,
Space without bound, THE BOSOM OF THEIR GOD!

II. 'ETHEREAL POWERS! YOU chase the shooting stars,
Or yoke the vollied lightnings to your cars,
Cling round the aërial bow with prisms bright,

And pleased untwist the sevenfold threads of light;
 Eve's silken couch with gorgeous tints adorn,
 And fire the arrowy throne of rising Morn.
 -OR, plum'd with flame, in gay battalion's spring
 To brighter regions borne on broader wing;
 Where lighter gases, circumfused on high,
 Form the vast concave of exterior sky;
 With airy lens the scatter'd rays assault,
 And bend the twilight round the dusky vault;
 Ride, with broad eye and scintillating hair,
 The rapid Fire-ball through the midnight air;
 Dart from the North on pale electric streams,
 Fringing Night's sable robe with transient beams.
 -OR rein the Planets in their swift careers,
 Gilding with borrow'd light their twinkling spheres;
 Alarm with comet-blaze the sapphire plain,
 The wan stars glimmering through its silver train;
 Gem the bright Zodiac, stud the glowing pole,
 Or give the Sun's phlogistic orb to roll.

III. NYMPHS! YOUR fine forms with steps impassive mock
 Earth's vaulted roofs of adamantine rock;
 Round her still centre tread the burning soil,
 And watch the billowy Lavas, as they boil;
 Where, in basaltic caves imprison'd deep,
 Reluctant fires in dread suspension sleep;
 Or sphere on sphere in widening waves expand,
 And glad with genial warmth the incumbent land.
 So when the Mother-bird selects their food
 With curious bill, and feeds her callow brood;
 Warmth from her tender heart eternal springs,
 And pleased she clasps them with extended wings.
 'YOU from deep cauldrons and unmeasured caves
 Blow flaming airs, or pour vitrescent waves;
 O'er shining oceans ray volcanic light,
 Or hurl innocuous embers to the night.-
 While with loud shouts to Etna Heccla calls,
 And Andes answers from his beacon'd walls;
 Sea-wilder'd crews the mountain-stars admire,
 And Beauty beams amid tremendous fire.
 'Thus when of old, as mystic bards presume,
 Huge CYCLOPS dwelt in Etna's rocky womb,

On thundering anvils rung their loud alarms,
And leagued with VULCAN forged immortal arms;
Descending VENUS sought the dark abode,
And sooth'd the labours of the grisly God.-
While frowning Loves the threatening falchion wield,
And tittering Graces peep behind the shield,
With jointed mail their fairy limbs o'erwhelm,
Or nod with pausing step the plumed helm;
With radiant eye She view'd the boiling ore,
Heard undismay'd the breathing bellows roar,
Admired their sinewy arms, and shoulders bare,
And ponderous hammers lifted high in air,
With smiles celestial bless'd their dazzled sight,
And Beauty blazed amid infernal night.

IV. 'EFFULGENT MAIDS! YOU round deciduous day,
Tressed with soft beams, your glittering bands array;
On Earth's cold bosom, as the Sun retires,
Confine with folds of air the lingering fires;
O'er Eve's pale forms diffuse phosphoric light,
And deck with lambent flames the shrine of Night.
So, warm'd and kindled by meridian skies,
And view'd in darkness with dilated eyes,
BOLOGNA'S chinks with faint ignition blaze,
BECCARI'S shells emit prismatic rays.
So to the sacred Sun in MEMNON's fane,
Spontaneous concords quired the matin strain;
-Touch'd by his orient beam, responsive rings
The living lyre, and vibrates all it's strings;
Accordant ailes the tender tones prolong,
And holy echoes swell the adoring song.
'YOU with light Gas the lamps nocturnal feed,
Which dance and glimmer o'er the marshy mead;
Shine round Calendula at twilight hours,
And tip with silver all her saffron flowers;
Warm on her mossy couch the radiant Worm,
Guard from cold dews her love-illumin'd form,
From leaf to leaf conduct the virgin light,
Star of the earth, and diamond of the night.
You bid in air the tropic Beetle burn,
And fill with golden flame his winged urn;
Or gild the surge with insect-sparks, that swarm

Round the bright oar, the kindling prow alarm;
Or arm in waves, electric in his ire,
The dread Gymnotus with ethereal fire.-
Onward his course with waving tail he helms,
And mimic lightnings scare the watery realms,
So, when with bristling plumes the Bird of JOVE
Vindictive leaves the argent fields above,
Borne on broad wings the guilty world he awes,
And grasps the lightening in his shining claws.

V. 1. 'NYMPHS! Your soft smiles uncultur'd man subdued,
And charm'd the Savage from his native wood;
You, while amazed his hurrying Hords retire
From the fell havoc of devouring FIRE,
Taught, the first Art! with piny rods to raise
By quick attrition the domestic blaze,
Fan with soft breath, with kindling leaves provide,
And lift the dread Destroyer on his side.

So, with bright wreath of serpent-tresses crown'd,
Severe in beauty, young MEDUSA frown'd;
Erewhile subdued, round WISDOM'S Aegis roll'd
Hiss'd the dread snakes, and flam'd in burnish'd gold;
Flash'd on her brandish'd arm the immortal shield,
And Terror lighten'd o'er the dazzled field.

2. NYMPHS! YOU disjoin, unite, condense, expand,
And give new wonders to the Chemist's hand;
On tepid clouds of rising steam aspire,
Or fix in sulphur all it's solid fire;
With boundless spring elastic airs unfold,
Or fill the fine vacuities of gold;
With sudden flash vitrescent sparks reveal,
By fierce collision from the flint and steel;
Or mark with shining letter KUNKEL's name
In the pale Phosphor's self-consuming flame.
So the chaste heart of some enchanted Maid
Shines with insidious light, by Love betray'd;
Round her pale bosom plays the young Desire,
And slow she wastes by self-consuming fire.

3. 'YOU taught mysterious BACON to explore
Metallic veins, and part the dross from ore;
With sylvan coal in whirling mills combine
The crystal'd nitre, and the sulphurous mine;

Through wiry nets the black diffusion strain,
And close an airy ocean in a grain.-
Pent in dark chambers of cylindric brass
Slumbers in grim repose the sooty mass;
Lit by the brilliant spark, from grain to grain
Runs the quick fire along the kindling train;
On the pain'd ear-drum bursts the sudden crash,
Starts the red flame, and Death pursues the flash.-
Fear's feeble hand directs the fiery darts,
And Strength and Courage yield to chemic arts;
Guilt with pale brow the mimic thunder owns,
And Tyrants tremble on their blood-stain'd thrones.

VI. NYMPHS! You erewhile on simmering cauldrons play'd,
And call'd delighted SAVERY to your aid;
Bade round the youth explosive STEAM aspire
In gathering clouds, and wing'd the wave with fire;
Bade with cold streams the quick expansion stop,
And sunk the immense of vapour to a drop.-
Press'd by the ponderous air the Piston falls
Resistless, sliding through it's iron walls;
Quick moves the balanced beam, of giant-birth,
Wields his large limbs, and nodding shakes the earth.
'The Giant-Power from earth's remotest caves
Lifts with strong arm her dark reluctant waves;
Each cavern'd rock, and hidden den explores,
Drags her dark coals, and digs her shining ores.-
Next, in close cells of ribbed oak confined,
Gale after gale, He crowds the struggling wind;
The imprison'd storms through brazen nostrils roar,
Fan the white flame, and fuse the sparkling ore.
Here high in air the rising stream He pours
To clay-built cisterns, or to lead-lined towers;
Fresh through a thousand pipes the wave distils,
And thirsty cities drink the exuberant rills.-
There the vast mill-stone with inebriate whirl
On trembling floors his forceful fingers twirl.
Whose flinty teeth the golden harvests grind,
Feast without blood! and nourish human-kind.
'Now his hard hands on Mona's rifted crest,
Bosom'd in rock, her azure ores arrest;
With iron lips his rapid rollers seize

The lengthening bars, in thin expansion squeeze;
Descending screws with ponderous fly-wheels wound
The tawny plates, the new medallions round;
Hard dyes of steel the cupreous circles cramp,
And with quick fall his massy hammers stamp.
The Harp, the Lily and the Lion join,
And GEORGE and BRITAIN guard the sterling coin.
'Soon shall thy arm, UNCONQUER'D STEAM! afar
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car;
Or on wide-waving wings expanded bear
The flying-chariot through the fields of air.
-Fair crews triumphant, leaning from above,
Shall wave their fluttering kerchiefs as they move;
Or warrior-bands alarm the gaping crowd,
And armies shrink beneath the shadowy cloud.
'So mighty HERCULES o'er many a clime
Waved his vast mace in Virtue's cause sublime,
Unmeasured strength with early art combined,
Awed, served, protected, and amazed mankind.-
First two dread Snakes at JUNO'S vengeful nod
Climb'd round the cradle of the sleeping God;
Waked by the shrilling hiss, and rustling sound,
And shrieks of fair attendants trembling round,
Their gasping throats with clenching hands he holds;
And Death untwists their convoluted folds.
Next in red torrents from her sevenfold heads
Fell HYDRA'S blood on Lerna's lake he sheds;
Grasps ACHELOUS with resistless force,
And drags the roaring River to his course;
Binds with loud bellowing and with hideous yell
The monster Bull, and threefold Dog of Hell.
'Then, where Nemea's howling forests wave,
He drives the Lion to his dusky cave;
Seized by the throat the growling fiend disarms,
And tears his gaping jaws with sinewy arms;
Lifts proud ANTEUS from his mother-plains,
And with strong grasp the struggling Giant strains;
Back falls his fainting head, and clammy hair,
Writhe his weak limbs, and flits his life in air;-
By steps reverted o'er the blood-dropp'd fen
He tracks huge CACUS to his murderous den;
Where breathing flames through brazen lips he fled,

And shakes the rock-roof'd cavern o'er his head.
'Last with wide arms the solid earth He tears,
Piles rock on rock, on mountain mountain rears;
Heaves up huge ABYLA on Afric's sand,
Crowns with high CALPÈ Europe's saliant strand,
Crests with opposing towers the splendid scene,
And pours from urns immense the sea between.-
-Loud o'er her whirling flood Charybdis roars,
Affrighted Scylla bellows round his shores,
Vesuvio groans through all his echoing caves,
And Etna thunders o'er the insurgent waves.

