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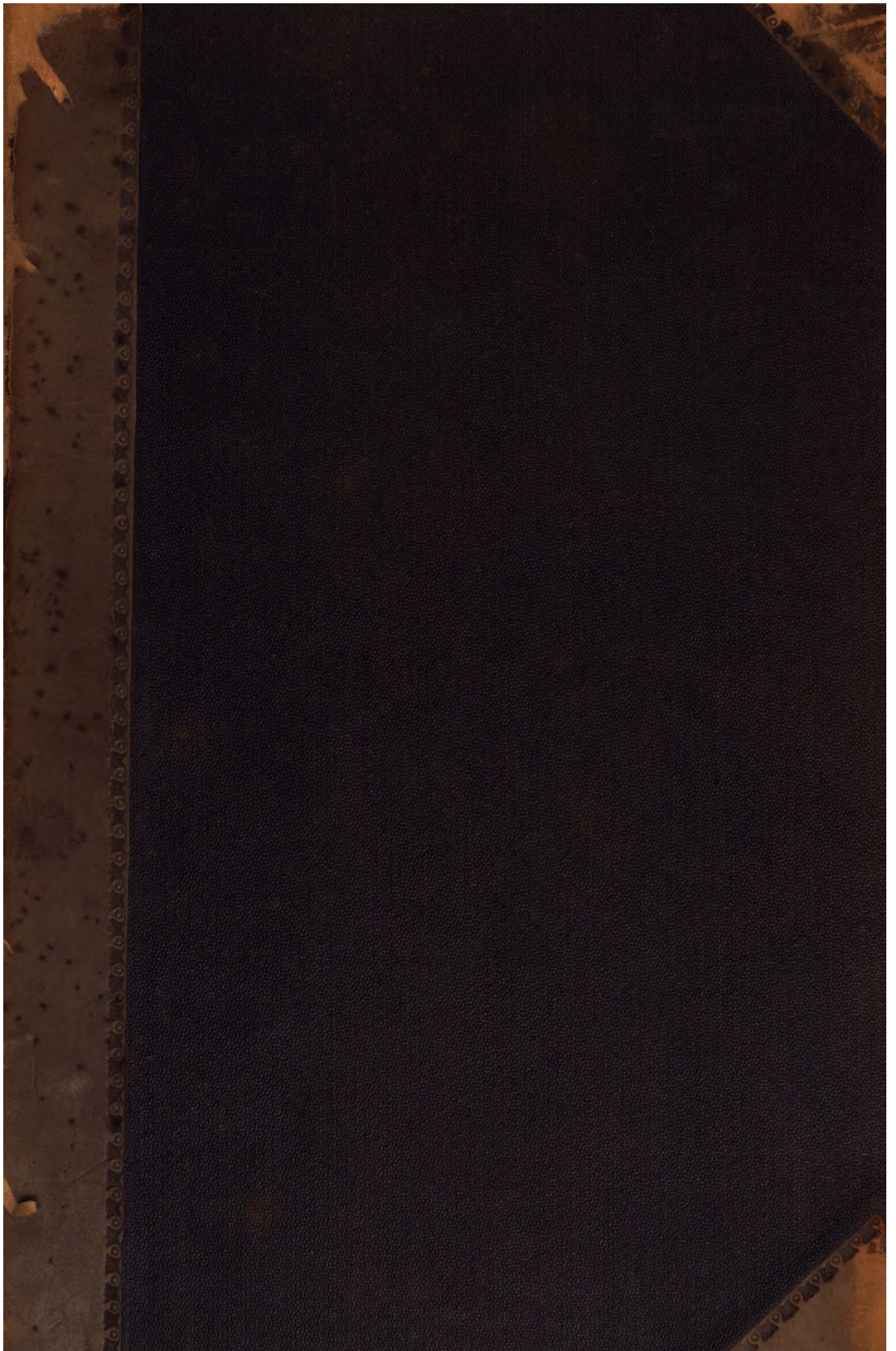
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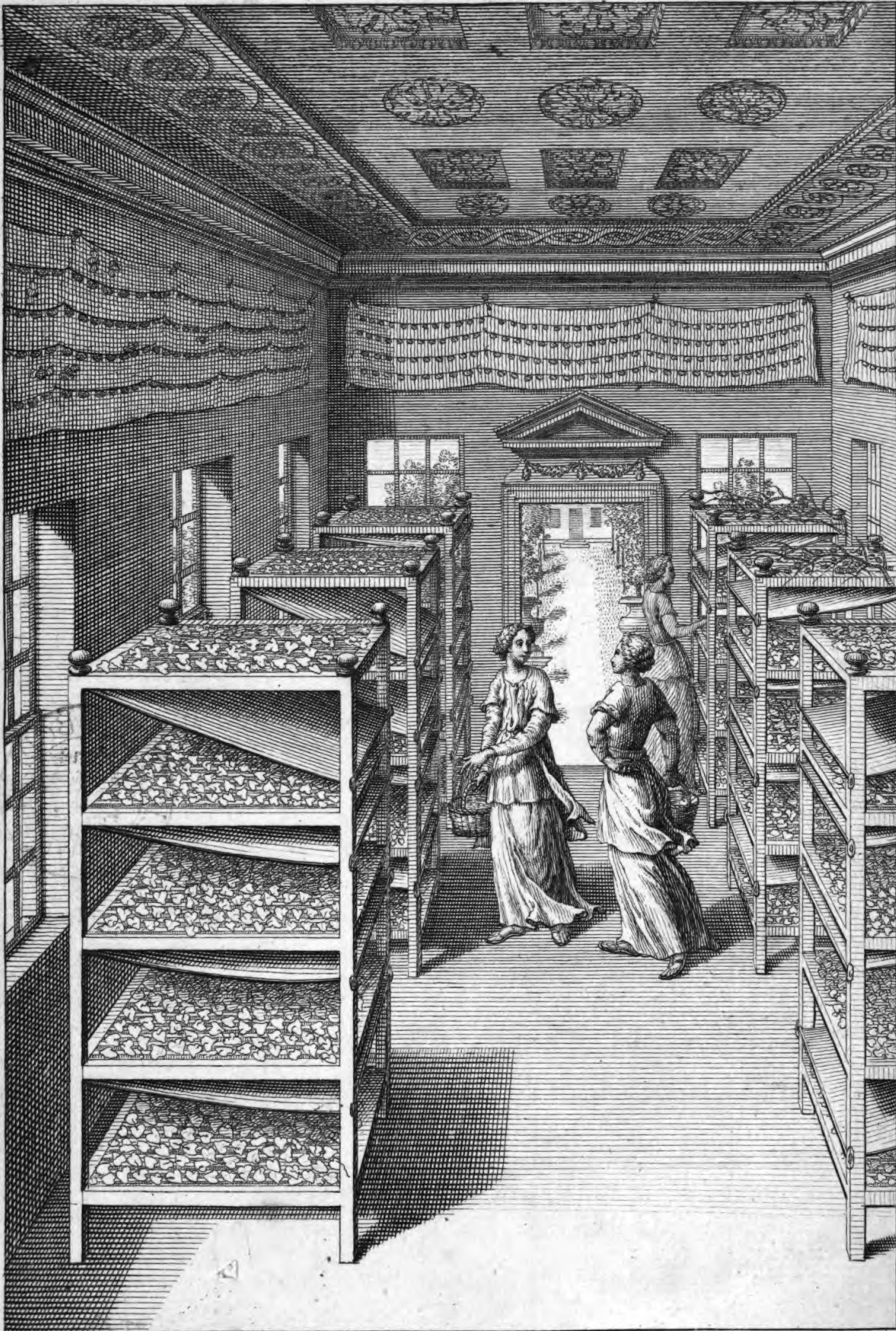




