





A View of the Silkhouse with the Stands for Seeding the Wörms, the method of hindering their Dirt from incommoding the under Shelves, -- of placing Twiggs when they Spin their Silkballs, -- and of hanging those Silkballs which are intended for Breeding

T H E
S I L K W O R M:
A
P O E M.
I N T W O B O O K S.

WRITTEN BY
MARCUS HIERONYMUS
V I D A,
A N D

Translated into ENGLISH VERSE

B Y

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D U B L I N:
Printed by S. POWELL, for the AUTHOR.
M D C C L.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

THE usefulness of the subject was not one of the least reasons which induced me to translate the silkworm of Vida, since at this time it seems, in a peculiar manner, to merit the care of the British nations. I make no doubt but that Vida's poem did, in his time, prompt many persons of fortune and distinction to encourage the silken manufacture in several parts where it had not yet been introduced: And it would give me a very sensible pleasure if, by making him speak English, I should any way assist in naturalizing the subject he wrote on to our own country. And, that this is very practicable, several trials that have already been made seem to demonstrate. And from my own experience I am convinced that the manufacture might be carried on among us with great ease and success; giving both employment and profit to great numbers, with this additional advantage of requiring no fund to begin it, except that of a few mulberry-trees.

The following poem is wrote upon a plan like that of the Georgic of Virgil, where precepts are delivered in the pleasing dress of poetry; and tho' Virgil's Georgic on bees may have more grandeur and colouring in

P R E F A C E.

it than this on the silkworm, yet it must be allowed that Vida has adhered more strictly to his subject, and given more accurate and true instructions. Virgil's subject had the advantage of this; it was naturally more active; not a field or flower but what it gave him liberty to range over: That which Vida treats is, in a great part, so still and sedentary that it required great art to give it vigour and motion. So that Virgil's poem appears, like an object view'd thro' a multiplying glass, in variety of situations and dazzling colours; but Vida's gives us a microscopic view, which more justly represents nature, and only magnifies in order to discover truth. None of Vida's episodes can indeed be compared to that of Aristæus, but then they have this advantage that they do not engross so much of the poem.

As to the translation, I only wish that it may have some resemblance of the style and manner which appear in the original, and hope I have in nothing material departed from its meaning, unless it be in applying those compliments which the author designed for another to one whose great merit gives her as just a title to whatever amiable qualities were found in former ages, as it doth to her being a pattern to the present. Tho' I am very sensible of one fault in the application, which forced me to confine a picture to a few lights which would have appeared beautiful in every situation.

T H E

T H E
L I F E
O F
V I D A.

MARCUS HIERONYMUS VIDA was born at Cremona in the year of our Lord 1470, his father's name was Gelelmus Vida, and his mother's Leona Ofcafala, both of the neighbourhood of St. Leonard's. He was descended from illustrious ancestors, for Bonvesinus Vida had born the consular dignity of Cremona even so early as the year 1166; but, at the time we now speak of, the family was reduced to low circumstances. While our poet was yet a child the great talents which he afterward displayed began to discover themselves. These were first improved in his own native country at the school of the
A learned

learned Nicolaus Lascarus, and afterward in several other cities of note whither he was sent for instruction by his father ; and his celebrated writings bear sufficient testimony of the progress he made both in divinity, philosophy, poetry and oratory.

Having imbibed the first principles of the liberal sciences at Cremona and Mantua he was sent to Padua ; here and at Bulloign he bent his studies to divinity and poetry, giving such proofs of his learning and genius as soon made his name so famous that while he was but a youth he was made a prebend of the regulars of St. Mark's of Mantua, a society of royal foundation ; and a little afterward was promoted to the same dignity in the church of St. John of Lateran. By these shining ornaments of the sciences, and especially by his poetical talents, he became known to pope Leo the tenth, the great patron of learning in that age ; who, having read the poem in which Vida describes the fictitious battle of chefs, was so taken with the author's genius and strength of style, that he immediately cried out ' this is the person whom I have long earnestly
' wished for, who has both elegance and sublimity ca-
' pable of describing the wonderful transactions of
' Christ

‘ Christ (a subject which had already been attempted by some, but not with that clearness and spirit which it deserved.) And he encouraged and prevailed upon him to attempt the poem which is called the *Christiad*.

That he might therefore more successfully set about such a difficult task, he was presented to the priory of St. Sylvester in Tusculum. In this calm and pleasant recess, which possessed every thing that was suited to the society of the Muses, he immediately employed himself in executing the commands of his patron; and having finished and presented some of the first books of the *Christiad* to him, Leo upon reading them complimented the author with the following distich,

‘ *Cedite Romani scriptores cedite Graii*

‘ *Nescio quid majus nascitur Æneide.*

‘ Yield Greeks and you that sung of Latian kings,

‘ Here something greater than an Æneid springs.

While Vida was thus employed he did not enjoy his retirement like a recluse that had no taste for society,

for his house always lay open to men of learning and genius, in such an hospitable and friendly manner that he rather seemed to give them something which they had a right to, than to pay them a compliment which might be imputed to his generosity.

During his residence at Tusculum he lost both his parents, almost as it were by one stroke of death; whose fate he piously laments in a poem dedicated to their memory; and, much about the same time, he was deprived of pope Leo, with whom for some time died the vigour and support of our poet's studies. But within the space of two years (after the death of Adrian VI.) they revived again with the pontificate of Clemens VII, who insisted upon Vida's finishing the *Christiad*, and, when it was compleated, patronized it in the most friendly manner, together with its author, with whom he had formerly been intimate and a fellow-student. Clemens, who followed the example of his predecessor Leo in rewarding men of learning, afterwards promoted Vida to the bishoprick of Alba, to which he had been before nominated by ~~Paulus~~ Paulus III, who seems also to have intended further to promote him

him to the bishoprick of Cremona, upon the death of cardinal Accolita, but to have died before he had him installed in either ; for his election to Cremona by the chapter of that cathedral still appears in their register in the following terms—‘ They have found none fitter
‘ than the reverend divine M. H. Vida, one so excel-
‘ ling in all kinds of virtue and true piety as to de-
‘ serve much greater honours. When he was raised to the sacred dignity he lived some short time at Rome with pope Clemens, after which neither the invitation of his patron, nor the hopes of greater preferment, could prevail upon him to continue there any longer, but, repairing to Alba, he applied himself diligently to the care of the flock with which he was intrusted, and was never afterward absent from his see, except in those troubled times when the war raged between Francis I. and the emperor Charles, when sometimes the public calamities forced him from home. And here we must not omit mentioning an incident which, during that war, shewed that the same spirit which actuated his writings could also exert itself in defence of his country ; for when the French troops were upon the point
of

of storming Alba, having already gained the trenches, applied their scaling ladders, and entered some soldiers into the city; while the imperial troops were on all sides giving ground, and securing themselves in the most fortified parts of the town, then both the courage and patriotism of their prelate shone forth, who, for a while laying aside his sacerdotal office, hastened to resist the danger, rallied the citizens who were inviolably attached to him, led and encouraged them against the enemy whom they defeated and repulsed, and under his conduct saved themselves from being plundered and put to the sword.

The poems to which Vida subscribed his name were his Divine Hymns, the *Christiad*, his *Art of Poetry*, the *Silkworm*, the *Poem on Chefs*, three *Eclogues*, and some *Poems on various Subjects*. These were in his life time honoured with a place in the academy of *Bulloign*, and some of them have been since translated both into the English, Italian, French and Spanish languages. He also wrote in prose a treatise upon regulating a commonwealth, and some on religious subjects, but of the authentickness of these last there is no firm

firm assurance ; yet it is certain that he was so esteemed for having the welfare of religion at heart, as to be sent to the council of Trent with near the same authority as the pope's legates, an office which he did not at all covet on account of its dignity, being in no sort obnoxious to the allurements of either riches or titles. It would take too much time to mention his public works of charity, or the religious edifices that he built, renewed, or beautified ; as also his acts of beneficence to the poor, numbers of whom he took care to have constantly supplied with food at his own house before he would sit down to meat, in which he himself always observed great simplicity and temperance.

He died in a pious and easy manner, A. D. 1566. in the ninety-sixth year of his age, lamented by the poor as their common father, and commemorated by his country with all the honours due to so great a man, as appears from the monument erected to him by the city of Cremona with the following inscription :

M. HIER.

THE LIFE OF VIDA.

M. HIER. VIDÆ ALBÆ EPISCOPO,
 QUEM PROBE OMNES NORUNT,
 CIVITAS CREMONA DECRETO SEPULCHRO SUMPTU
 PUB. CIVIT.

QUI DE UNIVERSA CIVITATE B. M. EST,
 PARENTAVIT
 V. A. N.

QUI, CUM QUIDQUID IN EGREGIUM HOMINEM
 LAUDIS DICI POTEST,
 IN EUM BENEFICIO NATURÆ FUERIT COLLATUM,
 IMMORTALITATE ERAT DIGNUS,
 NISI NATURÆ COMMUNIS CONDITIO OBSTITISSET.
 VIVIT TAMEN ADHUC APUD NOS,
 VIVETQUE ÆTERNUM AD POSTEROS BENEF.
 JUCUNDISS.

AC PERPETUA RECORDATIONE.
 QUI OMNIBUS ERGA GREGEM SIBI COMMISSUM
 OFFICIIS FUNCTUS,
 PIET. CHARIT. FIDE, CONST. PRÆCLARUS,
 OMNIBUS CHARUS,
 NEMINI NOXIUS, A NOBIS DISCESSIT,
 SUO MAGIS, QUAM ALIORUM
 TEMPORE.

QUI NON SOLUM PIE ET SANCTE DEUM COLUIT,
 SED ITA ETIAM CECINIT, UT IN COELO LOCUM,
 UBI BEATUS

ÆVO SEMPITERNO FRUATUR,
 ET IN TERRIS ÆTERNAM SIBI GLORIAM,
 MAXIMO OMNIUM MORTALIUM FRUCTU,
 COMPARARIT.

OBIIT ANNO MDLXVI.

XXII SEPTEMBRIS.

TO MARCUS HIERONYMUS VIDA BISHOP OF ALBA,
 A MAN WELL KNOWN TO THE WORLD,
 THE CITY OF CREMONA, DECREERING AT THE PUBLIC EXPENCE
 A SEPULCHRE TO ITS MUCH DESERVING CITIZEN
 PERFORMS ITS LAST DUTIES.
 WHO, BEING ENDOWED BY NATURE
 WITH EVERY GREAT AND WORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENT,
 SEEMED ALSO TO DESERVE IMMORTALITY FROM HER,
 WERE IT NOT ORDAINED
 THAT ALL MEN MUST DIE.
 NEVERTHELESS HE STILL LIVES AMONG US,
 AND WILL LIVE TO LATEST POSTERITY
 IN THE PERPETUAL REMEMBRANCE
 OF HIS MOST GOOD AND TENDER OFFICES.
 WHO HAVING FULFILLED ALL THE DUTIES WHICH HE OWED
 TO THE FLOCK HE WAS INTRUSTED WITH,
 LEFT US AT A TIME RATHER FIT FOR HIMSELF
 THAN OTHERS;
 EMINENT FOR PIETY, CHARITY, FAITH AND CONSTANCY,
 VOID OF OFFENCE; DEAR TO ALL;
 WHO NOT ONLY SO SINCERELY AND DEVOUTLY SERVED GOD,
 BUT ALSO SO CELEBRATED HIM IN SONG,
 AS TO GAIN A PLACE EVER TO ENJOY HIM
 IN HEAVEN,
 AND, TO THE ADVANTAGE OF ALL MANKIND,
 A FAME UNPERISHABLE
 ON EARTH.
 DIED SEPT. 17. ANNO DOM. 1566.

His stature was tall, his countenance elevated, and his mein grave, with a mixture that produced at once both love and veneration. There are some medals extant with his image and name on one side and on the reverse Pegasus with this inscription—*Quos amarunt Dii*—The favourites of the Gods. In other medals the reverse has this motto—*Non stemma fed virtus*—Not titles but virtue. His picture has a place in many public repositories of learning, and among the rest in the duke of Tuscany's library; his writings have been admired by men of the finest taste, and even commended by some of the severest critics, being of all the moderns the likest to Virgil's, both in elegance and simplicity.

The

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST BOOK.

The use of silkworms long undiscovered. Line 21—In some countries spin abroad on the trees. 35—With us must be kept in houses. 47—The time and manner of hatching their eggs. 71—The form of the silkhouse, and shelves upon which they feed; with cautions against birds and vermin. 121—What food must be substituted when the mulberry leaves shall happen to fail. 251—Silkworms to be kept clean. 315—Their sleep. 341—Observations when they are ready to spin. 383—Their manner of spinning. 411—Their disappearance in the silkballs. 439—Episode of Venus who instructed by Saturn first taught their use in the East. 449.

MARCI HIERONYMI
V I D Æ
B O M B Y C U M,

A D

ISABELLAM ESTENSEM,
MARCHIONISSAM MANTUÆ,

LIBER PRIMUS.

Q UOS mores, quas aut parvis reptantibus artes
Juppiter addiderit, quæ fila tenacia Serum

Ore vomunt faturæ, vos mecum evolvite Nymphæ

Seriades : vos lanifici gregis aurea nôtis

Munera, quæ pater Italiæ prior intulit olim 5

Serius,

T H E
S I L K W O R M.
T R A N S L A T E D F R O M
M A R C U S H I E R O N Y M U S
V I D A.

T O H E R R O Y A L H I G H N E S S T H E P R I N C E S S
O F W A L E S.

B O O K T H E F I R S T.

WHAT pow'rs of nature, and what wond'rous
arts,

Jove's bounty to an infect race imparts,

Who plenteous on their leafy pasture fed,

Disgorge the tough extent of filky thread,

Unfold ye nymphs that haunt the Serian stream, 5

For not untutor'd you assist the theme,

Taught

Serius, huc patriis Serum devectus ab oris.

Tuque ades, & nostro succurre ISABELLA labori,

Nympha, Padi in ripa magnis è regibus orta,

Quæ gentem pulchrâ auxisti pulcherrima prole

GONSAGAM ; exiguis ades huc non aspera cœptis. 10

Et vos ô placidæ properate, ubi quæque puellæ :

Vestrum opus hoc, vestros faciles hîc discite cultus.