VII. 1. NYMPHS! YOUR fine hands ethereal floods amass
From the warm cushion, and the whirling glass;
Beard the bright cylinder with golden wire,
And circumfuse the gravitating fire.
Cold from each point cerulean lustres gleam,
Or shoot in air the scintillating stream.
So, borne on brazen talons, watch'd of old
The sleepless dragon o'er his fruits of gold;
Bright beam'd his scales, his eye-balls blazed with ire,
And his wide nostrils breath'd enchanted fire.
'YOU bid gold-leaves, in crystal lanterns held,
Approach attracted, and recede repel'd;
While paper-nymphs instinct with motion rife,
And dancing fauns the admiring Sage surprize.
OR, if on wax some fearless Beauty stand,
And touch the sparkling rod with graceful hand;
Through her fine limbs the mimic lightnings dart,
And flames innocuous eddy round her heart;
O'er her fair brow the kindling lustres glare,
Blue rays diverging from her bristling hair;
While some fond Youth the kiss ethereal sips.
And soft fires issue from their meeting lips.
So round the virgin Saint in silver streams
The holy Halo shoots it's arrowy beams.
'YOU crowd in coated jars the denser fire,
Pierce the thin glass, and fuse the blazing wire;
Or dart the red flash through the circling band
Of youths and timorous damsels, hand in hand.
-Starts the quick Ether through the fibre-trains
Of dancing arteries, and of tingling veins,

Goads each fine nerve, with new sensation thrill'd,
 Bends the reluctant limbs with power unwill'd;
 Palsy's cold hands the fierce concussion own,
 And Life clings trembling on her tottering throne.-
 So from dark clouds the playful lightning springs,
 Rives the firm oak, or prints the Fairy-rings.
 2. NYMPHS! on that day YE shed from lucid eyes.
 Celestial tears, and breathed ethereal sighs!
 When RICHMAN rear'd, by fearless haste betrayed,
 The wiry rod in Nieva's fatal shade;-
 Clouds o'er the Sage, with fringed skirts succeed,
 Flash follows flash, the warning corks recede;
 Near and more near He ey'd with fond amaze
 The silver streams, and watch'd the sapphire blaze;
 Then burst the steel, the dart electric sped,
 And the bold Sage lay number'd with the dead!-
 NYMPHS! on that day YE shed from lucid eyes
 Celestial tears, and breathed ethereal sighs!
 3. 'YOU led your FRANKLIN to your glazed retreats,
 Your air-built castles, and your silken seats;
 Bade his bold arm invade the lowering sky,
 And seize the tiptoe lightnings, ere they fly;
 O'er the young Sage your mystic mantle spread,
 And wreath'd the crown electric round his head.-
 Thus when on wanton wing intrepid LOVE
 Snatch'd the raised lightning from the arm of JOVE;
 Quick o'er his knee the triple bolt He bent,
 The cluster'd darts and forky arrows rent,
 Snapp'd with illumin'd hands each flaming shaft,
 His tingling fingers shook, and stamp'd, and laugh'd;
 Bright o'er the floor the scatter'd fragments blaz'd,
 And Gods retreating trembled as they gaz'd;
 The immortal Sire, indulgent to his child,
 Bow'd his ambrosial locks, and Heaven relenting smiled.

VIII. 'When Air's pure essence joins the vital flood,
 And with phosphoric Acid dyes the blood,
 YOUR VIRGIN TRAINS the transient HEAT dispart,
 And lead the soft combustion round the heart;
 Life's holy lamp with fires successive feed,
 From the crown'd forehead to the prostrate weed,
 From Earth's proud realms to all that swim or sweep

The yielding ether or tumultuous deep.
You swell the bulb beneath the heaving lawn,
Brood the live seed, unfold the bursting spawn;
Nurse with soft lap, and warm with fragrant breath
The embryo panting in the arms of Death;
Youth's vivid eye with living light adorn,
And fire the rising blush of Beauty's golden morn.
'Thus when the Egg of Night, on Chaos hurl'd,
Burst, and disclosed the cradle of the world;
First from the gaping shell refulgent sprung
IMMORTAL LOVE, his bow celestial strung;-
O'er the wide waste his gaudy wings unfold,
Beam his soft smiles, and wave his curls of gold;-
With silver darts He pierced the kindling frame,
And lit with torch divine the ever-living flame.'

IX. The GODDESS paused, admired with conscious pride
The effulgent legions marshal'd by her side,
Forms sphered in fire with trembling light array'd,
Ens without weight, and substance without shade;
And, while tumultuous joy her bosom warms,
Waves her white hand, and calls her hosts to arms,
'Unite, ILLUSTRIOUS NYMPHS! your radiant powers,
Call from their long repose the VERNAL HOURS.
Wake with soft touch, with rosy hands unbind
The struggling pinions of the WESTERN WIND;
Chafe his wan cheeks, his ruffled plumes repair,
And wring the rain-drops from his tangled hair.
Blaze round each frosted rill, or stagnant wave,
And charm the NAIAD from her silent cave;
Where, shrined in ice, like NIOBE she mourns,
And clasps with hoary arms her empty urns.
Call your bright myriads, trooping from afar,
With beamy helmets, and glittering shafts of war;
In phalanx firm the FIEND OF FROST assail,
Break his white towers, and pierce his crystal mail;
To Zembla's moon-bright coasts the Tyrant bear,
And chain him howling to the Northern Bear.
'So when enormous GRAMPUS, issuing forth
From the pale regions of the icy North;
Waves his broad tail, and opes his ribbed mouth,
And seeks on winnowing fin the breezy South;

From towns deserted rush the breathless hosts,
Swarm round the hills, and darken all the coasts;
Boats follow boats along the shouting tides,
And spears and javelins pierce his blubbery sides;
Now the bold Sailor, raised on pointed toe,
Whirls the wing'd harpoon on the slimy foe;
Quick sinks the monster in his oozy bed,
The blood-stain'd surges circling o'er his head,
Steers to the frozen pole his wonted track,
And bears the iron tempest on his back.

X. 'On wings of flame, ETHEREAL VIRGINS! sweep
O'er Earth's fair bosom, and complacent deep;
Where dwell my vegetative realms benumb'd,
In buds imprison'd, or in bulbs intomb'd,
Pervade, PELLUCID FORMS! their cold retreat,
Ray from bright urns your viewless floods of
heat
;
From earth's deep wastes
electric
torrents pour,
Or shed from heaven the scintillating shower;
Pierce the dull root, relax its fibre-trains,
Thaw the thick blood, which lingers in its veins;
Melt with warm breath the fragrant gums, that bind
The expanding foliage in its scaly rind;
And as in air the laughing leaflets play,
And turn their shining bosoms to the ray,
NYMPHS! with sweet smile each opening glower invite,
And on its damask eyelids pour the
light

.
'So shall my pines, Canadian wilds that shade,
Where no bold step has pierc'd the tangled glade,
High-towering palms, that part the Southern flood
With shadowy isles and continents of wood,
Oaks, whose broad antlers crest Britannia's plain,
Or bear her thunders o'er the conquer'd main,
Shout, as you pass, inhale the genial skies,
And bask and brighten in your beamy eyes;
Bow their white heads, admire the changing clime,

Shake from their candied trunks the tinkling rime;
With bursting buds their wrinkled barks adorn,
And wed the timorous floret to her thorn;
Deep strike their roots, their lengthening tops revive,
And all my world of foliage wave, alive.

'Thus with Hermetic art the ADEPT combines
The royal acid with cobaltic mines;
Marks with quick pen, in lines unseen portrayed,
The blushing mead, green dell, and dusky glade;
Shades with pellucid clouds the tintless field,
And all the future Group exists conceal'd;
Till waked by fire the dawning tablet glows,
Green springs the herb, the purple floret blows,
Hills vales and woods in bright succession rise,
And all the living landscape charms his eyes.

XI. 'With crest of gold should sultry SIRIUS glare,
And with his kindling tresses scorch the air;
With points of flame the shafts of Summer arm,
And burn the beauties he designs to warm;-
-So erst when JOVE his oath extorted mourn'd,
And clad in glory to the Fair return'd;
While Loves at forked bolts their torches light,
And resting lightnings gild the car of Night;
His blazing form the dazzled Maid admir'd,
Met with fond lips, and in his arms expir'd;-
NYMPHS! on light pinion lead your banner'd hosts
High o'er the cliffs of ORKNEY'S gulphic coasts;
Leave on your left the red volcanic light,
Which HECCLA lifts amid the dusky night;
Mark on the right the DOFRINE'S snow-capt brow,
Where whirling MAELSTROME roars and foams below;
Watch with unmoving eye, where CEPHEUS bends
His triple crown, his scepter'd hand extends;
Where studs CASSIOPE with stars unknown
Her golden chair, and gems her sapphire zone;
Where with vast convolution DRACO holds
The ecliptic axis in his scaly folds,
O'er half the skies his neck enormous rears,
And with immense meanders parts the BEARS;
Onward, the kindred BEARS with footstep rude
Dance round the Pole, pursuing and pursued.

'There in her azure coif and starry stole,
Grey TWILIGHT sits, and rules the slumbering Pole;
Bends the pale moon-beams round the sparkling coast,
And strews with livid hands eternal frost.
There, NYMPHS! alight, array your dazzling powers,
With sudden march alarm the torpid Hours;
On ice-built isles expand a thousand sails,
Hinge the strong helms, and catch the frozen gales;
The winged rocks to feverish climates guide,
Where fainting Zephyrs pant upon the tide;
Pass, where to CEUTA CALPE'S thunder roars,
And answering echoes shake the kindred shores;
Pass, where with palmy plumes CANARY smiles,
And in her silver girdle binds her isles;
Onward, where NIGER'S dusky Naiad laves
A thousand kingdoms with prolific waves,
Or leads o'er golden sands her threefold train
In steamy channels to the fervid main,
While swarthy nations croud the sultry coast,
Drink the fresh breeze, and hail the floating Frost,
NYMPHS! veil'd in mist, the melting treasures steer,
And cool with arctic snows the tropic year.
So from the burning Line by Monsoons driven
Clouds sail in squadrons o'er the darken'd heaven;
Wide wastes of sand the gelid gales pervade,
And ocean cools beneath the moving shade.