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*A View of the Silkhouse with the Stands for Seeding the Worms, the method of hindering their Dirt from incommoding the under Shelves, - of placing Twiggs when they Spin their Silkballs, - and of hanging those Silkballs which are intended for Breeding*

*P. Fourdrinier Delin. & Sculp.*

*A. M. J. J. J. J.*

THE  
SILKWORM:  
A  
POEM.  
IN TWO BOOKS.

WRITTEN BY  
MARCUS HIERONYMUS  
VIDA,  
AND



Translated into ENGLISH VERSE

BY

The Reverend SAMUEL PULLEIN,  
of TRINITY COLLEGE, *Dublin*, A. M.

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DUBLIN:

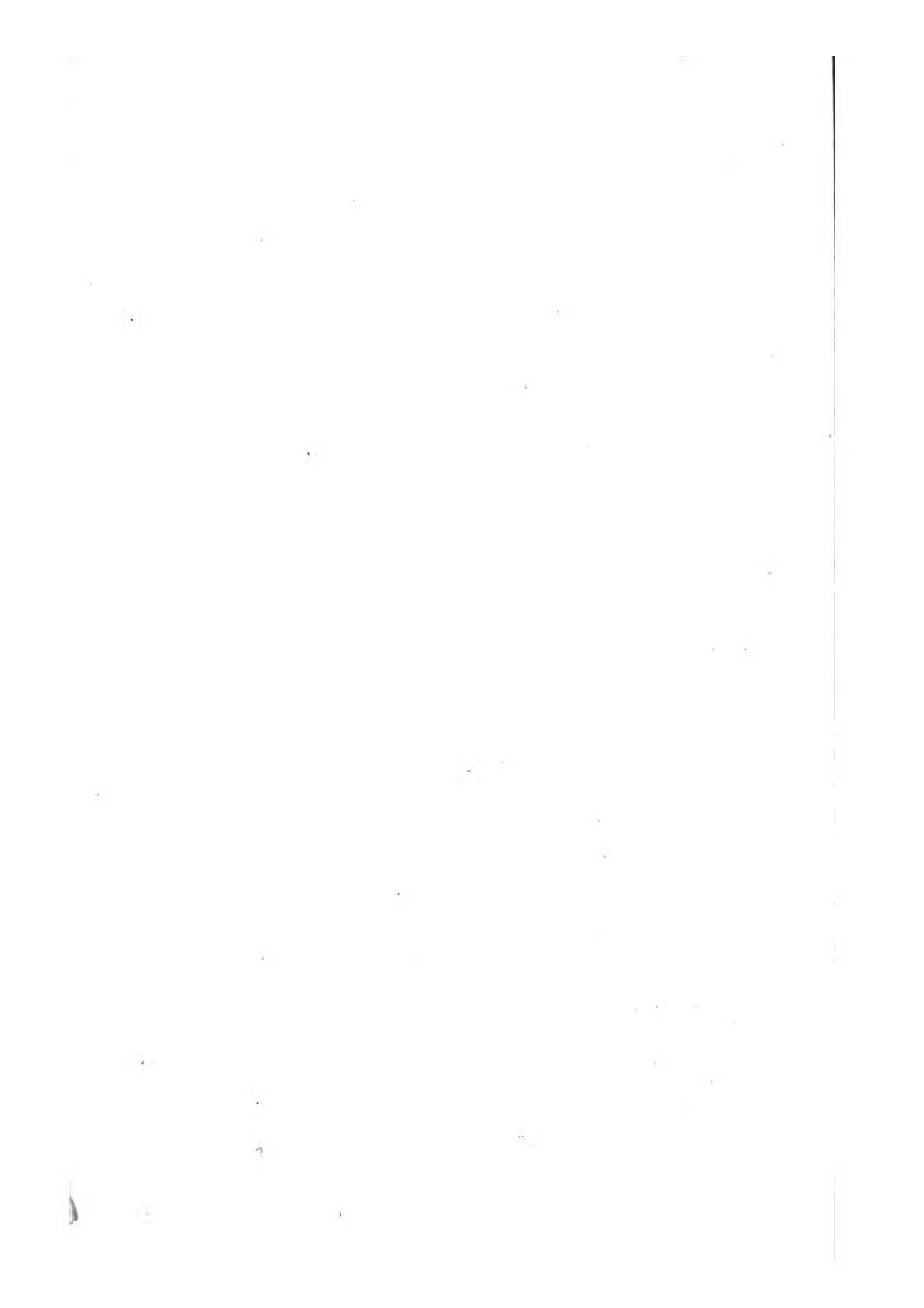
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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**HE 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