Id tineæ in fylvis, multis volventibus annis,

Gentibus ignotum vixit genus : aurea frustra

Edebant opera umbriferis pendentia ramis : 15

Nam pluvix, lateque immites omnia venti

Vastabant, tenui nec honos, nec gloria filo

Ulla erat : in fylvis ceu quondam more ferarum

Degebant

Book I. The SILK WORM. 15

Taught by your parent Serius, you can trace
The golden labours of the spinster race,
With him the Serian arts to Latium came,
And chang'd their climate but preserv'd their name. 10
And thou Augusta, sprung from royal blood
Where Saxon Weser rolls its infant flood,
Illustrious Nymph, from whom the Britons trace
Their pledge of empire in a beauteous race,
Indulgent smile upon the slender lay, 15
And blend inspiring looks with Pæan's ray.
And hasten to the task each beauteous maid
That grace the city or the rural shade,
Your labour to the pleasing task is due,
The willing insect spins, and toils for you. 20

Long thro' the woods the puny tribes had flown,
Rank'd with the common moths of race unknown ;
Their labours, rudely on the branches twin'd,
Droop'd with the rains, and floated with the wind ;

No

Degebant homines, antiquo robore nati ;

Nondum urbes, nondum certos gens dura penates 20

Noverat, aut ullas vitam excoluisse per artes.

Verùm postquam homini divini est muneris usus

Traditus, in tectis atque intra septa domorum

Sylvestres tineas alere, atque impendere curam

Cœpit ; opes multi hinc ad summas emerfere. 25

Quamvis esse aliquas etiam nunc fertur in oris

Longè aliis gentes, quæ nondum in tecta relatas

Per lucos errare sinunt, nulloque labore

Fila suo carpunt oneratis mollia ramis.

Namque malo affuetæ arboribus frondentibus illæ 30

Pubentes fylvas, & quæque tenerrima carpunt,

Injussæque instant operi : non horrida multùm

Flabra nocent, neque provisi prudentibus imbres.

Quippe

Book I. The S I L K W O R M. 17

No honours to their fruitless works were paid, 25

Unus'd, unnotic'd hung the silver thread :

So man's first hardy race, without abodes,

Unsocial rang'd and savage thro' the woods,

E'er families were known or lands assign'd,

Or industry and arts had form'd the mind. 30

But when at last the gift divine began,

Fam'd for its use, to grow the care of man,

The sylvan moths in domes secure were stow'd,

And wealth redundant from their labours flow'd.

Tho' yet in other regions far remov'd, 35

As fame reports, they wander unimprov'd ;

Wild thro' the woods their filky down display,

And swains untoiling bear their works away :

There nurs'd in hardship to the branch they cling,

Crop the green leaf, and nip the budding spring ; 40

There unassisted work, nor greatly dread

The storm foreseen impending o'er their head ;

Quippe ubi fenserunt in nubes aera cogi,
 Diffugiunt trepidæ, foliisque sub omnibus hærent ; 35
 Securæque hyemis velut alta ex arce fonantes
 Accipiunt Austros, pulsataque robora nimbis.
 Sed tu ne, moneo, in sylvis permittite vagari
 Incustoditas, nec curam adhibere recusa
 In tectis : hujus non gratia parva laboris. 40
 Haud longum tempus fluet, & jam siamine multo
 Dives eris, filoque ibis spectabilis aureo.
 Principio, ne te lateat quæ tradita agendæ
 Sint illis vitæ spatia : brevis omnibus ætas :
 Vix ulli lunæ completur tertius orbis ; 45
 Et nunquam ex sese prolem videre creatam.
 Intereunt omnes, pecus occidit omne quotannis ;
 Et cunctam evertunt fera fata ab origine gentem.

Immortale

Book I. The SILK WORM. 19

For, when the thick'ning tempest loads the sky,
Swift to their leafy sheds forewarn'd they fly,
Securely there avoid the rushing show'rs, 45
And winds that harmless shake their branchy bow'rs.
But you be wise, nor let th' industrious broods
Untended wander thro' the devious woods,
Nor grudge the care that helps the tender swarm
In shelter'd roofs to shun the driving storm ; 50
The grateful labourer shall reward your aid
With shining robes, and heaps of golden thread.

Now first observe to what determin'd date,
The period of their lives is fix'd by fate :
Few are their days, to death an early prey, 55
They scarce behold three changing moons decay ;
No tender pledges of their love they share,
Extinct before they know a parent's care ;
And each returning year beholds no trace,
No living relick of the numerous race ; 60

Immortale tamen restat genus his, neque morti
 Est penitus locus; æternùm nam femina durant. 50

Ceu quondam fylvæ si forte aut frigore diro,
 Aut æstu arefcant summæ; tamen abdita quædam.

Vitalis superat vis in radicibus imis;

Et, trunco exciso, nova vere repullulat arbos.

Non fecus extinctis bombycibus annuus ortus: 55

Usque nova in regnis proles succedit avitis.

Ne verò ante diem, sed tempeſtiva creata

Sit soboles; veto ne revoces in luminis oras

Progeniem extinctam, attonſis cùm gramina campis

Nondum ulla, aut frondes apparent arbore nullæ. 60

Antè nova incipiat morus revireſcere fylvâ:

Neve fames teneris, neve obſint frigora alumnis.

Ipsi

Book I. The S I L K W O R M. 21

Yet, in their seeds, reviving tribes elude
The hand of fate, and see their name renew'd.
As when a total growth of forest dies,
Parch'd up by thirst or chill'd by rigorous skies,
The vegetating soul, expell'd each shoot, 65
Retires unseen, and sleeps within the root ;
And, when the stem has felt the axe's blade,
With spring revives, and rears an infant shade :
The silky nations, thus replenish'd, reign
Heirs to their parents thro' the green domain. 70

But, not untimely let their eggs display
The tender embryo to the face of day,
Lest the burst shell your families unfold
Expos'd to famine's rage, or pinching cold,
While ev'ry forest leafless stands, and bare, 75
And fields uncloath'd yet dread the wintry air.
First let the mulberry's late verdure bring
The certain signals of a settled spring,

For,

Ipsi etiam morum agricolæ, ne tempora fallant,
 Observare solent : nam cùm sese illa virentem
 Induit in frondem, nostris tum protinus oris 65
 Excessisse hyemem, & manes abiisse sub imos
 Nil dubitant ; nec sæva ultra pecorive fativæ
 Frigoravæ, glaciemve timent, canamve pruina.
 Præterea tibi : lunæ gelidæ incrementa
 Sunt servanda : senescentis fuge tempora læva : 70
 Nec tum etiam liquidis cùm sese nuper ab undis
 Extulit Oceani, pallentesque humida vultus
 Ostendit, gracili incedens per inania cornu,
 Utile erit teneros ovis excludere fœtus.
 Expecta, cùm plena animis, cùm lumine largo 75
 Solis ab igne tumens, altumque per æthera vecta,
 Carpit iter, fratremque audet se attollere contra,

Tum

Book I. The S I L K W O R M. 23

For, hence inform'd, the wary peasant shuns
The false allurements of untimely fairs : 80
But soon as its expanding leaves appear
He marks the turning period of the year,
When hoary winter from the climate flies
To rule the regions of the nether skies,
And swains no longer dread his iron reign, 85
But fearless flocks possess the flow'ry plain.
Nor less the moon demands thy watchful sight
To note the changes of her chilly light,
Beware th' unlucky moments of the wane,
'Tis fatal then to hatch the shelly grain ; 90
Or then when first her slender horns advance
With watry paleness thro' the void expanse ;
Expect till tumid from the solar rays
Her orb full-gleaming spreads its yellow blaze,
And, high-exalted in th' æthereal space, 95
With rival glory views her brother's face :

Then

Tum fas foeturæ, tum iustum incumbere tempus :
 Quandoquidem validas crescenti a lumine vires
 Semina concipiunt genitalia : tum favet æther, 80
 Majoremque trahunt nascentia membra vigorem.

Quo foveas autem pacto : mos ipse fovendi
 Haud simplex. Sunt quæ calido sub sole relinquunt
 Ova, recens donec foetus in luminis auras
 Proderit : tu conde sinu velamine tecta, 85
 Nec pudeat roseas inter fovissè papillas,
 Si te tangit honos, & flavi gloria fili.
 Cumque dies alterque dies processerit, ecce,
 Cernere erit formis animantia fervere miris.
 Ante opus omne tamen pete matutina Deorum 90
 Limina, ferque preces supplex, divisque litato
 Auspiciis cunctorum operum, cum manè sacerdos
 Sinceram Cererem, & Lenæum libat honorem.

Necnon,

Book I. The SILK WORM. 25

Then haste the birth, and let the quickning shell,
Foster'd beneath the genial planet swell,
The skies then teem with influential pow'r,
And shed their vigour on the natal hour. 100

The life-warm seeds are hatch'd by diff'rent ways,
Some let them bask beneath the solar rays,
Some from themselves a milder heat impart
Near the warm region of the lab'ring heart.
Nor let the virgin blush if, gently press'd, 105
They lye soft nurtur'd in her rosy breast,
While studious of the prize, by glory led,
She courts the wages of the golden thread :
Few days thus cherish'd, lo! the fervid swarms,
Bursting to life, shall move in wond'rous forms. 110
But first, before your work begins, repair
To heav'n's propitious shrine with suppliant pray'r,
While early stands the priest prepar'd to pour
The gifts of wine sincere, and hallow'd flour ;

D And

Necnon, lanicii florem, velamina prima

Suspendes templis : avertunt omnia fœtu 95

Munere placati Superi mala, frigora, & æstus,

Et quæ multa solent bombyci instare pericla.

Interea populi sedes, & tecta futuri

Ipsè novare jube, tabulataque victa seneçtâ.

Non aptæ sine sole domus, sine luce penates. 100

Sed duplices recta lumen regione fenestræ

Admittant, quarum surgentes altera Phœbi

Speçtet equos, fessos contrâ altera jamque cadentes.

Tum vitri pellucentes opponere quadras

Hinc atque hinc jubeo, lini aut firmissima texta, 105

Ut neque concutiant venti, neque nubila nimbis

Conspergant, obfitque intus penetrabile frigus.

Nec

Book I. The SILK WORM. 27

And let the firflings of your filken down, 115
Your choicelt woof, their facred temples crown ;
With off'rings thus appeas'd the Gods withhold
Their plagues of fcorching heat, and deadly cold,
And bind the rage of many-mouth'd difeafe
Which various on the tender infect preys. 120
Mean while the manfions of your future brood,
Shatter'd by wafteful time, fhould be renew'd ;
Nor let a dark and dolefome ftation fhade
Th' enliv'ning light, and fun's fruētific aid ;
A double op'ning fhould his rays receive, 125
Both when he rifes vig'rous from the wave,
And when his courfers droop with languid heads
Prone from the skies, and feek their watry beds.
But guard your windows from the fubtle air
With thin-fpread canvafs, or the glaffy fquare, 130
Left ruffling ftorms difturb the floating thread,
Or piercing cold the tender flock invade.

Nec postrema fuit cautis prætere cura

Retia rara : avium infidias, & callida furta

Averte : illudit passer custodibus olim 110

Improbis, illudit chortis cristata volucris :

Dant stragem passim rostris immitibus, implentque

Ingluviem, ac vivo viva abduunt corpora busto.

Nec, quibus est tineæ felicis copia multa,

Parietibus sedem affigunt, sed quatuor æquis 115

Tectorum in medio erectis hinc inde columnis

Plurima suspendunt tabulata ; aulæque per altos

Surgunt mille gradus, digestæque ordine sedes.

Tuque etiam, variæ ut nequeant irrepere pestes,

Parietis antiqui vitium ne negliges segnis ; 120

Sed calce, aut creta linito, atque angusta viarum

Quæque

Book I. The SILK WORM.

29

Nor shou'd your cautious hand forget to place
The net's thin texture for the feather'd race ;
The pilf'ring sparrow, and the crested cock 135
From secret ambush oft attack your flock,
Dire havock thro' the suff'ring nation make,
Infatiate feasting, while the restless beak
Supplies whate'er voracious hunger craves,
And panting morsels sink in living graves. 140
Nor shou'd the owners of a num'rous race
Near walls the stations of their labours place ;
But, in the mansions middle space, shou'd rise
Four columns fix'd erect of equal size,
And shelves throng'd to their tops aspire, 145
Exactly rang'd in well-proportion'd tire.
Nor yet neglect the flaws which time has wrought
In antient walls, with various vermin fraught,
But firm with lime cement each narrow path,
And fear each crevice as the road of death ; 150

Here

Quæque time : mus fepe cavis feſe abdidit imis,
 Luce latens ; at cùm in tenebris cinis occultit ignem
 Sopitum, indulgetque gravi cuſtodia fomno ;
 Improbus egreditur tutis ad furta latebris, 1:
 Et citus irreptat tabulis, ſæviturque per omnes
 Cæde madens aulas, prædamque avertit ab altis
 Porticibus fatur, atque cavis epulatur in antris.
 Molire infidias, deceptum carcere claude,
 Ignarusque doli ipſe ſibimet vincula neſtat, 1:
 Dum petit oſtenſam confidentiſſimus eſcam.
 Quædam etiam trabibus, quibus omnis machina rectis
 Nititur, auxiliantur, & imas ſentibus armant,
 Sentibus, & tribulis, ac juniperi hirtutæ
 Vulnificos addunt gladios ; circùm undique ut hoſtis 1:
 Indeprenſi

Book I. The S I L K W O R M. 31

Here lurks the robber mouse, conceal'd till night
Obscure in embers wraps each sleeping light,
But when secure the weary'd guardians lie,
And heavy slumber loads the languid eye,
Th' audacious felon then forsakes his home, 155
Ascends your shelves, and fierce o'er all the dome
Rages in blood, and rich with rapine hastes
To his dark cell, and there securely feasts :
Let snares deceive him, and let prisons wait
In hospitable guise, with artful bait, 160
Here shackled let the bold intruder toil,
Himself the captive while he fought for spoil.
Some guard the posts on which the shelves are borne
In wreaths of thistles wrap'd, or pointed thorn,
Or juniper, whose prickly branch affords 165
Its useful bulwark arm'd with threatful swords ;
That thus the subtle foe may be compell'd,
Altho' he 'scape your watchful eye conceal'd,

Thro'

Indeprenfus eat faltem per vulnera mille,

Nec referat captam multo niſi ſanguine prædam.

Verùm age, vix tenebras pepulit lux tertia rebus.

Ecce, ſinu incipiunt tepido calefacta moveri

Semina ; jam viſenda novis animalia formis 140

Irrepunt, paſſimque albis mantilibus errant.

Nec verò jam tum hæc thalamis ſublimibus infer.