XII. Should SOLSTICE, stalking through the sickening bowers,
Suck the warm dew-drops, lap the falling showers;
Kneel with parch'd lip, and bending from it's brink
From dripping palm the scanty river drink;
NYMPHS! o'er the soil ten thousand points erect,
And high in air the electric flame collect.
Soon shall dark mists with self-attraction shroud
The blazing day, and sail in wilds of cloud;
Each silvery Flower the streams aerial quaff,
Bow her sweet head, and infant Harvest laugh.
'Thus when ELIJA mark'd from Carmel's brow
In bright expanse the briny flood below;
Roll'd his red eyes amid the scorching air,
Smote his firm breast, and breathed his ardent prayer;
High in the midst a massy altar stood,

And slaughter'd offerings press'd the piles of wood;
 While ISRAEL'S chiefs the sacred hill surround,
 And famish'd armies crowd the dusty ground;
 While proud Idolatry was leagued with dearth,
 And wither'd famine swept the desert earth.-
 'OH, MIGHTY LORD! thy woe-worn servant hear,
 'Who calls thy name in agony of prayer;
 'Thy fanes dishonour'd, and thy prophets slain,
 'Lo! I alone survive of all thy train!-
 'Oh send from heaven thy sacred fire,-and pour
 'O'er the parch'd land the salutary shower,-
 'So shall thy Priest thy erring flock recal,-
 'And speak in thunder, 'THOU ART LORD OF ALL.'-
 He cried, and kneeling on the mountain-sands,
 Stretch'd high in air his supplicating hands.
 -Descending flames the dusky shrine illumine;
 Fire the wet wood, the sacred bull consume;
 Wing'd from the sea the gathering mists arise,
 And floating waters darken all the skies;
 The King with shifted reins his chariot bends,
 And wide o'er earth the airy flood descends;
 With mingling cries dispersing hosts applaud,
 And shouting nations own THE LIVING GOD.'
 The GODDESS ceased,-the exulting tribes obey,
 Start from the soil, and win their airy way;
 The vaulted skies with streams of transient rays
 Shine, as they pass, and earth and ocean blaze.
 So from fierce wars when lawless Monarch's cease,
 Or Liberty returns with laurel'd Peace;
 Bright fly the sparks, the colour'd lustres burn,
 Flash follows flash
 Blue serpents sweep along the dusky air,
 Imp'd by long trains of scintillating hair;
 Red rockets rise, loud cracks are heard on high,
 And showers of stars rush headlong from the sky,
 Burst, as in silver lines they hiss along,
 And the quick flash unfolds the gazing throng.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden(Part II)

The Economy Of Vegetation

Canto II

AND NOW THE GODDESS with attention sweet
Turns to the GNOMES, that circle round her feet;
Orb within orb approach the marshal'd trains,
And pigmy legions darken all the plains;
Thrice shout with silver tones the applauding bands,
Bow, ere She speaks, and clap their fairy hands.
So the tall grass, when noon-tide zephyr blows,
Bends it's green blades in undulating rows;
Wide o'er the fields the billowy tumult spreads,
And rustling harvests bow their golden heads.

I. 'GNOMES! YOUR bright forms, presiding at her birth,
Clung in fond squadrons round the new-born EARTH;
When high in ether, with explosion dire,
From the deep craters of his realms of fire,
The whirling Sun this ponderous planet hurl'd,
And gave the astonish'd void another world.
When from it's vaporous air, condensed by cold,
Descending torrents into oceans roll'd;
And fierce attraction with relentless force
Bent the reluctant wanderer to it's course.
'Where yet the Bull with diamond-eye adorns
The Spring's fair forehead, and with golden horns;
Where yet the Lion climbs the ethereal plain,
And shakes the Summer from his radiant mane;
Where Libra lifts her airy arm, and weighs,
Poised in her silver ballance, nights and days;
With paler lustres where Aquarius burns,
And showers the still snow from his hoary urns;
YOUR ardent troops pursued the flying sphere,
Circling the starry girdle of the year;
While sweet vicissitudes of day and clime
Mark'd the new annals of enascent Time.

II. 'You trod with printless step Earth's tender globe,
While Ocean wrap'd it in his azure robe;
Beneath his waves her hardening strata spread,
Raised her PRIMEVAL ISLANDS from his bed,
Stretch'd her wide lawns, and sunk her winding dells,
And deck'd her shores with corals, pearls, and shells.
'O'er those blest isles no ice-crown'd mountains tower'd,
No lightnings darted, and no tempests lower'd;
Soft fell the vesper-drops, condensed below,
Or bent in air the rain-refracted bow;
Sweet breathed the zephyrs, just perceiv'd and lost;
And brineless billows only kiss'd the coast;
Round the bright zodiac danced the vernal hours,
And Peace, the Cherub, dwelt in mortal bowers!
'So young DIONE, nursed beneath the waves,
And rock'd by Nereids in their coral caves,
Charm'd the blue sisterhood with playful wiles,
Lisp'd her sweet tones, and tried her tender smiles.
Then, on her beryl throne by Triton's borne,
Bright rose the Goddess like the Star of morn;
When with soft fires the milky dawn He leads,
And wakes to life and love the laughing meads;-
With rosy fingers, as uncurl'd they hung
Round her fair brow, her golden locks she wrung;
O'er the smooth surge on silver sandals flood,
And look'd enchantment on the dazzled flood.-
The bright drops, rolling from her lifted arms,
In slow meanders wander o'er her charms,
Seek round her snowy neck their lucid track,
Pearl her white shoulders, gem her ivory back,
Round her fine waist and swelling bosom swim,
And star with glittering brine each crystal limb.-
-The immortal form enamour'd Nature hail'd,
And Beauty blazed to heaven and earth, unvail'd.

III. 'You! who then, kindling after many an age,
Saw with new fires the first VOLCANO rage,
O'er smouldering heaps of livid sulphur swell
At Earth's firm centre, and distend her shell,
Saw at each opening cleft the furnace glow,
And seas rush headlong on the gulphs below.-

GNOMES! how you shriek'd! when through the troubled air
Roar'd the fierce din of elemental war;
When rose the continents, and sunk the main,
And Earth's huge sphere exploding burst in twain.-
GNOMES! how you gazed! when from her wounded side
Where now the South-Sea heaves its waste of tide,
Rose on swift wheels the MOON'S refulgent car,
Circling the solar orb; a sister-star,
Dimpled with vales, with shining hills emboss'd,
And roll'd round Earth her airless realms of frost.
'GNOMES! how you trembled! with the dreadful force
When Earth recoiling stagger'd from her course;
When, as her Line in slower circles spun,
And her shock'd axis nodded from the sun,
With dreadful march the accumulated main
Swept her vast wrecks of mountain, vale, and plain;
And, while new tides their shouting floods unite,
And hail their Queen, fair Regent of the night;
Chain'd to one centre whirl'd the kindred spheres,
And mark'd with lunar cycles solar years.

IV. 'GNOMES! you then bade dissolving SHELLS distil
From the loose summits of each shatter'd hill,
To each fine pore and dark interstice flow,
And fill with liquid chalk the mass below.
Whence sparry forms in dusky caverns gleam
With borrow'd light, and twice refract the beam;
While in white beds congealing rocks beneath
Court the nice chissel, and desire to breathe.-
'Hence wearied HERCULES in marble rears
His languid limbs, and rests a thousand years;
Still, as he leans, shall young ANTINOUS please
With careless grace, and unaffected ease;
Onward with loftier step APOLLO spring,
And launch the unerring arrow from the string;
In Beauty's bashful form, the veil unfurl'd,
Ideal VENUS win the gazing world.
Hence on ROUBILIAC'S tomb shall Fame sublime
Wave her triumphant wings, and conquer Time;
Long with soft touch shall DAMER'S chissel charm,
With grace delight us, and with beauty warm;
FOSTER'S fine form shall hearts unborn engage,

And MELBOURN's smile enchant another age.

V. GNOMES! you then taught transuding dew to pass
Through time-fall'n woods, and root-inwove morass
Age after age; and with filtration fine
Dispart, from earths and sulphurs, the saline.

1. 'HENCE with diffusive SALT old Ocean steeps
His emerald shallows, and his sapphire deeps.
Oft in wide lakes, around their warmer brim
In hollow pyramids the crystals swim;
Or, fused by earth-born fires, in cubic blocks
Shoot their white forms, and harden into rocks.
'Thus, cavern'd round in CRACOW'S mighty mines,
With crystal walls a gorgeous city shines;
Scoop'd in the briny rock long streets extend
Their hoary course, and glittering domes ascend;
Down the bright steep, emerging into day,
Impetuous fountains burst their headlong way,
O'er milk-white vales in ivory channels spread,
And wondering seek their subterraneous bed.
Form'd in pellucid salt with chissel nice,
The pale lamp glimmering through the sculptured ice,
With wild reverted eyes fair LOTTA stands,
And spreads to Heaven, in vain, her glassy hands;
Cold dew condense upon her pearly breast,
And the big tear rolls lucid down her vest.
Far gleaming o'er the town transparent fanes
Rear their white towers, and wave their golden vanes;
Long lines of lustres pour their trembling rays,
And the bright vault returns the mingled blaze.

2. 'HENCE orient NITRE owes it's sparkling birth,
And with prismatic crystals gems the earth,
O'er tottering domes in filmy foliage crawls,
Or frosts with branching plumes the mouldering walls.
As woos Azotic Gas the virgin Air,
And veils in crimson clouds the yielding Fair,
Indignant Fire the treacherous courtship flies,
Waves his light wing, and mingles with the skies.
'So Beauty's GODDESS, warm with new desire,
Left, on her silver wheels, the GOD of Fire;
Her faithless charms to fiercer MARS resign'd,
Met with fond lips, with wanton arms intwin'd.

