

# V E R S E S,

Occasion'd by the Sight of a

## CHAMERA OBSCURA.

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*In nova fert Animus mutatas dicere formas  
Corpora. —*

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L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN CUFF, Optical Instrument Maker, against  
*Serjeants-Inn* in *Fleet-street*; and Sold by Mrs. COOKE at the  
*Royal-Exchange*. MDCCXLVII.

ON THE  
CHAMERA OBSCURA.

S A Y, rare Machine, who taught thee to design ?

And mimick Nature with such Skill divine ?

The Miracles of whose creative Glafs,  
Struck with Amaze, the superstitious Clafs,  
Of Fools, in \* BACON'S Days, and did for Witchcraft pass ;  
Productions strange ! weak Reason did transcend ;  
And all admir'd, but few could comprehend ;  
The Cause conceal'd ; th' Effect Men plain perceive ;  
Compell'd by Sight thy Myst'ries to believe.

Come ; lead us to thy Chamber ; there unfold  
Thy secret Charms, delightful to behold ;

A 2

How

\* Friar *Bacon*, who for his Skill in Optics, and other Arts, was tried for a Conjuror.

How little is thy Cell? How dark the Room?  
 Disclose thine Eye-lid, and dispel this Gloom!  
 That radiant Orb reveal'd, smooth, pure, polite;  
 In darts a sudden Blaze of beaming Light,  
 And stains the clear white Sheet, with Colours strong and  
 bright;

Exterior Objects painting on the Scroll,  
 True as the Eye presents 'em to the Soul;  
 A new Creation! deckt with ev'ry Grace!  
 Form'd by thy Pencil, in a Moment's Space!  
 As in a Nutshell, curious to behold;  
 Great HOMER'S ILIAD was inscrib'd of old;  
 So the wide World's vast Volume, here, we see  
 To Miniature reduc'd, and just Epitome:

Each wondrous Work of thine excites Surprise;  
 And, as at Court some fall, when others rise;

So,

So, if thy magick Pow'r thou deign to shew;  
 The High are humbled, and advanc'd the Low;  
 Those, who to <sup>Rank</sup> ~~Seats~~ of worthiest Place aspire,  
 And Right-hand Honours as their Due require;  
 Thou to the Left configns; — (foretold their Doom,  
 In sacred Writ;) — and others take their Room.  
 Instructive Glafs! here human Pride may trace,  
 Diminish'd Grandeur, and inverted Place:  
 How like to Thine, are fickle Fortune's Ways?  
 Delighting to transpose, depress, and raise;  
 O! couldst thou shew such Influence on my Lay!  
 Whilst I thy various Properties display;  
 And lift to loftier Heights my Genius low;  
 That equal to my Theme my Verse might flow;  
 Then, wou'd I paint great Nature's Works and Thine,  
 In lasting Characters, and each strong Line,  
 Shou'd justly represent the Archetype divine.

Now

Now tow'rd's that Garden spread the Paper Screen ;  
 What instantaneous Beauties gild the Scene ?  
 The Chryſtal Fountains, and the fine Caſcade ;  
 The living Statues, and green Arbour's Shade ;  
 The painted Hollies, and the ſmooth-ſhorn Yew ;  
 The Lillies lovely white, and Iris blue !  
 The gaudy Tulips ; and the bluſhing Roſe,  
 With each gay Flow'r that on the Margin glows ;  
 Array'd in all their native glorious Dyes ;  
 Waving their Tops, as the ſoft Zephyrs riſe :

Or, ſhou'd the rich Autumnal Seaſon ſuit ;  
 The Print preſents us with all kinds of Fruit ;  
 The red-ripe Cherry, and the Sun-burnt Peach ;  
 And purple Grape, hang here within our Reach ;  
 Of Mulb'ries plenteous ſtore on thoſe fair Trees,  
 In Cluſters, court the Hand their Load to eaſe ;

That

That loose Branch shakes, by Winds rent from the Wall,  
Down drop the Plumbs ; see ! catch 'em in their Fall.