Exiguus primùm capiet ſobolem locus omnem ;

Corpora deinde auctæ cunabula prima relinquent :

Tum cunctam in populos, in vicos divide gentem, 145

Diviſasque dabis fedes, ſecretaque regna.

Nec ſatis hoc ſemel : at quoties his arcta videbis

Elle domus ſpatia, augentur dum corpora cuique,

Has toties legere, inque novas diducere fedes

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Thro' many painful wounds to reach his prey,
Nor pleas'd nor bloodless bear the prize away. 170

But come, for now the third successive light
Has rescu'd nature from the frown of night,
When lo ! the foster'd eggs, maturely warm,
Unfold and pour to life the bursting swarm ;
O'er the white lawn, a wond'rous-fashion'd throng, 175

They lie in crowds, or curling move along :
But range the newborn nations by themselves,
Nor let them yet attempt the lofty shelves
Till timely nurture vig'rous strength creates,
And prompts the race to leave their natal seats : 180

Then send your nations forth to realms assign'd,
And class each tribe in proper tracts confin'd :
Nor shou'd this labour once perform'd suffice,
But still, as you observe their growing size,
So often ease each region of its load, 185
And send selected colonies abroad ;

E Till

Ne dubita, donec tabulas impleveris omnes. 150

Nec tamen interea parvas non pascere oportet.

Ut primùm hauserunt cœli auras, pabula poscunt,

Affuefcunt jam tum dapibus, menfasque requirunt.

Sed prodeft, nondum thalamos experta puella

Prima manu tenera teneras fi pafcat alumnas. 155

Primam autem mori pubem, atque tenerrima femper

Quæq; legunt, dum grex tener eft, atque infcius ævi.

Continuò veterum veluti memor ille parentum

Agnofcit vefcas frondes, ipfafque recentes

Depofcit : nam fi plenis ferventur in horreis 160

Hefternæ, dulcis fucci corrumpitur aura,

Et fapor ingratus fubit, atque inamabilis haufu.

Manè petunt igitur fylvas, et quæque reportant 165

Pabula leâta die famulæ, gratumque laborem

Sortitæ

'Till all the num'rous families complete

Fill the large dome, and people every feat.

Mean time, not carelefs of your helpless brood,
Supply their early wants with plenteous food ; 190

Soon as they breath they crave the green repaft,

And grow familiar, with their future feaft :

But now felect the foft unwedded maid

To lend your infant flock her tender aid,

The mulberry's firft fhots, with juicy buds 195

Cull'd by her hand, fhall pleafe the feeble broods,

While early, by inftinctive hunger led,

They feek the paffure where their parents fed.

Yet ftore not up their foliage long for ufe,

For time abforbs its sweetly-flavour'd juice, 200

And that which yefterday fupply'd the feaft

To day grows ftale, and naufeous to the tafte :

But let your maidens to the woods repair

Each morning, and divide the pleafing care ;

Sortitæ inter se, folia illibata canistris 165
 Expediunt ; legit illa, domum fert altera lecta,
 Instaurant aliæ mensas, epulasque ministrant :
 Pabula larga superjaciunt pecus omne tegentes.
 Protinus emergunt tineæ, folioque jacenti
 Victrices super assistunt, omnisque juvenus 170
 Vescitur, atque avidæ dapibus implentur opimis.
 Fit strepitus longè : qualem olim sæpe solemus,
 Cùm pluit, in tecto clausis audire fenestris.
 Nec mora, nec requies : properant, & grandia morfu
 Attendent folia emensæ, redeuntque, iterumque 175
 Incumbunt, longam nequeunt explerier alvum,
 Dum superant frondes, & plenæ pabula mensæ.
 Tuque ideo parcis epulas moderare canistris,
 Terque die tantùm pasces : nam prodiga cunctam

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Some cull expert th' unfully'd leaves, and some 205
Heap the thin baskets, and convey them home ;
While others, various fix'd, their aid afford
To rule the banquet, and supply the board :
O'er all the brood the light-spread verdure lies,
And hides the crouded nation from your eyes ; 210
But, swift emerging forth, unnumber'd swarms
O'er the broad leaves advance their curling forms,
And, spread on ev'ry plant, with eager haste,
Enjoy the dainties of their verdant feast ;
A rustling noise is heard like driving rain 215
Which rushes on the windows glassy plain ;
No respite intervenes, keen hunger shaves
The fibres close, and clips the leff'ning leaves ;
Reviving appetite renews the feast,
Nor can the mouth supply their eager haste. 220
Then moderate their food in baskets light
Dispens'd, and only thrice from morn till night ;

For

Si frondem simul effundas, sine more dapesque 180

Accumules, mensasque oneres, avertitur ultro

Ingratam futurum morum pecus, atque repente

Ipsa parit largi fastidia copia victûs.

Paulatim invita ; metuant sibi pabula semper

Deficere, expectentque dapes : priùs injice ludens 185

Frondem unam, ac certare sine ; illæ protinus omnes

Arrexere animos cupidæ, prædamque capeffunt

Certatim, pariterque ingens subit ardor edendi.

Tum demum solitas epulas effunde canistris,

Dum dapis optatæ fuerit compressa libido. 190

Sed ne longa fames noceat tamen, aspice prudens,

Dum nimiùm differs epulas, & gaudia mensæ.

Nam soliti impastis si desit copia victûs,

Nulla mora est, miseram macies deformat iniqua :

Pabula

For if incessant, on the loaded board,
Continu'd heaps continual feasts afford,
Sated at length they surfeit on the store, 225
And shun the dainties which they fought before :
Invite them by degrees with coy delay,
And hungry let th' expecting nation stay
Afraid of want : then first, in sportive mood,
Throw single leaves, and let them strive for food ; 230
The crouds immediate, in tumultuous fray,
Impatient rush, and seize the scanty prey ;
Their eager appetites excited rise,
And round they search for more with longing eyes ;
Then from your heap produce their usual store 235
Till the keen point of hunger pricks no more.
Yet guard lest, hinder'd of their due repast,
The suff'ring nation bear too long a fast,
While famine raging thro' the ghastly race
Stamps its deforming hand on ev'ry face ; 240

Exhausted.

Pabula deinde parum exhaustis duplicare juvabit ; 195

Et vix longa dies lapsas in pristina reddet :

Dira fames adeò nocet, ac penuria edendi.

Quin etiam haud parvi mutari pabula refert.

Est bicolor morus ; bombyx vescetur utraque,

Utraque grata illi : cui verò affuerit, eandem, 200

Nigra albensve fuat, nullo discrimine amabit ;

Quamvis Aufoniis laudetur nigra puellis.

Fortè etiam si deficient folia omnia mori,

Et subito sylvæ (Dii talem avertite casum,)

Thisbææ arefcant nimjo æstu, aut frigore, quæris 205

Quasnam tum, pereant ne res tibi funditus omnes,

Bombyci jubeam legere, & summittere frondes.

Orandi Superi eveniant ne talia nobis.

Exhausted thus by penury of food,
 The plenteous banquet is in vain bestow'd,
 Scarce length of time shall cure the dire disease,
 So deep the dreadful rage of hunger preys.

Besides, it much avails your puny guests 245
 That skilful change diversifie their feasts ;
 Two diff'rent mulberrys adorn the groves,
 And both are grateful to the filky droves,
 Whether in purple fruits or white array'd,
 Tho' purple pleases best th'Ausonian maid. 250

Now if by chance (the Gods prevent such harm !)
 The mulberry should wholly fail your swarm,
 And Thisbe's grove, by thirst extreme or cold
 Subdu'd, its shrivel'd leaves no more unfold ;
 Then learn what other food to substitute, 255
 And save your flocks by plants of kindly shoot,
 (First heav'n should be entreated to withhold
 Such dire misfortunes from the suff'ring fold)

Si tamen urgeris, conscendat robora pastor

Ulmea per fylvas, & summa cacumina carpat. 210

His etenim arboribus multùm est affinis origo.

Jamque ideo agricolæ morum didicere per agros

Inferere umbrosæ ramis ingentibus ulmi ;

Et steriles fylvæ nunc dant bicoloria mora.

Sunt aliæ, quæ, si foetus sibi nascitur antè 215

Quàm Thisbæa novis adolescat frondibus arbos,

Urticamque rubosque legunt, dum plurimus humor

Vere subest : at tu teneris tunc parce puellis ;

Crura, manusque arment facito : nec robora dura

Ascendat permitte in fylvis innuba virgo : 220

Verùm operum patiens anus, & cui durior annis

Sit cutis, (ingratæ facilis jactura senectæ,)

Munere

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But, urg'd by famine, let the shepherd croud
Ascend the vig'rous elms thro' ev'ry wood, 260
And nip their tender buddings near ally'd
To those which blasting seasons have deny'd ;
For elms are said to bear the grafted shoots
Of Thisbe's tree, and bend with foreign fruits.
Others there are who, if their broods are born 265
Ere blooming spring the mulberry adorn,
Commit their nurfplings to the bramble's use,
Or nettle swelling with nutritious juice :
But now in pity guard your maiden bands
Lest the rude shrub shou'd wound their tender hands ;
Nor let the virgin delicate and soft 271
Tempt the rough-rinded branch, or climb aloft,
But choose some matron season'd well with years,
Of hardy mold, nor teiz'd with virgin fears,
To risk her skin against the knotty trees, 275
For age neglects such accidents as these,

Munere fungatur tali ; ne forte quis altis

Egreflus fylvis fatyrorum è gente procaci

Sufpiciat, teneræque pudor notet ora puellæ. 225

Illa quoque in primis cura eft, ut pabula femper

Sicca legant, nullaque fluant afpergine fylvæ

Aut pluviæ, aut roris nocturni ; quippe venenum

Sæpe fuit, quamvis tenuis, bombycibus humor.

Nunquam igitur, cum nox horis filet intempeftis, 230

Accedant fylvam : expectent dum gurgite Eoæ

Tethyos exierit, furfumque eduxerit omnem

Collectum noctis humorem purpureus fol,

Et jam tres scandens supera alta peregerit horas.

Quòd fi fortè etiam fuerit tunc humida fylva, 235

Ut potes, è foliis stillantem decute rorem,

Profuit,

Left some intruder of the satyr croud
In gamefome frolic iffuing from the wood,
Should raife his prying eye with wanton flame,
And ftain the virgin's cheeks with marks of fhame. 280
But now, whatever foliage you provide,
Chooſe that which ſkies ſerenely pure have dry'd ;
Guileleſs of ſpot, and free from ev'ry blight
Of miſts polluting, or the vapour'd night ;
For often, tho' the ſprinkling drops be few, 285
A ſubtle poiſon lodges in the dew :
Then forage not, when now the night's bleak hours
Deſcend in damps upon the ſilent bow'rs,
But patient tarry till the purple blaze
Of Phœbus, wheeling round from eaſtern ſeas, 290
Has near aſcended his meridian height,
And drain'd away the vapours of the night,
When yet, if any dropping dew adheres,
Shake the moiſt leaves, and dry their midnight tears.

Nor

Profuit, & siquando matutina pruina

Perstrinxit teneras frondes, ostendere foli

Cratibus impositas, & frigora vincere flammis.

Cumque tibi fuerint suspecti denique nimbi, 240

Appropera, calathos cape, moros scande, ministras

Voce voca, mitte in fylvas, sine lege legunto

Obvia quæque, penum foliis atque horrea comple ;

Ne, dum sævit hyems, perdant jejunia pubem

Lanivomam, at parta securæ fronde fruuntur. 245

Quòd si adeò subitum citò non prævideris imbrem,

Ne turpi rigeat macieque, fameque senescat

Omne pecus, validos in fylvas mitte colonos,

Qui tibi, utraque manu, nunc huc, nunc robora & illuc

Crebra agitent, frondem patulis tu impone canistris 250

Rorantem,

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Nor is it ufelefs, if the morning hoar 295
Has crufted all the ftiffen'd foliage o'er,
To fpread it thin before the funny beam
On hurdles, and fubdue the froft with flame ;
But rather, when you fear the low'ring cloud,
Be speedy, fnatch your baskets, call the croud, 300
Hafte to the woods, and heap the verdant ftore
Till your large veffels can contain no more ;
Securely thus your flocks fhall be fupply'd,
Nor fear the fhow'ry deluge raging wide.
But if the cloud fwift burfting from the fky 305
Prevents the prefage of your watchful eye,
Let not the nation therefore droop fubdu'd,
Liftlefs and lean from penury of food ;
But tho' the flagging verdure droop with rain,
Thro' the wide foreft fend the fturdy fwain 310
With finewy arms to fhake the quiv'ring wood,
And eafe the foliage of its humid load ;

Then

Rorantem, quando fatiis urgemur acerbis.

At labor interea famulas exerceat alter,

Cura sit hefternæ femefas tollere menfæ

Reliquias, tabulisque immundam avertere ventris

Proluivem : manè, ante pecus quàm pabula guftet, 255

Tergendæ fedes, & gramine perverrendæ.

Tum Bacchi irrorant gratum bene olentis odorem,

Purgatifque abigunt tabulis tristem omnibus auram.

Hinc leviter digito medicatis fedibus omnes

Traducunt cœtus, lætos melioribus auris ; 260

Nec super extremas errare licentiùs oras

Permittunt, femper media ad penetralia cogunt,

Præcipitesque timent lapfus, altasque ruinas.

Huic generi facilis leti via : protinus ægras

Delapfæ effundunt animas, lucemque relinquunt. 265

Siqua

Then pluck the reeking leaves, and homeward bear,
Refrain'd from better food by fate fevere.

Mean time another task employs your maids 315
Whose careful hands remove the wither'd shreds
Of banquets past, and cleanly sweep away
All dregs unseemly of the former day ;
While purg'd from noisome smells with fragrant wine,
And rub'd with scented hay the tables shine ; 320
And this each morning's business, e'er your brood
Be serv'd with fresh supplies of verdant food :
Then gently shifted let your nations share
Their mansions fresh perfum'd with wholesome air ;
But here confine them to the midmost space, 325
Nor let their wand'ring tribes licentious trace
The outmost verges of their lofty feats,
Where headlong ruin on their roving waits ;
The tender race, to death an easy prey,
Pant out their lives and quit the beam of day ; 330

Siqua tamen superest, & cœli vescitur aura,
 Post casum inspicio : nam si pars corporis ulla est
 Læsa tibi deprensa, aliarum sedibus ultro
 Projice, nec frustra libeat tibi pascere inertem.
 Nullam operam omnino, nullum expectabis ab illa 270
 Certum opus : ignavum deducet inutilis ævum ;
 Et comitum egregias tantùm mirabitur artes.
 Sæpe etiam impastas averti pabula cernes,
 Sopitaque gravi veluti torpere veterno
 In tabulis : hîc parce metu, ne corpora morbus 275
 Fortè aliquis, gentemque lues invaserit ægram.
 Hunc illis morem, natura hunc ipsa soporem
 Addidit ; indulgent somno, stratisque quiescunt,
 Sopitisque dies alter transibit, & alter.
 Cùm verò expulerit noctem lux tertia rebus, 280

Confurgent.