-Indignant VULCAN eyed the parting Fair,
And watch'd with jealous step the guilty pair;
O'er his broad neck a wiry net he flung,
Quick as he strode, the tinkling meshes rung;
Fine as the spider's flimsy thread He wove
The immortal toil to lime illicit love;
Steel were the knots, and steel the twisted thong,
Ring link'd in ring, indissolubly strong;
On viewless hooks along the fretted roof
He hung, unseen, the inextricable woof.-

-Quick start the springs, the webs pellucid spread,
And lock the embracing Lovers on their bed;
Fierce with loud taunts vindictive VULCAN springs,
Tries all the bolts, and tightens all the strings,
Shakes with incessant shouts the bright abodes,
Claps his rude hands, and calls the festive Gods.-

-With spreading palms the alarmed Goddess tries
To veil her beauties from celestial eyes,
Writhes her fair limbs, the slender ringlets strains,
And bids her Loves untie the obdurate chains;
Soft swells her panting bosom, as she turns,
And her flush'd cheek with brighter blushes burns.
Majestic grief the Queen of Heaven avows,
And chaste Minerva hides her helmed brows;
Attendant Nymphs with bashful eyes askance
Steal of intangled MARS a transient glance;
Surrounding Gods the circling nectar quaff,
Gaze on the Fair, and envy as they laugh.

3. 'HENCE dusky IRON sleeps in dark abodes,
And ferny foliage nestles in the nodes;
Till with wide lungs the panting bellows blow,
And waked by fire the glittering torrents flow;
-Quick whirls the wheel, the ponderous hammer falls,
Loud anvils ring amid the trembling walls,
Strokes follow strokes, the sparkling ingot shines,
Flows the red slag, the lengthening bar refines;
Cold waves, immersed, the glowing mass congeal,
And turn to adamant the hissing Steel.

'Last MICHELL'S hands with touch of potent charm
The polish'd rods with powers magnetic arm;
With points directed to the polar stars
In one long line extend the temper'd bars;

Then thrice and thrice with steady eye he guides,
And o'er the adhesive train the magnet slides;
The obedient Steel with living instinct moves,
And veers for ever to the pole it loves.

'Hail, adamantine STEEL! magnetic Lord!
King of the prow, the plowshare, and the sword!
True to the pole, by thee the pilot guides
His steady helm amid the struggling tides,
Braves with broad sail the immeasurable sea,
Cleaves the dark air, and asks no star but Thee.-
By thee the plowshare rends the matted plain,
Inhumes in level rows the living grain;
Intrusive forests quit the cultured ground,
And Ceres laughs with golden fillets crown'd.-
O'er restless realms when scowling Discord flings
Her snakes, and loud the din of battle rings;
Expiring Strength, and vanquish'd Courage feel
Thy arm resistless, adamantine STEEL!

4. 'HENCE in fine streams diffusive ACIDS flow,
Or wing'd with fire o'er Earth's fair bosom blow;
Transmute to glittering Flints her chalky lands,
Or sink on Ocean's bed in countless Sands.
Hence silvery Selenite her chrystal moulds,
And soft Asbestos smooths his silky folds;
His cubic forms phosphoric Fluor prints,
Or rays in spheres his amethystine tints.
Soft cobweb clouds transparent Onyx spreads,
And playful Agates weave their colour'd threads;
Gay pictured Mochoes glow with landscape-dyes,
And changeful Opals roll their lucid eyes;
Blue lambent light around the Sapphire plays,
Bright Rubies blush, and living Diamonds blaze.
'Thus, for attractive earth, inconstant JOVE
Mask'd in new shapes forsook his realms above.-
First her sweet eyes his Eagle-form beguiles,
And HEBE feeds him with ambrosial smiles;
Next the chang'd God a Cygnet's down assumes,
And playful LEDA smooths his glossy plumes;
Then glides a silver Serpent, treacherous guest!
And fair OLYMPIA folds him in her breast;
Now lows a milk-white Bull on Afric's strand,
And crops with dancing head the daisy'd land.-

With rosy wreathes EUROPA'S hand adorns
 His fringed forehead, and his pearly horns;
 Light on his back the sportive Damsel bounds,
 And pleased he moves along the flowery grounds;
 Bears with slow step his beauteous prize aloof,
 Dips in the lucid flood his ivory hoof;
 Then wets his velvet knees, and wading laves
 His silky sides amid the dimpling waves.
 While her fond train with beckoning hands deplore,
 Strain their blue eyes, and shriek along the shore;
 Beneath her robe she draws her snowy feet,
 And, half-reclining on her ermine seat,
 Round his raised neck her radiant arms she throws,
 And rests her fair cheek on his curled brows;
 Her yellow tresses wave on wanton gales,
 And high in air her azure mantle sails.
 -Onward He moves, applauding Cupids guide,
 And skim on shooting wing the shining tide;
 Emerging Triton's leave their coral caves,
 Sound their loud conchs, and smooth the circling waves,
 Surround the timorous Beauty, as she swims,
 And gaze enamour'd on her silver limbs.
 -Now Europe's shadowy shores with loud acclaim
 Hail the fair fugitive, and shout her name;
 Soft echoes warble, whispering forests nod,
 And conscious Nature owns the present God.
 -Changed from the Bull, the rapturous God assumes
 Immortal youth, with glow celestial blooms,
 With lenient words her virgin fears disarms,
 And clasps the yielding Beauty in his arms;
 Whence Kings and Heroes own illustrious birth,
 Guards of mankind, and demigods on earth.

VI. 'GNOMES! as you pass'd beneath the labouring soil,
 The guards and guides of Nature's chemic toil,
 YOU saw, deep-sepulchred in dusky realms,
 Which Earth's rock-ribbed ponderous vault o'erwhelms,
 With self-born fires the mass fermenting glow,
 And flame-wing'd sulphurs quit the earths below.

1. 'HENCE ductile CLAYS in wide expansion spread,
 Soft as the Cygnet's down, their snow-white bed;
 With yielding flakes successive forms reveal,

And change obedient to the whirling wheel.
 -First CHINA'S sons, with early art elate,
 Form'd the gay tea-pot, and the pictured plate;
 Saw with illumin'd brow and dazzled eyes
 In the red stove vitrescent colours rise;
 Speck'd her tall beakers with enamel'd stars,
 Her monster-josses, and gigantic jars;
 Smear'd her huge dragons with metallic hues,
 With golden purples, and cobaltic blues;
 Bade on wide hills her porcelain castles glare,
 And glazed Pagodas tremble in the air.
 'ETRURIA! next beneath thy magic hands
 Glides the quick wheel, the plaistic clay expands,
 Nerved with fine touch, thy fingers (as it turns)
 Mark the nice bounds of vases, ewers, and urns;
 Round each fair form in lines immortal trace
 Uncopied Beauty, and ideal Grace.
 'GNOMES! as you now dissect with hammers fine
 The granite-rock, the nodul'd flint calcine;
 Grind with strong arm, the circling chertz betwixt,
 Your pure Ka-o-lins and Pe-tun-tses mixt;
 O'er each red saggars burning cave preside,
 The keen-eyed Fire-Nymphs blazing by your side;
 And pleased on WEDGWOOD ray your partial smile,
 A new Etruria decks Britannia's isle.-
 Charm'd by your touch, the flint liquescent pours
 Through finer sieves, and falls in whiter showers;
 Charm'd by your touch, the kneaded clay refines,
 The biscuit hardens, the enamel shines;
 Each nicer mould a softer feature drinks,
 The bold Cameo speaks, the soft Intaglio thinks.
 'To call the pearly drops from Pity's eye,
 Or stay Despair's disanimating sigh,
 Whether, O Friend of art! the gem you mould
 Rich with new taste, with antient virtue bold;
 Form the poor fetter'd SLAVE on bended knee
 From Britain's sons imploring to be free;
 Or with fair HOPE the brightening scenes improve,
 And cheer the dreary wastes at Sydney-cove;
 Or bid Mortality rejoice and mourn
 O'er the fine forms on PORTLAND'S mystic urn.-
 ,

Here

by fall'n columns and disjoin'd arcades,
On mouldering stones, beneath deciduous shades,
Sits HUMANKIND in hieroglyphic state,
Serious, and pondering on their changeful state;
While with inverted torch, and swimming eyes,
Sinks the fair shade of MORTAL LIFE, and dies.

There

the pale GHOST through Death's wide portal bends
His timid feet, the dusky steep descends;
With smiles assuasive LOVE DIVINE invites,
Guides on broad wing, with torch uplifted lights;
IMMORTAL LIFE, her hand extending, courts
The lingering form, his tottering step supports;
Leads on to Pluto's realms the dreary way,
And gives him trembling to Elysian day.

Beneath

in sacred robes the PRIESTESS dress'd,
The coif close-hooded, and the fluttering vest,
With pointing finger guides the initiate youth,
Unweaves the many-colour'd veil of Truth,
Drives the profane from Mystery's bolted door,
And Silence guards the Eleusinian lore.-
'Whether, O Friend of Art! your gems derive
Fine forms from Greece, and fabled Gods revive;
Or bid from modern life the Portrait breathe,
And bind round Honour's brow the laurel wreath;
Buoyant shall sail, with Fame's historic page,
Each fair medallion o'er the wrecks of age;
Nor Time shall mar; nor steel, nor fire, nor rust
Touch the hard polish of the immortal bust.
2. 'HENCE sable COAL his massy couch extends,
And stars of gold the sparkling Pyrite blends;
Hence dull-eyed Naphtha pours his pitchy streams,
And Jet uncolour'd drinks the solar beams,
Bright Amber shines on his electric throne,
And adds ethereal lustres to his own.
-Led by the phosphor-light, with daring tread
Immortal FRANKLIN sought the fiery bed;
Where, nursed in night, incumbent Tempest shrouds

The seeds of Thunder in circumfluent clouds,
 Besieged with iron points his airy cell,
 And pierced the monster slumbering in the shell.
 'So, born on sounding pinions to the WEST,
 When Tyrant-Power had built his eagle nest;
 While from his eyry shriek'd the famish'd brood,
 Clenched their sharp claws, and champ'd their beaks for blood,
 Immortal FRANKLIN watch'd the callow crew,
 And stabb'd the struggling Vampires, ere they flew.
 -The patriot-flame with quick contagion ran,
 Hill lighted hill, and man electrised man;
 Her heroes slain awhile COLUMBIA mourn'd,
 And crown'd with laurels LIBERTY return'd.
 'The Warrior, LIBERTY, with bending sails
 Helm'd his bold course to fair HIBERNIA'S vales;-
 Firm as he steps, along the shouting lands,
 Lo! Truth and Virtue range their radiant bands;
 Sad Superstition wails her empire torn,
 Art plies his oar, and Commerce pours her horn.
 'Long had the Giant-form on GALLIA'S plains
 Inglorious slept, unconscious of his chains;
 Round his large limbs were wound a thousand strings
 By the weak hands of Confessors and Kings;
 O'er his closed eyes a triple veil was bound,
 And steely rivets lock'd him to the ground;
 While stern Bastile with iron cage inthralls
 His folded limbs, and hems in marble walls.
 -Touch'd by the patriot-flame, he rent amazed
 The flimsy bonds, and round and round him gazed;
 Starts up from earth, above the admiring throng
 Lifts his Colossal form, and towers along;
 High o'er his foes his hundred arms He rears,
 Plowshares his swords, and pruning hooks his spears;
 Calls to the Good and Brave with voice, that rolls
 Like Heaven's own thunder round the echoing poles;
 Gives to the winds his banner broad unfurl'd,
 And gathers in its shade the living world!

