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Stowe: a description of the magnificent house and gardens of the Right Honourable Richard Grenville Nugent Temple ...

Seeley, Robert Benton

Buckingham, 1780

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To the late Earl Temple, on Gardening.

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To the late EARL TEMPLE,

ON GARDENING.

BY Commerce, *Albion*, and by Arms refin'd,
 Sought for the Charms of Art and Nature join'd ;
 Along the Banks of her own *Thames* the stray'd,
 Where the gay Sisters of the Waters play'd ;
 In many a soft Meander wildly rov'd,
 And grac'd the Meadows which their Stream improv'd.
 She mark'd romantic *Windsor's* warlike Pride,
 To Learning's peaceful Seat so near ally'd ;
 Where *TEMPLE's* Bosom early sigh'd for Praise,
 Struck with th' inspiring Fame of ancient Days ;
 She came where silver *Thames* and *Isis* bright,
 Their friendly Treasures in one Stream unite :
 Where Princes, Prelates, fir'd with Patriot Views,
 By gen'rous Gifts invited ev'ry Muse ;
 Where every Muse her grateful Tribute brought,
 And Virtue practis'd what sound Learning taught ;
 At length her longing Eyes and hallow'd Feet
 Reach'd verdant *Stowe's* magnificent Retreat,
 Where Fame and Truth had promis'd, she should find
 Scenes to improve and please her curious Mind ;
 Each Step Invention, Elegance display'd,
 Such, as when *Churchill* woos the *Aonian* Maid,
 And joins in easy graceful Negligence,
 Th' harmonious Powers of Verse, with *Sterling* Sense ;
 Such, as when *Poussin's* or *Albano's* Hand
 On glowing Canvass the rich Landscape plann'd,
 And classic Genius strove, by mimic Art,
 Thro' the admiring Eye to reach the Heart.
 Amidst the Wonders of each striking Scene,
 High on the Summit of a sloping Green
 A solemn Temple, in Proportion true,
 Magnificently simple, courts the View ;

Concord and Victory with Pride proclaim
 This Mansion sacred to *Britannia's* Fame,
 Whose Form * majestic from all Hands receives
 The various Product ev'ry Region gives,
 Pleas'd at her Feet their choicest Gifts to lay,
 And Homage to her Power superior pay ;
 The sculptur'd Walls her Glories past declare,
 In proud Memorials † of successful War ;
 No factious Sacrifice to *France* and *Spain*
 These consecrated Trophies can profane ;
 For public ‡ Liberty her awful Seat
 Here fixing, here protects her last Retreat ;
 Where to the Great and Good in every Shade,
 The fragrant Tribute of just Praise is paid,
 Where the prime Beauties, form'd by Nature's Hand
 Throughout her Works in every distant Land,
 Transplanted, flourish in their native Ease,
 And, as by magic Charm collected, please—
 Here the fair Queen of this heroic Isle,
 Imperial *Albion*, with a gracious Smile
 Confess'd, the lovely Nature saw, at last,
 Unite with Art, and both improve by Taste.

* The Alto Relievo in the Pediment.

† The Medallions of the Victories.

‡ The Statue of Public Liberty placed in the Middle Niche of the Temple.

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