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

**M**ARCUS 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 Lafcarus, 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 ches, 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 ~~the~~ Paulus III, who seems also to have intended further to promote him

## THE LIFE OF VIDA. v

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

THE LIFE OF VIDA. ix

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 sed 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.*

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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 nôstis

Muncra, quæ pater Italiæ prior intulit olim

5

Serius,

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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.

---

**W**HAT pow'rs of nature, and what wond'rous  
arts,

Jove's bounty to an insect 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 devector 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 Wefer 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 assuetæ 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 SILK WORM. 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 silky 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 unafflicted 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 sonantes

Accipiunt Austros, pulsataque robora nimbis.

Sed tu ne, moneo, in sylvis permitte vagari

Incustoditas, nec curam adhibere recusa

In teētis : hujus non gratia parva laboris. 40

Haud longum tempus fluet, & jam flamine 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 semina durant. 50

Ceu quondam fylvæ si forte aut frigore diro,

Aut æstu arescant summæ ; tamen abdita quædam

Vitalis superat vis in radicibus imis ;

Et, trunco exciso, nova vere repullulat arbos.

Non secus 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.

Book I. The SILK WORM.

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 pecorivè fativæ  
 Frigorave, glaciemve timent, canamve pruina.  
 Præterea tibi : lunaii 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 foetus.  
 Expecta, cùm plena animis, cùm lumine largo 75  
 Solis ab igne tumens, altumque per æthera vecta,  
 Carpit iter, fratremque audent 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 suns :

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 justum 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

Prodierit : tu conde sinu velamine tecta, 85

Nec pudeat roseas inter fovisse papillas,

Si te tangit honos, & flavi gloria fili.

Cumque dies alterque dies procefferit, 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 feeds 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 fedes, & tecta futuris

Ipse novare jube, tabulataque victa fenestâ.

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, obsitque intus penetrabile frigus.

Nec

Book I. The SILK WORM. 27

And let the firflings of your filken down, 115

Your choicest woof, their sacred temples crown ;

With off'rings thus appeas'd the Gods withhold

Their plagues of scorching heat, and deadly cold,

And bind the rage of many-mouth'd disease

Which various on the tender infect preys. 120

Mean while the mansions of your future brood,

Shatter'd by wasteful time, shou'd be renew'd ;

Nor let a dark and doleful station shade

Th' enliv'ning light, and sun's fructific aid ;

A double op'ning shou'd his rays receive, 125

Both when he rises vig'rous from the wave,

And when his courfers droop with languid heads

Prone from the skies, and seek their watry beds.

But guard your windows from the subtle air

With thin-spread canvass, or the glassy square, 130

Lest ruffling storms disturb the floating thread,

Or piercing cold the tender flock invade.

Nec postrema fuit cautis prætere cura

Retia rara : avium insidias, & 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 fœgnis ; 120

Sed calce, aut creta linito, atque angusta viarum

Quæque

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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-story'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 sepe cavis sese abdidit imis,  
 Luce latens ; at cùm in tenebris cinis occulit ignem  
 Sopitum, indulgetque gravi custodia somno ;  
 Improbus egreditur tutis ad furta latebris, 125  
 Et citus irreptat tabulis, sævitque per omnes  
 Cæde madens aulas, prædamque avertit ab altis  
 Porticibus fatur, atque cavis epulatur in antris.  
 Molire insidias, deceptum carcere claude,  
 Ignarusque doli ipse sibimet vincula neçtat, 130  
 Dum petit ostensam confidentissimus escam.  
 Quædam etiam trabibus, quibus omnis machina rectis  
 Nititur, auxiliantur, & imas sentibus armant,  
 Sentibus, & tribulis, ac juniperi hirsutæ  
 Vulnificos addunt gladios ; circùm undique ut hostis 135

Indeprensus

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31

Here lurks the robber moufe, 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'

Indeprensus 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 sedes, secretaque regna.

