Appendix 5.3: Review in *The English Review* 14 (July and August 1789)

ART. I. *the Botanic Garden, Part II.*; *containing the Loves of the Plants; a Poem. With Philosophical Notes. Vol. II.* 4to. 12s. boards.[1] Johnson. London, 1789.

[p. 1]

AS this work contains a variety of matter, and much novelty, we shall make no apology for presenting our readers with a criticism of some length. The publication of the first part, which contains the physiology of plants, is deferred to another year, for the purpose of repeating some experiments.[2] The design of the work before us is to explain the sexual system of Linneus, with the remarkable properties of many particular plants. The preface contains a general account of the Linnean system, which, though short, is not only comprehensive, but perspicuous. The poem opens with the following invocation, well suited to the occasion and the scene:

> '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,

[p. 2]

> What beaux and beauties crowd the gaudy groves,
> And woo and win their vegetable loves.
> How snowdrops cold, and blue-ey'd harebels blend
> Their tender tears, as o'er the stream they bend;
> The love-sick 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 rustling 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!

* * * * * * * * *

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 on 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,

---

[3]*Vegetable loves*, l. 10. Linneus, the celebrated Swedish naturalist, has demonstrated that all flowers contain families of male or females, or both; and on their marriages has constructed his invaluable system of botany.

Callitriche, l. 45. Fine-hair, stargrass. One male and two females inhabit each flower. The upper leaves grow in form of a star, whence it is called Stellaria Aquatica by Ray and others; its stems and leaves float far on the water, and are often so matted together, as to bear a person walking on them. The male sometimes lives in a separate flower.

'*Collinsonia*, l. 51. Two males one female. I have lately observed a very singular circumstance in this flower; the two males stand widely diverging from each other, and the female bends herself into contact first with one of them, and after some time leaves this, and applies herself to the other. It is probably one of the anthers may be mature before the other. See note on Gloriosa and Genista. The females in Nigella, devil in the bush, are very tall compared to the males; and

[p. 3]

With rival love for fair Collinia sigh,
Knit the dark brow, and roll the unsteady eye.
With sweet concern the pitying beauty mourns,
And sooths with smiles the jealous pair by turns.
'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.'[4]

By these passages the reader will see how beautifully the sexual system of Linneus may be improved by poetical allusions; but these are not the only subjects in which our author displays his genius; even the dull class of cryptogamia, which has so often

---

bending over in a circle to them, give the flower some resemblance to a regal crown. The female of the epilobium angustifolium, rose bay willow herb, bends down amongst the males for several days, and becomes upright again, when impregnated.

'*Alcea*, l. 69. Flore pleno. Double hollyhock. The double flowers, so much admired by the florists, are termed by the botanist vegetable monsters; in some of these the petals are multiplied three or four times, but without excluding the stamens; hence they produce some seeds, as Campanula and Stramoneum; but

in others the petals become so numerous as totally to exclude the stamens, or males; as Caltha, Peonia, and Alcea; these produce no seeds, and are termed eunuchs.

'*Iris*, l. 71. Flower de luce. Three males, one female. Some of the species have a beautifully freckled flower; the large stigma or head of the female covers the three males, counterfeiting a petal with its divisions.

'*Cupressus*, l. 73. Cypress. One house. The males live in separate flowers, but on the same plant. The males of some of these plants, which are in separate flowers from the females, have an elastic membrane; which disperses their dust to a considerable distance when the anthers burst open. This dust, on a fine day, may often be seen like a cloud hanging round the common nettle. The males and females of all the cone-bearing plants are in separate flowers, either on the same or on different plants; they produce resins; and many of them are supposed to supply the most valuable timber; what is called Venice-turpentine is obtained from the larch, by wounding the bark about two feet from the ground, and catching it as it exudes; sandarach is procured from common juniper; and incense from a juniper with yellow fruit. The unperishable chests, which contain the Egyptian mummies, were of Cypress; and the cedar, with which black-lead pencils are covered, is not liable to be eaten by worms.

'*Osyris*, l. 75. Two houses. The males and females are on different plants.

[p. 4]

wearied many an industrious botanist, is made interesting by a lively imagination:

'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 horny 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 dryades 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 glistering 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.

'*Tremella*, l. 373. Clandestine marriage. I have frequently observed fungusses of this genus on old rails and on the ground to become a transparent jelly, after they had been frozen in autumnal mornings; which is a curious property, and distinguishes them from some other vegetable mucilage; for I have observed that the paste, made by boiling wheat-flour in water, ceases to be adhesive after having been frozen.'

