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### **The language and poetry of flowers**

**London, 1877**

The Flower.

**urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-33126**



THE FLOWER.

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clear,  
Are Thy returns ! e'en as the flowers in spring—  
To which, besides their own demean,  
The late-past frosts tributes of Pleasure bring—  
Grief melts away  
Like snow in May,  
As if there was no such cold thing.



Who would have thought my shrivell'd heart  
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone  
Quite underground ; as flow'rs depart  
To see their mother-root when they have blown,  
Where they together,  
All the hard weather  
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are Thy wonders, Lord of power ;  
Killing and quick'ning, bringing down to hell  
And up to heaven in an hour :  
Making a chiming of a passing-bell.  
We say amiss  
This or that is,—  
Thy Word is all, if we could spell.

O that I once past changing were,  
Fast in Thy paradise, where no flower can wither !  
Many a spring I shoot up fair,  
Offering at heav'n, growing and groaning thither ;  
Nor doth my flower  
Want a spring shower,  
My sins and I joining together.

These are Thy wonders, Lord of Love,  
To make us see we are but flowers that glide ;  
Which when we once can find and prove  
Thou hast a garden for us where to bide  
Who would be more,  
Swelling through store,  
Forfeit their paradise by their pride.

*G. Herbert.*