VII. 'GNOMES! YOU then taught volcanic airs to force
 Through bubbling Lavas their resistless course,
 O'er the broad walls of rifted Granite climb,
 And pierce the rent roof of incumbent Lime,

Round sparry caves metallic lustres fling,
 And bear phlogiston on their tepid wing.
 'HENCE glows, refulgent Tin! thy chrystal grains,
 And tawny Copper shoots her azure veins;
 Zinc lines his fretted vault with sable ore,
 And dull Galena tessellates the floor;
 On vermil beds in Idria's mighty caves
 The living Silver rolls its ponderous waves;
 With gay refractions bright Platina shines,
 And studs with squander'd stars his dusky mines;
 Long threads of netted gold, and silvery darts,
 Inlay the Lazuli, and pierce the Quartz;-
 -Whence roof'd with silver beam'd PERU, of old,
 And hapless MEXICO was paved with gold.
 'Heavens! on my sight what sanguine colours blaze!
 Spain's deathless shame! the crimes of modern days!
 When Avarice, shrouded in Religion's robe,
 Sail'd to the West, and slaughter'd half the globe;
 While Superstition, stalking by his side,
 Mock'd the loud groans, and lap'd the bloody tide;
 For sacred truths announced her frenzied dreams,
 And turn'd to night the sun's meridian beams.-
 Hear, oh, BRITANNIA! potent Queen of isles,
 On whom fair Art, and meek Religion smiles,
 Now AFRIC'S coasts thy craftier sons invade
 With murder, rapine, theft,-and call it Trade!
 -The SLAVE, in chains, on supplicating knee,
 Spreads his wide arms, and lifts his eyes to Thee;
 With hunger pale, with wounds and toil oppress'd,
 'ARE WE NOT BRETHERN?' sorrow choaks the rest;-
 -AIR! bear to heaven upon thy azure flood
 Their innocent cries!-EARTH! cover not their blood!

VIII. 'When Heaven's dread justice smites in crimes o'ergrown
 The blood-nursed Tyrant on his purple throne,
 GNOMES! YOUR bold forms unnumber'd arms outstretch,
 And urge the vengeance o'er the guilty wretch.-
 Thus when CAMBYSES led his barbarous hosts
 From Persia's rocks to Egypt's trembling coasts,
 Defiled each hallowed fane, and sacred wood,
 And, drunk with fury, swell'd the Nile with blood;
 Waved his proud banner o'er the Theban states,

And pour'd destruction through her hundred gates;
 In dread divisions march'd the marshal'd bands,
 And swarming armies blacken'd all the lands,
 By Memphis these to ETHIOP'S sultry plains,
 And those to HAMMON'S sand-incircled fanes.-
 Slow as they pass'd, the indignant temples frown'd,
 Low curses muttering from the vaulted ground;
 Long ailes of Cypress waved their deepen'd glooms,
 And quivering spectres grin'd amid the tombs;
 Prophetic whispers breathed from S
 And MEMNON'S lyre with hollow murmurs rung;
 Burst from each pyramid expiring groans,
 And darker shadows stretch'd their lengthen'd cones.-
 Day after day their deathful rout They steer,
 Lust in the van, and rapine in the rear.
 'GNOMES! as they march'd, You hid the gathered fruits,
 The bladed grass, sweet grains, and mealy roots;
 Scared the tired quails, that journey'd o'er their heads,
 Retain'd the locusts in their earthy beds;
 Bade on your sands no night-born dews distil,
 Stay'd with vindictive hands the scanty rill.-
 Loud o'er the camp the Fiend of Famine shrieks,
 Calls all her brood, and champs her hundred beaks;
 O'er ten square leagues her pennons broad expand,
 And twilight swims upon the shuddering sand;
 Perch'd on her crest the Griffin Discord clings,
 And Giant Murder rides between her wings;
 Blood from each clotted hair, and horny quill,
 And showers of tears in blended streams distil;
 High-poised in air her spiry neck she bends,
 Rolls her keen eye, her Dragon-claws extends,
 Darts from above, and tears at each fell swoop
 With iron fangs the decimated troop.
 'Now o'er their head the whizzing whirlwinds breathe,
 And the live desert pants, and heaves beneath;
 Tinged by the crimson sun, vast columns rise
 Of eddyng sands, and war amid the skies,
 In red arcades the billowy plain surround,
 And stalking turrets dance upon the ground.
 -Long ranks in vain their shining blades extend,
 To Demon-Gods their knees unhallow'd bend,
 Wheel in wide circle, form in hollow square,

And now they front, and now they fly the war,
Pierce the deaf tempest with lamenting cries,
Press their parch'd lips, and close their blood-shot eyes.
-GNOMES! o'er the waste YOU led your myriad powers,
Climb'd on the whirls, and aim'd the flinty showers!-
Onward resistless rolls the infuriate surge,
Clouds follow clouds, and mountains mountains urge;
Wave over wave the driving desert swims,
Bursts o'er their heads, inhumes their struggling limbs;
Man mounts on man, on camels camels rush,
Hosts march o'er hosts, and nations nations crush,-
Wheeling in air the winged islands fall,
And one great earthy Ocean covers all!-
Then ceased the storm,-NIGHT bow'd his Ethiop brow
To earth, and listen'd to the groans below,-
Grim HORROR shook,-awhile the living hill
Heaved with convulsive throes,-and all was still!

IX. 'GNOMES! whose fine forms, impassive as the air,
Shrink with soft sympathy for human care;
Who glide unseen, on printless slippers borne,
Beneath the waving grass, and nodding corn;
Or lay your tiny limbs, when noon-tide warms,
Where shadowy cowslips stretch their golden arms,-
So mark'd on orreries in lucid signs,
Star'd with bright points the mimic zodiac shines;
Borne on fine wires amid the pictured skies
With ivory orbs the planets set and rise;
Round the dwarf earth the pearly moon is roll'd,
And the sun twinkling whirls his rays of gold.-
Call your bright myriads, march your mailed hosts,
With spears and helmets glittering round the coasts;
Thick as the hairs, which rear the Lion's mane,
Or fringe the Boar, that bays the hunter-train;
Watch, where proud Surges break their treacherous mounds,
And sweep resistless o'er the cultured grounds;
Such as erewhile, impell'd o'er Belgia's plain,
Roll'd her rich ruins to the insatiate main;
With piles and piers the ruffian waves engage,
And bid indignant Ocean stay his rage.
'Where, girt with clouds, the rifted mountain yawns,
And chills with length of shade the gelid lawns,

Climb the rude steeps, the granite-cliffs surround,
Pierce with steel points, with wooden wedges wound;
Break into clays the soft volcanic slaggs,
Or melt with acid airs the marble craggs;
Crown the green summits with adventurous flocks,
And charm with novel flowers the wondering rocks.
-So when proud Rome the Afric Warrior braved,
And high on Alps his crimson banner waved;
While rocks on rocks their beetling brows oppose
With piny forests, and unfathomed snows;
Onward he march'd, to Latium's velvet ground
With fires and acids burst the obdurate bound,
Wide o'er her weeping vales destruction hurl'd,
And shook the rising empire of the world.

X. 'Go, gentle GNOMES! resume your vernal toil,
Seek my chill tribes, which sleep beneath the soil;
On grey-moss banks, green meads, or furrow'd lands
Spread the dark mould, white lime, and crumbling sands;
Each bursting bud with healthier juices feed,
Emerging scion, or awaken'd seed.
So, in descending streams, the silver Chyle
Streaks with white clouds the golden floods of bile;
Through each nice valve the mingling currents glide,
Join their fine rills, and swell the sanguine tide;
Each countless cell, and viewless fibre seek,
Nerve the strong arm, and tinge the blushing cheek.
'Oh, watch, where bosom'd in the teeming earth,
Green swells the germ, impatient for its birth;
Guard from rapacious worms its tender shoots,
And drive the mining beetle from its roots;
With ceaseless efforts rend the obdurate clay,
And give my vegetable babes to day!
-Thus when an Angel-form, in light array'd,
Like HOWARD pierced the prison's noisome shade;
Where chain'd to earth, with eyes to heaven upturn'd,
The kneeling Saint in holy anguish mourn'd;-
Ray'd from his lucid vest, and halo'd brow
O'er the dark roof celestial lustres glow,
'PETER, arise!' with cheering voice He calls,
And sounds seraphic echo round the walls;
Locks, bolts, and chains his potent touch obey,

And pleased he leads the dazzled Sage to day.

XI. 'YOU! whose fine fingers fill the organic cells,
With virgin earth, of woods and bones and shells;
Mould with retractile glue their spongy beds,
And stretch and strengthen all their fibre-threads.-
Late when the mass obeys its changeful doom,
And sinks to earth, its cradle and its tomb,
GNOMES! with nice eye the slow solution watch,
With fostering hand the parting atoms catch,
Join in new forms, combine with life and sense,
And guide and guard the transmigrating Ens.
'So when on Lebanon's sequester'd hight
The fair ADONIS left the realms of light,
Bow'd his bright locks, and, fated from his birth
To change eternal, mingled with the earth;-
With darker horror shook the conscious wood,
Groan'd the sad gales, and rivers blush'd with blood;
On cypress-boughs the Loves their quivers hung,
Their arrows scatter'd, and their bows unstrung;
And BEAUTY'S GODDESS, bending o'er his bier,
Breathed the soft sigh, and pour'd the tender tear.-
Admiring PROSERPINE through dusky glades
Led the fair phantom to Elysian shades,
Clad with new form, with finer sense combined,
And lit with purer flame the ethereal mind.
-Erewhile, emerging from infernal night,
The bright Assurgent rises into light,
Leaves the drear chambers of the insatiate tomb,
And shines and charms with renovated bloom.-
While wondering Loves the bursting grave surround,
And edge with meeting wings the yawning ground,
Stretch their fair necks, and leaning o'er the brink
View the pale regions of the dead, and shrink;
Long with broad eyes ecstatic BEAUTY stands,
Heaves her white bosom, spreads her waxen hands;
Then with loud shriek the panting Youth alarms,
'My Life! my Love!' and springs into his arms.'
The GODDESS ceased,-the delegated throng
O'er the wide plains delighted rush along;
In dusky squadrons, and in shining groups,
Hosts follow hosts, and troops succeed to troops;

Scarce bears the bending grass the moving freight,
And nodding florets bow beneath their weight.
So when light clouds on airy pinions sail,
Flit the soft shadows o'er the waving vale;
Shade follows shade, as laughing Zephyrs drive,
And all the chequer'd landscape seems alive.