[p. 5]

'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 ravell'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 genial showers,
And pearly rain-drops deck the laughing flowers.'[5]

This account of Tremella's transformation would have done honour to Ovid's Metamorphoses, and is quite in his style: the canto closes with the same apposite allusions as we quoted from the beginning. The reader will observe the words particularly descriptive of the class and order of the plants are in Italics. At the end of each canto we are presented with what our author terms an interlude—a conversation between himself and his bookseller. In the first interlude the subject is an inquiry concerning the true distinctions between poetry and prose, which our author conceives to be, in a great measure, confined to the first admitting no expressions but what immediately relate to the senses; and the latter abounding with abstract ideas; and that, in proportion as either departs from these distinctions, it invades the province of the other. This is followed by many ingenious, and, in some respects, new observations, o[n] personifications, allegories, and the

propriety of forming, under particular circumstances, ideal beings, and even a new creation, when we may suppose the possibility of rendering the judgment and reason, for a time, wholly subservient to the senses.

The second canto opens with a description of Carlina, the plumage of whose seeds gives the author another opportunity of indulging his poetical talents by the apotheoses of Mr. Montgolfier, quite in the style of the ancients:

> '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.

[p. 6]

> '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 red 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 whalebone ribs the fair mechanic joins;
> Inlays with eider down the silken strings,
> And weaves in wide expanse Dædalean 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 sails,
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 shine;

'*Carlina*, l. 7. Carline thistle. Of the class confederate males. The seeds of this, and of many other plants of the same class, are furnished with a plume, by which admirable mechanism they perform long aerial journies, crossing lakes and deserts, and are thus disseminated far from the original plant, and have much the appearance of a shuttlecock as they fly. The wings are of different construction, some being like a divergent tuft of hair, others are branched like feathers, some are elevated from the crown of the seed by a slender foot-stalk, with gives them a very elegant appearance, others sit immediately on the crown of the seed.'

[p. 7]

Sees at his feet the forky lightnings glow,
And hears inocuous thunders roar below.
——Rise, great Mongulfier! urge thy vent'rous 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 burning zodiac, 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 wond'ring pole.
So Argo, rising from the southern main,
Lights with new stars the blue etherial plain;
With fav'ring beams the mariner protects,
And the bold course, which first it steer'd, directs.'[6]

We pass over a number of descriptions no less animated and interesting to make room for the following, in which our author has very agreeably introduced a sonnet:[7]

'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.

'*For thee the Bear*, l. 60. Tibi jam brachia contrahit ardens Scorpius. *Virg. Georg*. l. 1. 34.

'*Cistus lubdaniferus*, l. 301. Many males, one female. The petals of this beautiful and fragrant shrub, as well as of the Oenothera, tree primrose, and others, continue expanding but a few hours, falling off about noon, or soon after, in hot weather. The most beautiful flower of the cactus grandiflorus (see Cerea), are of equally short duration, but have their existence in the night. And the flowers of the hibiscus trionum are said to continue but a single hour. The courtship between the males and females in these flowers might be easily watched; the males are said to approach and recede from the females alternately. The flowers of the hibiscus sinensis, mutable rose, live in the West-Indies, their native climate, but one day; but have this remarkable property, they are white at the first expansion, then change to deep red, and become purple as they decay.

'The gum or resin of this fragrant vegetable is collected from extensive underwoods of it in the East, by a singular contrivance. Long leathern thongs are tied to poles and cords, and drawn over the tops

[p. 8]

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 flow,
'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 dews descends the transient glare,
And all the glittering pageant melts in air.'[8]

[*To be continued.*]

---

of these shrubs about noon; which thus collect the dust of the anthers, which adheres to the leather, and is occasionally scraped off. Thus, in some degree, is the manner imitated, in which the bee collects, on his thighs and legs, the same material for the construction of his combs.'

Review, continued, in *The English Review* 14 (August 1789)

[p. 128]

ART. XI. *The Botanic Garden, Part II.*; *containing the Loves of the Plants*; *a Poem. With Philosophical Notes*. *Vol. II*. 4to. 12s. boards. Johnson. London, 1789.

[*Concluded.*]

THE passages we have selected are not to be considered as preeminent; there are few inferior; we have only studied variety, and given our readers some foretaste of the pleasures they are to expect from the perusal of the whole.