How wou'd that Painter boast his Pencil's Art ?  
Who cou'd such Motions to his Piece impart ?  
But, here, thou hast no Rival in thy Fame ;  
'Tis thine alone to copy Nature's Frame,  
So strictly true, she seems the very same ;  
In just Proportions ; Colours strong or faint ;  
By Light and Shade ; without the Daub of Paint :  
To animate the Picture, and inspire,  
Such Motions, as the Figures may require,  
From Heav'n, Prometheus like, thou steal'st the sacred Fire.

Again, the blank unfullied Scheme display ;  
Earth, Ocean, Air and Sky, thy Call obey.  
Their num'rous Charms the various Beings blend ;  
As far and wide the Landskip does extend ;

Fresh Wonders entertain our ravish'd Sight ;  
 The Change of Scene affords us new Delight :  
 See ! distant Hills advance above the Sky,  
 Whose Tops below the lifted Vallies lie ;  
 There lowing Herds in the rich Pastures graze ;  
 The fleecy Flock, here, from the Shepherd strays.

Poor tim'rous Hare! how swift along the Plain  
 Thou darts thy Flight ; thy Flight, alas ! is vain ;  
 Inspir'd by sound of Horn, and Cries of Hounds,  
 O'er the high Fence the gen'rous Courser bounds ;  
 The Huntsman, Horses, Dogs, pursue the Chase,  
 With eager Speed and fierce tumultuous Race ;  
 Decreed thy Death, nor can thy Doublings save ;  
 They seize their Prey, and drag thee to thy Grave.

See yonder Cottage its new Height admire,  
 Uprais'd above the Steeple's lofty Spire ;

Now

Now smile the fruitful Fields of ripen'd Corn,  
 Whose golden Plenty does the Print adorn ;  
 How the Clown stares ! smit with Surprize and Love,  
 To see th' inverted pretty Milk-Maid move,  
 With Pail beneath her Head, and Feet above ;  
 While swift his Windmill whirls its giddy Sail,  
 This Way and that, obedient to the Gale :

Near the thick Copse, the dazzling Meteor's Blaze  
 Dances the swamy Green, in giddy Maze ;  
 Avoid the Path, ye simple Hines, nor tread  
 The dang'rous Track : bewilder'd and misled,  
 The lonesome Trav'ler, oft, at dark Midnight  
 Pursues, with pleasing Hopes, the wandring Light ;  
 Too late repents ; misguided by the Flame,  
 Thro' miry Bogs, wet Marsh, and muddy Stream ;



O'er Hedge and Bush; 'midst Briars, Thorns and Brakes,  
 Such dreary Ways the Jack-o-Lantern takes,  
 Then plung'd in Pond, or Ditch, the drowning Wretch  
 forfakes.

So warn'd ; beware false Lights, that lead astray,  
 And tempt your Feet to quit the good old Way ;  
 By safer Course to guide you they pretend  
 To Heav'n, while headlong down to Hell they tend.

The Kyte and Lantern mounting from that Plain  
 Aloft in Air, dispread a shining Train ;  
 Which like a falling Star, in dead of Night,  
 With long continued Trail of streaming Light,  
 Descends a-down the Chart ;—some Truant Boy's Delight.

Conceal'd by yon' tall topsy-turvey Trees,  
 Whose bending Branches answer to the Breeze ;

We juſt diſcern ſome Nobleman's fair Seat ;  
 How happy to enjoy ſuch bleſt Retreat,  
 If Happineſs wou'd deign to dwell among the Great !  
 Here croſs the Landſkip Ravens wing their Flight ;  
 There ſkulks the Screech Owl, hideous Bird of Night ;  
 Theſe pretty Songſters hop from Spray to Spray,  
 And with ſweet Notes ſalute the dawning Day ;  
 While tow'ring Larks, attempting high to ſoar,  
 With downward Pinions nether Skies explore ;  
 Birds in full Flocks forſake our Hemisphere,  
 Purſue their deſtin'd Voy'ge in the Mid Air ;  
 And, quite beyond our Ken, to diſtant Climes repair.