Nec satis hoc semel : at quoties his arcta videbis

Esse domus spatia, augentur dum corpora cuique,

Has toties legere, inque novas diducere sedes

Ne

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33

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 crouds, 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, donèc tabulas impleveris omnes. 150

Nec tamen interea parvas non pascere oportet.

Ut primùm hauserunt cœli auras, pabula poscunt,

Affuescunt jam tum dapibus, mensasque requirunt.

Sed prodest, nondum thalamos experta puella

Prima manu tenera teneras si pascat alumnas. 155

Primam autem mori pubem, atque tenerrima semper

Quæq; legunt, dum grex tener est, atque inscius ævi.

Continuò veterum veluti memor ille parentum

Agnoscit vefcas frondes, ipsasque recentes

Deposcit : nam si plenis ferventur in horreis 160

Hesternæ, dulcis fucci corrumpitur aura,

Et sapor ingratus subit, atque inamabilis haustu.

Manè petunt igitur sylvas, et quæque reportant

Pabula læta die famulæ, gratumque laborem

Sortitæ

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'Till all the num'rous families complete  
Fill the large dome, and people every feat.  
Mean time, not careles of your helpless brood,  
Supply their early wants with plenteous food ; 190  
Soon as they breath they crave the green repast,  
And grow familiar, with their future feast :  
But now select the soft unwedded maid  
To lend your infant flock her tender aid,  
The mulberry's first shoots, with juicy buds 195  
Cull'd by her hand, shall please the feeble broods,  
While early, by instinctive hunger led,  
They seek the pasture where their parents fed.  
Yet store not up their foliage long for use,  
For time absorbs its sweetly-flavour'd juice, 200  
And that which yesterday supply'd the feast  
To day grows stale, and nauseous to the taste :  
But let your maidens to the woods repair  
Each morning, and divide the pleasing 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

Si

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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 saturem morum pecus, atque repente

Ipsa parit largi fastidia copia victus.

Paulatim invita ; metuant sibi pabula semper

Deficere, expectentque dapes : prius 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 victus,

Nulla mora est, miseræ 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 deficiant folia omnia mori,

Et subito fylvæ (Dii talem avertite casum,)

Thisbææ arefcant nimio æstu, aut frigore, quæris 205

Quasnam tum, pereant ne res tibi funditus omnes,

Bombyci jubeam legere, & summittere frondes.

Orandi Superi eveniant ne talia nobis.

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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)

F

But,

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 nurselings to the bramble's use,  
Or nettle swelling with nutritious juice :  
But now in pity guard your maiden bands  
Left 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

Egressus fylvis satyrorum è gente procaci

Suspiciat, teneræque pudor notet ora puellæ. 225

Illa quoque in primis cura est, ut pabula semper

Sicca legant, nullaque fluant aspergine fylvæ

Aut pluvix, aut roris nocturni ; quippe venenum

Sæpe fuit, quamvis tenuis, bombycibus humor.

Nunquam igitur, cum nox horis filet intempestis, 230

Accedant fylvam : expectent dum gurgite Eoæ

Tethyos exierit, sursumque eduxerit omnem

Collectum noctis humorem purpureus sol,

Et jam tres scandens supera alta peregerit horas.

Quodd si fortè etiam fuerit tunc humida fylva, 235

Ut potes, è foliis stillantem decute rorem.

Profuit,

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Left some intruder of the fatyr croud  
In gamesome frolic iffuing from the wood,  
Should raife his prying eye with wanton flame,  
And stain the virgin's cheeks with marks of fhame. 280  
But now, whatever foliage you provide,  
Chooſe that which ſkies ſerenely pure have dry'd ;  
Guiltleſs 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 sylvas, sine lege legunto

Obvia quæque, penum foliis atque horrea comple;

Ne, dum sævit hyems, perdant jejunia pubem

Lanivomam, at parta securæ fronde fruantur. 245

Quòd si adeò subitum citò non prævideris imbrem,

Ne turpi rigeat macieque, fameque senescat

Omne pecus, validos in sylvas 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 useless, if the morning hoar 295

Has crufted all the stiffen'd foliage o'er,

To spread it thin before the sunny beam

On hurdles, and subdue the frost with flame ;

But rather, when you fear the low'ring cloud,

Be speedy, snatch your baskets, call the croud, 300

Haste to the woods, and heap the verdant store

Till your large vessels can contain no more ;

Securely thus your flocks shall be supply'd,

Nor fear the show'ry deluge raging wide.

But if the cloud swift bursting from the sky 305

Prevents the presage of your watchful eye,

Let not the nation therefore droop subdu'd,

Listless and lean from penury of food ;

But tho' the flagging verdure droop with rain,

Thro' the wide forest send the sturdy swain 310

With sinewy arms to shake the quiv'ring wood,

And ease the foliage of its humid load ;

Then

Rorantem, quando fatis urgemur acerbis.

At labor interea famulas exerceat alter.

Cura sit hesternæ semefas tollere mensæ

Relliquias, tabulisque immundam avertere ventris

Proluviem : manè, ante pecus quàm pabula gustet, 255

Tergendæ sedes, & gramine perverrendæ.

