

« Botanique » par J. Young

John Lidwell Durnin

Among the contributors to the *Encyclopédie Nouvelle*, J. Young (or J. Jung) was particularly prolific, authoring over 90 entries on a range of botanical and agricultural subjects, aimed at providing useful guidance and practical assistance to the reader. As Young's entry on botany shows, however, these articles provided a space in which Young could take up some of the most contested issues within the agricultural and botanical sciences of the time. Within the lengthy historical and philosophical discussions included in his introduction of botany, Young advances an argument against the followers of Linnaeus and argues passionately for the superiority of the approaches adopted by Alphonse de Candolle and John Lindley in England. By attending to the similar histories Young provides for topics like 'agriculture' and 'culture' (cultivation), it becomes apparent that Young attaches great importance to grounding these sciences in the pre-historic practices and ambitions of mankind. Over these entries, an understanding of science emerges that draws upon the intimate relationship of mankind to the natural world while also insisting that contemporary practitioners (farmers, gardeners, and amateurs) must involve themselves within the emerging scientific societies and institutions if genuine progress in these sciences is to be achieved.