And ev'n tho' some escape the crushing death,
And move, and still enjoy the food of breath,
Strict view them o'er, and if the slightest wound
Inflicted on the tender skin be found,
Remove them quickly from the founder flock, 335
Nor useless let them waste the common stock ;
No thrifty labours shall your cares repay,
Inactive they shall waste their lives away,
Pining admire their fellows silky store,
And arts which never shall employ them more. 340

Beside, you shall at times behold the brood
Lethargic flumbring, careless of their food,
But quit your fears, for no contagious harm,
Nor any mischief hence attends your swarm ;
'Tis nature's work, two circling days shall keep 345
The nation thus refresh'd in friendly sleep,
But when the third has dawn'd with chearing light,
And op'ning landscapes dropt the mask of night,

Confurgent, lætæque ad pabula nota redibunt.

Ergo illas tumidas jubeo observare, (nec ingens

Nosse labor,) ne improvifus fopor occupet : ultro

Signa dabunt ipfæ : cœlo capita ardua tollent

Arrectæ, fpernentque dapes : tum pigra notabis 285

Corda, animos refides, infueta fientia mentis.

Non tamen adveniet fomnus fimul omnibus idem :

Infomnes aliquæ vigilant, dum turba quiefcit

Cætera, nondum aptæ, teneros quibus alliget artus

Irrepens fopor ; advenient fua tempora & illis, 290

Atque omnes tandem demittent lumina fomno.

Cura fit interea infomnes legere, atque vagantes,

Secretafque aliis aliam citò transfer in aulam.

Sopitæ stabulent fimul : his par omnibus ætas.

Unà operi incumbent, & eodem tempore feffe 295

Artubus

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The waking guests, with appetite renew'd,
Joyful and strong shall crop their usual Food. 350
Yet watch them well, lest unprovision'd sleep
Shou'd on the hungry fold untimely creep ;
With previous signs their tumid bodies lie
Inactive, while their heads are rais'd on high ;
No more the sounds of revel rouse the feast, 355
But stagnant sloth usurps the lazy breast :
Yet not at once benum'd the nation lies
Part sleep, and part withhold their watchful eyes,
Till firm with riper age and strength'ning food
They too shall sink beneath the charming God. 360
Mean time distinct let sep'rate lodges keep
The waking tribes, from those consign'd to sleep,
For these, of equal strength, and equal age,
Shall all together in their tasks engage ;
Freed of their grosser limbs shall take their flight, 365
Together wing'd, and range the fields of light.

But

Artubus exolvent supera ad convexa volantes,
 Dumque Deus stratis thalamifve silentibus ales
 Regnat, Lethæo perfundens corpora rore ;
 Pabula subtrahito solita, frondemque negato.
 Nam tumidæ interea renovant torpentia alumnæ 300
 Corpora, & exuvias veteres, ac tegmina ponunt,
 Et nitidam induitur pubes renovata juventam.
 Ceu, fodere domos serpentum ubi lubrica turba
 Sub terram veniente hyeme, stant frigore inertes,
 Dum redeat terris tepidi clementia veris ; 305
 Tum demum egressi, ad solem squalentia terga
 Convolvunt, posita turpi cum pelle senecta :
 Annuus hic illis mos : at bombycibus ipsis
 Ter pigra, dum vivent, renovabit corpora somnus.
 Jamque age, jam grandes foetus, jam ducitur ætas 310
 Ultima, turgenti filum trahet in alvo

But while the God with wand pacific sheds
The dews of Lethe on their silent beds,
Withdraw their foliage and withhold the feast,
For fated now they nurse themselves with rest, 370
Cast their old skins thick furrow'd o'er by time,
And wake to life array'd in youthful prime :
Thus deep in earth, when wintry clouds appear,
The serpent race their chamber'd domes prepare ;
Here stiff with cold the slimy nation lies 375
Till tepid spring has thaw'd the frozen skies,
Then rushing to the sun's enliv'ning flames
They roll in circling orbs before his beams,
With scaly coats renew'd, and sleek attire,
The sloth of age exchange'd for youthful fire ; 380
This yearly they perform, the lab'ring brood
Are thrice in all their life with sleep renew'd.

But come, the thriving race appears at length
Of age mature and full confirm'd in strength,

Omnibus, accingunt alacres operique parant se.
 Pabula jam saturæ fugiunt : nova quærere regna
 Ardor agit : tollunt oculos, arreçtaque terga,
 Omnia vestigant latè loca, ficubi rami 315
 Arbutei, per quos sua possint tendere fila ;
 Atque novis prisca cupiunt mutare penates,
 Et tabulæ extremis pendentes sedibus hærent.
 Tum famulæ properare, omnes provisâ parare
 Sarmenta, & steriles tectis inferre genistas. 320
 Jamque illæ antiquas sedes supera ardua linquant,
 Atque nova hospitia invadant, per vimina lenta
 Demissæ, nisi succurrat nuruum ociùs omnis
 Hinc atque inde manus, durum miserata laborem.
 Ipsæ nam manibus secernunt grandia natu 325
 Corpora jam matura operi, jamque apta labori ;
 Per ramosque locant arentes agmina densa.

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The substance of the filky twine within 385
Transparent glitters thro' the tumid skin ;
Replete with food the busy tribes prepare
For work, and vig'rous raise their necks in air,
Oft roll their eyes around, and turn their heads
In search of branches whence to stretch their threads ; 390
Swing pendant from the shelves, or coasting roam
To change for other seats their native home :
Mean time your busy maids their mansions wreath
With sprigs of leafless broom and barren heath,
And now, swift gliding down the pliant rods, 395
Your wand'ring clans would leave their old abodes,
Did not your pitying girls, with gentle hands,
Collect and oft replace th' unfettled bands,
And fix the stronger sort, for toil mature,
Amidst the branchy fence to work secure ; 400
While others, yet unripe, are still withheld
Till time has ev'ry natal taint expell'd,

H

And

Summotas alias arcent, dum funditus omnes
 Corporeæ excedant labes, ac, temporis orbe
 Perfecto, sua cuique dies exemerit omnem 335
 Alvi infinceræ illuviem, purumque relinquat
 Lanicium, & fili tralucens simplicis aurum.
 Sic ubi mitescunt pendentes vitibus uvæ,
 Paulatim liquor ille intus rarefcit, & aureus
 Accedit color, elucent puriffima musta. 335
 Tum demum tabulis passim farmenta relictis
 Complêrunt omnes, perque atria virgia lætæ
 Exercentur, & effundunt quæfita per ævum
 Stamina, ditis opes uteri, fufpenfaque denfos
 Fila regunt inter ramos, atque ordine ducunt. 340
 Mille legunt releguntque vias, atque orbibus orbes
 Agglomerant, cæco donec fe carcere claudant
 Sponte fua : tanta est edendi gloria fili.

And the clear skin, thro' ev'ry winding fold,
 Transparent shines with threads of ductile gold :
 So from the vine when rip'ning clusters draw 405
 Their first imperfect juice opaque and raw,
 Time rarifies the cloud, the sap refines,
 Till pure and bright the yellow nectar shines.
 Then all your flocks forsake their antient stalls,
 And spread laborious thro' their wicker halls, 410
 There from their mouths discharge the precious hoard
 Of golden woof; which length of time had stor'd ;
 From branch to branch extends the glitt'ring twine,
 And round and round returns the mazy line ;
 Forward and back a thousand times they tread, 415
 A thousand ways direct the subtle thread,
 Till thick'ning orb in orb the texture holds
 The willing pris'ner circled in its folds ;
 So freely is the price of glory paid,
 Such thirst of fame attends the golden trade : 420

Mox autem clausæ interiùs circum undique lecta
 Stamina condensant, terctisque ovi instar opus fit. 345
 Nullæ operum immunes : est omnes cernere passim
 Noctes atque dies niti præstante labore,
 Et quasi de palma summas contendere vires.
 Aspicias quasdam incipere, primumque laborem
 Tendere adhuc, quasdam obscuro jam carcere clausas.
 Ast aliæ, velut in nebula, fumoque nigranti 351
 Nunc etiam apparent properantes intus, & omnes
 Fas oculis spectare vias, variumque laborem.
 Quin & nonnullæ paribus communia curis
 Affociant opera, & nebula clauduntur eadem. 355
 Quædam adcò (visu miserabile,) sæpe repertæ,
 Dum tendunt superare alias, instantque labori,
 Vitam, opere in medio clausæ, sub nocte dedisse,
 Ante diem, ah miseræ ! jacuit labor interruptus.

Parva

None rest from work exempted, none delay,
 The pleasing toil proceeds by night, by day ;
 The palm of conquest seems before their eyes,
 And each keen rival straining for the prize :
 Those just advanc'd their outside warp extend, 423
 These dark inclos'd their round of labour end ;
 Others, with downy cloud envelop'd thin,
 As thro' a mist appear employ'd within ;
 Our eyes engag'd pursue the wond'rous art,
 And trace the subtle work thro' ev'ry part ; 430
 While some unite their tasks, with common care
 Harmonious lab'ring in one cloudy sphere,
 And others, spurr'd by glory, while they dread
 To be outrival'd in the quickspun thread,
 O'er harass'd in the strife (a piteous fight) 435
 Untimely perish wrap'd in shades of night ;
 Imperfect cells entomb the wretched band,
 Their monumental works unfinish'd stand.

Parva mora est tamen : ut se aliæ includere latebris, 360

Extremoque manum summam imposuere labori,

Exhaustæ intereunt omnes, terræque relinquunt.

Ite animæ egregiæ, fortunatæque laborum

Ultro in fata alacres : vobis nempe altera fato

Corpora debentur ; vobis miserata priorem 365

Eripiet formam Venus, atque ad dulcia reddet

Lumina, & aereas rursus revocabit in auras.

Prima Venus docuit bombycem in tecta referre

Eductam sylvis, atque hanc impendere curam,

Antè homines nati, durum genus, ilice rupta, 370

In sylvis nudi degebant more ferarum :

Necdum ullus lini, necdum ullus velleris usus.

Verùm dura hyemis pellebant frigora, noctisque

Humorem,

Nor long survive their fellow tribes but all,
 Imprison'd dark within the silky ball, 440
 Compleat their labours, and resign their breath
 Exhausted, sinking in the shades of death.
 Go wond'rous race, thrice happy artifts go,
 Meet fate content, to you the sifters owe
 A second birth ; kind Venus shall requite 445
 Your toils, and raise you to the realms of light ;
 With other forms, and other pow'rs repair,
 And spread your nations thro' the fields of air.
 Unskilful mortals, first by Venus taught,
 From sylvan wilds the lab'ring insect brought ; 450
 In domes secur'd them from intemp'rate air,
 Improv'd their arts, and rear'd their tribes with care :
 E'er this the race of man, an oak-born brood,
 All savage liv'd, and naked rang'd the wood ;
 Nor yet, in labour'd flax or fleeces, knew 455
 To ward the wintry blast, or nightly dew ;

Humorem, fruticum se frondibus involventes,

Et liquidos imbres vitabant arbore tecti,

375

Per noctemque cavis latitabant rupibus hirti.

Hic illic misti latos impunè per agros

Cum nudis nudi juvenes errare puellis.

Ast ubi crescenti paulatim cognitus orbi

Irrepfit pudor, exuviis cœpere ferarum,

380

Aut tergo bovis, aut villosi pelle leonis

Se tegere, & coriis involvere mollibus artus.

Ipsi etiam nudi degebant æthere in alto

Cœlicolæ, cœlique nurus discrimine nullo.

Prima Deûm Pallas docuit committere campo

385

Enodis lini segetem, & tondere bidentem

Lanigeram, ac tenui telas intendere filo.

Illa

Dry grafs, and wither'd foliage kept them warm,
And lodg'd in hollow trees they fhun'd the ftorm ;
From midnight vapour chill, the vaulted cave
To their rough limbs its craggy fhelter gave ; 460
Then guiltlefs, sporting o'er the verdant mead,
The naked youths with naked virgins ftay'd :
But foon as time had feen the world increafe,
And fhame crept rofy to the maiden's face,
Then fkins of beafts their early wants fupply'd, 465
The fheep, or ox, or lyon's fhaggy hide ;
The Gods themfelves that rule the realms on high
In naked majefty poffefs'd the fky,
Nor any drefs, thro' all the blefs'd abodes,
Diftinguifh'd yet the daughters of the Gods : 470
Firft Pallas fhew'd to plant the knotlefs flax,
And fpin the fofter thread of fleecy backs ;
Strung the fram'd loom with warp of various die,
And taught the refllefs fhuttle how to fly.

Illa quidem primùm vario se ornavit amiçtu,

Egregiam piçto pallam circumdata limbo :

Mox alias etiam texit ditiffima divas :

390

Nec mora, deinde novam ostendit mortalibus artem.

Tantum nuda Venus mœrebat muneris expers

Egregii, ob formam textrici invisâ Minervæ ;

Atque, irrifa diu, super Idalium frondosum

Se natosque suos in fylvis condidit atris.

395

Cui pòst optanti Fors & Deus attulit olim

Auxilium : nam Peliacis te in montibus altis,

Phyllira, Nympharum pulcherrima montanarum,

Saturnus, captus forma & florentibus annis,

Viderat errantemque, & gramina certa legentem. 400

Ah,

Book I. The SILK WORM. 67

First for herself the flowing robe she made, 475
Rich border'd, wrought in many-colour'd shade ;
Each Goddess next was with her bounty grac'd,
And happy mortals shar'd the gift at last :
Venus, alone of all celestials, mourn'd,
Naked amid the Gods, and unadorn'd ; 480
Her lively charms displeas'd the spinster maid,
And envy'd beauty lost Minerva's aid ;
Asham'd of heav'n, to shun the gibing croud,
She sought the shelter of th' Idalian wood ;
Hid with her sons, afraid of ev'ry eye, 485
And pensive view'd her abdicated sky.
At length kind fortune to her wishes came,
And all unhop'd a God reliev'd the dame :
For Phyllira a mountain nymph, and fair
Surpassing all that breath'd in Pelion's air, 490
Was seen by Saturn as she wander'd light
In quest of herbs that love the hilly height ;

Ah, quoties precibus Nympham Deus aspernantem

Tentavit supplex, ingrataque munera verbis

Addit! ah, quoties nimboris montibus errans,

Matutinus iter tulit, & monstravit in agris

Præfentes morbis herbas, usumque medendi! 405

Illam averfa Deum femper fugiebat amantem.