Tum Bacchi irrorant gratum bene olentis odorem,

Purgatisque abigunt tabulis tristem omnibus auram.

Hinc leviter digito medicatis sedibus omnes

Traducunt cœtus, lætos melioribus auris ; 260

Nec super extremas errare licentiùs oras

Permittunt, semper media ad penetralia cogunt,

Præcipitesque timent lapsus, altasque ruinas.

Huic generi facilis leti via : protinus ægras

Delapsæ effundunt animas, lucemque relinquunt. 265

Siqua

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

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 seats,  
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

G

And

Siqua tamen superest, & cœli vescitur aura,

Post casum inspicito : 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,

Sopitasque 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 fomno, stratisque quiescunt,

Sopitisque dies alter transibit, & alter.

Cùm verò expulerit noctem lux tertia rebus, 280

Confurgent,

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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 useles 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, careles 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  
Nôsse labor,) ne improvisus sopor occupet : ultro

Signa dabunt ipsæ : cœlo capita ardua tollent

Arrectæ, spernentque dapes : tum pigra notabis 285

Corda, animos refides, infueta silentia mensis.

Non tamen adveniet somnus simul omnibus idem :

Infomnes aliquæ vigilant, dum turba quiescit

Cætera, nondum aptæ, teneros quibus alliget artus

Irrepens sopor ; advenient sua tempora & illis, 290

Atque omnes tandem demittent lumina somno.

Cura sit interea infomnes legere, atque vagantes,

Secretasque aliis aliam citò transfer in aulam.

Sopitæ stabulent simul : his par omnibus ætas.

Unà operi incumbent, & eodem tempore sese 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



Artibus 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 fenestâ :  
 Annuus hic illis mos : at bombycibus ipsis  
 Ter pigra, dum vivent, renovabit corpora somnus.  
 Jamque age, jam grandes fœtus, jam ducitur ætas 310  
 Ultima, turgenti filum tralucet in alvo

Omnibus,

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But while the God with wand pacific sheds  
The dews of Lethe on their filent 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 exchang'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,

The

Omnibus, accingunt alacres operique parant se.

Pabula jam saturæ fugiunt : nova quærere regna

Ardor agit : tollunt oculos, arreçtaque terga.

Omnia vestigant latè loca, sicubi rami 315

Arbuti, per quos sua possint tendere fila ;

Atque novis priscos cupiunt mutare penates,

Et tabulæ extremis pendentes sedibus hærent.

Tum famulæ properare, omnes provisa 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 feats 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' unsettled 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 330  
 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 purissima musta. 335  
 Tum demum tabulis passim farmenta relictis  
 Complêrunt omnes, perque atria virgia lætæ  
 Exercentur, & effundunt quæfita per ævum  
 Stamina, ditis opes uteri, suspensaque densos  
 Fila regunt inter ramos, atque ordine ducunt. 340  
 Mille legunt releguntque vias, atque orbibus orbes  
 Agglomerant, cæco donec se carcere claudant  
 Sponte sua : tanta est edendi gloria fili.

Mox

Book I. The SILK WORM. 59

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, teretisque 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 adeò (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.

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, 425  
 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 subtile 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, terrasque relinquunt.

Ite animæ egregiæ, fortunatæque laborum

Utro 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,

Book I. The SILK WORM. 63

Nor long survive their fellow tribes but all,  
Imprison'd dark within the filky ball, 440  
Compleat their labours, and resign their breath  
Exhausted, sinking in the shades of death.

Go wond'rous race, thrice happy artists go,  
Meet fate content, to you the fifters 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 ;

Dry

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

Irrepsit 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.

Ille

Book I. The SILK WORM. 65

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, fporting 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 majefly 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 reftlefs fhuttle how to fly.

Illa quidem primùm vario se ornavit amiçtu,

Egregiam piçto pällam circumdata limbo :

Mox alias etiam textit ditissima divas :

390

Nec mora, deinde novam ostendit mortalibus artem.

Tantùm nuda Venus mcerebat muneris expers

Egregii, ob formam textrici invisa Minervæ ;

Atque, irrita diu, super Idalium frondosum

Se natoſque ſuos in fylvis condidit atris.

395

Cui poſt 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 S I L K W O R M. 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

Addidit! ah, quoties nimboſis montibus errans,

Matutinus iter tulit, & monſtravit in agris

Præſentes morbis herbas, uſumque medendi! 405

Illa averſa Deum ſemper fugiebat amantem.

Quid faceret? Venerem ſupplex adit ipſe, rogatque

Auxilium, & meriti promittit præmia tanti.

Diva monet, duræ fruſtra præcordia Nymphæ

Tentari, nulli peçtus penetrabile amanti, 410

Nec precibus, nec muneribus mutarier ullis;

Fallendamque dolis tantùm, furtifque domandam.

Ergo

Book I. The SILK WORM. 69

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 shew 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 fought 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 subito transformet equinam

Imperat, & pascat qua gramina sueverat 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 insignes tunicas, nihil indiga lanæ,

Aut lini, quæ dona negat tibi iniqua Minerva.

Hinc præcepta dedit, divinam & prodidit artem,

Quam

Book I. The SILK WORM. 71

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 solis meditando in montibus olim.

