



To Mrs. STEPHENS.

THOU, *Sodbury* House, my lov'd, my sweet
And all the Beauties that surround the Seat;
[Retreat,

Where Nature smiles in all her fertile Pride;

Demand'st my Song, and Truth shall be my Guide.

Scarce *Eden's* Garden more divinely fair;

Alike in Fragrance is thy balmy Air.

When bow'd by Sickness nigh the gloomy Grave,

Thy Air reviv'd, and Heav'n vouchsaf'd to save.

REV'REND by hoary Age, and old in Fame,

Unknown its Founder's Family and Name.

The Fabric stands a venerable Seat;

Just in the Centre of a fair Estate:

That wide its hospitable Door extends,
Capacious to receive a thousand Friends.
The Owner's Soul, like Goodness, unconfin'd,
Diffuses wide her Favours on her Kind.
Her gen'rous Breast scarce other Pleasure knows,
Than what reflects from those that she bestows.
She knows with strictest Prudence how to spend ;
Still frugal to herself, and noble to her Friend.
Fair verdant Avenues the House adorn ;
And double Courts the bold Intruder warn.
For great Beneficence is oft oppress'd ;
And those that can't deny, can seldom rest.
Wide arched Portals grace the solemn Hall ;
Where wait the Poor, as their Distresses call :
Nor call in vain ; but of Assistance sure ;
If hungry, fed ; if sick, they find a Cure.
But view the Parlour ; here Description's faint :
Its Beauties languish in my lifeless Paint.
Its wide Dimension, well-proportion'd Height,
With pleasing Awe command and charm the Sight.

Here

Here OLIVER, in *Britain's* Annals fam'd,
Frowns awful, yet intrepid and untam'd.
This Piece a Son of *Spain* could scarce survive ;
The Canvas speaks, 'tis OLIVER alive.
From the broad Windows see the Scenes extend ;
Till on the distant Hills the Skies descend.
Within, around exotic Flow'rets bloom ;
Fair *India's* Spices shed a rich Perfume.
Nor less, ye lovely Natives of our Isle,
Your Scenes delight me, or your Blossoms smile.
The fragrant *Jessamin*, and blushing *Rose*,
The various *Woodbine*, *Pink*, and *Lily* shows
Yet liuelier Beauty in their native Soil ;
Shed sweeter Fragrance, and require less Toil.

HERE hanging Gardens rich with Fruit appear ;
The golden *Apple*, and the mellow *Pear*,
And nicer Plants, their spreading Arms extend ;
To tempt the gath'ring Hand of ev'ry Friend.

On the smooth Terras, set with Ever-greens,
 I walk'd, delighted with the lovely Scenes:
 Where Groops of Trees around are artful spread,
 And meet in verdant Arches o'er the Head.
 Amidst the awful Shades, from Grove to Grove,
 In Noon-day's Heat secure and cool, I rove.
 Whence Clouds of Birds pursue their airy Way,
 When dawning Beams proclaim the rising Day;
 Rous'd from their leafy Beds they hail the Light.
 I gaze, delighted with the Sound and Sight!
 And wait their wish'd Return with rising Night.
 Here rises on the Plain a spreading Town;
 Part the Sun gilds, and Part the Shades imbrown.
 See gently gradual yonder Hills arise;
 Till blue the last, and hid among the Skies.
 Along the Side an ancient City spreads,
 Churches and *Gothic* Spires erect their Heads.
 Here Seats unnumber'd interspers'd appear;
 With vocal Woods, and Corn with golden Ear.

Gay Plenty, with her ever smiling Face,
And graceful Beauty, dresses all the Space.
The loaded Vessel there securely rides
On *Severn*, proudly rolling back her Tides;
Carrying our Plenty to each distant Shore,
Exchang'd for foreign Wine, and golden Oar.
The distant River courts the wand'ring Eyes,
Till the wide View in ancient *Cambria* dies.
Cambria; whose hardy Sons were true and bold,
Scorn'd to be Slaves, their Freedom never sold;
But chose to live on barren Cliffs their own,
Disdain'd more fertile Fields for *Roman* Masters
Here view the wide extended Concave bound ^{[fown.}
The haughty Hills, that guard the Vallies round.
What grateful Thoughts those awful Camps inspire!
Once a dread Scene of War, and Blood, and Fire:
When conqu'ring *Romans* sat in Triumph there,
And Death flew hissing thro' the frightened Air.
The slaughter'd Natives spread the Vallies wide,
And drench'd the Meadows with a Crimson Tide.

Now Peace her downy Wing spreads o'er the Scene,
 The Camps lie harmless on the level Green,
 The Noise of War is hush'd, and all a sweet Serene. }
 Not *Cowper's Hill* a more delightful Theme,
 That smiles in DENHAM'S Song for ever green;
 Nor *Windsor Forest* ever fair and gay,
 Immortaliz'd by POPE'S harmonious Lay;
 Nor fancied Scenes in Fable Stories told,
 By modern Bards, or the enchanting old,
 Have greater Charms than *Sodbury*, dear Retreat! }
 Serenely blest, here could I fix my Seat.
 But I must wander with unwilling Feet. }
 Thus ADAM took his last, his farewell Round,
 And mourning left fair *Eden's* happy Ground.
 Happy and long may here the Owner live,
 To taste those Pleasures which she loves to give!
 Long by her wise and fair Example show,
 How Peace and Joy from silent Order flow!
 With chearful Health and Friendship ever crown'd,
 And deal out Blessings to the Country round!