Erasmus Darwin

The Botanic Garden(Part Iii)

The Economy Of Vegetation

Canto III

AGAIN the GODDESS speaks!-glad Echo swells
The tuneful tones along her shadowy dells,
Her wrinkling founts with soft vibration shakes,
Curls her deep wells, and ripples all her lakes,
Thrills each wide stream, Britannia's isle that laves,
Her headlong cataracts, and circumfluent waves.
-Thick as the dews, which deck the morning flowers,
Or rain-drops twinkling in the sun-bright showers,
Fair Nymphs, emerging in pellucid bands,
Rise, as she turns, and whiten all the lands.

I. 'YOUR buoyant troops on dimpling ocean tread,
Wafting the moist air from his oozy bed,
AQUATIC NYMPHS!-YOU lead with viewless march
The winged vapours up the aerial arch,
On each broad cloud a thousand sails expand,
And steer the shadowy treasure o'er the land,
Through vernal skies the gathering drops diffuse,
Plunge in soft rains, or sink in silver dews.-
YOUR lucid bands condense with fingers chill
The blue mist hovering round the gelid hill;
In clay-form'd beds the trickling streams collect,
Strain through white sands, through pebbly veins direct;
Or point in rifted rocks their dubious way,
And in each bubbling fountain rise to day.

'NYMPHS! YOU then guide, attendant from their source,
The associate rills along their sinuous course;
Float in bright squadrons by the willowy brink,
Or circling slow in limpid eddies sink;
Call from her crystal cave the Naiad-Nymph,
Who hides her fine form in the passing lymph,
And, as below she braids her hyaline hair,

Eyes her soft smiles reflected in the air;
Or sport in groups with River-Boys, that lave
Their silken limbs amid the dashing wave;
Pluck the pale primrose bending from its edge,
Or tittering dance amid the whispering sedge.-

'Onward YOU pass, the pine-capt hills divide,
Or feed the golden harvests on their side;
The wide-ribb'd arch with hurrying torrents fill,
Shove the slow barge, or whirl the foaming mill.
OR lead with beckoning hand the sparkling train
Of refluent water to its parent main,
And pleased revisit in their sea-moss vales
Blue Nereid-forms array'd in shining scales,
Shapes, whose broad oar the torpid wave impels,
And Tritons bellowing through their twisted shells.

'So from the heart the sanguine stream distils,
O'er Beauty's radiant shrine in vermil rills,
Feeds each fine nerve, each slender hair pervades,
The skins bright snow with living purple shades,
Each dimpling cheek with warmer blushes dyes,
Laughs on the lips, and lightens in the eyes.
-Erewhile absorb'd, the vagrant globules swim
From each fair feature, and proportion'd limb,
Join'd in one trunk with deeper tint return
To the warm concave of the vital urn.

II. 1.'AQUATIC MAIDS! YOU sway the mighty realms
Of scale and shell, which Ocean overwhelms;
As Night's pale Queen her rising orb reveals,
And climbs the zenith with refulgent wheels,
Car'd on the foam your glimmering legion rides,
Your little tridents heave the dashing tides,
Urge on the sounding shores their crystal course,
Restrain their fury, or direct their force.

2.'NYMPHS! YOU adorn, in glossy volumes roll'd,
The gaudy conch with azure, green, and gold.
You round Echinus ray his arrowy mail,
Give the keel'd Nautilus his oar and sail;

Firm to his rock with silver cords suspend
The anchor'd Pinna, and his Cancer-friend;
With worm-like beard his toothless lips array,
And teach the unwieldy Sturgeon to betray.-
Ambush'd in weeds, or sepulcher'd in sands,
In dread repose He waits the scaly bands,
Waves in red spires the living lures, and draws
The unwary plunderers to his circling jaws,
Eyes with grim joy the twinkling shoals beset,
And clasps the quick inextricable net.
You chase the warrior Shark, and cumberous Whale,
And guard the Mermaid in her briny vale;
Feed the live petals of her insect-flowers,
Her shell-wrack gardens, and her sea-fan bowers;
With ores and gems adorn her coral cell,
And drop a pearl in every gaping shell.

3. 'YOUR myriad trains o'er stagnant ocean's tow,
Harness'd with gossamer, the loitering prow;
Or with fine films, suspended o'er the deep,
Of oil effusive lull the waves to sleep.
You stay the flying bark, conceal'd beneath,
Where living rocks of worm-built coral breathe;
Meet fell TEREDO, as he mines the keel
With beaked head, and break his lips of steel;
Turn the broad helm, the fluttering canvas urge
From MAELSTROME'S fierce innavigable surge.
-Mid the lorn isles of Norway's stormy main,
As sweeps o'er many a league his eddying train,
Vast watery walls in rapid circles spin,
And deep-ingulph'd the Demon dwells within;
Springs o'er the fear-froze crew with Harpy-claws,
Down his deep den the whirling vessel draws;
Churns with his bloody mouth the dread repast,
The booming waters murmuring o'er the mast.

III. 'Where with chill frown enormous ALPS alarms
A thousand realms, horizon'd in his arms;
While cloudless suns meridian glories shed
From skies of silver round his hoary head,
Tall rocks of ice refract the coloured rays,

And Frost sits throned amid the lambent blaze;
NYMPHS! YOUR thin forms pervade his glittering piles,
His roofs of chrystal, and his glasy ailes;
Where in cold caves imprisoned Naiads sleep,
Or chain'd on mossy couches wake and weep;
Where round dark crags indignant waters bend
Through rifted ice, in ivory veins descend,
Seek through unfathom'd snows their devious track,
Heave the vast spars, the ribbed granites crack,
Rush into day, in foamy torrents shine,
And swell the imperial Danube or the Rhine.-
Or feed the murmuring TIBER, as he laves
His realms inglorious with diminish'd waves,
Hears his lorn Forum sound with Eunuch-strains,
Sees dancing slaves insult his martial plains;
Parts with chill stream the dim religious bower,
Time-mouldered bastion, and dismantled tower;
By alter'd fanes and nameless villas glides,
And classic domes, that tremble on his sides;
Sighs o'er each broken urn, and yawning tomb,
And mourns the fall of LIBERTY and ROME.

IV. 'Sailing in air, when dark MONSOON inshrouds
His tropic mountains in a night of clouds;
Or drawn by whirlwinds from the Line returns,
And showers o'er Afric all his thousand urns;
High o'er his head the beams of SIRIUS glow,
And, Dog of Nile, ANUBIS barks below.
NYMPHS! YOU from cliff to cliff attendant guide
In headlong cataracts the impetuous tide;
Or lead o'er wastes of Abyssinian sands
The bright expanse to EGYPT'S shower-less lands.
-Her long canals the sacred waters fill,
And edge with silver every peopled hill;
Gigantic SPHINX in circling waves admire;
And MEMNON bending o'er his broken lyre;
O'er furrow'd glebes and green savannas sweep,
And towns and temples laugh amid the deep.

V. 1. 'High in the frozen North where HECCLA glows,

And melts in torrents his coeval snows;
O'er isles and oceans sheds a sanguine light,
Or shoots red stars amid the ebon night;
When, at his base intomb'd, with bellowing sound
Fell GIESAR roar'd, and struggling shook the ground;
Pour'd from red nostrils, with her scalding breath,
A boiling deluge o'er the blasted heath;
And, wide in air, in misty volumes hurl'd
Contagious atoms o'er the alarmed world;
NYMPHS! YOUR bold myriads broke the infernal spell,
And crush'd the Sorceress in her flinty cell.

2. 'Where with soft fires in unextinguish'd urns,
Cauldron'd in rock, innocuous Lava burns;
On the bright lake YOUR gelid hands distil
In pearly mowers the parsimonious rill;
And, as aloft the curling vapours rise
Through the cleft roof, ambitious for the skies,
In vaulted hills condense the tepid steams,
And pour to HEALTH the medicated streams.
-So in green vales amid her mountains bleak
BUXTONIA smiles, the Goddess-Nymy of Peak;
Deep in warm waves, and pebbly baths she dwells,
And calls HYGEIA to her sainted wells.

'Hither in sportive bands bright DEVON leads
Graces and Loves from Chatsworth's flowery meads.-
Charm'd round the NYMPH, they climb the rifted rocks;
And steep in mountain-mist their golden locks;
On venturous step her sparry caves explore,
And light with radiant eyes her realms of ore;
-Oft by her bubbling founts, and shadowy domes,
In gay undress the fairy legion roams,
Their dripping palms in playful malice fill,
Or taste with ruby lip the sparkling rill;
Croud round her baths, and, bending o'er the side,
Unclasp'd their sandals, and their zones untied,
Dip with gay fear the shuddering foot undress'd,
And quick retract it to the fringed vest;
Or cleave with brandish'd arms the lucid stream,
And sob, their blue eyes twinkling in the steam.
-High o'er the chequer'd vault with transient glow

Bright lustres dart, as dash the waves below;
And Echo's sweet responsive voice prolongs
The dulcet tumult of their silver tongues.-
O'er their flush'd cheeks uncurling tresses flow,
And dew-drops glitter on their necks of snow;
Round each fair Nymph her dropping mantle clings,
And Loves emerging shake their showery wings.

'Here oft her LORD surveys the rude domain,
Fair arts of Greece triumphant in his train;
LO! as he steps, the column'd pile ascends,
The blue roof closes, or the crescent bends;
New woods aspiring clothe their hills with green,
Smooth slope the lawns, the grey rock peeps between;
Relenting Nature gives her hand to Taste,
And Health and Beauty crown the laughing waste.

