

Appendix 5.17: Alexander Thomson, from *The British Parnassus* (1801)

Alexander Thomson (1763–1803) is best known for his poems *Whist* (1791) and *An Essay on Novels* (1793).

Selection copied from Alexander Thomson, *The British Parnassus, at the Close of the Eighteenth Century*. Edinburgh: Muntell & Son; London: Longman & Rees, and J. Wright, 1801.

[p. 58]

What say you to DARWIN, the DERBY Physician?
Who so long for the Muse hid his predisposition†,
Till he broke forth at once in explosion volcanic,
And dazzled all eyes with his GARDEN BOTANIC; 250

† Being far advanced in life before he was known as a Poet.

[p. 59]

Where each amorous plant with such tenderness glows*,
And each line in a stream of such harmony flows,
That the samples of Rhyme, which appear from his shop,
In smoothness and gloss beat the numbers of POPE;¹
But I grieve that a work of such costly erection, 255
Should want so completely the grace of connection,
And that Plumes which display such a splendor of feather,
Should have no proper Ribbon to keep them together.

* One of the divisions of this wonderful performance, is intitled the Loves of the Plants.

¹ Alexander Pope (1688–1744).