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## Specimen Poetics: Botany, Reanimation, and the Romantic Collection

IT IS NOW COMMONPLACE TO say that the canon wars of the 1980s and early 1990s provoked changes to anthologies in the following decades.<sup>1</sup> What we read in the Norton, Blackwell, or Broadview anthologies of British or American literature is not what we read thirty years ago. The change has been characterized as a movement away from aesthetic criteria—Matthew Arnold’s famous “the best which has been thought and said in the world”—to a more representative selection, one that conveys the diverse literary landscape of a defined historical period or national tradition.<sup>2</sup> In the 1990s, space opened for underrepresented authors, genres, historical moments, and worldviews; John Milton and William Wordsworth now mingle with Anne Finch and Olaudah Equiano, appearing alongside anonymous popular ballads, snippets of periodical essays, excerpts from novels, and a smattering of letters and speeches—varied content that projects an overall tilt toward diversity of matter, form, and authorial identity. Ours is not, however, the diversity promoted by the literary miscellany, that popular, eclectic, omnivorous genre so omnipresent in earlier periods. Twenty-first-century anthologies seek to represent a broad and varied spectrum of literary production, but they retain a defining feature of the anthology as it was consolidated at the end of the eighteenth century: organization by author in

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**ABSTRACT** This essay argues that the modern literary anthology—and specifically its aspiration to delimit both aesthetic merit and historical representativeness—emerged as a response to changes in eighteenth-century botanical collecting, description, and illustration. A dramatic upsurge in botanical metaphors for poetic collections around 1800 was triggered by shifts in the geographies, aims, and representational practices of botany in the previous century. Yoking Linnaean taxonomy and Buffonian vitalism to Hogarth’s line of beauty, late eighteenth-century botanical illustrations imbued plucked, pressed specimens with a new vitality. Erasmus Darwin’s *Botanic Garden* (1789, 1791) translated the aesthetic reanimations of visual art into a collection of poetic specimens, spurring compilations that promote a vitalist standard of literary value. By rejecting aesthetic reanimation as the figurative ground for poetic collecting, Charlotte Smith and Robert Southey forward an alternative historical model of literary merit, one grounded in the succession and continuity of representative literary types. These competing metrics for selection and valuation underwrite the anthology as we know it today.

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chronological sequence. Even with the addition of thematic sections, anthologized literature as we know it today remains fundamentally historical, and each selection implicitly functions as a representative specimen, an illustrative example standing in for a larger authorial corpus or class of work.

The justification for a literary collection based on historical representativeness—the legitimating force behind modern anthologies of English, American, or Anglophone literature—emerged in Britain around 1800. It was spurred, as I will argue here, by dramatic changes in what we see as a distinct sphere of knowledge making—namely the collection, organization, naming, and representation of plants in the previous century. This claim is not as surprising as it may seem. Botanical metaphors for the poetic collection have a very long history. Rooted in the *Στέφανος*, or garland, of Meleagar of Gadara and the *Silvae* of Statius, for centuries verses have been gathered up into *florilegia*, *anthologia*, *sylvae*, gardens, garlands, woods, wreaths, bouquets, and anthologies, this last from the Greek *ἀνθολόγιον*, a gathering of flowers.<sup>3</sup> In Britain, collections of vernacular poetry were ushered in with titles like *England's Parnassus; or, the choicest flowers of our modern poets* (1600) and *Belvedere; or, The Garden of the Muses* (1600). Tropes of the bouquet, garden, and forest were regularly deployed throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to legitimate the heterogeneous content of verse and prose collections, but the field of nineteenth-century literary annuals was lush with these figures.<sup>4</sup> This efflorescence of the botanical metaphor for collections was spurred by a vigorous debate about the purpose, audience, and content of poetic collections in the decades around 1800. At the turn of the nineteenth century, compilers took up botanical metaphors to argue whether a collection ought to strive for a historically representative selection or for a selection of acclaimed pieces “carelessly mingled with all the ease and wildness of natural variety.”<sup>5</sup> For antiquarians like Henry Headley, George Ellis, and Robert Southey, compilation was a recovery project, a method of preserving worthy specimens of poetry from oblivion; for their contemporaries Vicesimus Knox, William Mavor, and Samuel Jackson Pratt, among many others, the ideal collection contained a great variety of the most influential, recognized, elegant work, poems of unquestioned merit that displayed the richness and vitality of the poet's genius, an image of living nature. Carried out in the prefaces, title pages, tables of contents, and introductions to collections, this contentious debate predicted the agon of the canon wars.

Scholars of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century poetic collections have noted the abundance of botanical metaphors, even occasionally employing them to structure their own arguments about literary compilations.<sup>6</sup> Most studies of poetic collections in Britain before the twentieth century, however, focus on a set of issues common to miscellanies and

anthologies: the economics of the publishing market, changes in copyright law, canon formation, expanding readerships, and editorial practice.<sup>7</sup> Critics have frequently used literary anthologies to take the pulse of the eighteenth-century book trade: printed anthologies and miscellanies proliferated throughout the period, and the forms they took responded (at least in part) to ongoing legal disputes over publishers' rights to valuable literary property, increases in literacy and access, and changing technologies of print.<sup>8</sup> Scholars agree that the form and function of the anthology shifted in the decades around 1800, but they disagree about exactly when it occurred, how it was manifested, and what provoked this change.<sup>9</sup> I won't claim to fully resolve this conundrum, but I will insist that we need to look outside the narrow field of poetic or even literary collecting to understand the changing cultural role of anthologies and miscellanies—and even single-author collections of verse—in the Romantic period. Beyond Barbara Benedict's acknowledgement that "it is no coincidence that the genre of the literary collection crystallized during the long eighteenth century when collecting itself became a popular activity" as a form of self-fashioning for the emergent middle class, existing studies take little notice of nonliterary collecting practices.<sup>10</sup> As I will argue, Romantic-era collections of poetry were not just metaphorically but also materially conditioned by the projects of botanical collecting, preservation, classification, description, and illustration of the previous century. Editors legitimated their selection and organization of poems in collections by trading on the aesthetic paradigms and material practices of botanical science and art. Further, the evaluative principles structuring poetic collecting in the Romantic period emerged when editors drew on, separated, or combined competing strands of Enlightenment natural history, specifically Linnaean taxonomy and Buffonian vitalism.

A pointed antagonism between taxonomic representativeness and an aesthetics of vital nature is thus central to my argument. The dominant theory of poetic collecting in late eighteenth-century Britain replicated a desire in visual and verbal art to represent the vitality of living nature, a trend spurred by transformations in botanical description and illustration. A confluence of factors changed botanical collecting and publishing in the eighteenth century, including shifts in the geographies of collecting; developments in conventions of botanical naming and systems of nomenclature; the emergence of vitalist theories in natural history; and the application of eighteenth-century aesthetic theories to scientific illustration. As a result of these shifts, living plants were collected, dried, and pressed in a *hortus siccus* (an herbarium or book of dried plants), becoming botanical specimens that were subsequently imbued with the semblance of life in drawings, paintings, and engravings. This process—what I call *aesthetic reanimation*—reveals how scientific and aesthetic paradigms merge to dismantle and remake objects of

botanical knowledge in print. I trace the consolidation of reanimation as an aesthetic paradigm as it was formulated in William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753) and applied to botanical illustration by a group of artists employed by Joseph Banks to illustrate the specimens collected on Capt. James Cook's *Endeavour* voyage of 1768–71. I then detail how the reanimated plants of eighteenth-century botanical illustration enter the lexicon of Romantic poetry with Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin and progenitor of an early theory of evolution. Embracing the animating power of prosopopoeia, E. Darwin translated the aesthetic principles of botanical illustration into his two-part allegorical poem, *The Botanic Garden* (part 1: *Economy of Vegetation*, 1791; part 2: *Loves of the Plants*, 1789).<sup>11</sup> In this heavily annotated and illustrated poem, Darwin combines taxonomy with vitalism to promote a particular brand of poetic and aesthetic vitality, one that defined the “nature” of plants collected in his poetic-botanic garden.

Romantic poets variously mobilized and resisted the conventions introduced by Darwin: the philosophical tenets of Enlightenment vitalism find outlets in individual poems ranging from William Wordsworth's “Lines Written in Early Spring” to Percy Shelley's *Sensitive Plant* to John Clare's ballads. But more important for my argument here, Darwin's reanimated poetic garden concomitantly changed how authors and editors thought and wrote about poetry in the aggregate. Books of pressed plants, catalogs of specimens, and anthologies of poems began to stand in for one another, their contents crisscrossing disciplinary boundaries in the process of consolidation. These confluences imbued the long-standing botanical metaphor for the poetic collection with a new urgency: as Charlotte Smith's *Conversations Introducing Poetry* (1804) reveals, the content and structure of a literary collection of verse might intervene in larger debates about natural history and its representational practices. At the same time, the antipodal figures of the reanimated plant and the dead specimen provided the rhetorical ground for competing versions of literary history and evaluation in the period. The resurgence of botanical metaphors in this period signals a new division in poetic collection, a gulf between vitalist aesthetics and the collection as historical medium, a site where the present of literary culture negotiates its past and writes its future. Turning back to this formative moment in the history of literary collecting illuminates how literary history became embedded in our own anthologies of culled flowers.

### **The Book of the Dead**

Modern botanical science begins when the specimen is incorporated into the book. While pressing and drying plants has a much longer



FIGURE 1. Page from “A collection of dried, rare and chiefly Indian Plants, many of which are not referred to Mr Ray or any other Author,” by Dr. Plukenet Vol. I: A–C, Herb. Sloane 99: 50. © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.