In the next interlude our author enters into a discussion of the effects the *horrid* and *distressing* produce on the passions. We think his objection against the former in statuary is more delicate than just. The spectator who views either Marcias[9] or the beautiful group of Laocoon,[10] does not dwell long enough on either to feel all those painful associated ideas a representation of such events on the stage would produce. He is at once hurried into the depth of the tragedy without those previous introductory steps which are necessary to make the incident, and more particularly the objects, interesting to him. Besides which, statuary being confined to a single colour, we have only to admire how so much can be expressed by the mere chissel; and should probably not feel ourselves at all interested beyond the workmanship, if the recollection of the history did not obtrude itself upon us.

These reflections lead our author to the old inquiries concerning the source of those pleasures we feel at the distresses of tragedy, which he seems willing to attribute to our capacity of at any time relieving ourselves from the delusion by a voluntary exertion of our rational faculties. But this, though it may account for our being less affected than from reality, is not sufficient to account for the sensation of pleasure. With submission, we will offer our readers a cause which has not, we believe, been hitherto insisted on. We are ready to allow much to novelty,

[p. 129]

to what is called, though it ought to have been defined by those who insist on it, the sympathetic power, and most of all to the grandeur of the personages and events before us. A single step further will lead us to the contemplation of the most amiable and beautiful sight in nature, that of

virtue triumphant over every difficulty and oppression; supporting its votary under every suffering, and teaching him to submit with calmness to any thing but acting wrong.

If it should be urged that many tragedies present us with distressful objects without this relief, we might answer that such as do are rarely esteemed by enlightened minds, unless where some signal punishment await the delinquent. We have been the more particular on this subject because we think our author's third canto is rendered much less interesting by abounding with horror in too quick a succession, and without any relief. Not content with a poetical description of Laura; with the account of the deleterious effects of Mancinella, Ur[t]ica, Lobelia, Upas,[11] &c. we have several innocent plants brought to view to introduce similies, or, as the author would wish them to be called, episodes, of every thing horrible. The Laura[12] is somehow made to remind us of Fuseli's night-mare; Lobelia brings to view, it is not easy to say how, the dreary prospect of the ruins of Palmyra;[13] Cuscuta, from its property of existing by entwining itself on some neighbouring vegetable, presents us with the story of Laocoon and his sons;[14] the Vine, by a transition natural enough, and extremely poetical, produces the allegory of Prometheus;[15] the Cyclamen, with a little more difficulty, presents us with the plague of London, and the hard fate of an amiable female;[16] lastly, Cassia, a native of North-America, dropping its fruits into the Ontario, which are afterwards found on the coast of Norway, introduces Moses committed to the bulrushes; and his relieving his countrymen from slavery gives the poet an opportunity of concluding this canto with his opinion of the slave-trade.[17] It is, however, but justice to allow that every description is animated and poetical; but the loves of the plants are so entirely forgotten, that we seem only lost, or endeavouring to lose ourselves, in a dreary reverie, from which the want of connexion and congruity is perpetually recovering us.

This canto is followed by another interlude or dialogue with the bookseller, intended to shew the relative connexion between poetry and its sister arts painting and music; and also between painting and music; in all which our author discovers much judgment, good taste, and a very lively imagination. In the remainder of the dialogue we think him less happy in attempting

[p. 130]

to prove that the English language is capable of all the advantages of the Greek. If we admit the possibility of compounding our words with the facility of that beautiful language, must we not acknowledge the inferiority of its effect in all poetical compositions? Can we for a moment compare Pope's cloud-compelling Jove to Homer's Νεφελεγερετα ζευς;[18] or where shall we find English compounds which give more than a faint idea of his other beautiful epithets. If we allow too that our words, being shorter, may lessen the inconvenience of the shortness of our lines, how shall we retain the vigour of our strains, incumbered as we are with a tedious number of monosyllables, from auxiliaries, and articles? It is true an English line may easily be rendered rough by our abundance of consonants; but how shall we imitate that rapid succession of liquid syllable which is formed by a line of Greek or Latin dactyles, and this, in the same pentameter as presents us with a line of harsh-sounding spondies. Can we forget how clumsily the master of English rhyme succeeded in his attempt to describe the quickness with which 'Camilla flies *o'er th' unbending corn*, and skims along the main.'[19] There is, however, much ingenuity in all our author's observations; and the conclusion of this interlude, which may be called an apology for modest plagiarism, is *extremely well introduced*.

In the fourth canto the poet resumes his lyre with as much spirit, and more pleasantry, than he concluded his former strains:

'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-coloured bow.—
The tuneful goddess on the glowing sky
Fix'd in mute ecstasy 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,

'*Pleas'd Lichfield*, l. 11. The scenery described at the beginning of the first part, or economy of vegetation, is taken from a botanic garden about a mile from Lichfield.