Quid faceret? Venerem supplex adit ipse, rogatque

Auxilium, & meriti promittit præmia tanti.

Diva monet, duræ frustra præcordia Nymphæ

Tentari, nulli pectus penetrabile amori, 410

Nec precibus, nec muneribus mutarier ullis;

Fallendamque dolis tantùm, furtisque domandam.

Ergo

Struck with her form and youth, the gazing God
 With soft insinuated passion glow'd :

How oft alas ! before the scornful maid, 495
 Were suppliant plaints express'd and presents laid ?
 How often did he tread the morning dew,
 And damp with misty clouds her steps pursue ?
 With what officious fondness flew each flow'r,
 And point out ev'ry plant of healing pow'r ? 500
 But fruitless ev'ry friendly office prov'd,
 The fair still slighted, and the God still lov'd.
 Thus deep distress'd he sought the Cyprian dame,
 And there with pray'rs and gifts disclos'd his flame :
 When thus love's pitying pow'r—' No soothing art, 505
 ' No gifts will ever gain the virgin's heart ;
 ' Nor sighs incessant breath'd, nor tears can move
 ' A bosom steel'd against the shafts of love,
 ' But cunning may prevail, and deep disguise,
 ' Try these, and take the fair one by surprize. 510

She

Ergo se in faciem fubitò transformet equinam

Imperat, & pascat qua gramina fueverat illa

Quærere, ut ignaram furto aggrediatur opertus. 415

Nec mora preceptis : hinnitu Pelion altum

Clausus equo, Deus implevit, votoque potitus

Vi tenuit frustra pugnantem, & multa recusantem.

Exin promeritæ Veneri, pro munere magno,

Semina clausa dedit niveo tenuissima linteo, 420

Et, meriti memor, his, inquit, pulcherrima texes

Diva tibi infignes tunicas, nihil indiga lanæ,

Aut lini, quæ dona negat tibi iniqua Minerva.

Hinc præcepta dedit, divinam & prodidit artem,

Quam

She then advis'd him near her haunts to feed,
 Chang'd to the semblance of a sprightly steed ;
 There watch, and sudden seize the stubborn maid,
 Guardless to love's fictitious form betray'd.
 Streight, to a courser chang'd, the lover bounds, 515
 And filling Pelion's height with borrow'd sounds
 Seizes the nymph, persisting in disdain,
 Deceiv'd to love, and struggling now in vain,
 Bless'd in his wishes thus, the God repairs
 To Venus, grateful for her friendly cares, 520
 And wrapt in lawn presents the shelly grain
 Whose polish'd orbs the filky race contain,
 And hence he cries, indulgent pow'r divine,
 O'er thy fair limbs shall richer raiment shine
 Than all which labour'd flax or wool produce, 525
 Confin'd by partial Pallas in their use.
 He then inform'd the dame in all the art
 Which meditated long had sooth'd his heart,

What:

Quam primus, nati fugeret cùm protinus iras, 425

Deprendit folis meditando in montibus olim.

Infuper admonuit, venturi præcius ævi,

Quondam aliquos, sed enim multò pòst, affore vates,

Qui totum canerent præclara inventa per orbem,

Gratum opus Aufoniis, dum volvent fila, puellis. 430



Book I. The SILK WORM. 73

What time he lost the skies, compell'd to rove
In lonely mountains, hid from angry Jove ; 530
And last pronounc'd, with pow'r prophetic fill'd,
That future times, but far remov'd, would yield
Some children of the muse, whose tuneful tongue
Should teach the silken arts, and whence they sprung,
A tale attentive heard by list'ning maids, 535
While whirling spindles twist their silver threads.



The ARGUMENT of the SECOND BOOK.

The silkworms subject to sickness. Line 45—Remedies—Dead ones to be remov'd 65—Air and sunshine useful. 71—Fruit of the mulberry-tree hurts them. 107—And oil, and salt. 115—Noise, and tainted breath. 145—Children to be kept from molesting them. 151—The appearance, different colours, and fineness of their finish'd silkballs. 211—How to keep those balls which are designed for breed. 245—Episode of Venus going to Pluto to repair her lost race. 273—The manner of their breaking thro' the silkballs in form of butterflies. 341—They never eat afterward. 371—But propagate their species, and die. 383—Their eggs how preserv'd. 413—Not to be kept longer than the ensuing spring. 443—The manufacture of silk. 447—Episode of Serius and Phaetbusa, who introduced the art into Italy. 501.

MARCI HIERONYMI
V I D Æ
B O M B Y C U M,

A D

ISABELLAM ESTENSEM,
MARCHIONISSAM MANTUÆ,

LIBER SECUNDUS.

RURSUS ades, Nympha, inceptum jam perfice
munus,

O decus Italidum, fortunatissima matrum,

Quæ, vastas fessæ Italiæ miserata ruinas,

Haud dubias pulchra spes nobis prole tulisti.

Tu

THE
SILK WORM.
A POEM OF
MARCUS HIERONYMUS
VIDA.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS the Princess of
WALES.

BOOK THE SECOND.

ONCE more the muse thy guardian aid shall ask,
Thy presence to compleat her promis'd task,
O Nymph the pattern of the British fair,
By whom each mother forms her anxious prayer ;
Whose growing offspring, charg'd with Albion's fate,
Ensure dominion to an endless date ;

6

Soon

Tu jam læta tuos natos præstantibus ausis 5

Cœlicolas ipsos supra se ferre videbis.

Aspice jam quantas ostendet corpore vires

FREDERICUS puer, ut vultu decora alta parentum

Spondeat, ut veniant scintillæ ardentis ab ore,

Flagrantefque micent oculi, utque horrentia semper 10

Bella sonet, puerique agitet se pectore Mavors.

Jamque adèdè nunc arma placent, jam fervidus acri

Gaudet equo, indomitufque animi, cupidufque pericli.

Hunc jam regna Asiæ metuunt, orientque subactus,

Gangefque; Tigriſque; tremunt, atque Indus Hydaspes. 15

Sæpe hunc, Euphratæ propter vaga flumina, Eoæ

Bellantem aspicient, multa inter millia, matres ;

Horrescentque animis hostem, pariterque timebunt

Egregio juveni, cæcoque urentur amore,

Præstanti

Soon shalt thou see thy race of heroes rise,
 And claim by deeds a kindred to the skies ;
 Lo thy young George to ev'ry softer grace
 Knits manly strength, and shares each parent's face, 10
 What glowing mein ! what flashes light his eyes !
 Mars fills his breast, and fancy'd wars arise,
 Impatient for the fight his thoughts take arms,
 Mount the fierce steed and spring amidst alarms ;
 Gaul views th' aspiring youth with boding hate, 15
 And fear anticipates Hispania's fate ;
 The Danube sees him stretch th' embattled line,
 And shakes, and sends its terrors to the Rhine ;
 Oft while he spreads the war along the Po,
 Or where Sequana's wand'ring waters flow, 20
 On him the trembling maid shall fix her fight,
 And send kind wishes thro' the rage of fight,
 Conflicting passions shall her breast inspire,
 And hostile hatred mix with soft desire :

But

Præstanti captæ forma, & juvenilibus annis. 20

Gaudia mox trepidæ referet tibi quanta revertens,

Ultus avos Graiûm, Solymorumque eruta templa !

Tunc illum, Mincî in ripis facta ampla canentes,

Carminibus tollent sublimem ad fidera vates.

Lanificas nos interea revocamur ad artes : 25

Frondosæ invitant rursus sub tegmine mori

Seriades, grataque legunt è fronde coronam ;

Quando nondum ausim laurum sperare superbam,

Aut caput intonsis hederarum innectere ramis.

Ergo age, sarmentis dum se super aurea bombyx 30

Exercet, nitidumque edit de pectore filum,

Nempe

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 81

But O! what joy shall gild thy pious grief? 25
When safe restor'd you clasp the darling chief,
And pictur'd trophies rais'd on Albion's walls
Display his triumphs o'er the fainting Gauls,
While purple streams along the canvass flow,
And art prolongs the slaughter of the foe : 30
Then shall each Muse high-tune the swelling lyre
To notes expressive of his martial fire,
The floating sounds shall roll along the Thames,
And mix the hero with immortal names.
Mean time employ'd in humbler flights we rove, 35
And trace the filken arts in Thisbe's grove ;
Beneath its shade the Serian Nymphs invite,
There weaving for their bard a chaplet light,
Since yet he dares not hope the laurell'd bough,
Nor bend the curling ivy to his brow. 40

Now therefore (while the busy nations twine,
And stretch from spray to spray the glitt'ring line,

Nempe tuæ interea prorsus nihil indiga curæ est,
 Dum novies roseus se laverit æquore Titan.
 Disce laboranti pecori non pigra mederi,
 Tristibus & morbis occurrere : vos quoque nostri, 35
 Parvæ animæ, exercent per tot discrimina casus,
 Vestraque pallentes infestant corpora morbi.
 Corrupta sive illa lues cœli influit aurâ,
 Seu vitio infectæ frondis, gens labitur ægra,
 Et cœtus subitò serpunt contagia in omnes. 40
 Invadit mors, intereunt data corpora leto,
 Et thalamis passim tetro manantia tabo
 Fusa jacent : perit omne pecus, spes irrita fili.
 Dii teneros, Dii, vos fœtus arcete periclis ;
 Cùm nondum morbis præsentibus omnibus herbas 45
 Montrârit natura, hominumve industria solers

Nondum

Needleſs of aid till roſy Phoebus riſe
 Nine times reſreſh'd in Thetis' ſilver ſkies,)

Come learn what healing helps ſhould be prepar'd 45
 When dire diſeaſes threat the ſick'ning herd :
 Like us attack'd, their tender bodies know
 Mortal miſchance, and feel their lot of woe ;
 Pale ſickneſs ſhakes alike their little frames ;
 Whether the tainted air's corrupting ſteams 50
 Or noxious food the latent poiſon hold,
 Whate'er the cauſe, infection thins the fold ;
 Fate triumphs, bodies ſtain'd with putrid gore
 Deform the ſhelves and fun'ralſ ſtrow the floor ;
 No flatt'ring proſpect heaps the golden thread, 55
 But ev'ry hope lies mingled with the dead.
 The Gods avert, defend the tender flock,
 E'er helpleſs nature ſink beneath the ſhock,
 Since human wiſdom yet uncertain ſtrays
 Amidſt the mazy turns of wild diſeaſe, 60

Nondum morborum causas deprenderit omnes.

Multa tamen, longo quæ nos invenimus usu,

Quæque alii docuere, tibi nunc dicere pergam.

Nil adeò tinea fuerit presentius ægris, 50

Quàm subito è medio jucundo lumine cassas

Tollere, ne totam perfusa cadavera tabo

Latiùs inceffent miserando funere gentem.

Nec minùs inde tibi tristis contagia cœli

Sit studium vitæ : juvat, cùm lucidus æther, 55

Cùm noctis gelidum sol rorem sustulit, & cùm

Inter se Alpinus Boreas atque humidus Auster

Pacem agitant, vitro detracto aperire fenestras,

Quove almam lucem aspiciant, quove æthera purum,

Aurarumque leves animas, & frigora captent. 60

Nempe

And nature still conceals her precious wealth
Of sov'reign plants that aid the springs of health ;
But yet some useful hints the Muse imparts
From time and practice drawn, the source of arts.

First, nought so much avails the sickly crew 65
As early to remove from out their view
Each carcass ravish'd from the sweets of light,
Tainted in smell, and loathsome to the sight ;
Left hence the subtle air convey'd along
Spread its swift poison thro' the founder throng : 70
Nor less observe to keep their mansion dry
When lazy vapours load the gloomy sky ;
But when the sun has drank the midnight dew,
And his pure splendor gilds th' æthereal blue,
While yet pacific in their caverns deep 75
Sharp Boreas, and his humid rival sleep,
Unfold your windows to th' enliv'ning day,
And catch the gale, and meet the genial ray ;

Nempe intrò veniens Zephyris variantibus aer

Aera dispellit pigrum novus, & grave olentes

Lustrat, agens sese, thalamos, variatque saluber ;

Qui, nisi mutetur crebrò, corrumpitur, haustusque

Inducit varios reptantum in corpora morbos. 65

Ceu puteis pigros latices nisi sæpiùs urnâ

Hauferis, ut subito inde locum novus occupet humor,

Continuò sapor immotæ vitiatur aquâi,

Oraque potantum tristis perturbat amaror.

Tum verò ad solem, blandique ad luminis auras 70

Exultare pecus videas, & corpora luci

Pandere : non tamen immisso sub sole jacere

Securum fuit, aspiciant sed lumina longè.

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 87

Soft Zephyr then in gentle eddy streams,
And frees the stagnant air of noxious steams, 80
With fresh supplies improves its weaken'd spring,
And lifts the languid mafs on lighter wing ;
Else breath'd impure it fills with jarring strife
Th' unbalanc'd powr's, and taints the fount of life
Like wells, which long have lack'd the draughting urn,
Whose springs obstructed to their source return, 86
The lazy lake, by rest perpetual fix'd,
Corrupts in sloth, with freshning streams unmix'd,
Nor dares the weary fwain his thirst allay,
But tasting throws the nauseous draught away. 90
But touch'd with fresher air and genial heat
The swarms exult, with active life elate ;
Stretch to the solar light their lengthy frames,
And bask extatic in the soothing beams :
Yet suffer not th' imprudent flock to stay 95
Too long expos'd beneath the torrid ray ;

Shade

Si verò fuerit gelidis Aquilonibus aer

Frigidus, aut nimbos spirantibus humidus Austris ; 75

Protinus in thalamos inferri profuit ignes :

Ne tamen ineffet lacrymosus lumina fumus,

Ipfos occuluere cavis fornacibus ignes,

Unde aditus fumo fit nusquam in tecta, sed extrà

Respirans Vulcanus in aera fumet apertum. 80

At calor interea placidus diffunditur intus

Paulatim, & tepidi calida è fornace vapores.