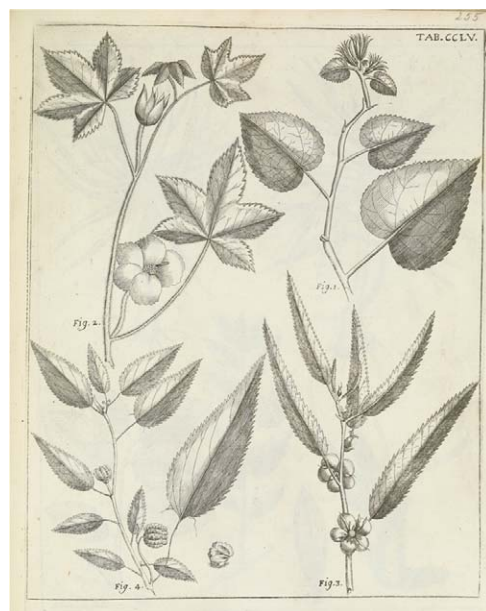


FIGURE 2. Leonard Plukenet, Tab. CCLV from *Leonardi Plukenetii, M.D. Opera omnia botanica: in sex tomos divisa*, vol. 4 (London, 1720). Courtesy of the Cullman Library of Natural History, Smithsonian Libraries, Washington, DC.

history, the production of large-scale *horti sicci* (*hortus siccus*: a “dry garden” of preserved plant specimens mounted on paper and bound into a book) was a Renaissance invention. By the late seventeenth century, the popularity of *horti sicci* had grown to mammoth proportions, a consequence of the interlocking developments previously noted, particularly the growth of international communication networks between theoretical botanists and botanical collectors, and the problems of categorization and naming introduced into botanical science by this influx of physical specimens, textual descriptions, and illustrations from around the globe. To parse the dynamics of the *hortus siccus* as material instantiation of botanical science, I will consider two historically important late seventeenth-century collections, those of Leonard Plukenet (1641–1706) and James Petiver (1665–1718). These multivolume *horti sicci* were bought by Sir Hans Sloane, whose collection of natural and ethnographic artifacts became the foundation for the British Museum; Linnaeus used Sloane’s collections as the basis for taxonomic

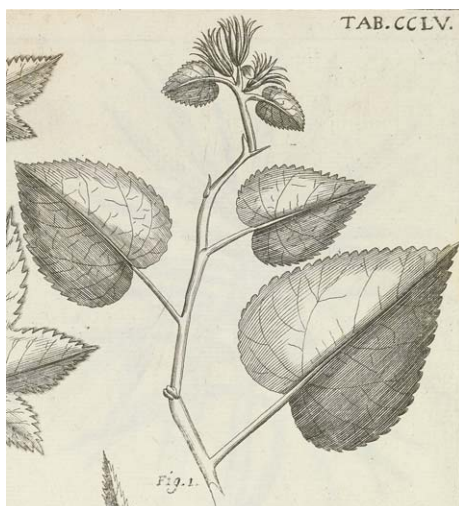


FIGURE 3. Plukenet, Tab. CCLV from *Leonardi Plukenetii, M.D. Opera omnia botanica: in sex tomos divisa*, vol. 4 (detail).



FIGURE 4. Page from “A collection of dried, rare and chiefly Indian Plants, many of which are not referred to Mr Ray or any other Author,” by Dr. Plukenet Vol. I: A–C, Herb. Sloane 99: 50 (detail).

descriptions in the *Species Plantarum* (1753). Before this, Petiver and Plukenet had published extensively from their collections, a necessity because the European scientific community did not recognize a new species until a description had appeared in print. Building on these examples, in what follows I consider how the printed book emerged from and transformed the book of specimens before and after the advent of Linnaean taxonomy.

Plukenet’s *horti sicci* and published *Phytographia* (1691–1705) are closely related in form and structure: the pages of each often have the same number of specimens, arrayed in a similar fashion (figs. 1–4). In this example, a specimen of *Alchora Jamaicius* is clearly the model for the illustration, possibly even a partial tracing. For Plukenet, the *hortus siccus* provides a material model for the printed book, its formal pattern and legitimating source; publication reiterates the botanical collection in print, and the illustration is simply another version of the thing itself.<sup>12</sup> Petiver’s collections attest to a less straightforward transformation. A typical page from one of Petiver’s geographically organized *horti sicci* includes dried specimens, drawings in ink, clipped woodblock illustrations, descriptions from printed books, and manuscript notes in various hands (figs. 5 and 6). In this example, the printed illustration of *Jacobaea Capensis Senecionis foho, fl. purpureo* has been

clipped and pasted next to the dried plant, while a taxonomic designation from John Ray's *Historiæ Plantarum* has been used to affix the specimen to the page.<sup>13</sup> Here, printed text and engravings are components of the specimen collection, useful for illustration, identification, cross-reference, and, more practically, for holding things in place. In Petiver's practice, the *hortus siccus* has engulfed the printed book, eaten it up and digested it into itself. At the same time, the preponderance of scribal and printed matter buries the specimen under the weight of Petiver's extensive publishing projects. As a material object, the specimen seems to resist its transformation into print, stubbornly sticking up off the page, introducing ripples into the text, intruding on the space allotted to its neighbor. The illustrations in the printed book in turn attempt to curb the disorderly profusion of the *hortus siccus* with neat rows of illustrations, a strategy Petiver heightens in his *Herbarii Britannici*, where each plant is contained in its own printed box—the bounded form of the specimen cabinet deployed to rescue the printed book from its palimpsestic alter ego.

In place of a linear movement from collection of plants to botanical publication, Petiver's collections reveal a process more like a feedback loop, a dynamic interplay between specimen, taxonomic description, and illustration. While Plukenet's specimens remain emphatically dead even as they are remade in print—a condition manifest in the stiff, angular lines of the illustrations—Petiver's *hortus siccus* exposes the specimen's vital history, one born from the interlocking networks in which objects, people, and books circulated in the period. Consider this example (fig. 7): a specimen from the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa is overlaid with a description by the original collector, James Cuninghame, amended with further annotations by Petiver, and finally cross-referenced to Ray's *Historiæ Plantarum* by Sloane after he acquired Petiver's *hortus siccus*.<sup>14</sup> This page shows the networks of collecting and exchange the specimen participated in before it became "enclaved," a term Arjun Appadurai uses to describe commodities that have been removed from circulation.<sup>15</sup> As with artifacts in museum collections, enclaved botanical specimens were often remediated through description and illustration, a process that flattens the three-dimensional object, literally and figuratively, and attempts to fix it in print.<sup>16</sup> Petiver legitimated the information contained in his printed books by appending a patron's name to every plate, but his *hortus siccus* upends the fixity and veracity of the printed book by piling up conflicting information from scribal and print sources.<sup>17</sup> His collections of dried plants trade on and materialize the web of connections between plant species and families, as well as the networks of exchange and emendation in which the specimen accrued meaning. The *hortus siccus* thus reveals what the orderly rows of illustrations and the printed catalog of names mask: the messy, chaotic, tangled *history* of taxonomic





FIGURE 5. Page from “Hortus siccus Cappensis. Plants gathered at the Cape of good hope by Mr OLDENLAND and sent to Mr Petiver and disposed by him,” Hans Sloane’s bound herbarium volumes, HS 156: 36 (BM). © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.



FIGURE 6. James Petiver, TAB. LXXXI from *Jacobi Petiveri Opera, historium naturalem spectantia*, vol. 1 (London, 1767). Courtesy of the Cullman Library of Natural History, Smithsonian Libraries, Washington, DC.

science. Counterintuitively, what appears to be an emblematic instance of Max Horkheimer’s “dead matter”—that “heap of things” produced by mechanistic philosophy and systematization—dramatizes the dynamism of Enlightenment botanical science.<sup>18</sup>

Horkheimer’s characterization of Enlightenment science as deadening, of course, rests on an assessment of its philosophical tenets and modern outcomes, not the material practices of collecting and book publication. Connecting intellectual history to material practice adds layers: Michel Foucault’s teleological narrative of Enlightenment dreams of order giving way to Romantic organicism becomes a much more unseemly affair, one in which opposed intellectual positions often coexist and even coalesce in practice. The visual examples in figures 1 through 7 show that distinct ways of understanding the object of botanical science—as knowledge fixed and



FIGURE 7a. Page from “Hortus siccus Cappensis. Plants gathered at the Cape of good hope by Mr OLDENLAND and sent to Mr Petiver and disposed by him,” Herb. Sloane 156: 232. © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London. I would like to thank Charlie Jarvis for bringing this example to my attention and identifying the hands.

FIGURE 7b. Page from “Hortus siccus Cappensis. Plants gathered at the Cape of good hope by Mr OLDENLAND and sent to Mr Petiver and disposed by him,” Herb. Sloane 156: 232 (detail).



verified by print publication and as the site of open-ended knowledge making within the *hortus siccus*—existed in a productive tension in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A similar point can be made for developments across the eighteenth century. The publication of Linnaeus’s *Systema Naturae* (1735) and *Species Plantarum* are often taken as a dividing line, after which conventions of botanical illustration shifted in tandem with the conventions of naming. Brian Ogilvie points out, however, that the use of illustrations declined in seventeenth-century plant identification guides—even before Linnaeus, Ray’s *Historiæ Plantarum* (1686–1704) appeared without illustrations—while an emergent genre, the lavishly illustrated florilegia, promoted texts as appendages to the images.<sup>19</sup> With the publication of large-format illustrated natural histories of specific locales, the tabular images of Petiver’s or Plukenet’s comprehensive identification guides—which would have allowed visual comparisons across species native to different places—were marketed alongside books with detailed images of individual specimens from a single geographic area on single sheets, like those of Sloane’s *Voyage to the Islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, St. Christophers, and Jamaica; with the Natural History* (1707, 1725).<sup>20</sup> All three publication formats—taxonomies without illustrations, identification guides with cabinet-like illustrations, and single-sheet engravings of plants appended to natural histories—existed concurrently in the eighteenth century, signaling the diverse genres, audiences, and uses of botanical books in the period.

However tempted, we should resist the urge to equate each of these distinct publication formats with a specific intellectual position in eighteenth-century botany or natural history more broadly. Large-format, single-sheet illustrations in geographically specific natural histories, for example, combined Linnaean taxonomy with a vitalist ethos that emerged from what Philip Sloan has called “the Buffonian revolution.”<sup>21</sup> As Kärin Nickelsen has shown, mid- to late eighteenth-century botanists instructed their draftsmen to represent taxonomically relevant features of plants, specifically the sexual organs of the stamen and pistil, and botanical drawing manuals provided guides to the pictorial vocabulary associated with Linnaean taxonomy.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the palimpsestic *hortus siccus* was largely replaced by single specimens mounted on single sheets, as in Sloane’s collections and the specimens collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander on the *Endeavour* voyage of 1768–71. These practices correspond with what Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison locate as the naturalist’s desire to tame nature’s variability by standardizing how the objects of science were represented visually, both in the collection and in print.<sup>23</sup> In striving for “truth-to-nature,” illustrators brought the wild profusion of the seventeenth-century *hortus siccus* into alignment with the new Linnaean taxonomic principles of botanical knowledge.<sup>24</sup> However—and this is a key point—these representational techniques also

depended on principles developed in contemporary aesthetic theory, particularly William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*. Large-format, single-sheet illustrations in natural histories are not simply an effect of the widespread adoption of Linnaeus's system; these images also embrace the aesthetic principles of vitality and liveliness, a development that corresponds with emergent eighteenth-century vitalist accounts of nature. As Peter Reill suggests, Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* provoked a turn to living nature—an insistence on seeing nature as “a teeming interaction of active forces vitalizing matter”—that Reill labels Enlightenment vitalism.<sup>25</sup> Large-format illustrated natural histories reveal how intellectual developments that are often seen as opposed or sequential—Linnaean taxonomy and Buffonian vitalism—coalesce in the second half of the eighteenth century. The result was a new brand of vitality, one that erased the enmeshed history of the physical specimen through a process of aesthetic reanimation.