VI. 'NYMPHS! YOUR bright squadrons watch with chemic eyes
The cold-elastic vapours, as they rise;
With playful force arrest them as they pass,
And to
pure
AIR betroth the
flaming
GAS.

Round their translucent forms at once they fling
Their rapturous arms, with silver bosoms cling;
In fleecy clouds their fluttering wings extend,
Or from the skies in lucid showers descend;
Whence rills and rivers owe their secret birth,
And Ocean's hundred arms infold the earth.

'So, robed by Beauty's Queen, with softer charms
SATURNIA woo'd the Thunderer to her arms;
O'er her fair limbs a veil of light she spread,
And bound a starry diadem on her head;
Long braids of pearl her golden tresses grac'd,
And the charm'd CESTUS sparkled round her waist.
-Raised o'er the woof, by Beauty's hand inwrought,
Breathes the soft Sigh, and glows the enamour'd Thought;
Vows on light wings succeed, and quiver'd Wiles,
Assuasive Accents, and seductive Smiles.

-Slow rolls the Cyprian car in purple pride,
 And, steer'd by LOVE, ascends admiring Ide;
 Climbs the green slopes, the nodding woods pervades,
 Burns round the rocks, or gleams amid the shades.
 -Glad ZEPHYR leads the train, and waves above
 The barbed darts, and blazing torch of Love;
 Reverts his smiling face, and pausing flings
 Soft showers of roses from aurelian wings.
 Delighted Fawns, in wreathes of flowers array'd,
 With tiptoe Wood-Boys beat the chequer'd glade;
 Alarmed Naiads, rising into air,
 Lift o'er their silver urns their leafy hair;
 Each to her oak the bashful Dryads shrink,
 And azure eyes are seen through every chink.
 -LOVE culls a flaming shaft of broadest wing,
 And rests the fork upon the quivering string;
 Points his arch eye aloft, with fingers strong
 Draws to his curled ear the silken thong;
 Loud twangs the steel, the golden arrow flies,
 Trails a long line of lustre through the skies;
 'Tis done!' he shouts, 'the mighty Monarch feels!'
 And with loud laughter shakes the silver wheels;
 Bends o'er the car, and whirling, as it moves,
 His loosen'd bowstring, drives the rising doves.
 -Pierced on his throne the slarting Thunderer turns,
 Melts with soft sighs, with kindling rapture burns;
 Clasps her fair hand, and eyes in fond amaze
 The bright Intruder with enamour'd gaze.
 'And leaves my Goddess, like a blooming bride,
 'The fanes of Argos for the rocks of Ide?
 'Her gorgeous palaces, and amaranth bowers,
 'For cliff-top'd mountains, and aerial towers?'
 He said; and, leading from her ivory seat
 The blushing Beauty to his lone retreat,
 Curtain'd with night the couch imperial shrouds,
 And rests the crimson cushions upon clouds.-
 Earth feels the grateful influence from above,
 Sighs the soft Air, and Ocean murmurs love;
 Etherial Warmth expands his brooding wing,
 And in still showers descends the genial Spring.

VII. 'NYMPHS OF AQUATIC TASTE! whose placid smile
Breathes sweet enchantment o'er BRITANNIA'S isle;
Whose sportive touch in showers resplendent flings
Her lucid cataracts, and her bubbling springs;
Through peopled vales the liquid silver guides,
And swells in bright expanse her freighted tides.
YOU with nice ear, in tiptoe trains, pervade
Dim walks of morn or evening's silent shade;
Join the lone Nightingale, her woods among,
And roll your rills symphonious to her song;
Through fount-full dells, and wave-worn valleys move,
And tune their echoing waterfalls to love;
Or catch, attentive to the distant roar,
The pausing murmurs of the dashing shore;
Or, as aloud she pours her liquid strain,
Pursue the NEREID on the twilight main.
-Her playful Sea-horse woos her soft commands,
Turns his quick ears, his webbed claws expands,
His watery way with waving volutes wins,
Or listening librates on unmoving fins.
The Nymph emerging mounts her scaly seat,
Hangs o'er his glossy sides her silver feet,
With snow-white hands her arching veil detains,
Gives to his slimy lips the slacken'd reins,
Lifts to the star of Eve her eye serene,
And chaunts the birth of Beauty's radiant Queen.-
O'er her fair brow her pearly comb unfurls
Her beryl locks, and parts the waving curls,
Each tangled braid with glistening teeth unbinds
And with the floating treasure musks the winds.-
Thrill'd by the dulcet accents, as she sings,
The rippling wave in widening circles rings;
Night's shadowy forms along the margin gleam
With pointed ears, or dance upon the stream;
The Moon transported stays her bright career,
And maddening Stars shoot headlong from the sphere.

VIII. 'NYMPHS! whose fair eyes with vivid lustres glow
For human weal, and melt at human woe;
Late as YOU floated on your silver shells,
Sorrowing and slow by DERWENT'S willowy dells;
Where by tall groves his foamy flood he steers

Through ponderous arches o'er impetuous wears,
By DERBY'S shadowy towers reflective sweeps,
And gothic grandeur chills his dusky deeps;
You pearl'd with Pity's drops his velvet sides,
Sigh'd in his gales, and murmur'd in his tides,
Waved o'er his fringed brink a deeper gloom,
And bow'd his alders o'er MILCENA'S tomb.

'Oft with sweet voice She led her infant-train,
Printing with graceful step his spangled plain,
Explored his twinkling swarms, that swim or fly,
And mark'd his florets with botanic eye.-
'Sweet bud of Spring! how frail thy transient bloom,
'Fine film,' she cried, 'of Nature's fairest loom!
'Soon Beauty fades upon its damask throne!'-
-Unconscious of the worm, that mined her own!-
-Pale are those lips, where soft caresses hung,
Wan the warm cheek, and mute the tender tongue,
Cold rests that feeling heart on Derwent's shore,
And those love-lighted eye-balls roll no more!

-HERE her sad Consort, stealing through the gloom
Of
Hangs in mute anguish o'er the scutcheon'd hearse,
Or graves with trembling style the votive verse.

'Sexton! oh, lay beneath this sacred shrine,
When Time's cold hand shall close my aching eyes,
Oh, gently lay this wearied earth of mine,
Where wrap'd in night my loved MILCENA lies.

'So shall with purer joy my spirit move,
When the last trumpet thrills the caves of Death,
Catch the first whispers of my waking love,
And drink with holy kiss her kindling breath.

'The spotless Fair, with blush ethereal warm,
Shall hail with sweeter smile returning day,
Rise from her marble bed a brighter form,
And win on buoyant step her airy way.

'Shall bend approved, where beckoning hosts invite,

On clouds of silver her adoring knee,
Approach with Seraphim the throne of light,
-And BEAUTY plead with angel-tongue for Me!

IX. 'YOUR virgin trains on BRINDLEY'S cradle smiled,
And nursed with fairy-love the unletter'd child,
Spread round his pillow all your secret spells,
Pierced all your springs, and open'd all your wells.-
As now on grass, with glossy folds reveal'd,
Glides the bright serpent, now in flowers conceal'd;
Far shine the scales, that gild his sinuous back,
And lucid undulations mark his track;
So with strong arm immortal BRINDLEY leads
His long canals, and parts the velvet meads;
Winding in lucid lines, the watery mass
Mines the firm rock, or loads the deep morass,
With rising locks a thousand hills alarms,
Flings o'er a thousand streams its silver arms,
Feeds the long vale, the nodding woodland laves,
And Plenty, Arts, and Commerce freight the waves.
-NYMPHS! who erewhile round BRINDLEY'S early bier
On show-white bosoms shower'd the incessant tear,
Adorn his tomb!-oh, raise the marble bust,
Proclaim his honours, and protect his dust!
With urns inverted, round the sacred shrine
Their ozier wreaths let weeping Naiads twine;
While on the top MECHANIC GENIUS stands,
Counts the fleet waves, and balances the lands.

X. 'NYMPHS! YOU first taught to pierce the secret caves
Of humid earth, and lift her ponderous waves;
Bade with quick stroke the sliding piston bear
The viewless columns of incumbent air;-
Press'd by the incumbent air the floods below,
Through opening valves in foaming torrents flow,
Foot after foot with lessen'd impulse move,
And rising seek the vacancy above.-
So when the Mother, bending o'er his charms,
Clasps her fair nurseling in delighted arms;
Throws the thin kerchief from her neck of snow,
And half unveils the pearly orbs below;
With sparkling eye the blameless Plunderer owns

Her soft embraces, and endearing tones,
Seeks the salubrious fount with opening lips,
Spreads his inquiring hands, and smiles, and sips.

'CONNUBIAL FAIR! whom no fond transport warms
To lull your infant in maternal arms;
Who, bless'd in vain with tumid bosoms, hear
His tender wailings with unfeeling ear;
The soothing kiss and milky rill deny
To the sweet pouting lip, and glistening eye!-
Ah! what avails the cradle's damask roof,
The eider bolster, and embroider'd woof!-
Oft hears the gilded couch unpity'd plains,
And many a tear the tassel'd cushion stains!
No voice so sweet attunes his cares to rest,
So soft no pillow, as his Mother's breast!-
-Thus charm'd to sweet repose, when twilight hours
Shed their soft influence on celestial bowers,
The Cherub, Innocence, with smile divine
Shuts his white wings, and sleeps on Beauty's shrine.

XI. 'From dome to dome when flames infuriate climb,
Sweep the long street, invest the tower sublime;
Gild the tall vanes amid the astonish'd night,
And reddening heaven returns the sanguine light;
While with vast strides and bristling hair aloof
Pale Danger glides along the falling roof;
And Giant Terror howling in amaze
Moves his dark limbs across the lurid blaze.
NYMPHS! you first taught the gelid wave to rise
Hurl'd in resplendent arches to the skies;
In iron cells condensed the airy spring,
And imp'd the torrent with unfailing wing;
-On the fierce flames the shower impetuous falls,
And sudden darkness shrouds the shatter'd walls;
Steam, smoak, and dust in blended volumes roll,
And Night and Silence repossess the Pole.-

'Where were ye, NYMPHS! in those disasterous hours,
Which wrap'd in flames AUGUSTA'S sinking towers?
Why did ye linger in your wells and groves,

When sad WOODMASON mourn'd her infant loves?
When thy fair Daughters with unheeded screams,
Ill-fated MOLESWORTH! call'd the loitering streams?-
The trembling Nymph on bloodless fingers hung
Eyes from the tottering wall the distant throng,
With ceaseless shrieks her sleeping friends alarms,
Drops with singed hair into her lover's arms.-
The illumin'd Mother seeks with footsteps fleet,
Where hangs the safe balcony o'er the street,
Wrap'd in her sheet her youngest hope suspends,
And panting lowers it to her tiptoe friends;
Again she hurries on affection's wings,
And now a third, and now a fourth, she brings;
Safe all her babes, she smooths her horrent brow,
And bursts through bickering flames, unscorch'd, below.
So, by her Son arraign'd, with feet unshod
O'er burning bars indignant Emma trod.