Sunt etiam, quæ, cùm nigrefcit foetibus arbos,

Incipiunt cùm mora rubescere, pabula lecta

Retibus imponunt raris, in perque foratis 85

Pellibus, in gyrumque agitant, jaçantque per auras.

Namque cadunt, veluti, per lata foramina, grando,

Nigrantes baccæ, vel quicquid inutile mensis ;

Et tantùm folia ipfa manent, quòd folvere mollem

Alvum mora ferunt, tristesque inducere morbos. 90

Præterea

Shade its keen blaze and force them to retire
At distance tasting of the temper'd fire.

But if the rigid north should blow severe,
Or clouds breathe humid from the southern sphere, 100
Check the rude blast with artificial heats,
And chace the moisture from their chilly seats ;
For this the cover'd stove affords its fire,
The tepid vapours thro' its arch transpire,
A milder climate spreads o'er all the room, 105
And outward flies the tear-compelling fume.

Some cautious, when the foodful forest shoots
Its lengthy branches weigh'd with rip'ning fruits,
In meshy nets receive the leafy store
Or sieves thin wove, till shaken o'er and o'er 110
The purple berries all have sep'rate pass'd,
Like hail thick driving in the wintry blast ;
For Thisbe's juicy fruits are said to drain
Their tender bowels with diseaseful pain.

Præterea liquido respergi corpora olivo
 Mors erit extemplo ah! miseris, lucemque relinquent.
 Ergo, ubi nocte gregem famulæ & stabula alta revifent,
 Edico procul ardentem deponere testam
 In tenebris, ubi pingue oleum depascitur ignis ; 95
 Ne super incautis gutta stillantis olivi
 Decidat, ac totos deformat peste penates.
 Usque aded in Venerem longas exercuit iras
 Infensam inventrix semper frondentis olivæ.
 Exin cùm liquor officiat bombycibus omnis, 100
 Præcipuè fale qui fuerit vitiatum amaro
 Cùm semel attigerit, miseris erit acre venenum.
 Protinus elucet languentibus aurea pellis,
 Deinde tument, turpifque animis ignavia venit

Defidibus,

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 91

Take heed beside left drops of trickling oil 115
Besmear the lab'ers with its clammy foil ;
Death in the fatal fluid wraps his prey
Confin'd for ever from the beam of day ;
Then let the maid who tends the flock by night,
While the fat liquid feeds the trembling light, 120
With steady grasp secure the reeking vase
Remov'd at distance from the thrifty race,
Lest from her hand the viscid nuisance pour,
And stain their mansion with its pois'nous show'r ;
For Pallas still, from out her olive grove, 125
Wreaks endless hatred on the queen of love ;
Beside, all moisture hurts the silky kind,
But chiefly that with acid salt combin'd ;
Its slightest touch infects the wretched brood,
Corrodes the flesh, and taints the circling blood ; 130
A glossy polish smooths the morbid skin,
Lifeless subsides the sluggish soul within,

Defidibus, tandem rumpuntur, & omnia tetro 105

Inficiunt tabo : fanies fluit undique membris,

Nec quicquam falso Venerem æquore profuit ortam.

Quædam ideo fylvas servant noctesque diesque :

Quandoquidem inventæ, falso quæ pabula rore

Invidiâ infecere, (scelus prohibete nefandum 110

Diique Deæque omnes,) cæcum & liquere venenum

In fylvis, quod mox foliis bibit inficia bombyx.

Arce etiam strepitus, cantu cava cornua rauco,

Fistulaque horribili procul absit ahenea bombo,

Tympanaque, & voces ludentis comprime pubis, 115

Invalidas sæpe exanimat leve murmur alumnas.

Book II. The SILK WORM. 93

They swell, they burst, foul venom reeks around
From all their limbs, and filth pollutes the ground ;
Nor helps it to allay the sharp disease 135
That Venus sprung from out the briny seas.
Then let the careful guardian fence his wood,
And watch by day, by night, the verdant food ;
Since some there are, with envious fury fraught,
(Banish ye Gods from breasts humane the thought) 140
Who, secret mixing draughts saline, imbrue
Whole groves polluted with the pois'nous dew,
The little lab'rer, thoughtless of his fate,
Sips the dire juice with latent death replete.

Avoid all stunning sounds, the horn's hoarse throat,
And trumpet thrilling with terrific note ; 146
The tinkling tongue of bells, and clam'rous noise
Incessant rais'd by throngs of sportive boys,
For lifeless oft appears the feeble flock,
Stunn'd by the fretted air's convulsing shock. 150

Nor

Sed neque tum pueri vastantes irrequietâ
 Cuncta manu hîc illic, stragemque impunè ferentes,
 Jamq; has jamque illas digitis dum tangere gaudent,
 Introducantur ; quos longè arcebis, & ultro 120
 Absissent, ætas si improvida ludificetur.
 Verbis falle illos : tincas finge acre venenum
 Inspirare animâ, vel spicula linquere caudis,
 Atque angues, colubrosque voca, dirosve chelydros.
 Observabis item, ne qui gustaverit allii, 125
 Aut cepæ, aut acris porri illætabile virus,
 Introeat, ne res pereat tibi funditus omnis.
 Bombycem exanimem vidi sæpe ipse jacere
 Afflatam famulæ graviter spirantis odore.
 Continuò vis illa subit, naresque laceffit, 130
 Intimaque infestum venit ad præcordia virus.
 Non igitur cunctis aditus permiferis, illas

Spectatum.

Nor should their feats admit the restless bands
Of childish years, whose busy-curious hands
Confusive thro' the filken labours roam,
And thoughtless spread swift mischief thro' the dome ;
Let frightful words their forward boldness shake, 155
Feign ev'ry worm an adder and a snake,
And cheat their ruder age with dreadful names
Of serpents arm'd with stings, and breathing flames.

Nor let his breath approach who steams with use
Of leek or garlick's tear-procuring juice ; 160
Oft have I seen the little insect die
Struck by the vapour of a tainted sigh,
So swift in air the subtle poisons dart,
And sudden reach the fountains of the heart :
Mark therefore ev'ry face, each breath explore, 165
And e'er your cautious hands unfold the door
Observe their mein, their voice, and strictly spy
Each temper thro' the foul-revealing eye ;

Nor

Spectatum quicumque adeunt ; quis spiritus ollis,
 Quis vultus, vocisque sonus, quis euntibus ultro
 Sit gressus, qui oculive, notes : discrimine nullo 135
 Limine anus omnes, monstra infelicia, longè
 Pelle ; nocent cantu tristes, oculifve malignis.
 Intrò autem tantùm juvenes, pulchræque puellæ
 Ducendæ, queis forma ætasque ignara nocendi est.
 Hic impunè choros agitent, alternaque læti 140
 Idaliæ Veneri, ac Saturno carmina dicant.
 Quandoquidem memini Tusci alta in rupe Viterbi
 Ipse senem vidisse ferum, cui dira rigebant
 Ora, gravesque oculi suffecti sanguine circum,
 Fronsqve obscœna situ, hirtique in vertice cani. 145
 Ille truci (scelus) obtutu genus omne necabat
 Reptantum, tenues animas, parvasque volantes.

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Nor pause, but make the wither'd hag retreat
Swift from the threhold of your filken feat, 170
Her voice ill-omen'd shakes with thrilling knells,
And from her eyes distil malignant spells ;
But let the stripling and the spotless maid,
Sweet forms with beauteous innocence array'd,
In measur'd dance around the mansion move 175
With songs to Saturn and the queen of love :
For I remember, where Viterbo stands
O'er-hanging from its rocks the Tuscan lands,
An aged wretch, his features stiff with years,
And each red eyeball raw with rheumy tears ; 180
A scaly scurf his furrow'd front o'erspread,
And hoary stubble bristled from his head ;
He, direful to relate, with venom'd sight
Sent ev'ry tender life to shades of night,
Each insect fell before his blasting face, 185
And birds drop'd flutt'ring from their airy race ;

Quinetiam siquando hortos ingressus, ubi annus

Exiit expleto turpem novus orbe senectam,

Floribus & passim per agros incanuit arbor, 150

Ille hortis stragem dedit, arboribusque ruinam,

Spemque anni agricolæ mœsti flevere caducam.

Nam quocunque aciem horribilem intendisset, ibi omnes,

Cernere erat subito afflato languescere flores ;

Mox album late nimum volitare per auras : 155

Nec tantum noceat raptor ferus Orithyæ,

Siquando iratus male tutis incubet hortis.

Nostram igitur si forte domum prætermeet olim

Pestis & ira Deum talis, cum plurima reptans

Complevit

Or if his foot approach'd Pomona's bow'rs
While vernal gales unwrap'd the fruitful flow'rs,
When now the folt'ring fun advancing near
With genial touch reviv'd the wither'd year, 190
Wide o'er the groves his blast malignant spread,
And struck the beauties from each leafy head,
The hopelefs peasant mix'd his mournful tear
O'er the sad ruins of the perish'd year ;
For whatfoe'er his look malignant ey'd 195
Swift shrunk the bloom and ev'ry beauty dy'd,
In clouds the wafted bloffoms flew around,
And spread their snowy honours o'er the ground ;
Not the fierce God who forc'd th' Athenian fair
Brings fuch destruction in the driving air 200
When wrathful he exerts his boift'rous force,
And o'er unshelter'd gardens wings his courfe :
If fuch a peft portentous from the Gods
Should pafs ill-omen'd near my flocks abodes,

Complevit fedes omnes atque atria circùm ; 160

Non illum affari libeat, longumque morari.

Sed properate fores, famulæ, properate, fenestras

Claudite, pestiferamque avertite limine cladem.

Jam promissa dies terris lucem intulit almam :

Jam, licet, ingredi, artificum mirare laborem 165

Egregium, mirare artes, ut pendula ramis

Omnibus hæferunt varii glomeramina fili.

Qualiter autumnis primo cum frigore in hortis

Arboribus pendent haud uno poma colore.

Sic hærent nitidi vario discrimine ramis 170

Folliculi : sunt quæ viridem traxere colorem

E foliis, quæ depasta est Saturnia bombyx,

Fila,

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When now the filky nations all complete 205
Croud the wide hall and swarm on ev'ry feat,
No friendly converse should his steps delay,
No courteous office should invite his stay,
But, close my windows, maidens, bolt my door,
And fast and far repel the plague impure. 210

But now at last appears the promis'd day,
And wide o'er nature spreads its chearing ray,
Advance and let your eyes all-wond'ring trace
Each art, each labour of the filky race,
How firmly fix'd amid the boughs on high 215
The pendant balls appear in diff'rent dye ;
As orchards ripen'd e'er autumnal cold
Display their various shades of verdant gold,
So ev'ry downy twig delights the view
Thick hung with filken spheres of diff'rent hue ; 220
Some with a feeble tinge of green imbu'd
Declare their kindred to the leafy food,

Some

Fila, auri quædam electricæ fimillima puri.

Omnibus est reliquis color albi velleris instar.

Ergo ubi, per ramos jam perfecisse laborem 175

Clausas, quamque suum, vigili exploraveris aure ;

Atq; ubi nec strepitus, nec vim datur amplius ullam

Audiri, sed jam motus requieverit omnis ;

Pelle moram, exonera ramos, impone canistris,

Carpe utraque manu, & famulas properare jubeto. 180

Primus deinde labos extrema, & inutile quicquid

Lanicii detraxe, & luxuriantia circum

Vellera, quæ stuppæ veluti nodosa puellæ

Ruris pensâ trahunt torquentes pollice fila,

Unde sibi intexant festis gestanda diebus 185

Tegmina, cum lætas agitant per prata choreas.

Hinc triplex delectus erit : meliora Deorum

Imponunt

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Some to the blaze of burnish'd gold aspire,
And others glow with amber's fainter fire,
The rest, of milder beauty, sooth the sight 225
With fleecy smoothness and its soften'd white.
And now intent with list'ning ear explore,
And if th' imprison'd lab'rer toils no more,
Nor effort from within nor rustling sound
Is heard, but steady silence reigns around, 230
Quick place your baskets, urge your maiden croud,
Pull fast and see the filken vintage stow'd :
Now the first task presents to raise and cull
The coarse luxuriance of the downy wool,
Which teaz'd like knotty flax the rural maid 235
Fits to the staff, and forms the gaudy thread,
To flow'r the garb on high occasions seen
When festal dance invites her to the green.
Next make a triple choice ; the finest balls
Hang sacred on the temple's hallow'd walls ; 240

Distinguish

Imponunt aris ; aliqua in spem gentis, & anni

Venturi ad sobolem servant de more creandam ;

Cætera dein varios devolvunt vestis in usus.

190

Quæ verò in generis spem vis servare caduci,

Deligito ex omni numero : neglecta quotannis

Degenerat proles magis ac magis, atque propago

Deterior tibi semper erit labentibus annis.

Sed non ob sobolem multos servare necesse est

195

Folliculos, capitum multorum sœmina partu

Una dabit mater, centum quæque ova relinquet.

Quos igitur fœturæ habiles provideris, omnes

Connectes ducto per acûs vestigia filo.

Sed

Distinguish some to raise your annual stock
And fill the mansions with a younger flock ;
The rest unfold their orbs for human use,
And rich attire of various form produce.

But those from whom the perishable brood 245
Shall raise your hopes in younger swarms renew'd,
Select with judgment, else the tribes appear
With lessen'd vigour each successive year,
Their dwindling size thro' ev'ry birth you trace
At last diminish'd to a useless race. 250

Yet choose not many to preserve the kind,
A few shall leave a num'rous race behind ;
Each fruitful mother e'er she quits the earth
Conceives and brings an hundred eggs to birth.
Whom therefore your judicious thoughts approve 255
For offspring vig'rous and the fruits of love,
Place by themselves, and let a slender thread
Connect them by the guiding needle led,

Sed parcens leviter terebrato, extremaque tantùm 200

Tangito acu tenui, ne inclusa cadavera ferro

Ah! violes, & res evertas funditus omnes.