### Reanimated Nature

Botany, as critics have noted, was “big science and big business” in the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>26</sup> The number and scope of collecting expeditions increased in the period, a trend fueled by botany's perceived importance to the economic and medical interests of European states engaged in global exploration and colonization. The heightened awareness of botany's utility in European metropolitan centers provoked new schemes for expanding knowledge of foreign plants. Linnaeus famously began training his students as collectors whose expeditions would provide him with a steady supply of new specimens from across the globe. One of his students, Daniel Solander, accompanied Joseph Banks and Capt. James Cook on one of the most politically, historically, and scientifically important expeditions of the midcentury, the *Endeavour* voyage to Tahiti and New South Wales. Existing scholarship has indicated the ways the *Endeavour* voyage and Banks's subsequent fame changed the public perception and status of botany in Britain and across Europe; it was also one of the first expeditions to employ Linnaean taxonomy systematically on a grand scale.<sup>27</sup> As Daniela Bleichmar argues, eighteenth-century expeditions of this kind were concerned with economic botany and political economy as much as natural history; they sought to visualize the empire by generating “abstracted natural facts in multiple media.”<sup>28</sup> The archive of catalogs, specimens, and illustrations produced during the voyage can thus be mined for information on how botany was mobilized in the service of empire, or to consider the degree to which Solander's description and organization of specimens fits with Linnaean taxonomic principles.<sup>29</sup> More important for

my purposes here, this multimedia archive also makes visible the representational practice of aesthetic reanimation that would condition theories of poetic collecting in subsequent decades.

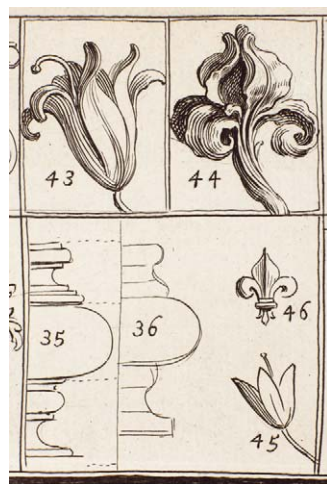
Through the labors of Solander and Herman Spöring, Banks collected in excess of thirty thousand botanical specimens, more than nine hundred of which were sketched by the artist Sydney Parkinson during the voyage. After the *Endeavour* returned to Britain (sadly without Parkinson and Spöring, among many others), Solander made an inventory of the specimens “arranged for each locality in the order of Linnaeus’s *Species plantarum*.”<sup>30</sup> During the voyage, however, he had written detailed descriptions—where and when the plant was collected, its native name, details of its folia, petiolus, calyx, corolla, vexillum, and so on—on small slips of paper (about four by seven inches) that accompanied the freshly plucked specimen as it was pressed, mounted, and transported back to England.<sup>31</sup> As Solander composed this fragmentary inventory, Parkinson sketched, using the fresh cutting to do an outline drawing that he (or another artist) could later finish in watercolor by referring to the dried specimen. Together, this triad of object, text, and image—the specimen collections, catalog descriptions, and illustrations—defined the outcome of the eighteenth-century botanical expedition, its contribution to knowledge of nature.<sup>32</sup>

This archive was produced by reference to the stock of published books that traveled with the expedition. Banks carried a stack of voyage and expedition narratives (including Sloane’s), copies of Plukenet and Linnaeus for plant identification, John Ray’s *Historia Insectorum*, Thomas Pennant’s *British Zoology*, and Buffon’s *Histoire naturelle*. Banks’s library thus represented several competing strands of eighteenth-century natural history, most strikingly the conflicting approaches of Linnaeus and Buffon. Parkinson carried his own copy of Linnaeus’s *Species Plantarum*, but also Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Pope, Dryden, and Gay. Along with his literary reading, Parkinson also brought one treatise on art, William Hogarth’s *Analysis of Beauty*.<sup>33</sup> The aesthetic principles articulated by Hogarth, as I will show, provided Parkinson with a practical and theoretical guide for his depiction of botanical specimens.

Hogarth opens the *Analysis* by invoking the tradition of *Figura serpentina* practiced by Renaissance painters Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo and theorized by Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo. Hogarth quotes Lomazzo’s claim that the “greatest grace and life that a picture can have, is, that it expresse *Motion*: which the Painters call the *spirite* of a picture.”<sup>34</sup> Accumulating authorities for this claim, Hogarth then quotes seventeenth-century painter Charles Alphonse du Fresnoy on the serpent-like forms of antique statuary, which “have I know not what of life and seeming motion in them.” Reimagining this tradition, Hogarth locates “fitness,” “composed variety,”

intricacy of form, and gracefully curving lines as the central components of beauty, and in the accompanying plates he exemplifies his theory of the waving and serpentine lines—the lines of beauty and grace respectively—with the forms of corseted women’s bodies, table legs, and flowering plants. For Hogarth, a plant’s beauty was ensured by its appearance of vitality and consequent diversity of form and color: he notes that when a nosegay dries, “it loses its distinct shape, and the firm colors fade into a kind of sameness: so that the whole gradually becomes a confused heap.”<sup>35</sup> Extending this example, Hogarth directs readers to a set of figures, “taken from the life,” that show the graceful, curving forms of the “Lily and calceolionian Iris” (designated by the numbers 43 and 44 in fig. 8), which he compares to the “meanness” of simplified “imitations” beneath them (numbers 45 and 46 in fig. 8).<sup>36</sup> In Hogarth’s aesthetic theory, the carefully constructed appearance of life and motion guarantees the beauty and grace of the artistic representation.

FIGURE 8. Detail from plate 1 in William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty* (London, 1753).  
Courtesy of the Huntington Library,  
San Marino, California.



Hogarth’s influence on Parkinson’s botanical illustrations is clearly discernible in an unusual example of his work, a finished watercolor of *Melicytus ramiflorus* (the māhoe or whiteywood tree) for which Parkinson had produced a separate outline drawing with notes for finishing the painting (figs. 9 and 10). (This set is unusual because most of Parkinson’s outline drawings were filled in and completed by other artists after his death.) The outline drawing captures the crucial attributes of the plant noted in Solander’s catalog description—the texture and venation of the leaves, the flower fascicles, the alternate distribution of leaves off the main stem—but Parkinson was not satisfied with the rendering and revised it substantially in the finished watercolor. Instead of positioning the main stem in the center of



the page with branches coming off both sides, Parkinson draws a central stem in a serpentine line from the lower right to the upper right corner, adding only one opposing branch to give variety and movement to the image. To show the small purple berries, Parkinson adds a separate branch across the bottom, extending the line farther into the right corner. As a result, the image presents a less bushy plant but a more elegant one.



FIGURE 9. Sydney Parkinson, outline drawing of *Melicytus ramiflorus*, NZ 1/10. *Endeavour* Botanical Illustrations, Library and Archives Collection, © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.



FIGURE 10. Sydney Parkinson, finished watercolor of *Melicytus ramiflorus*, NZ 1/10. *Endeavour* Botanical Illustrations, Library and Archives Collection, © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.

Hogarth's line of beauty is an omnipresent feature of Parkinson's drawings and paintings; this particular example is exceptional only in that we can observe the image's transformation. Equally striking examples exist in the watercolors completed after the *Endeavour* had returned to Britain. When Frederick Polydore Nodder began working on the watercolor of *Sophora tetralptra*, he had Parkinson's outline drawing and the dried specimen (figs. 11 and 12). In this case, Parkinson's drawing lacks several elements present in

FIGURE 11. Sydney Parkinson, outline drawing of *Sophora tetraptera*, NZ 1/38. *Endeavour* Botanical Illustrations, Library and Archives Collection, © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.



FIGURE 12. Mounted specimen of *Sophora tetraptera*, collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander on the *Endeavour* voyage. BM001209655, Botanical Collections, © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.



FIGURE 13. Frederick Polydore Nodder, *Sophora tetraptera*, finished watercolor from an original outline drawing by Sydney Parkinson, NZ 1/38. *Endeavour* Botanical Illustrations, Library and Archives Collection, © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.





both the pressed specimen and the finished painting—the entire top of the plant and the seedpods—meaning Nodder had to improvise. As a result, the finished watercolor does not accurately capture the living plant: the pods of the kōwhai do not shoot straight up into the air, but hang down in the same manner as the flowers (fig. 13). While achieving a level of aesthetic competency—note the pronounced serpentine line and the elegantly bending stems—Nodder’s painting thus contains the ghostly trace of the “confused heap,” the dried specimen and its haphazard placement on the page.

For both Parkinson and Nodder, the process of botanical illustration was bound up with representing the grace and beauty of living form—even if that form did not correspond to the plant as it was found growing in a distant locale. (Both the māhoe and the kōwhai are native to New Zealand.) This aim of rendering the fresh-cut plant in illustrations is in keeping with the goals of botanical illustration in Europe as it developed from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Sixteenth-century botanical illustrations, as Sachiko Kusakawa notes, conventionally presented complete, and thus idealized, versions of plants—a *pictura absolutissima* or *pictarum perfectam*—that captured identifying features in a “naturalistic” way but did not attempt to represent any individual specimen as it actually appeared in nature.<sup>37</sup> The drawings made for Conrad Gessner’s projected universal history of plants, for example, enabled him to retain and fix the transient color and shape of living plants while also compiling “perfect” plants that never grew in field or garden.<sup>38</sup> Parkinson and Nodder had similar aims: their drawings represent idealized specimens in multiple stages of development (flowers and fruit simultaneously), but Gessner’s straight stalks have been replaced by sinuous Hogarthian lines. This shift in illustration practice can be linked to the burgeoning mid-eighteenth-century interest in nature’s vitality: Hogarth’s theory of the motion and life imbued by serpentine lines appears at the same historical moment as Buffon’s vitalist natural history. While Parkinson and Nodder’s renderings allow for identification using the Linnaean taxonomic system, the aesthetic principles subtending their designs promote a vitalist understanding of nature. This confluence of Buffonian vitalism and Linnaean classification had a direct and palpable influence on theories of poetic collecting in the succeeding decades, largely due to one work, Erasmus Darwin’s *Botanic Garden*.