'*Cerea*, l. 15. Cactus grandiflorus, or Cereus. Twenty males, one female. This flower is native to Jamaica and Veracrux. It

[p. 131]

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 pencil'd brows,
Opes her fair lips, and breathes her virgin vows;
Eyes the white zenith; 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
Glows thy warm cheek, thy polish'd bosom gleams.
In crouds around the 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.'[20]

Though we have made very free extracts from this valuable and entertaining performance, we shall not scruple to obtrude the conclusion of this canto on such of our readers as have a taste for the elegancies of poetic fancy:

'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;

---

expands a most exquisitely beautiful corol, and emits a most fragrant odour for a few hours in the night, and then closes to open no more. The flower is nearly a foot in diameter, the inside of the calyx of a splendid yellow, and the numerous petals of a pure white; it begins to open about seven or eight o'clock in the evening, and closes before sun-rise in the morning. Martyn's Letters, p. 294.'

'*Adonis*, l. 388. Many males and many females live together in the same flower.

[p. 132]

On wings of gossamer swift whispers fly,
And the sly glance steals sidelong 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;
Enraptured sylphs arose in murmuring crouds
To air-wove canopies and pillowy clouds;
Each gnome reluctant sought his earthly 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 etherial plain,
And bad his nightingales repeat the strain.'[21]

A few notes are subjoined, too long to be introduced in the body of the work; among which is the natural history of the poison-tree of Java, which some of our readers may think wants further confirmation. We wait with much impatience for the first volume of this agreeable and novel

performance; and doubt not but the success of the present publication will encourage the author to persevere with spirit and industry.

---

[1] Books in boards had covers made of pasteboard and covered with paper. Purchasers would pay extra to have books more permanently bound.
[2] This sentence and the next are drawn from *LOTP*, Advertisement.
[3] The opening quotation mark is accidentally omitted in these first two notes.
[4] *LOTP* I:1–30, 45–56, 69–76.
[5] *LOTP* I:427–84 in this edition.
[6] *LOTP* II:1–66.
[7] In ED's time, the name of "sonnet" was not restricted to fourteen-line formal sonnets, but could mean any short poem, especially a love poem.
[8] *LOTP* II:305–46.
[9] Marsyas was a satyr who played the aulos (a kind of pipe). He challenged Apollo (who played the *kithara* or lyre) to a music contest judged by the Muses. Marsyas lost and was hung from a tree and flayed alive by Apollo. The story is told in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (6:382–400). The flaying of Marsyas was a favorite subject of ancient and Renaissance artists for depicting human anatomy and the suffering body.
[10] The sculpture known as *Laocoön*, carved in the 2nd or 1st century CE, was rediscovered in 1506. Laocoön was a Trojan priest who warned the Trojans not to accept the wooden horse offered by the Greeks, which turned out to contain soldiers who at night came out and captured the city. As punishment by the gods for his opposition, and specifically for his having pierced the wooden horse with a spear, he and his two sons were crushed to death by two enormous sea-serpents. The story is most famously told in the *Aeneid* (Book 2: 199–231). The sculpture was influential on eighteenth-century aesthetic theory through the writings of Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768) and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781). Winckelmann's *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (1755) (translated by Henry Fuseli (1741–1825) as *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks* (1765)) and G. E. Lessing's treatise *Laokoon oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* [Laocoon or the Limits of Painting and Poetry] (1766) both contrasted a decorous, stoical restraint in the expression of pain in the sculpture with a lack of restraint in the *Aeneid* verses.
[11] *LOTP* III:187–96, 219–58.
[12] *LOTP* III:39–50.
[13] *LOTP* III:197–218.
[14] *LOTP* III:327–54.
[15] *LOTP* III:355–78.
[16] *LOTP* III:379–410.
[17] *LOTP* III:411–68.
[18] Literally, "cloud-gatherer Zeus," an epithet used in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The Roman Jove or Jupiter corresponds to the Greek Zeus. Alexander Pope (1688–1744) published his translation of the *Iliad* in 6 volumes over the years 1715–1720, and of the *Odyssey*, with two collaborators, Elijah Fenton (1683–1730) and William Broome (bap. 1689, d. 1745), in 5 volumes, 1725–1726.
[19] Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* (1711), 2. 372–73.
[20] *LOTP* IV:1–42.
[21] *LOTP* IV:467–96 in this edition.