Post hinc confertos ita frigida sub loca conde,

Aut Bacchi in cella sub terram, aut ficubi montis

Exesi specus ardenti impenetrabile Phœbo, 205

Ne calor absumat defuncta cadavera vitâ :

Fata dabunt quibus ad jucundum surgere lumen

Rurfus, & in parvas volucrum se vertere formas,

Cùm primùm cœlo stellas aurora fugârit,

Et decies roseos sol laverit æquore currus. 210

Nam quondam (ut perhibent) cùm primos aurea fœtus

Nutriet Venus umbrosis in vallibus Idæ,

Nuda cohors tenerùm circum ludebat Amorum,

Et

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But flight and softly pierce the filken skin,
And ah ! beware the tender life within, 260
A ruder wound destroys the parent stock,
And ev'ry prospect of a future flock :
Thus link'd securely, stow the treasur'd balls
In vaulted cellars cool with circling walls,
Or in the shady slope of mountain high 265
Where caves deep scoop'd the torrid beam defy,
Lest with'ring heat should drain their lives away
Which once again shall taste the beam of day,
New form'd to range the tracts of airy space
On pinions mingling with the feather'd race, 270
When the tenth dawn shall fright the starry train,
And Phœbus rise new bath'd from out the main.

For once 'tis said that when the queen of love
Rear'd her first brood in Ida's sacred grove,
While absent from the tender flock she stray'd 275
The naked cupids thro' their mansions play'd,

Et nunc hîc manibus temere dare pabula blandis,
 Nunc illic tractare levi reptantia tactu 215
 Corpora, Acidaliosque toris diffundere flores,
 Dum verò incauti nunc huc, nunc protinus illuc
 (Fortè parens aberat) studiis puerilibus errant,
 Impliciti inter sese altis in cratibus urgent :
 Fit strepitus, pontes vastam traxere ruinam, 220
 Lanifici stabula alta gregis : jacet undique bombyx
 Fusa solo, exanimùm ingentes (miserabile) acerui.
 Quam cladem accepit rediens ubi mater, & omnem
 Cæde madere locum vidit procul, & genus omne
 Funditus extinctum, totamque ab origine gentem, 225
 Et famulas nusquam sibi, nusquam occurrere natos,
 Qui sese abdiderant fylvis, tacitique latebant ;
 Infelix stetit ingenti perculsa dolore,

Tum

With bufy fingers teiz'd the reptil brood,
And turn'd and forc'd them to their leafy food ;
Thus thoughtlefs while they rang'd the filken bow'rs,
And sportive fcatter'd Acidalian flow'rs 280
Wrestling in playful bands, their infant weights
Shook the flight basis of the wicker feats,
Down all at once with crackling ruin falls
The fhatrer'd ftructure of their airy halls,
Crush'd on the floor the filky nations lie, 285
And heaps of mangled bodies fhock the eye ;
Swift from the mifchief flew the frighted loves,
And filent hid amid the thickeft groves ;
When as the dame returning view'd around
The flaughter'd tribes lie reeking o'er the ground, 290
Her maidens all, and all her children fled,
Nor fpark of life among the num'rous dead,
Breathlefs fhe flood, o'erpower'd with rufhing grief,
And fpeech fupprefs'd deny'd her foul relief ;

Then

Tum furiis acta huc illuc clamore supremum

Idalium implevit, natos famulasque requirens. 230

Nulla quies animo, noctesque diesque vagatur,

Incaffumque gemens folos interrogat agros.

Infernas etiam sedes, atque atria Ditis

Ægra adiit, quo mœstæ animæ post fata feruntur

Squamigerûm, pecudum atq; hominum, vitæq; volantum :

Si fortè ipse sibi patruus rex maximus Orci 236

Annueret paucas animas in tarda reverti

Corpora, ut inde novam sobolem revocaret in auras.

Jamque

Book II. The SILK WORM, I I I

Then frantic rushing thro' th' Idalian hills 295

Her plaintive voice each rocky cavern fills,
And cites her fons her maids with piteous cry,

But mountains only to her call reply.

Thus day and night amidst the desert wilds
In vain lamenting to the lonely fields, 300

Mournful at last she sought the dreary feats
Where gloomy Pluto rules his dark retreats,

Where shades from ev'ry element repair,

The tenant of the flood, and fowls of air,
And beasts that range in lawns and forests tall 305

Savage or tame, and man the lord of all ;

O'er the bleak coast with silent pace she treads

To try the sov'reign tyrant of the shades

If haply, soften'd by her piteous pray'r,

The little lives releas'd to fields of air 310

Again might feel the chearing beam of day,

And animate once more their torpid clay.

And

Jamque ibant umbræ tenues Styga circumfusæ

Obscuram, nigrosque lacus, & rauca fluenta. 240

Tum dominæ adventu lætæ circum ora volantes

Nondum oblitæ alis plaufere, & signa dederunt

Lætitiæ, nondum trans livida flumina vectæ.

Agnovit Venus, & secum est lætata repertis.

Quam Saturnius horrentis regnator Averni, 245

Ut procul aspexit, multo est dignatus honore,

Permissetque animas in corpora tarda reverti

Rurfus, ut extinctam sobolem revocaret in auras,

Seminaque his generis penitus repararet adempti.

Utque sequi possent dominam supera alta petentem, 250

Corporibus

And now in thronging flocks their puny ghosts,
Round the dark waters of the joyless coasts,
Possess'd the Stygian shore, prepar'd to take 315
Their voyage o'er its hoarse-resounding lake ;
When as the dame approach'd her hapless crew
With wings applausive round their mistress flew,
Their former love with grateful minds avow'd,
Not wafted yet o'er Lethe's lazy flood ; 320
The smiling Goddess hail'd the flutt'ring train,
And anxious view'd her little cares again :
Whom when the God that rules Avernus dire,
Great Saturn's son, and brother to her sire,
Perceiv'd at distance from his awful throne, 325
Mild on the dame his soften'd aspect shone,
And gave the ruin'd race, with quick repair,
To rise and repossess the fields of air ;
Then bounteous, to assist their lab'ring flight
In the steep journey to the realms of light, 330

Corporibus geminas renovatis addidit alas.

Hanc legem posuit tamen, ut genus omne quotannis

Alitis in faciem se post opera atque labores

Verteret, & nigros Orci bis viferet amnes.

Ut quosdam populos in Hyperborea Pallene 255

Esse ferunt, qui, se ut novies Tritonide in unda

Merferunt, natis tollantur in aera pennis.

Nonne vides, cùm carceribus exire reclusis

Infant ardentis, quanta nitantur opum vi ?

Clausa obstat domus, & filii densissimus ordo. 260

Nec mora, nec requies, vestigant omnia circùm,

Explorantque aditus omnes, siqua potis extrà

Rumpere, & optatæ rursus se reddere luci.

Ecce

He gave new beauties to their plummy pride,
And spread a second wing on either side,
But fix'd a law, that each revolving year
When all compleat their silken toils appear,
Their tribes transform'd on airy wings should rise, 33;
And twice pay homage in his fable skies ;
Thus fame reports, in blake Pallene's climes
That men, renown'd for spells and magian rhymes,
When nine times bath'd in Triton's wizard springs,
Mount on the winds supply'd with airy wings. 340

Observe, when first th' imprifon'd race revives,
How each exerted pow'r for freedom strives ;
On ev'ry side the circling cell restrains,
Their efforts, strong secur'd with silken chains,
Restless from side to side they turn around 345
Where-e'er the tough enclosure weakest found
May yield a passage to their eager flight,
And blefs the wishing tribes with new-born light ;

Ecce autem, ut rostro follem terebravit acuto,

Protinus erumpit (visu mirabile monstrum) 265

Alitis in parvæ bombyx collecta figuram ;

Et nova se rerum facies mirantibus offert.

Nam quæ longa fuit tinea olim, fit levis alis

Papilio, tineæ pallentes concolor artus.

Ergo carceribus cùm rupit multa viam vis, 270

Et sese cæcis populi eripuerunt tenebris

Aligeri, atque iterum lucis venere sub auras ;

Hærent attoniti rerum novitate, neque audent

Remigio alarum se aperto credere cœlo :

Diffimilesque sui tacitè nova corpora secum 275

Mirari, forma nec sese agnoscere in illa.

Cornua mirantur fronti, mirantur & alas,

Et

When lo! no sooner is the filken skin
 Pierc'd by their pointed beaks, than from within 350
 The flutt'ring wonder bursts, in plumes array'd,
 And pinions like the feather'd race display'd.
 And now amaz'd with diff'rent eyes they view
 A diff'rent scene, and ev'ry object new ;
 For that which once with reptiles crawl'd along 355
 Now mixes light amidst the mothy throng,
 Its wings and body still besprinkled o'er
 With the pale colours which it held before :
 Now therefore when with oft-repeated force
 The struggling tribes have bor'd a pervious course, 360
 Freed from their prisons and surrounding night
 To drink pure air, and feel reviving light,
 Astonish'd they survey their new-got frame,
 Strange to themselves, and wond'ring whence they came ;
 The wings broad-spreading down their sides surprize,
 And lengthy beak, and horn's extended size ; 366

Unus'd

Et vires nil supra audent tentare priores

Diffisi, memoresque fui : sed tum neque gustant

Pabula, nec vitæ quærunt alimenta prioris : 280

Tantus adhuc memores timor atri detinet Orci.

Nunc etiam ante oculos Styx livida, nigraque regna,

Tartareique canis tria guttura, monstraque Ditis

Impacata, brevis ne vitæ gaudia quærant.

Idcirco, aligeræ neque frondem suffice genti 285

Incasum, neque potandos admoveris amnes.

Carpe manu refides, & funibus insidentes,

In tabulamque refer stratam velamine molli.

Quippe ubi subtræcto se rursus ad fata vocari

Senferunt victu, turbantur : tum simul omnes, 290

Excidium

Unus'd to boundless space they fear to try
Their fans unpractis'd in the pathless sky,
Nor aught attempt beyond their former sphere,
Deterr'd, and conscious still of what they were. 379
Nor search they now for life-sustaining food,
Nor crop the leaf that rear'd the reptile brood,
Death lately tasted swims before their sight,
With Styx dark-rolling round the realms of night ;
And Cerberus still warns with yell severe, 385
That fleeting life no more deserves their care.

Let therefore all supplies of foliage cease,
Nor tempt with drink the plume-apparel'd race,
But, on the silken cordage as they stand
Inactive, see them rais'd with gentle hand, 389
And from their burst enclosures hung aloft
Bear them to tables spread with carpet soft ;
Here when they feel their near approaching end,
And ebbing life no more with food sustain'd,

Strong

Excidium veluti cœlo terrisque propinquum
 Immineat, cùm supremo mortalia cuncta
 Una dies dabit exitio, multosque per annos
 Sustentata ruet perituri machina mundi,
 Attoniti dubiis properant succurrere rebus. 295
 Concubitu indulgent omnes, ut femina gentis
 Munere defuncti vitæ post fata relinquunt,
 Et fervare genus valeant, stirpemque tueri.
 Nec verò, velut in sylvis genus omne ferarum,
 Alituumque, vagos passim furantur amores ; 300
 Sed connubia certa, sed electi hymenæi :
 Ille suam tenet, illa suum, dulcique fruuntur
 Amplexu caudis ambo per mutua nexis :
 Instant, et validis juncti compagibus hærent.
 Nec Veneris brevis usus erit ; videre revincti 305
 Quartam sæpe diem : nec quas legere relinquent,

Donec

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Strong panics sudden seize the trembling bands 385
As if dire destiny's revolting hands
Shook nature's fabric, when the last of days
Shall dreadful lowr o'er heav'n, and earth, and seas,
And fate shall mix in one great ruin hurl'd
The works of man, and strong-compacted world. 390
Thus to defeat the swift-dissolving hour
The frighted tribes bestir each active pow'r,
And give to Hymen's rites the scanty space
Of fleeting life, regardful of their race,
Fond to elude the fates, and leave behind 395
Some sorrow-foothing pledges of their kind.
Yet not promiscuous like the savage race
They join, in short fortuitous embrace ;
A lasting knot the mutual bond unites,
Four circling days, and four successive nights ; 400
Constant their love, dissolv'd alone by death,
For if the male should first resign his breath,

Donec uterque cadat : neque enim si viribus haustus
 Mas prior occiderit, longum tamen ipsa superstes
 Fœmina erit : sed ubi concepta effuderit ova,
 Nulla mora, amplexu nondum divulsa, sequetur. 310
 Idem omni interitus generi, fata omnibus æqua.
 Aspicias, miserans, confusa cadavera passim
 Procubuisse toris genialibus : omnia primùm
 Sedibus exportato, & tristia funera ducito :
 Illis namque operum est cunctorum finis & ævi. 315

At verò quæ infusa vides mantilibus albis
 Semina, ceu milii exigui tenuissima, coge :
 Hæc tibi post annum sobolis spes certa creandæ.
 His etenim sese reparat moribunda quotannis
 Seminibus, sobolesque venit nova semper ad auras. 320
 Abde domo, his aptam super omnia delige sedem,
 Quò neque sint aditus torrenti æstate calori,

Nec

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Still clasp'd in his embrace his faithful mate
Pours forth the num'rous birth, and shares his fate ;
Thus claim'd by death the total nations fall, 405
And one impartial lot alights on all ;
Stretch'd on the nuptial beds (a mournful sight)
They lye confus'd, and crave the fun'ral rite ;
Convey them forth, and let the parting bier
Receive the tribute of a grateful tear, 410
For now each busy scene of life is o'er,
Fate seals their freedom, and they toil no more.

Their orphan eggs, which small as millet grain
Besprinkle thick the carpet-cover'd plane,
Collect with careful hand, for these shall bring 415
A certain issue to supply the spring,
Unnumber'd nations here in embryo live,
Prop the frail race, and bid the name revive :
Wherefore to these allot peculiar feats
Impervious to the summer's scorching heats, 420

Nec Boreæ bruma in media : contraria vis est
 Utraque feminibus fervandis : frigora dira
 Vim genitalem omnem perimunt, frustra que fovebis 325
 Semen inane ; calor verò si admiffus in ova
 Paulatim fefe infnuet, parva est mora, proles
 Ante diem superas incassum rumpet in auras ;
 Cùm frondes jam confumptæ, cùm pabula fylvæ
 Deficiunt, & tonsa comam Thisbeïa nudos 330
 Ostentat ramos populatis frondibus arbor.