### Life in Death

While botanical metaphors and figures were common features of poetry collections throughout the eighteenth century, the vitalist aesthetic promoted by Parkinson and Nodder was thrust into British literature with

the publication of Erasmus Darwin's alternately extolled and despised poem *Loves of the Plants*, part 2 of *The Botanic Garden*. Under the auspices of the Litchfield Botanical Society, Darwin had completed translations of Linnaeus's *Systema Vegetabilium* and *Genera Plantarum* before beginning his long poem, and the voluminous annotations to *The Botanic Garden* attest to his intimate knowledge of Linnaean taxonomy, nomenclature, and natural history more broadly, including recent advances in chemistry, geology, galvanism, and a host of other fields.<sup>39</sup> His choice to employ Nodder—who signed one of his engravings for Darwin as “F. P. Nodder, Botanical Painter to her Majesty”—reveals Darwin's attention to the visual aesthetic of his book, particularly the full-page images of plants.<sup>40</sup> While Darwin's stated goal is to explain Linnaean taxonomy, the book as a whole translates the vitalist aesthetic of Nodder's visual art into poetry.

As Darwin claims in the advertisement, this long annotated poem was intended to lead the “votaries” of poetry into the realms of philosophy, a goal Darwin achieves with allegory: the Linnaean classification system of plant species detailed in the notes becomes personified maids and swains in the verse.<sup>41</sup> The poem reanimates botanical specimens through a double transformation: for example, the note describing *Meadia* points out that the “elegant bend” of the flower stalks is occasioned by the relative lengths of the pistil and stamen, further explaining that the petals are “so beautifully turned back to prevent the rain or dew drops from sliding down and washing off this dust [from the anthers].”<sup>42</sup> In the accompanying engraving by Nodder (fig. 14), the graceful, Hogarthian lines and the illusion of movement sanction the aesthetic values propounded in the descriptive note.<sup>43</sup> The illustration consequently bridges the gap between plant reproduction and poetic ornament: the personified *Meadia* in the verse “bows with wanton air” and “waves her golden hair” precisely *because* she is composed of elegantly bending stems, a downward hanging stigma, and beautifully turned-back petals.<sup>44</sup> Darwin's verse thus performs a second order reanimation: once the object of scientific knowledge has been aesthetically reanimated in the illustration and catalog-like note, it can take on a life of its own in the verse—laughing, bowing, blushing, weeping, crying out for sympathy and love.

As Darwin's verse-note-image composite indicates, the poetic reanimation of plants through personification is the direct result of adopting the conventions of botanical illustration to the work of literary representation. For this reason, Darwin's animate plants are distinct from the personifications of abstract concepts common in eighteenth-century verse: as Catherine Packham notes, his poem is engaged in “extending qualities of life, emotion and consciousness to natural objects,” thus returning animation to the dead specimen.<sup>45</sup> The prefatory “Proem” to *Loves of the Plants* plays on this concept: taking his cue from Ovid's transmutation of men and Gods into flowers and

Adored MELISSA ! and two squires attend.  
 MEADIA'S soft chains *see* suppliant beaux confest,  
 And hand in hand the laughing belle address ;  
 Alike to all, she bows with wanton air,  
 Rolls her dark eye, and waves her golden hair.

*Missip.* l. 65. Ham. In each flower there are four males and one female; two of the males stand higher than the other two, whence the name of the clafs "two powers," have been given in the Baltoja, and others of this clafs, that the two lower flammens, or males become mature before the two higher. After they have shed their dull, they turn themselves away upwards; and the pitill, or female, continuing to grow a little taller, is applied to the upper flammens. See Glorinda, and Geniula.

All the plants of this class, which have naked seeds, are aromatic. The Marum, and Nepeta are particularly delightful to cats; no other brute animals seem delighted with any odours but those of their food or prey.

[illegible]

In the Meadii, the Borago, Cyclamen, Solanum, and many others, the filaments are very short compared with the style. Hence it became necessary, *iff.* to furnish the filaments with a filamentary thread at each of its base, a vegetable string, to prevent its snapping.



FIGURE 14. Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden, Part II: The Loves of the Plants, a Poem. With Philosophical Notes*, 3rd ed. (London, 1791), 6–7. Courtesy of the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

trees, Darwin claims he will “restore some of them to their original animality” by the “poetic art” of personification. This project of aesthetic and poetic reanimation fits within Darwin’s unmistakably vitalist understanding of nature. In his medical treatise *Zoonomia; or, the Laws of Organic Life* (1794–96), Darwin criticizes those “who busied themselves trying to explain the laws of life by those of mechanism,” advocating instead a medical theory grounded in the “laws of organic life.”<sup>46</sup> In *The Botanic Garden*, Darwin’s notes evidence nature’s fundamental vitality: employing an overarching analogical framework, the work as a whole maps a vast web of connections unified by the principles of life, growth, and succession.<sup>47</sup> Darwin articulated his vitalist theory most fully in the posthumously published *Temple of Nature* (1803), which, as Martin Priestman argues, propounds a full-blown evolutionary theory, a “total vision of life in a continuous sequence.”<sup>48</sup> Darwin’s personified plants are an early expression of this worldview: embedded in Linnaean taxonomy, articulated via eighteenth-century aesthetics, and visualized through the conventions of botanical illustration, Darwin’s blushing, bowing plants stand as emblematic figures for an animated, vital nature.

Darwin’s personified plants thus exist in a state of life-in-death—artfully resuscitated, they feel and act in a world without people but saturated by human myth, art, desire, and ambition. The omnipresent epic similes of *Loves* embed Darwin’s vegetable loves in a matrix of biblical and Greek mythology, scientific observation, experiment, and speculation; personification binds these ways of thinking and seeing to the conventions and tropes of sensibility.<sup>49</sup> The seeming fluidity between human and plant nurtured by personification also signals the trope’s potential dangers: shared feeling can easily slide into projection or domination, leaving the plant’s nonhuman nature by the wayside or in the way. For twentieth-century nature writers and poets, to personify was tantamount to romanticizing the nonhuman, a procedure that authorizes use, appropriation, and possession even as it promotes affection and kinship as an environmental ethic.<sup>50</sup> This tension within personification is amplified by aesthetic reanimation: the connection between plant and human depends on the consumption of vitality, and vitality necessarily arises from plucking and pressing, from transforming the living plant into dead specimen into remediated art object. To put this in terms consonant with Paul de Man’s discussion of personification in Romanticism, an animating prosopopoeia—a voice speaking from the grave—allows us to enter into a communion with nature revived as figure, as trope. But as de Man argues of William Wordsworth’s “Essay on Epitaphs,” prosopopoeia also contains the threat that restoration might become deprivation, a scene of loss for both lyric subject and personified object.<sup>51</sup>

Poets of the next generation—those we typically identify with British Romanticism, including William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy

Shelley, John Clare, and Charlotte Smith, among others—often draw attention to this disquieting condition of poetic reanimations of nature. To take one example of many, in a “Ballad” published in *The Village Minstrel* (1821), Clare explicitly draws attention to a plucked, pressed botanical specimen, forcing readers to confront the implications of aesthetic reanimation, its push and pull of vital figure and dead object. The poem begins with a meditation on botanizing: the speaker encounters a “weedling wild, on lonely lea,” and “much the weedling tempted me / To crop its tender flower.”<sup>52</sup> The weedling recognizes the speaker’s intent and responds, “And wilt though bid my bloom decay, / And crop my flower, and me betray?” (97). The plant makes its plea in the mode introduced by Darwin, as a poetic reanimation of the sentimentalized specimen, but Clare immediately draws attention to the work of personification: the plant’s quoted speech is pure projection, an effect of “silence” that “seemly sigh’d” (97). The speaker’s kinship with the plant emerges from the weedling’s tenuous vitality, a liveliness produced by prosopopoeia that the text designates as such. Clare pushes this point further in the third and final stanza, when the speaker-poet, in a moment of sympathetic identification, “took the root and all” (98). This conclusion admits what the poet gains through personification—nature as a companion to “stand the storm” of fate with him—while also avowing the potential for loss in the violence of figurative possession. Clare’s poem thus links the procedures of botanical collecting—and specifically the removal and transport of specimens out of their local environments—to a poetics of animated nature.

Darwin’s book, of course, is explicitly underwritten by this conjunction: as a poetic iteration of Kew Gardens under Joseph Banks’s direction, *The Botanic Garden* collects plants from across the globe, transplanting them into the fertile soil of the British book trade in herbals, identification guides, garden manuals, seed catalogs, and botanical magazines. As Alan Bewell has argued, Darwin’s personifications display “the new consumerist commercial vision of nature that would underpin Britain’s emergence as an imperial nation.”<sup>53</sup> Darwin reanimates plants, that is, in the service of an empire whose strength increasingly lay in the “control and management of global natures,” an agenda carried out in print.<sup>54</sup> While this is certainly true, Darwin’s image-text composite also draws attention to representational practices that “cleanse” these myriad natures of their original cultural, medical, and religious contexts and remake them as “global goods” for European consumption.<sup>55</sup> For example, of *Canna* “or Indian Reed”—the first specimen described in the text—Darwin notes that its “seeds are used as shot by the Indians, and are strung for prayer-beads in some catholic countries.”<sup>56</sup> The note points to the plant’s New World origin, while prosopopoeia allows the plant to lament having been transported across the globe in the first place:

because *Canna* was “brought from between the tropics to our hot-houses,” its monogamous maid and swain “dread the rude blast of Autumn’s icy morn.”<sup>57</sup> Reanimated in Darwin’s *Botanic Garden* and relocated to Britain’s inhospitable clime, *Canna* is decidedly discontented with its lot as a hothouse exotic.