Insuper admonuit, venturi præscius ævi,

Quondam aliquos, sed enim multò pòst, affore vates,

Qui totum canerent præclara inventa per orbem,

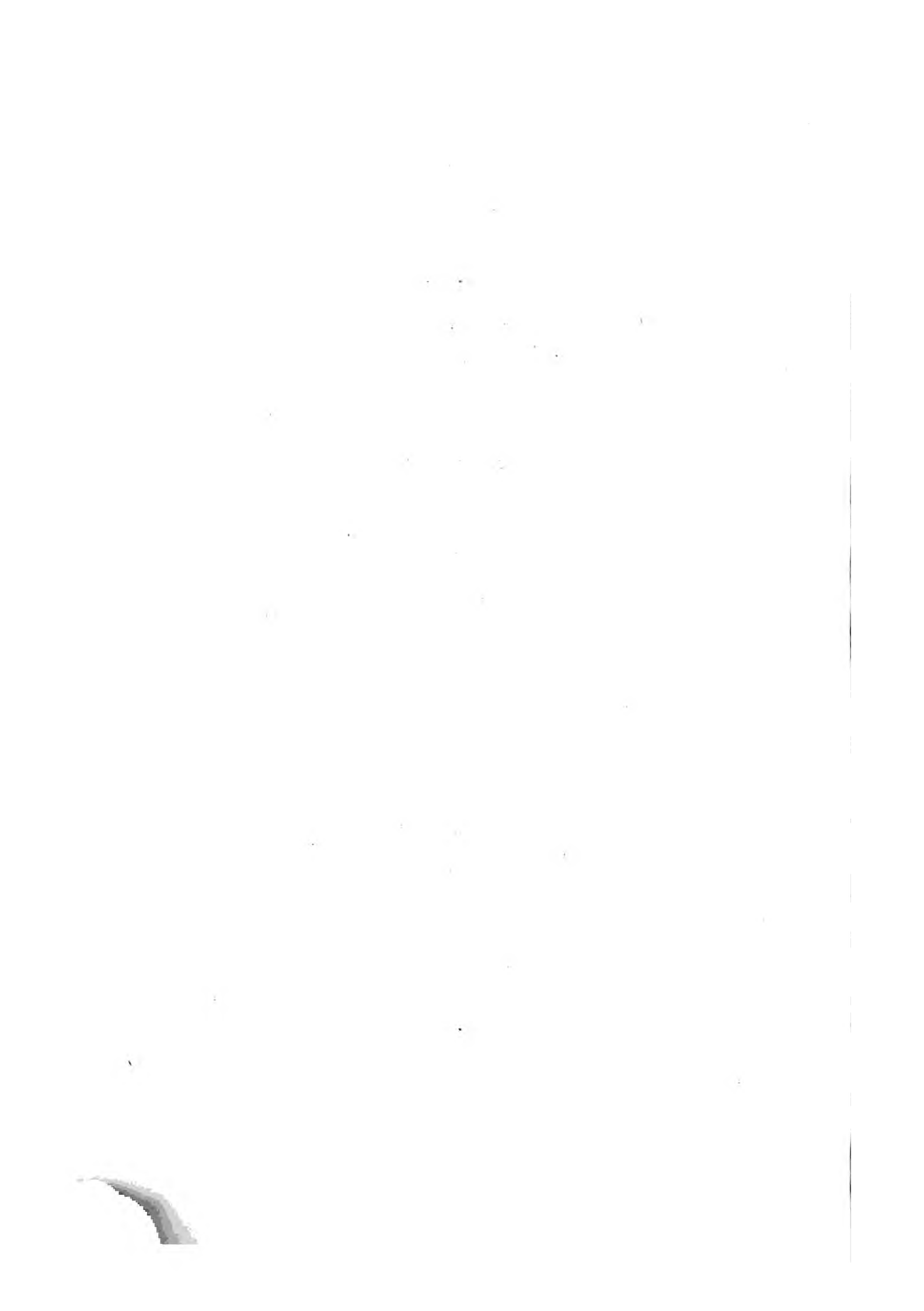
Gratum opus Aufoniis, dum volvent fila, puellis. 430



Book I. The SILK WORM. 73

What time he loft 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 filken 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 Phaethusa, who introduced the art into Italy. 501.*

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MARCI HIERONYMI

V I D Æ

B O M B Y C U M,

A D

ISABELLAM ESTENSEM,  
MARCHIONISSAM MANTUÆ,

LIBER SECUNDUS.

---

**R**URSUS ades, Nympha, incœptum jam perſice  
munus,

O decus Italidum, fortunatiſſima matrum,

Quæ, vaſtas feſſæ Italiæ miſerata ruinas,

Haud dubias pulchra ſpes nobis prole tuliſti,

Tu

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THE  
SILK WORM.  
A POEM OF  
MARCUS HIERONYMUS  
VIDA.

To Her ROYAL HIGHNESS the Princess of  
W A L E S.

BOOK THE SECOND.

---

O NCE 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, indomitusque animi, cupidusq; pericli.

Hunc jam regna Asiæ metuunt, orientisque subactus,

Gangesq; Tigrisq; 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

Book II. The SILK W O R M. 79

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 sight,  
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 sidera 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 silken 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,

L

Needles

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 foetus arcete periclis ;  
 Cùm nondum morbis præsentibus omnibus herbas 45  
 Monstrârit natura, hominumve industria solers

Nondum

Needless of aid till rosy Phœbus rise  
Nine times refresh'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'ral 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

Nondùm morborum causas deprenderit omnes.