Quòd si spes generis defecerit omnis ubique,
 Seminaque aruerint Jovis implacabilis irâ,
 Sicut apes, tencri reparantur cæde juveni.
 Hic super accedit tantùm labor : antè juvencus 335
 Bis denosque dies, bis denasque ordine noctes
 Graminis arcendus pastu, prohibendus ab undis.
 Interea in stabulis tantùm illi pinguis mori

Sufficiunt

Or winter's freezing blast alike severe
 To life yet sleeping in the shelly sphere ;
 Cold chills their broody warmth, and then in vain
 With fost'ring skill you nurse the perish'd grain,
 And swift-insinuating heat expels 425
 Th' abortive broods untimely from their shells,
 Short-liv'd they burst to light while ev'ry wood
 Denies the succour `of its leafy food,
 And Thisbe's trees despoil'd of all their charms
 Blake to the skies extend their wither'd arms. 430

But if the blast of Jove's destroying breath
 Should wrap the race unborn in early death,
 A slaughter'd steer their nations shall restore,
 As Maro's shepherd rais'd his bees of yore :
 Restrain him first in stalls from ev'ry food 435
 Of grassy growth, and thirst-allaying flood,
 Ten doubled days and nights confin'd to brouze
 On Thisbe's leaves, and crop her juicy boughs ;

Then

Sufficiunt folia, & lactenti cortice ramos.

Viscera ubi cæsi fuerint liquefacta, videbis 349

Bombycem fractis condensam erumpere costis,

Atque globos toto tinearum effervere tergo,

Et veluti putres passim concrefcere fungos.

Quod superest ; moneo, generis tibi femina funto

Annua : degenerant supra annum condita, & inde 345

Omnis abit vigor, atque intus vitalis hebet vis.

Tum verò lætas exercent fila puellas :

Haud brevis hic labor, exhausti cui nil fatis unquam,

Dum redeat moro attonsæ nova vere juvenus.

Folliculos primùm domitant ferventibus undis ; 350

Filaque devolvunt nigris fumantia ahenis :

Tum currente rota torquent, eademque retorquent,

Stamineque implicito cura est dissolvere nodos.

Hinc vocat extremum tandem textura laborem,

Intenduntque

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Then slain, his tender flesh dissolv'd within
Shall pour the silky nations thro' his skin, 440
And bursting crouds, with fervid motion warm,
On his arch'd ribs shall pile the clust'ring swarm.

Now last observe to let your filken breed
Be rais'd from fresh supplies of annual seed,
If longer stor'd their vig'rous pow'rs abate, 445
And languid lose the birth-assisting heat.

And now the shining threads your girls employ,
A lengthy labour yet a task of joy,
Continu'd till the sun's reviving fire
Has furnish'd Thisbe's groves with fresh attire : 450
The balls in boiling streams they first subdue,
And from the fuming cauldron wind the clue ;
Unnumber'd threads the circling wheel combines,
While num'rous fingers loose th' entangled lines ;
Thus twisted o'er and o'er they last assume 455
Their final beauty from the lab'ring loom :

To

Intenduntque nurus discretas pectine telas 355

Multifido, radiisque sonantibus intertexunt,

Jactantes dextra lævaque sequentia fila ;

Alternisque suis pedibus labor additus, atque

Desuper acta gemit tereti rota garrula nervo.

Nec mora ; certantes properant, falluntque laborem 360

Aut cantu, aut Veneris curæ narrantur inanes.

Nec modus est simplex texendi, nec genus unum

Telarum : nunc rafa vides, & levia texta ;

Nunc pexis, leviterque attonsis mollia villis.

Quinetiam varios tenui subtegmine pingunt 365

Nexilibus flores hederis, fylvasque virentes,

Pomaque, graminaque, & cervos, capreasque fugaces.

Adde,

To this nice art experienc'd dames succeed,
 The warp thick ranging in the crevis'd reed ;
 From side to side the restless shuttle flies,
 And in its race the binding woof supplies ; 460
 Below th' alternate feet responsive move,
 And turning pullies prattle shrill above :
 Restless they strive and soothing songs, the while,
 With soft deceit the loit'ring night beguile,
 Or sadly-pleasing tales amuse their ears, 465
 The fate of lovers, and their fruitless cares.
 Nor moves the loom with artifice confin'd,
 Nor gives its works of one unvary'd kind ;
 Now the smooth woof a glossy surface spreads,
 Now swells in softer fleece of downy threads ; 470
 A various scene the shifted warp combines,
 Here mix'd with flow'rs the pliant ivy twines,
 Boughs bend with fruit, and waving woods appear,
 Meads, lawns, and sporting kids, and flying deer.

Adde, velut nebulas tenues, velamina textu

Rara, quibus matres crines & tempora velant,

In templisque Deum prohibent à pulvere vultus. 370

Vidi etiam varium quæ mutant texta colorem,

Eluduntque oculos, ut discolor aura refulsit.

Quid sequar ulterius? nil vis humana reliquit

Intactum : filum tunicis includitur aureis,

Indutæque rigent fulvo subtegmine vestes : 375

Ut quondam, Phryxi de finibus Æeteis

Vectâ, ovis aurato fulgebat pectora villo,

Pectoraque, & pexo pallentia terga metallo.

Et dubitant matres pinguem ferere undique morum ;

Aut inter teneras bombycem ferre papillas ? 380

Quid

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 131

Hence flows the fubtle veil which o'er the fair 475
Spreads its thin cloud, and wraps her braided hair,
Or fhades her face when dufty winds prevail,
And guards that beauty which it can't conceal.
Sometimes the wond'rous pow'r of fhade and light
With magic luftre mocks the doubting fight, 480
While fickle colours, as they change their place,
Fade, and revive, and catch a diff'rent grace.

'Twere endless to purfue thro' ev'ry part
How human wit exhaufts the filken art,
How filver plates the downy threads infold, 485
And the foft texture stiffens into gold,
Such as, of old, appear'd the precious fleece
From Ætes ravish'd by the fons of Greece,
Where the pale gold a woolly femblance bore,
Comb'd o'er the fkin in locks of curling ore ; 490
Hafte then, ye fair, nor blufh to plant the feed
Of Thisbe's tree, and nurfe the filken breed.

Quid mirum, si jam totum diffusa per orbem
 Saturni et Veneris pascunt pecora aurea gentes,
 Mollia nec foli noverunt stamina Seres?
 Lanivomum ipsa genus, Saturni munere magno,
 Jamdudum super Idalium, super alta Cythera 385
 Transtulit et Venus, et nostras penetravit ad oras.
 Quippe olim (sed fama annis obscura,) regebat
 Felices Seras læti ditissimus agri
 Serius, antiquo patriæ de nomine dictus.
 Mox acri infelix Phaethusæ incensus amore 390
 Italiam petiit: postquam illam ad flumina magni
 Audiit Eridani correptum fulmine fratrem
 Flere diem noctemque, Jovis fera tela querentem.

Sed

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 133

What wonder then that ev'ry land should rear
The flocks of Saturn and the Cyprian fair?
Nor Serean climes possess the sole renown 495
Of distaffs swelling soft with golden down ;
Long since, by Saturn taught, the queen of love
Far from Idalium and Cythera's grove
Has spread her arts to where Hydaspes runs,
And thence deriv'd they reach Europa's sons : 500
For still in records trac'd a tale appears,
Tho' dimly notic'd thro' the dusk of years,
That Serius once, a prince of wide command,
O'er Serean nations blest with fertile land
Far to Hesperian climes was forc'd to rove, 505
Unhappy drawn by Phaethufa's love ;
There he had heard that o'er the founding Po,
By day, by night, with never ending woe,
She mourn'd her brother's fate with pious love,
And plaintive blam'd the cruel bolt of Jove : 510
But

Sed vix Aufonios fines, Oenotriaque arva
 Attigerat, novus ecce illi cùm perculit aures 395
 Rumor, virgineam formam amisisse puellam,
 Protinus & longos ad cœlum tendere ramos
 Pro manibus, duroque includi pectora libro,
 Ah miseram ! subitò stetit acri corda dolore
 Saucius, insignemque à pectore rupit amictum, 400
 Pictus acu molles tunicas opera aurea Serum.
 Tum viridi in ripa, charæ sub virginis umbra,
 Implevit cœlum questu, dilectaque frustra
 Robora complexus tereti dabat oscula ligno,
 Et tenero ereptos in cortice flebat amores 405
 Infelix : non scepra animum, non regna parentum
 Alta movere queunt, nec opimæ copia gazæ.

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 135

But scarce his feet th'Aufonian shore had gain'd,
And fertile plains where old OEnotrus reign'd,
When lo! the voice of fame officious bears
A strange and sudden rumour to his ears,
That robb'd of virgin shape the hapless maid 515
A poplar's trembling form in air display'd,
With branches stretch'd for arms, and close embrac'd
In bark stiff-circling round her slender waist :
With heart-felt pangs the wounded lover bore
The fatal news, and from his bosom tore 520
The broider'd robes where Serean needles play'd
In blazing gold, and filk of softer shade ;
Beneath her boughs dark bending o'er the Po
He lay, and sent to heav'n the breath of woe,
Clasp'd the lov'd stem with unavailing blifs, 525
And mark'd the polish'd rind with eager kifs ;
Nor treasur'd wealth nor realms paternal move
His heart possess'd alone by pow'rful love,

Nor

In patriam negat ire, placet tantùm Itala tellus.

Nec procul Eridani ripis absistit, & omnem

Vitam agit in lacrymis : bis senos ordine menses 410

Illum adèdè perhibent solos flevisse per agros,

Et tandem Superos extrema voce precatum,

Neve oculis lacrymæ, neu deesset luctibus humor

Perpetuus : Superis quæ vota audita repentè.

Perstat in incepto ; gemitu nemora omnia complet : 15

Non oculis lacrymæ, non desit luctibus humor.

Solvunt se in lacrymas artus, & corpore toto

Liquitur humor, abitque omnis conversus in undas :

Fit fluvius, cursuque brevissimus exit in alveum,

Addua magne, tuum ; & tecum in vada solvitur alti 420

Eridani,

Book II. The SILK WORM. 137

Nor happy native lands delight him more,
Fix'd in sweet exile to Hesperia's shore ; 530
There still near wide Eridanus he stray'd,
Incessant mourning for the much-lov'd maid,
And twelve returning moons each lonely vale,
Each unfrequented mountain heard him wail ;
At length it's said that, in the hour of death, 535
The Gods were courted with his latest breath,
That tears perpetual from his eyes might flow,
And never-failing moisture feed his woe ;
Sudden the Gods confirm his infant pray'rs,
Chang'd to a stream with ever-trickling tears 540
His limbs dissolve, and murm'ring as they move
Lament in plaintive sounds his hapless love ;
In little space his rapid current ends,
And swift with Addua's deeper water blends,
Thus mix'd, beneath Cremona's tow'rs they glide, 545
And swell her fruitful glebe with azure tide ;

Eridani, atque pedes Phaethufæ humectat amata,

Flumine turrigeræ radens fata culta Cremonæ.

Manfit amor, veteres amni manfere calores.

Sæpe illum fama est claufam sub cortice Nympham

Tentâffe, optatum mox afcendiffe cubile. 425

Tandem juncta Dryas fluvio est, licitifque hymenæis

Egreffam ruptâ Divam Deus arbore duxit :

Cui picturatas vario subtegmine vestes,

Illufasque auro tunicas, et tenuia lætæ

Texta dedit, miffa à patriis fibi munera terris. 430

Paucaque præterea bombycis femina donis

Addidit, oftendens hujus quis muneris ufus.

Ipfâ eadem egregias, longo pòft tempore, natas

Book II. The SILK WORM. 139

There his glad streams the Po's deep current meet,
And bathe his much-lov'd Phaethufa's feet :
Yet love still lasted, and his former flame
Glow'd unextinguish'd in the rolling stream, 550
And oft, as fame reports, his current stay'd,
Oft woo'd, and gain'd at last th' imprison'd maid,
The struggling Dryad rent the fibrous wood,
And join'd the God that pours the Serian flood.
Then precious robes adorn'd the plighted maid, 555
Rich tribute which his realms paternal paid,
Where fancy, wand'ring gay from fold to fold,
Sported in flow'rs, or liv'd in figur'd gold :
He added to his gift the shelly seed
Whose little orbs contain the filken breed, 560
Shew'd how from these vast nations to produce,
And full inform'd the fair of all their use.
These arts in after-times the royal dame
Taught her fair daughters of the Serian stream,

Seriadas docuit, patris de nomine dictas.

Mox illæ Aufonias passim sparsere per urbes,

Et morum umbrosam latos severe per agros ; 435

Unde facri viridem vates petiere coronam,

Et meritis gratas sibi devinxere puellas.

F I N I S.

Book II. The SILK W O R M. 141

Aufonia's cities owe their skill to these, 565
And plant each wide domain with Thisbe's trees ;
To these cool shades the bard resorting weaves
A wreathy chaplet from their vernal leaves,
Amus'd with labours which the fair approve,
Pleas'd with his strains, and grateful in their love. 570

F I N I S.

Some Observations necessary to be added to VIDA's Precepts on the Silkworm.

Book I.

- Line 35. **B**UT all over Europe the Silkworms are fed in houses.
200. The leaves will keep very well, during two or three days, in a cool place.
245. The white mulberry-leaf buds sooner, and is more delicate than the black, and may therefore be fittest for them when newly hatched, or just after their sleep, when they cast their skins, and their new teeth are tender: but if they should be fed with white, while they are in full health, after having been used to the black, their over-feeding might hurt them.
268. But no Leaf yet known will bring them to perfection except the mulberry, the nettle most resembles it in taste.
291. *Read*—Has climb'd a third of his meridian height.
321. Their shelves need not be cleaned so often—and much more seldom if they are made of small reeds, bulrush, or twiggs, which will let their dirt fall through on the sloping planes of paper, as designed in the copper-plate.
361. This will save much trouble in feeding and cleaning them.
382. According to Malpigijs, they sleep four times.
393. This is omitted in the copper-plate lest it should hide the frames.

Book II.

- Line 247. For doing this Vida gives no precept, the rule is, to choose the largest and deepest coloured balls of those which are first spun.
254. An hundred is here used for any large number, they generally lay three or four hundred eggs, but those which are last layed, do not produce so strong worms as the others.
263. Keeping the balls cool might perhaps be necessary in very hot climates, but with us it would retard the eruption of the moth till the cold weather advanced; whereas moderate warmth hastens it while the hot weather lasts, when they breed more vigorously.
271. Which added to the nine days, mentioned line 44, make eighteen. But with us they continue near a month in the silk-balls, unless they are kept in a moderately warm place, which is easily done for the few which are necessary to breed, and is of great use.
433. This is only a complementary imitation of Virgil—some other poetical embellishments, such as (perhaps) the hatching of their eggs only at full moon—the malignant eyes of old persons—the constancy of the male and female moths, &c. will easily be distinguished by the judicious reader.

In the Life of VIDA.

Pag. iv. lin. ult. *read*—who when he arrived at the Pontificate.

Pag. v. lin. 3. *For* in either, *read*—in it.