In the interplay between verse and note, Darwin’s text suggests that aesthetic reanimation entails a double act of erasure. Like the specimen it represents, the artfully resuscitated plant in the image is stripped of geographical context by conventions of botanical illustration, themselves caught up in the projects of botanical collecting undertaken by Sloane, Linnaeus, Banks, and their contemporaries across the eighteenth century. Through personification, the specimen is also plucked out of history: gracing the pages of a book-as-garden, the revived plant is detached from the palimpsestic *hortus siccus* that records its incorporation into European systems of classification and naming (from Indian reed to *Canna*). Darwin’s text-image composite participates in these techniques of erasure even as it calls attention to them. Consider how the profusion of geographical, cultural, mythological, and medical information in the notes scripts the action of the poem, where pistils and stamen aid Hygeia to cure disease (*Cinchona* and *Digitalis*) or save human wisdom from oblivion (*Papyrus*). These extended sequences of “plants in action” provoke mental images incommensurate with the graceful, decontextualized plants of the engravings—but these heroic personifications also enact figurative loss. In Darwin’s verse, animated plants replace one kind of history—the process of plucking, pressing, and pasting that remakes a living plant into a specimen in a collection—with another, the story of the plant’s heroic contribution to the advance of Western civilization.

Darwin’s book thus rehearses and rewrites the layered histories of eighteenth-century botanical collecting, replacing those palimpsestic networks of people, objects, texts, and images materialized in Petiver’s *horti sicci* with scenes of active, vital nature. Further, the structure of Darwin’s book transposes this aesthetic position onto the literary collection: each series of couplets identifies and represents a botanical specimen, while the *Botanic Garden* as a book turns a garden of plants into a carefully arranged collection of poetic specimens. On every page, Darwin’s book thus materializes a fundamental consonance between botanical and poetic collecting, one that authors writing in the wake of *Loves* mobilize for quite different ends. For example, in her 1804 educational work *Conversations Introducing Poetry, Chiefly on Subjects of Natural History*, Charlotte Smith casts her book as a museum of poetic forms, the doppelgänger of the *hortus siccus* or the natural history cabinet. Smith’s work was originally compiled as a poetic miscellany, but because the publisher found it too short, Smith wrote a fictional prose narrative around the sequence of poems.<sup>58</sup> By figuring her collection of poems as a natural history museum in the prose, Smith explicitly overlays the work of

compiling poems and collecting specimens. For example, in the fourth section of *Conversations*, the young pupil Emily exclaims, “Mamma, I have now several little copies of verses on insects, and some on plants: I have the squirrel too, the dormouse and the hedgehog, which are beasts, but we have none that tell of birds” (*Conversations*, 127). Emily first reveals her subjects as poems, but, as her list continues, verses become the very objects they represent: “I have the squirrel too.” To Emily’s observation Mrs. Talbot responds, “We must apply to your aunt for her assistance, and try to enrich our collection with some subjects from that department of natural history; at present let me hear the poetical collection of WILD FLOWERS” (127). With a play on “subject,” signifying both the matter of an art or science (in this case natural history) and the theme of a literary composition, Smith makes it appear as if Emily’s aunt might soon arrive with a parcel of ornithological specimens; the conflation of object and poem is furthered by “Wild Flowers,” a taxonomic nosegay in verse. Such confluences of poetic and botanical/natural historical collecting appear throughout the book: after listening to her brother George recite a “serious poetical lamentation over a fly,” Emily pronounces that she might have liked “an eulogium on a bullfinch” better, to which Mrs. Talbot responds, “I have a bird or two hatching for you, but they are not yet in a state to make a figure in our Museum” (142). The “figure” in this passage is, of course, a metaphor—a relation of equivalence rather than mere likeness. Reading poetry and understanding its forms stand in for observing the subjects of natural history; collecting verses amounts to the same activity as collecting specimens; Emily’s commonplace book of poetry—and *Conversations* itself—reiterates and replaces a visit to house museum or botanic garden.

Building on Darwin’s structural equivalence between botanic and poetic collections, Smith’s verse-prose composite thus positions itself to comment on the imbrication of literary and natural history collecting in this period. This commentary emerges most forcibly when Smith foregrounds the differences between the two. In the prose narrative, Mrs. Talbot explicitly declaims against the cruelty of emboweling birds and pinning insects that have “resigned their short lives in some degree of suffering, which nature would not have inflicted” (179).<sup>59</sup> In tandem with strident critiques of aesthetic reanimation in individual poems like “To a Fire-fly of Jamaica, Seen in a Collection” and “To a Geranium Which Flowered During the Winter,” Smith disavows the collecting practices that transform living natures into dead specimens into animated art. Smith thus presents her collection of poems as a counterpoint to books like Darwin’s *Loves* that cover over the violent histories of colonization with animated figures and personified plants. Pressing this point further: in the context of her playful confluences, the dead or dislocated specimens of Smith’s book intervene directly into a much larger ongoing debate over the shape and content of collections of

poetry—a debate carried out by invoking the tenets of botany as the figurative ground for miscellanies and anthologies. In drawing attention to this practice, Smith's book rehearses its kinship with antiquarian anthology makers over compilers of poetical beauties, taking the side of history over aesthetics, representativeness over fame, death over life.

### Compiling Vitality

Even as her verse-prose composite internally resists the project of aesthetic reanimation at multiple levels, Smith's book is, like Darwin's, part of the trade in popular botanical books, pedagogical works, and poetic miscellanies; it made money for Smith by tapping into the market generated by botanical popularizers like Darwin and miscellany makers like William Enfield, Vicesimus Knox, William Mavor, and Samuel Jackson Pratt. References to Darwin's *Loves* and other popular books of natural history are scattered throughout *Conversations*, but Smith explicitly sets her collection against pedagogical miscellanies of the day. In the preface, Smith notes that she began compiling poems for *Conversations* because she "met with very few verses that answered my purpose" in "collections avowedly made for the use of children" (61). Smith takes aim here at collections like Knox's *Elegant Extracts: or Useful and Entertaining Pieces of Poetry, Selected for the Improvement of Youth* (1789), which embraced an explicitly vitalist aesthetic to justify the structure and content of the poetic collection. Knox upholds the haphazard arrangement of excerpts in his book by noting:

Such compilations as these have not unfrequently been called garlands and nosegays: but in a garland or nosegay, who would place the tulips, the lilies, the pinks, and the roses in separate compartments? In this artificial disposition, their beauty and fragrance would be less pleasing than if they were carelessly mingled with all the ease and wildness of natural variety.<sup>60</sup>

Knox's counterpoint to careless mingling—the artificial disposition of pinks and tulips in compartments—takes sides in the ongoing contest between Buffonian vitalism and Linnaean taxonomy. By rejecting the "artificial disposition" of plant specimens, Knox sets vitalist principles of beauty and grace against the deadening effect of classification. His specimen types—tulips, lilies, pinks, and roses—are the most commercialized of botany's beauties, those species long cultivated to enhance their aesthetic appeal and commercial sales. Like Darwin's *Botanic Garden*, which Knox parrots in his preface, *Elegant Extracts* embraces a vision of vital nature underpinned by a consumerist, commercial ethos. Unsurprisingly, Knox's choice of commercially viable botanical types undergirds his choice of poems: the volume collects "such pieces as were already in use in schools," particularly those

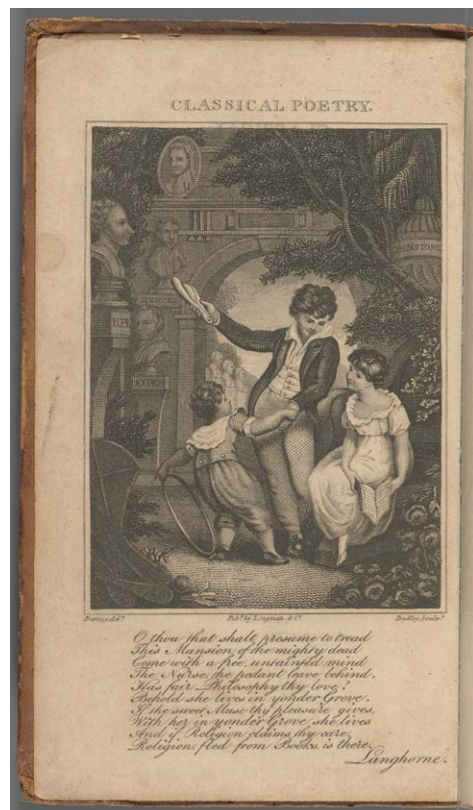


“loudly recommended by the voice of Fame” that “have been already selected in a variety of volumes of preceding collections.”<sup>61</sup> Contrary to the collections of Darwin or Smith, which contain original verse, Knox’s book is an exercise in canon making: it includes only those poems “*publically known and universally celebrated*,” poems by established poets that have already passed the test of marketability and public taste.<sup>62</sup> Knox’s principles of selection and organization serve as interlocking pieces of this project: the figure of the flower’s natural vitality proves the poems’ aesthetic appeal, while their status as the best pieces has already been confirmed by continual circulation and acclaim.