Multa tamen, longo quæ nos invenimus usu,

Quæque alii docuere, tibi nunc dicere pergam.

Nil adè tincis fuerit presentius ægris,

50

Quàm subitò è medio jucundo lumine cassas

Tollere, ne totam perfusa cadavera tabo

Latiùs inceſtent miſerando funere gentem.

Nec minùs inde tibi triftis contagia cœli

Sit ſtudioſum vitare : juvat, cùm lucidus æther,

55

Cùm noctis gelidum ſol rorem fuſtulit, & cùm

Inter ſe Alpinus Boreas atque humidus Auſter

Pacem agitant, vitro detractò aperire feneftras,

Quove almam lucem aſpiciant, quove æthera purum,

Aurarumque levès animas, & frigora captent.

60

Nempe

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 85

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 ;

Soft



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 subitò inde locum novus occupet humor,

Continuò fapor 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.

Si

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 maſs on lighter wing ;  
Eſe 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 floth, with freſhning ſtreams unmix'd,  
Nor dares the weary ſwain 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 Auftris ; 75  
 Protinus in thalamos inferri profuit ignes :  
 Ne tamen infestet lacrymosus lumina fumus,  
 Ipsos occuluere cavis fornacibus ignes,  
 Unde aditus fumo sit 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 nigrescit foetibus arbor,  
 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 ipsa manent, quòd solvere mollem  
 Alvum mora fertunt, tristesque inducere morbos. 90

Præterea

Book II. The SILK WORM. 89

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 feats ;  
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 diseafeful pain.

M

Take

Præterea liquido respergi corpora olivo

Mors erit extemplo ah! miseris, lucemque relinquent.

Ergo, ubi nocte gregem famulæ & stabula alta revisent,

Edico procul ardentem deponere testam

In tenebris, ubi pingue o'eum depascitur ignis ; 95

Ne super incautis gutta stillantis olivi

Decidat, ac totos deformet peste penates.

Usque adè in Venerem longas exercuit iras

Infensam inventrix semper frondentis olivæ.

Exin cùm liquor officiat bombycibus omnis, 100

Præcipuè sale qui fuerit vitiatum amaro

Cùm semel attigerit, miseris erit acre venenum.

Protinus elucet languentibus aurea pellis,

Deinde tument, turpisque animis ignavia venit

Desidibus,

Book II. The SILK WORM. 91

Take heed beside lest 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,  
Left from her hand the viscid nuisance pour,  
And stain their mansion with its pois'nous show'r ;  
For Pallas fill, 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,  
Lifless subsides the sluggish soul within,

Desidibus, tandem rumpuntur, & omnia tetro 105

Inficiunt tabo : fanies fluit undique membris,

Nec quicquam falso Venerem æquore profuit ortam.

Quædam ideo fylvas fervant 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 inscia 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.

Sed

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  
 Absistent, ætas si improvida ludificetur.  
 Verbis falle illos : tineas finge acre venenum  
 Inspirare animâ, vel spicula linqere 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 permiseris, illas

Speſtatum

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 95

Nor should their seats 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 fish,  
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 soul-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, oculisque 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 fanguine circum,  
 Fronsq̄ue obscœna situ, hirtique in vertice cani. 145  
 Ille truci (scelus) obtutu genus omne necabat  
 Reptantum, tenues animas, parvasque volantes.

Quinetiam

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 97

Nor pause, but make the wither'd hag retreat  
Swift from the threshold of your filken seat, 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 subitò afflato languescere flores ;

Mox album latè nimbum volitare per auras : 155

Nec tantùm noceat raptor ferus Orithyæ,

Siquando iratus malè tutis incubet hortis.

Nostram igitur si fortè domum prætermeet olim

Pestis & ira Deûm talis, cùm plurima reptans

Complevit

Book II. The SILK WORM. 99

Or if his foot approach'd Pomona's bow'rs  
While vernal gales unwrap'd the fruitful flow'rs,  
When now the foftring fun advancing near  
With genial touch reviv'd the wither'd year, 190  
Wide o'er the groves his blaft malignant fpread,  
And ftruck the beauties from each leafy head,  
The hopelefs peafant mix'd his mournful tear  
O'er the fad ruins of the perifh'd year ;  
For whatfoe'er his look malignant ey'd 195  
Swift fhunk the bloom and ev'ry beauty dy'd,  
In clouds the wafted bloffoms flew around,  
And fpread their fnowy honours o'er the ground ;  
Not the fierce God who forc'd th' Athenian fair  
Brings fuch deftruction in the driving air 200  
When wrathful he exerts his boift'rous force,  
And o'er unfhelter'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 hæserunt 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,

Book II. The SILK WORM. 101

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 simillima 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 pensa 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

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 103

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 silken 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 fervant de more creandam ;

Cætera dein varios devolvunt vestis in usus.

190

Quæ verò in generis spem vis fervare 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 fervare necesse est

195

Folliculos, capitum multorum femina partu

Una dabit mater, centum quæque ova relinquet.

Quos igitur fœturæ habiles provideris, omnes

Connectes ducto per acûs vestigia filo.

Sed

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 105

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,

O

But

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

Nutriret Venus umbrosis in vallibus Idæ,

Nuda cohors tenerùm circùm ludebat Amorum,

Et

Book II. The SILK W O R M.

107

But slight 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,

Left with'ring heat should drain their lives away

Which once again shall taste the beam of day,

New form'd to range the traëts 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) acervi.