'E'en on the day when Youth with Beauty wed,
The flames surprized them in their nuptial bed;-
Seen at the opening sash with bosom bare,
With wringing hands, and dark dishevel'd hair,
The blushing Beauty with disorder'd charms
Round her fond lover winds her ivory arms;
Beat, as they clasp, their throbbing hearts with fear,
And many a kiss is mix'd with many a tear;-
Ah me! in vain the labouring engines pour
Round their pale limbs the ineffectual shower!-
-Then crash'd the floor, while shrinking crouds retire,
And Love and Virtue sunk amid the fire!-
With piercing screams afflicted strangers mourn,
And their white ashes mingle in their urn.

XII. 'PELLUCID FORMS! whose crystal bosoms show
The shine of welfare, or the shade of woe;
Who with soft lips salute returning Spring,
And hail the Zephyr quivering on his wing;
Or watch, untired, the wintery clouds, and share
With streaming eyes my vegetable care;
Go, shove the dim mist from the mountain's brow,
Chase the white fog, which floods the vale below;
Melt the thick snows, that linger on the lands,

And catch the hailstones in your little hands;
Guard the coy blossom from the pelting shower,
And dash the rimy spangles from the bower;
From each chill leaf the silvery drops repel,
And close the timorous floret's golden bell.

'So should young SYMPATHY, in female form,
Climb the tall rock, spectatress of the storm;
Life's sinking wrecks with secret sighs deplore,
And bleed for others' woes, Herself on shore;
To friendless Virtue, gasping on the strand,
Bare her warm heart, her virgin arms expand,
Charm with kind looks, with tender accents cheer,
And pour the sweet consolatory tear;
Grief's cureless wounds with lenient balms assuage,
Or prop with firmer staff the steps of Age;
The lifted arm of mute Despair arrest,
And snatch the dagger pointed to his breast;
Or lull to slumber Envy's haggard mien,
And rob her quiver'd shafts with hand unseen.
-Sound, NYMPHS OF HELICON! the trump of Fame,
And teach Hibernian echoes JONES'S name;
Bind round her polish'd brow the civic bay,
And drag the fair Philanthropist to day.-
So from secluded springs, and secret caves,
Her Liffy pours his bright meandering waves,
Cools the parch'd vale, the sultry mead divides,
And towns and temples star his shadowy sides.

XIII. 'CALL YOUR light legions, tread the swampy heath,
Pierce with sharp spades the tremulous peat beneath;
With colters bright the rushy sward bisect,
And in new veins the gushing rills direct;-
So flowers shall rise in purple light array'd,
And blossom'd orchards stretch their silver shade;
Admiring glebes their amber ears unfold,
And Labour sleep amid the waving gold.

'Thus when young HERCULES with firm disdain
Braved the soft smiles of Pleasure's harlot train;
To valiant toils his forceful limbs assign'd,

And gave to Virtue all his mighty mind,
Fierce ACHELOUS rush'd from mountain-caves,
O'er sad Etolia pour'd his wasteful waves,
O'er lowing vales and bleating pastures roll'd,
Swept her red vineyards, and her glebes of gold,
Mined all her towns, uptore her rooted woods,
And Famine danced upon the shining floods.
The youthful Hero seized his curled crest,
And dash'd with lifted club the watery Pest;
With waving arm the billowy tumult quell'd,
And to his course the bellowing Fiend repell'd.

'Then to a Snake the finny Demon turn'd
His lengthen'd form, with scales of silver burn'd;
Lash'd with restless sweep his dragon-train,
And shot meandering o'er the affrighted plain.
The Hero-God, with giant fingers clasp'd
Firm round his neck, the hissing monster grasp'd;
With starting eyes, wide throat, and gaping teeth,
Curl his redundant folds, and writhe in death.

'And now a Bull, amid the flying throng
The grisly Demon foam'd, and roar'd along;
With silver hoofs the flowery meadows spurn'd,
Roll'd his red eye, his threatening antlers turn'd.
Dragg'd down to earth, the Warrior's victor-hands
Press'd his deep dewlap on the imprinted sands;
Then with quick bound his bended knee he fix'd
High on his neck, the branching horns betwixt,
Strain'd his strong arms, his sinewy shoulders bent,
And from his curled brow the twisted terror rent.
-Pleased Fawns and Nymphs with dancing step applaud,
And hang their chaplets round the resting God;
Link their soft hands, and rear with pausing toil
The golden trophy on the furrow'd soil;
Fill with ripe fruits, with wreathed flowers adorn,
And give to PLENTY her prolific horn.

XIV. 'On Spring's fair lap, CERULEAN SISTERS! pour
From airy urns the sun-illumined shower,
Feed with the dulcet drops my tender broods,
Mellifluous flowers, and aromatic buds;

Hang from each bending grass and horrent thorn
The tremulous pearl, that glitters to the morn;
Or where cold dews their secret channels lave,
And Earth's dark chambers hide the stagnant wave,
O, pierce, YE NYMPHS! her marble veins, and lead
Her gushing fountains to the thirsty mead;
Wide o'er the shining vales, and trickling hills
Spread the bright treasure in a thousand rills.
So shall my peopled realms of Leaf and Flower
Exult, inebriate with the genial shower;
Dip their long tresses from the mossy brink,
With tufted roots the glassy currents drink;
Shade your cool mansions from meridian beams,
And view their waving honours in your streams.

'Thus where the veins their confluent branches bend,
And milky eddies with the purple blend;
The Chyle's white trunk, diverging from its source,
Seeks through the vital mass its shining course;
O'er each red cell, and tissued membrane spreads
In living net-work all its branching threads;
Maze within maze its tortuous path pursues,
Winds into glands, inextricable clues;
Steals through the stomach's velvet sides, and sips
The silver surges with a thousand lips;
Fills each fine pore, pervades each slender hair,
And drinks salubrious dew-drops from the air.

'Thus when to kneel in Mecca's awful gloom,
Or press with pious kiss Medina's tomb,
League after league, through many a lingering day,
Steer the swart Caravans their sultry way;
O'er sandy wastes on gasping camels toil,
Or print with pilgrim-steps the burning soil;
If from lone rocks a sparkling rill descend,
O'er the green brink the kneeling nations bend,
Bathe the parch'd lip, and cool the feverish tongue,
And the clear lake reflects the mingled throng.'

The Goddess paused,-the listening bands awhile
Still seem to hear, and dwell upon her smile;
Then with soft murmur sweep in lucid trains

Down the green slopes, and o'er the pebbly plains,
To each bright stream on silver sandals glide,
Reflective fountain, and tumultuous tide.

So shoot the Spider-broods at breezy dawn
Their glittering net-work o'er the autumnal lawn;
From blade to blade connect with cordage fine
The unbending grass, and live along the line;
Or bathe unwet their oily forms, and dwell
With feet repulsive on the dimpling well.

So when the North congeals his watery mass,
Piles high his snows, and floors his seas with glass;
While many a Month, unknown to warmer rays,
Marks its slow chronicle by lunar days;
Stout youths and ruddy damsels, sportive train,
Leave the white soil, and rush upon the main;
From isle to isle the moon-bright squadrons stray,
And win in easy curves their graceful way;
On step alternate borne, with balance nice
Hang o'er the gliding steel, and hiss along the ice.

Erasmus Darwin

The Linnet's Nest

The busy birds, with nice selection, cull
Soft thistle-down, gray moss, and scatter'd wool;
Far from each prying eye the nest prepare,
Form'd of warm moss, and lined with softest hair.
Week after week, regardless of her food,
Th' incumbent linnet warms her future brood;
Each spotted egg with ivory bill she turns,
Day after day with fond impatience burns;
Hears the young prisoner chirping in his cell,
And breaks in hemispheres the fragile shell.

Erasmus Darwin

To The Stars

Roll on, ye stars! exult in youthful prime,
Mark with bright curves the printless steps of time;
Near and more near your beamy cars approach,
And lessening orbs on lessening orbs encroach;
Flowers of the sky! ye, too, to age must yield.
Frail as your silken sisters of the field!
Star after star from heaven's high arch shall rush,
Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush,
Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,
And death, and night, and chaos mingle all!
Till o'er the wreck, emerging from the storm,
Immortal nature lifts her changeful form,
Mounts from her funeral pyre on wings of flame,
And soars and shines, another and the same!

Erasmus Darwin

Visit Of Hope To Sydney Cove, Near Botany Bay

Where Sydney Cove her lucid bosom swells,
And with wide arms the indignant storm repels;
High on a rock amid the troubled air
Hope stood sublime, and waved her golden hair;
Calmed with her rosy smile the tossing deep,
And with sweet accents charmed the winds to sleep;
To each wild plain she stretched her snowy hand,
High-waving wood, and sea-encircled strand.
'Hear me,' she cried, 'ye rising realms! record
Time's opening scenes, and Truth's prophetic word.
There shall broad streets their stately walls extend,
The circus widen, and the crescent bend;
There, rayed from cities o'er the cultured land,
Shall bright canals, and solid roads expand.
There the proud arch, colossus-like, bestride
Yon glittering streams, and bound the chasing tide;
Embellished villas crown the landscape-scene,
Farms wave with gold, and orchards blush between.
There shall tall spires, and dome-capped towers ascend,
And piers and quays their massy structures blend;
While with each breeze approaching vessels glide,
And northern treasures dance on every tide!
Then ceased the nymph - tumultuous echoes roar,
And Joy's loud voice was heard from shore to shore -
Her graceful steps descending pressed the plain,
And Peace, and Art, and Labour, joined her train.

Erasmus Darwin