Knox’s preface is a striking example of how figuring the poetic collection via vital nature promoted a specific set of aesthetic criteria: natural variety and the beauty of living nature authorized both the editor’s selections of specific poems and their arrangement in the collection. A similar evaluative metric was widely promulgated in pedagogical miscellanies and single-author collections of poetry in the decades around 1800. The dedication to John Cartwright Cross’s *Parnassian Trifles, Being a Collection of Elegiac, Pastoral, Nautic, and Lyric Poetry* (1792), for example, is structured by an extended botanical metaphor. Like Knox, Cross casts his work as plucking flowers, those “homely blossoms a simple wanderer round the Parnassian mount has cull’d.”<sup>63</sup> This “small bouquet,” he suggests, can only bring pleasure while it remains fresh, untouched by the “blighting blast of criticism” that might “prematurely wither” it. While Cross deploys the reanimated botanical specimen—his culled flowers, like Knox’s, are very much alive—to divert critical judgment from his original poetry, William Mavor and Samuel Pratt’s *Classical English Poetry, for the Use of Schools, and of Young Persons in General* (1801) make it the standard of judgment for *all* poetry across time. In the “Advertisement” to the first edition, the editors figure their collection as “a wreath of flowers, culled from many a garden” where “in splendor of colouring, in sweetness of perfume, and in delicacy of structure” the individual poems “must differ, according to the genius and the soil that originally produced them; but they are all innoxious, and their sources warrant them to possess merit of the highest estimation.”<sup>64</sup> This link between poetic merit and the soil-source of the plant-poem’s vitality is followed in the introduction by an encomium on the animating power of poetic genius. Descriptive poetry, the editors assert, “is the test of poetic imagination, and distinguishes an original genius from a mere copyist. A true poet places the object he would paint before our eyes. He gives it the genuine colours of life, and affords subjects from which the painter may draw.”<sup>65</sup> Here, Mavor and Pratt promote poetic genius as the capacity to animate objects in a way commensurate with Hogarth’s criteria for grace and beauty in visual art. Taken together, these statements authorize the content and organization of the

collection—the editors’ choice of poems and their arrangement—by importing a vitalist aesthetic from visual art and yoking it to the figure of a decorative arrangement of culled flowers that nevertheless continue to look and smell as if they were alive. The aesthetic reanimations of botanical art and descriptive poetry thus supply Mavor, Pratt, and their readers with a benchmark for judging poetic merit, an aesthetic standard applicable to a wide swath of poetry.<sup>66</sup> These criteria are reinforced by the volume’s self-presentation as a collection. As the frontispiece to the volume suggests, this collection’s purpose is to infuse dead verses with new life (fig. 15). Based on a design by Edward Francis Burney (nephew of musician Charles Burney and cousin of novelist Fanny Burney), the engraving shows a group of children playing and reading in a flower garden decorated with stone busts of “classical” poets (Pope, Spenser, and Dryden), as well as what appears to be Shenstone’s urn. The epigraph from John Langhorne’s “Inscription on the Door of a Study” implies that, once embowered in Mavor and Pratt’s culled poetic garden, the work of these dead poets will come back to life: “Has fair Philosophy thy love? / Behold she lives in yonder Grove. / If the sweet Muse thy pleasure

FIGURE 15. Frontispiece from William Mavor [and Samuel Jackson Pratt], *Classical English Poetry, for the Use of Schools, and of Young Persons in General. A New Edition Revised and Improved* (London, 1823). Courtesy of the Gutman Education Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.



gives / With her in yonder Grove she lives.” Recontextualized by the frontispiece image, Langhorne’s lines no longer refer to an actual grove in nature (the opposite of that “mansion of the mighty dead,” the study or library), but to the book held by the young woman, the poetic miscellany as garden grove where verse retains the “genuine colours of life” even after its authors have turned to stone and dust.

Pratt and Mavor’s collection thus transforms the dead monuments of literature’s past into poetry that grows and thrives within the anthology. In downplaying historical context—the different “soils” in which poems by Spenser, Dryden, and Shenstone grew—this vitalist miscellany promotes a set of ahistorical aesthetic criteria for evaluating the genius of poets and the worth of poems. This vitalist aesthetic is clearly reactionary: as the compiler of *Beauties of British Poetry* proclaims, a “bouquet” of poems that “bear the indelible stamp of superiority” should have the “beauties of our ancient and modern Bards . . . indiscriminately mixed . . . without considering what period gave them birth.”<sup>67</sup> This rejection of chronological sequence responds directly to collections of “ancient” poetry that appeared after the publication of Thomas Percy’s *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765). Collections like Henry Headley’s *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry* (1787) and George Ellis’s *Specimens of the Early English Poets* (1790) follow Percy in recovering “specimens” of poets in order to “shew the gradation of our language, exhibit the progress of popular opinions, display the peculiar manners and customs of former ages.”<sup>68</sup> These collections insist on mapping a sequential literary history: complaining that “modern collections” like Knox’s were “mere common-place books of mutilated quotations . . . formed, almost at random, from the great mass of our Poetry, both ancient and modern, where we must not be alarmed if we meet with our friend, or our neighbour, in the same page with a Shakespeare, a Milton, and a Pope,” Headley seeks out the “unexpected latent beaut[ies]” in “unpopular” poems formerly doomed to oblivion.<sup>69</sup> Ellis is even more explicit about the sequential collection as recovery project: drawing on antiquarian works like James Granger’s *Biographical History of England from Egbert the Great to the Revolution* (1767), Ellis organizes poets by the “reigns in which they flourished,” drawing his material (like Percy) from manuscripts and black-letter books that had “escaped into the cabinets of literary collectors, where they are secure indeed against farther insult, but are at the same time inaccessible to the curiosity of the public.”<sup>70</sup> For Percy, Headley, and Ellis value adheres in the book’s scarcity and poem’s capacity to represent the language and opinions of a past historical period—and in order to fulfill this function, both poems and poets must remain unequivocally, irrevocably dead.

Collections that deploy botanical metaphors to imbue an old poetic canon with renewed vitality thus find their antipode in antiquarian collections

of representative types. While Percy, Headley, and Ellis all label poems “specimens,” it was the poet, historian, editor, and oft-forgotten member of the Lake school, Robert Southey, who most fully exploited this alternative botanical metaphor to articulate a full-blown theory of compilation as literary history. In his *Specimens of the Later English Poets* (1807)—a continuation of Ellis’s volumes—Southey insists that literary collections, like a collection of botanical specimens, ought to function typologically. In the preface, Southey gives his reasons for “including here the reprobate, as well as the elect”:

My business was to collect specimens as for a *hortus siccus*; not to cull flowers as for an anthology. I wished, as Mr. Ellis has done in the earlier ages, to exhibit specimens of every writer, whose verses appear in a substantive form, and find their place upon the shelves of the collector. The taste of the publick may better be estimated from indifferent Poets than from good ones; because the former write for their contemporaries, the latter for posterity. Cleveland and Cowley, who were both more popular than Milton, characterise their age more truly. Fame, indeed, is of slow growth; like the Hebrew language, it has no present tense; Popularity has no future one. The gourd which sprang up in a night withered in a day.<sup>71</sup>

For Southey, botany authorizes comprehensiveness over selectiveness in the poetic collection; the representative historical type trumps aesthetic quality. When Southey foregrounds the dead specimen in the *hortus siccus*, he does so to propound an alternative to the criteria of poetic value proclaimed by vitalists like Knox, Pratt, and Mavor: like languages and botanical specimens, poems cannot, indeed should not, be brought back to life. Ceaseless reanimation—poems made canonical through continual republication in yet another anthology—obscures the contours of literary history, masking the characteristic tastes of the past. To be true to history, Southey argues, one should collect gourd-like poems, those apt to wither away (or more likely rot), losing their shape and substance, metamorphosing from a dominant, perhaps delectable, fruit into a loose pile of seeds. Unlike Parkinson and Nodder’s graceful aesthetic reanimations of the dried heap, Southey picks up a strand of Enlightenment vitalism also present in Darwin’s *Loves*, Buffon’s historicization of nature by way of the continuity and succession of species, the “constant destruction and renewal of beings” over time.<sup>72</sup> Southey’s criteria for selecting poems and his corresponding model of literary history depend on the dead and withered remaining that way: to grasp the succession of types requires inclusion of forgotten reprobates along with the elect. Embracing dead specimens in place of an animated nature we often associate with Romanticism, Southey, like Smith, promotes a historically representative poetic collection, one that values contemporaneity over longevity and representativeness over fame.

## Postscript

When the *Endeavour* returned to England with its cargo of specimens and outline drawings, Solander and Banks launched into the immense project of organizing the herbarium. In the process, one of the “drying books,” the sheaves of paper in which the plucked, pressed specimens were transported back to England, was lost. This misplaced item now lives on a shelf in the Sloane Herbarium at the Natural History Museum of London (fig. 16, showing a specimen of *meadia*).<sup>73</sup> The drying “book” is a copy of *Notes upon the twelve books of Paradise Lost, collected from the Spectator*, written by Joseph Addison and printed for J. and R. Tonson at the Shakespeare’s Head shop, London, in 1738. The printed sheets were never folded, bound, or cut. They are probably remnants from the 1738 print run, left in the Tonson publishing house after the death, in 1767, of Jacob Tonson the younger. (The younger Tonson was the great nephew of the original Jacob Tonson, convener of the Kit-Cat Club and famed literary publisher of Addison, John Dryden, Richard Steele, and Nicholas Rowe.) When the Tonson publishing business folded in 1767, the scattered leaves of the second edition of a book originally published in 1719 would not have been worth much—except to someone in need of high-quality rag paper. Acquiring unbound remainders may well have been a common practice for botanical collectors: new paper was expensive and printed books, regardless of their content, were good for pressing plants. The “drying book” thus draws our attention to the material imbrication of eighteenth-century botanical collecting and book publishing. Evacuated of content, Addison’s literary-critical collection of notes absorbs vital fluid, the lifeblood of the plant, pressing it into history, preparing it for incorporation into the *hortus siccus*. Remainder and reminder, this object and its fragile remnants of the moment when living plant became botanical specimen points to the material past of aesthetic reanimations. Before *Meadia* performed her wanton bowing in Darwin’s *Loves*, her trailing stems and guttered leaves were folded into literary history, embowered in a dead man’s notes on a dead man’s epic. Pressed under the weight of the icon of poetic fame and the process of his canonization, this tangled *meadia* is a fit emblem of those indifferent poets Headley, Ellis, and Southey sought to recover—and those like Southey, Darwin, and Smith themselves, whose popularity seemed, for much of the twentieth century, to have no future tense. Botany’s archive thus opens onto a literary history of Romanticism still absent from our modern anthologies, making visible that long withering of what was lost and found again on the shelves of the collector.