What Firmament? which we from far deſcry,  
 Whoſe azure Surface elevated high,  
 And wide extended, ſeems another Sky ;  
 The vaſt unbounded Ocean's level Green !  
 Now, undiſturb'd by Winds, calm, ſmooth, ſerene.

O Sight magnificent ! O beauteous Train !

A moving Grove floats on the wat'ry Plain,

And with approaching Glories decks the shining Main.

A gallant Fleet ! Great BRITAIN'S boasted Pride,

And surest Safeguard ! with what State they ride,

And press the Bosom of the swelling Tide ;

The painted Streamers dancing to and fro,

Set ev'ry Sail to court all Winds that blow ;

The Sun Beams with reflected Lustre play

On the bright Surface of the glassy Way,

So still the peaceful Deep ! So soft the Gale !

Who in those Gallies wou'd not wish to fail ?

Ah ! trust no Summer's Sea, nor Harlot's Smile,

With sweet Deceit, and flatt'ring Joys, a while

They 'lure ; then, faithless, ruin those they once beguile :

Witness the Warning-piece before our Eyes!

Loe there! th' Horizon low'rs; black Clouds arise,

With Darknefs, thick as Night, enveloping the Skies.

Bless us! what quick, fierce Fires the Lightnings  
dart?

The livid Blaze illumes the gleaming Chart;

Hark! the loud Tempest roars, the Thunders roll,

And rat'ling Vollics rend the tott'ring Pole,

Yet cannot shake the tranquil Mind and stedfast Soul:

Against the Rocks those raging Billows dash;

That flying Foam seems some bright Lightning's  
Flash;

How are the Glories of our Glafs defac'd!

The Room obscur'd; the Picture quite eras'd;

Obliterated All!

Now mourn the Shatter'd Fleet, to Pieces torn ;  
 The wretched Seamen on the Surges born,  
 Become the Mock of Winds, and cruel Tempest's  
 Scorn :

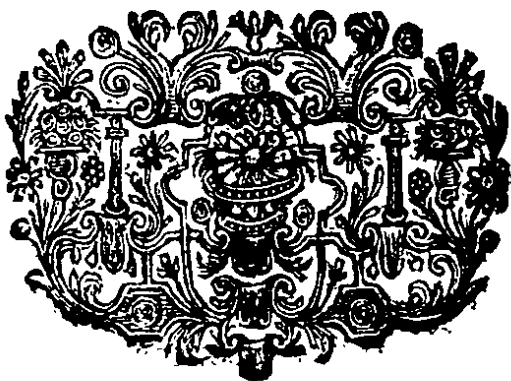
What Heart obdurate the sad Shock can bear  
 Without a solemn Sigh, and plenteous Fear?  
 When will this dreadful Hurricane have End?  
 Kind Heav'n some Friendly Ray of Comfort send ;  
 Thy heavy Judgments do not always last,  
 Pity succeeds when Punishment is past :

See ! while I speak, a glimm'ring Light arise,  
 And the gay Bow bedeck the milder Skies ;  
 Its Arch contracted, and revers'd its Horns,  
 Like the fair Moon, when new, the Chart adorns ;  
 The Waves subside, the boist'rous Winds decrease,  
 The troubled Motions of the Waters cease,  
 A settled Calm enfues, and all is Peace :

Enough !

Enough ! now ope' the Door ! See Sol's bright Ray  
Breaks in, the sickning Figures faint away,  
And all their Beauties fade, sunk in the Flood of Day ;  
So shine the Starry Train, and Planets bright,  
With peerless Lustre, all the darksome Night,  
But vanish at the splendent Sun's approaching Light.

*F I N I S.*



# J O H N C U F F,

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