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 sylvis, tacitique latebant ;

Infelix stetit ingenti percussa dolore.

Tum

Book II. The SILK WORM. 109

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 mischief flew the frightened loves,  
And filent hid amid the thickeft groves ;

When as the dame returning view'd around  
The fllaughter'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,

Incaustumque gemens solos interrogat agros.

Infernas etiam sedes, atque atria Ditis

Ægra adiit, quo mœstæ animæ post fata feruntur

Squamigerum, 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. III

Then frantic rushing thro' th' Idalian hills 295  
Her plaintive voice each rocky cavern fills,  
And cites her sons 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 blake 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,

Permisitque animas in corpora tarda reverti

Rursus, ut extinctam sobolem revocaret in auras,

Seminaque his generis penitus repararet adempti.

Utque sequi possent dominam supera alta petentem, 250

Corporibus

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 113

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-refounding lake ;  
When as the dame approach'd her hapless crew  
With wings applause round their mistress flew,  
Their former love with grateful minds avow'd,  
Not waded 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 possess the fields of air ;  
Then bounteous, to assist their lab'ring flight  
In the steep journey to the realms of light, 330

P

He

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 viseret annes.

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

Instant ardentes, quanta nitantur opum vi?

Clausa obstat domus, & fili densissimus ordo. 260

Nec mora, nec requies, vestigant omnia circum,

Explorantque aditus omnes, siqua potis extrà

Rumpere, & optatæ rursus se reddere luci.

Ecce

Book II. The SILK WORM. 115

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 filken toils appear,  
Their tribes transform'd on airy wings should rise, 335  
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' imprison'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 filken 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 bless 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,

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 117

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 sui : 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,

Tartarei que canis tria guttura, monstraque Ditis

Impacata, brevis ne vitæ gaudia quærant.

Idcirco, aligeræ neque frondem suffice genti 285

Incaesum, neque potandos admoveris amnes.

Carpe manu refides, & funibus infidentes,

In tabulamque refer stratam velamine molli.

Quippe ubi subtracto se rursus ad fata vocari

Senferunt victu, turbantur : tum simul omnes, 290

Excidium

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 119

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. 370

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, 375  
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, 380  
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 servare 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

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 121

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, regardless of their race,  
Fond to elude the fates, and leave behind 395  
Some sorrow-soothing 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,

Q

Still

Donec uterque cadat : neque enim si viribus haustus  
 Mas prior occiderit, longùm 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

Book II. The SILK WORM. 123

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 admissus in ova  
 Paulatim sese insinuet, parva est mora, proles  
 Ante diem superas incassum rumpet in auras ;  
 Cùm frondes jam consumptæ, cùm pabula fylvæ  
 Deficiunt, & tonsa comam Thisbeia nudos 330  
 Ostentat ramos populatis frondibus arbor.  
 Quòd si spes generis defecerit omnis ubique,  
 Seminaque aruerint Jovis implacabilis irâ,  
 Sicut apes, teneri reparantur cæde juveni.  
 Hic super accedit tantùm labor : antè juvenis 335  
 Bis denosque dies, bis denasque ordine noctes  
 Graminis arcendus pastu, prohibendus ab undis.  
 Interea in stabulis tantùm illi pingua 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 340

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 attonfæ 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

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 127

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 feed,  
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 intertextunt,

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, sylvasque virentes,

Pomaque, graminaque, & cervos, capreasq; fugaces.

Adde,

Book II. The S I L K W O R M. 129

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.

R

Hence

Adde, velut nebulas tenues, velamina textu

Rara, quibus matres crines & tempora velant,

In templisque Deûm 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 subtle veil which o'er the fair 475  
Spreads its thin cloud, and wraps her braided hair,  
Or shades her face when dusty winds prevail,  
And guards that beauty which it can't conceal.  
Sometimes the wond'rous pow'r of shade and light  
With magic lustre 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 pursue thro' ev'ry part  
How human wit exhausts the filken art,  
How silver plates the downy threads infold, 485  
And the soft 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 semblance bore,  
Comb'd o'er the skin in locks of curling ore ; 490  
Haste then, ye fair, nor blush to plant the seed  
Of Thisbe's tree, and nurse 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

Transiit 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 Phaethusa'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 fenos ordine menses 410

Illum adè 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 S I L K W O R M. 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 instant 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 ;

S

There

Eridani, atque pedes Phaethusæ humectat amatæ,

Flumine turrigeræ radens fata culta Cremonæ.

Manfit amor, veteres amni mansere calores,

Sæpe illum fama est clausam sub cortice Nympham

Tentâsse, optatum mox ascendisse cubile. 425

Tandem juncta Dryas fluvio est, licitisque hymenæis

Egressam ruptâ Divam Deus arbore duxit :

Cui picturatas vario subtegmine vestes,

Illusasque auro tunicas, et tenuia lætæ

Texta dedit, missa à patriis sibi munera terris. 430

Paucaque præterea bombycis femina donis

Addidit, ostendens hujus quis muneris usus.

Ipsa eadem egregias, longo pòst tempore, natas

Book II. The SILK WORM. 139

There his glad streams the Po's deep current meet,  
And bathe his much-lov'd Phaethusa'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 silken 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 sacri viridem vates petiere coronam,

Et meritis gratas sibi devinxere puellas.

F I N I S.

Book II. The SILK WORM. 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.