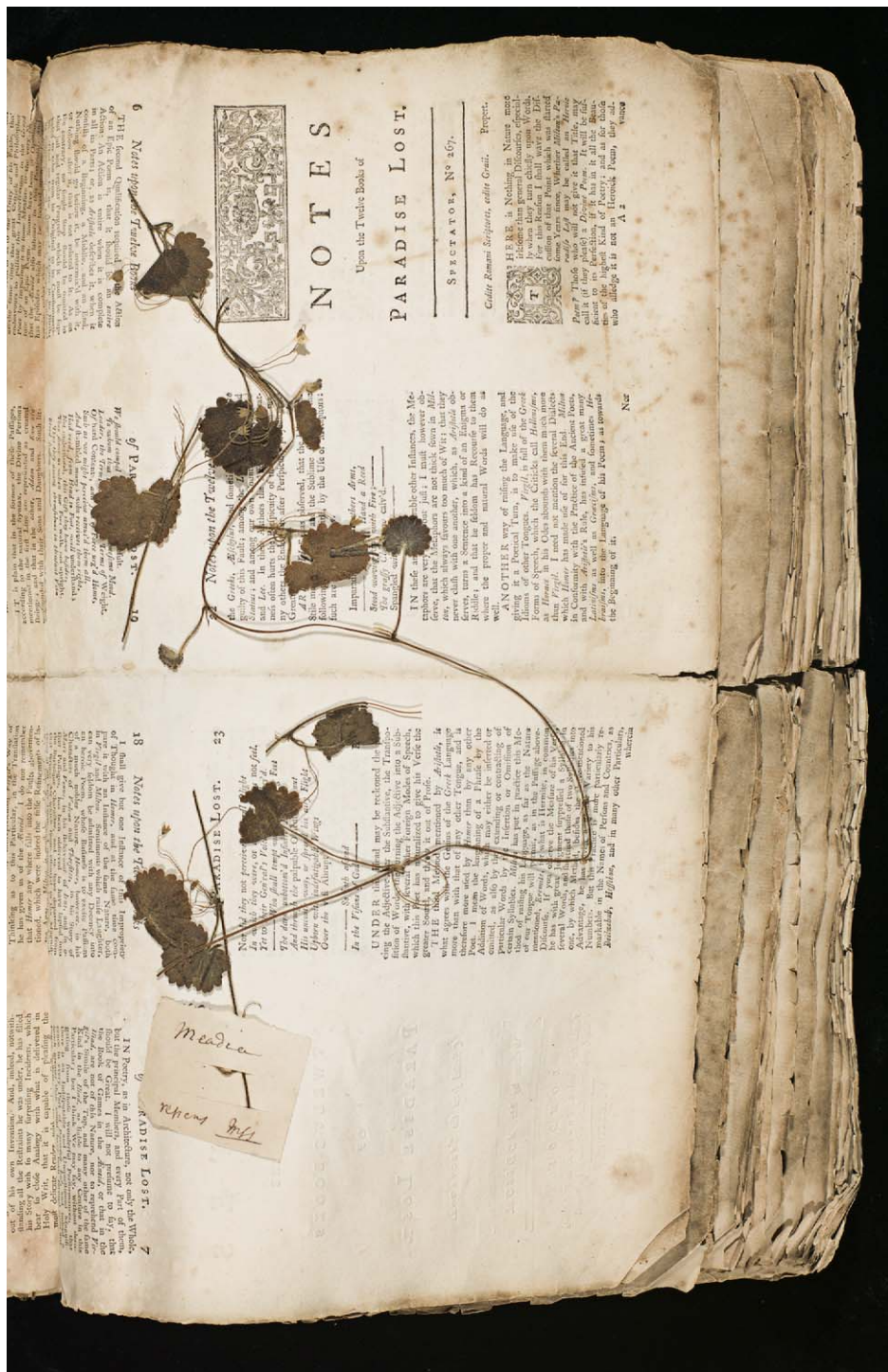


FIGURE 16. Page containing a specimen of *media* from the *Endeavour* voyage of 1768–71—material from Madeira. © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London. The drying book comprises unbound sheets from Joseph Addison's *Notes upon the twelve books of Paradise Lost*, collected from the *Spectator* (London, 1738).

## Notes

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1. See, for example, Jeffrey R. Di Leo, "Analyzing Anthologies," in *On Anthologies: Politics and Pedagogy*, ed. Jeffrey R. Di Leo (Omaha, 2004), 11–12; and Laura Mandell, "Putting Contents on the Table: The Disciplinary Anthology and the Field of Literary History," *Poetess Archive Journal* 1, no. 1 (12 April 2007): 1–34, <https://journals.tdl.org/paj/index.php/paj/article/view/29/31>. This essay extends and revises Mandell's astute argument about canon formation, literary history, and the emergence of the "disciplinary anthology" in the nineteenth century.
2. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism* (London, 1869), viii.
3. All of these designations were extremely common across the eighteenth century, as a quick search of *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* confirms; the first volume of poems to Anglicize *anthologia* in its title was *The English Anthology*, ed. Joseph Ritson (London, 1793), followed shortly by the *Annual Anthology*, ed. Robert Southey (Bristol, 1799).
4. Frederick Winthrop Faxon's *Literary Annuals and Gift Books; A Bibliography with a Descriptive Introduction* (Boston, 1912) lists *The Bouquet* (1844); *Buds and Blossoms* (1850); *The Casket, or Flowers of Literature* (1826–40); *The Children's Garland* (1863); *Christian Wreath* (1847); *Christmas Blossoms* (1847); *Christmas Garland* (1901); *Christmas Roses* (1849); *The Hyacinth* (1845); *The Iris* (1851); *The Lily* (1830); *The Magnolia* (1836); *The Violet* (1837); *The Rose* (1843); my personal favorite, *The Dahlia* (1842); and seemingly endless variations on the floral theme, including *Drops from Flora's Cup* (1845), *Flora and Thalia* (1836), *Floral Gems* (1847), *The Floral Keepsake* (1850), *The Floral Offering* (1847), *The Floral Wreath* (1851), *Flora's Album* (1848), *Flora's Gem* (1848), *Flora's Lexicon* (1839), *The Flower Vase* (1844), *Flowers of Loveliness* (1852), and the ever-popular *The Forget Me Not* and *The Garland*, which ran through fourteen and thirteen American editions respectively.
5. Vicesimus Knox, ed., *Elegant Extracts: or Useful and Entertaining Pieces of Poetry, Selected for the Improvement of Youth* (London, 1791), xii–xiii.
6. For example, see Barbara Korte, "Flowers for the Picking: Anthologies of Poetry in (British) Literary and Cultural Studies," in *Anthologies of British Poetry: Critical Perspectives from Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. Barbara Korte, Ralf Schneider, and Stefanie Lethbridge (Amsterdam, 2000), 1–32; and Chantel M. Lavoie, "Gender in the Verse Garden," in *Collecting Women: Poetry and Lives, 1700–1780* (Lewisburg, PA, 2009), 23–35.
7. For economic approaches, including the relationship between anthologies and changes in copyright, see William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge, 2004), 66–83, 122–39; for anthologies and canon formation, see 122–39, and Korte, "Flowers for the Picking," 10–14, 24–26; for discussion



- of anthologies and readership, see Barbara Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (Princeton, 1996), Anne Ferry, *Tradition and the Individual Poem: An Inquiry into Anthologies* (Stanford, 2001), and Stefanie Lethbridge, "Anthological Reading Habits in the Eighteenth Century: The Case of Thomson's *The Seasons*," in *Anthologies of British Poetry*, 89–103; for the anthology's entanglement with other literary genres, see Leah Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel* (Cambridge, 2000); on printed miscellanies, their marketing, and target audiences, see Adam Smyth, "Profit and Delight": *Printed Miscellanies in England, 1640–1682* (Detroit, 2004), Michael Suarez, "The Production and Consumption of the Eighteenth-Century Poetic Miscellany," in *Books and Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays*, ed. Isabel Rivers (London, 2001), 217–51, and Jonathan R. Topham, "The Mirror of Literature, Amusement and Instruction and Cheap Miscellanies in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain," in Geoffrey Cantor et al., *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature* (Cambridge, 2004), 37–66; for discussions of the distinction, or lack thereof, between anthologies and miscellanies, see Suarez, "Poetic Miscellany," 218–19, Benedict, *Modern Reader*, 4, and Laura Mandell, "Some Preliminary Work Toward a Site Philosophy," *Anthologies and Miscellanies*, last updated 2 September 1997, <http://oldsite.english.ucsb.edu/faculty/rraleigh/research/anthologies/site-phil.html>.
8. St. Clair, *Reading Nation*, 122–39; for a qualification of St. Clair's argument, see James Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade* (New Haven, 2007), 230–36.
  9. See Benedict, *Modern Reader*, 12–13, 182–210, 214–21; St. Clair, *Reading Nation*, 103–39, 158–209. Mandell provides a cogent and historically sensitive account, arguing that Robert Southey and William Hazlitt "establish a set of protocols for the disciplinary anthology" between 1800 and 1831. Mandell, "Putting Contents on the Table," 2.
  10. Barbara M. Benedict, "The Paradox of the Anthology: Collecting and Difference in Eighteenth-Century Britain," *New Literary History* 34 (2003): 231–56.
  11. Part 2 of *The Botanic Garden*, subtitled *Loves of the Plants*, was published in 1789, followed by part 1, subtitled *The Economy of Vegetation*, in 1791. In 1784, Darwin envisioned *Economy* as a short prefatory poem to *Loves* of only "400 lines, but which will have 3 or 4 times the quantity of notes"; in the "Advertisement" to *Loves*, Darwin states that he has deferred publishing *Economy* for a year "for the purpose of repeating some experiments on vegetation, mentioned in the notes." His correspondence, however, shows that he was still composing the poem and its notes in 1789–90. Erasmus Darwin to Joseph Johnson, 23 May 1784, in *The Collected Letters of Erasmus Darwin*, ed. Desmond King-Hele (Cambridge, 2007), 235.
  12. This assumption of equivalence is not unusual: seventeenth- and eighteenth-century botanists, including Linnaeus, treated illustrations and specimens interchangeably, and there are numerous instances in which an illustration is the "specimen" that defines a species or variety for a Linnaean binomial classification (called the holotype or lectotype). See Charlie Jarvis, *Order out of Chaos: Linnaean Plant Names and Their Types* (London, 2007).
  13. The typeface, the numeration, and the hyphenation of *purpureo* indicate that this text was clipped from page 245 of the 1704 edition of John Ray's *Historia Plantarum* (London, 1704); the text appears in a section titled "Hortus Siccus Petiverianus."
  14. I thank Charlie Jarvis for drawing my attention to this example and for identifying the hands.



15. Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, 1986), 16–25.
16. As Adrian Johns has argued, the apparent fixity, reliability, and veracity of print is not essential to the medium, but rather a perception that had to be produced over the course of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries by printers, publishers, booksellers, and authors. Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, 1998).
17. The British Library copies (shelfmark 724.k.1.[1.]) of James Petiver's *Catalogus Classicus & Topicus, Gazophylacii Naturae & Artis* (London, 1709) and *Herbarii Britannici Raii Catalogus* (A catalogue of Mr. Ray's English herbal) (London, 1715?) include dedications to various patrons printed or pasted onto the individual plates.
18. Max Horkheimer, "Reason Against Itself: Some Remarks on Enlightenment," *Theory, Culture & Society* 10, no. 2 (1993): 81.
19. Brian W. Ogilvie, "Image and Text in Natural History, 1500–1700," in *The Power of Images in Early Modern Science*, ed. Wolfgang Lefèvre, Jürgen Renn, and Urs Schöppflin (Basel, 2003), 157–62. Ogilvie traces this split to the development of classification systems focused on plant morphology and to the separation of image and text concomitant with the rise of copperplate engraving, which was printed separately from the text block. While copperplate engraving enabled larger, more elaborate illustrations, a desire to aggrandize the author or patron was more likely the driving force behind the production of large-format illustrated botanical books in eighteenth-century Britain. Further, it is unclear how books like Petiver's or Leonard Plukenet's late seventeenth-century illustrated catalogs fit within Ogilvie's schema.
20. Single-sheet illustrations were not unusual in earlier periods, and authors' preferences for large single-sheet illustrations deserve further consideration beyond the scope of this article. Preferences for single-sheet illustration in different periods may have been influenced by the descriptive or classificatory goals of the author, the expectations of patrons, or an aesthetic preference for a particular kind of background. I thank Roger Gaskell for helping to clarify my thinking on this topic.
21. Philip Sloan, "The Gaze of Natural History," in *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains*, ed. Christopher Fox, Roy Porter, and Robert Wokler (Berkeley, 1995), 126.
22. Karin Nickelsen, "Draughtsmen, Botanists and Nature: Constructing Eighteenth-Century Botanical Illustrations," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 37, no. 1 (2006): 1–25. Nickelsen notes that the physician and botanist Christoph Jacob Trew specifically asks his draftsman to be "true to nature," which for him meant coloring the background to set off the flowers, adding seeds and fruit to images, and placing only "one single plant per sheet of paper . . . right in the centre of the page" (7).
23. Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York, 2010), 55–84.
24. *Ibid.*, 58–66.
25. Peter Reill, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (Berkeley, 2005), 6–7.
26. Londa L. Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 5.
27. John Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1994), 107–18. See also John Gascoigne, *Science in the Service of Empire: Joseph Banks, the British State and the Uses of Science in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, 1998).

28. Daniela Bleichmar, "Visible Empire: Scientific Expeditions and Visual Culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment," *Postcolonial Studies* 12, no. 4 (2009): 446.
29. For a discussion of how Banks mobilized his collections in the service of empire, see Tim Fulford, Debbie Lee, and Peter Kitson, *Literature, Science and Exploration in the Romantic Era: Bodies of Knowledge* (Cambridge, 2004), 1–70.
30. Daniel Solander, "[The original descriptions and systematic lists of the Plants collected by Sir Joseph Banks and D. C. Solander during Capt. James Cook's first Voyage, 1768–71]," MSS BANKS COLL SOL, Natural History Museum, London.
31. Daniel Solander, "[Manuscript descriptions of Plants, written on slips of paper and systematically arranged, the Phanerogams and Vascular Cryptogams in accordance with Wildenow's edition of Linné's *Species Plantarum*, the Cellular Cryptogams by Richard's edition of that work]," 24 vols., MSS BANKS COLL SOL, Natural History Museum, London.
32. Bleichmar, "Visible Empire," 449–52.
33. Denis Carr, "The Books that Sailed with the *Endeavour*," *Endeavour* 7, no. 4 (1983): 194–201.
34. William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty* (London, 1753), vi–vii.
35. Ibid., 43. As Janice Neri notes, aesthetic criteria had long been important to the production of images in scientific books: in the *Micrographia* (1665), Robert Hooke notes that with the "minute Bodies" of ants, "almost as ever their life is destroyed, their parts shrivel, and lose their beauty." Quoted in Janice Neri, "Between Observation and Image: Representations of Insects in Robert Hooke's *Micrographia*," in *The Art of Natural History: Illustrated Treatises and Botanical Paintings, 1400–1850*, ed. Amy R. W. Meyers and Therese O'Malley (Washington, DC, 2008), 90.
36. Hogarth, *Analysis*, 44.
37. The "counterfeit" images in Otto Brunfel's *Herbarum vivae eicones* (1531) deviate from this convention in representing the individual specimen exactly, with all its idiosyncrasies—torn leaves, wilted flowers, and worm holes—intact. As Sachiko Kusukawa notes, this representational choice was made by the artist and publisher, and it often conflicted with Brunfel's project of reviving classical knowledge. Sachiko Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature: Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany* (Chicago, 2012), 16–19.
38. Ibid., 152. Neither Kusukawa nor Nickelsen attend to the aesthetic conventions that may underwrite botanical illustration; both are more interested in establishing the centrality of the visual and pictorial in the production of medical and botanical knowledge, a position contrary to the conventional assessments of botanical illustrations as primarily decorative. For a discussion of this issue, see Nickelsen, "Draughtsmen, Botanists and Nature," 1–5.
39. The first edition of *Loves of the Plants* includes an advertisement for Darwin's translations of *Systema Vegetabilium* and *Genera Plantarum*, affixed to a preface that explains Linnaeus's classification system. Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden, Part II. The Loves of the Plants, A Poem. With Philosophical Notes* (Litchfield, UK, 1789), n.p.
40. Ibid., plate facing 182.
41. Ibid., n.p.
42. Ibid., 6.
43. Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden, Part II: The Loves of the Plants, a Poem. With Philosophical Notes*, 3rd ed. (London, 1791), plate facing 6. Darwin initially hired a local Litchfield artist, E. Stringer, to create etchings for *Loves*; in the first

edition of 1789, the first three images, including the plate of *Meadia*, are signed by Stringer. Finding Stringer's work subpar (an assessment confirmed by Darwin's friend Josiah Wedgwood, who said these plates were "wretchedly engraved"), Darwin appears to have fired Stringer and commissioned Frederick Polydore Nodder to engrave the remaining plates and remake the first three plates. Thus, the third edition of *Loves* contains the engraving of *Meadia* by Nodder referenced here. Josiah Wedgwood, *The Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood, 1781–1794* (London, 1906), 91–92.

44. Darwin, *Loves*, 3rd ed., lines 64–65.
45. Catherine Packham, "The Science and Poetry of Animation: Personification, Analogy, and Erasmus Darwin's *Loves of the Plants*," *Romanticism* 10 (2004): 198.
46. Erasmus Darwin, *Zoonomia; or, the Laws of Organic Life* (London, 1794), 1:1–2.
47. As Reill notes, Buffon's vitalist account of nature relied on analogical thinking while also historicizing nature by emphasizing the continuity and succession in the reproduction of species. Reill, *Vitalizing Nature*, 6, 55.
48. Martin Priestman, introduction to Erasmus Darwin, *The Temple of Nature, or the Origin of Society, a Poem* (London, 1803), paragraph 11, *Romantic Circles Electronic Editions*, published October 2006, [http://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/darwin\\_temple/intro.html](http://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/darwin_temple/intro.html).
49. In the poem, sensibility is a product of prosopopoeia: for example, later in the first book of the poem, the early-blooming Anemone pleads, "Breathe, gentle AIR! From cherub-lips impart / Thy balmy influence to my anguished heart"; Darwin, *Loves*, 1st ed., lines 269–70.
50. Laurence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 180–82, 204–11.
51. Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-Facement," in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York, 1984), 76–81.
52. John Clare, *The Village Minstrel, and Other Poems* (London, 1821), 96.
53. Alan Bewell, "Darwin's Cosmopolitan Natures," *English Literature History* 76, no. 1 (2009): 21.
54. Ibid.
55. Nicholas Thomas, "Licensed Curiosity: Cook's Pacific Voyages," in *Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (London, 1994), 119–20, and Daniela Bleichmar, "Books, Bodies, and Fields: Sixteenth-Century Transatlantic Encounters with the New World *Materia Medica*," in *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World*, ed. Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan (Philadelphia, 2007), 99.
56. Darwin, *Loves*, 1st ed., 3.
57. Ibid., 3–4, line 42.
58. Charlotte Smith, *Conversations Introducing Poetry, Chiefly on Subjects of Natural History*, in *The Works of Charlotte Smith*, vol. 13, ed. Judith Pascoe (London, 2007). For a discussion of Smith's compositional process, see Dahlia Porter, "From Nosegay to Specimen Cabinet: Charlotte Smith and the Labour of Collecting," in *Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism*, ed. Jacqueline Labbe (London, 2008), 29–44.
59. Judith Pascoe also notes the common thread of sensibility in Mrs. Talbot's critique of collecting and the book's protests against the excesses of the rich. Judith Pascoe, introduction to *The Works of Charlotte Smith* (London, 2007), 13:xvi.
60. Knox, *Elegant Extracts*, xii–xiii.
61. Ibid., iv.
62. Ibid.

63. John Cartwright Cross, *Parnassian Trifles. Being a Collection of Elegiac, Pastoral, Nautic, and Lyric Poetry* (London, 1792).
64. William Mavor [and Samuel Jackson Pratt], eds., *Classical English Poetry, for the Use of Schools, and of Young Persons in General. A New Edition Revised and Improved* (London, 1823), iii. This edition reprints the “Advertisement” and frontispiece from the first edition. After Pratt’s death in 1814, Mavor continued to republish the collection.
65. *Ibid.*, viii.
66. Mavor and Pratt’s introduction splits poetry into different types—pastoral, lyric, didactic, descriptive, and elegiac—but the collection itself contains no section breaks or headings, and gives no indication of how to categorize the poems. The discussion of descriptive poetry is by far the longest and most detailed part of the introduction.
67. Sidney Melmoth, ed., *Beauties of British Poetry* (Huddersfield, UK, 1801).
68. Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry Consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, and Other Pieces of Our Earlier Poets, Chiefly of the Lyric Kind* (Dublin, 1766), vi.
69. Henry Headley, preface (1787) to *Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry* (London, 1810), viii–ix.
70. George Ellis, preface to *Specimens of the Early English Poets* (London, 1790), i–ii.
71. Robert Southey, preface to *Specimens of the Later English Poets* (London, 1807), 1: iv–v.
72. Reill, *Vitalizing Nature*, 6, 49.
73. Uncataloged object, Sloane Herbarium Collection, Natural History Museum, London. Viewed July 2013.