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

**London, 1877**

The Lilies of the Field.

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Whole ages have fled, and their works decay'd,  
 And nations scatter'd been ;  
 But the stout old Ivy shall never fade  
 From its hale and hearty green.  
 The brave old plant in its lonely days  
 Shall fatten upon the past ;  
 For the stateliest building man can raise  
 Is the Ivy's food at last.  
 Creeping where no life is seen,  
 A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

*Dickens.*

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THE JESSAMINE.

THE Jessamine, with which the queen of flowers,  
 To charm her god, adorns his favourite bowers ;  
 Which brides, by the plain hand of neatness drest,  
 Unenvied rival, wear upon their breast ;  
 Sweet as the incense of the morn, and chaste  
 As the pure zone which circle's Dian's waist.

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THE LILIES OF THE FIELD.

FLOWERS ! when the Saviour's calm benignant eye  
 Fell on your gentle beauty ; when from you  
 That heavenly lesson for all hearts He drew,  
 Eternal, universal, as the sky ;  
 Then, in the bosom of your purity,  
 A voice He set as in a temple-shrine,  
 That life's quick travellers ne'er might pass you by  
 Unwarned of that sweet oracle divine.  
 And though too oft its low, celestial sound,  
 By the harsh notes of work-day care is drowned,

And the loud steps of vain, unlistening haste ;  
 Yet the great ocean hath no tone of power  
 Mightier to reach the soul in thought's hushed hour,  
 Than yours, meek lilies,—chosen thus and graced.

*Hemans.*

THE LILY.

ABOVE his head  
 Four lily stalks did their white honours  
 wed,  
 To make a coronal, and round him grew  
 All tendrils green, of every bloom and  
 hue.  
 Together intertwined and trammell'd  
 fresh :  
 The vine of glossy sprout—the ivy mesh,  
 Shading its Ethiop berries—and wood-  
 bine,  
 Of velvet leaves and bugle blooms  
 divine—  
 Convolvulus in streaked vases blush—  
 The creeper mellowing for an autumn  
 flush—  
 And Virgin's Bower trailing airily,  
 With others of the sisterhood.



*Keats.*

