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The language and poetry of flowers

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Beautiful Lily.

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BEAUTIFUL LILY.

BEAUTIFUL lily, dwelling by still rivers,
Or solitary mere,
Or where the sluggish meadow-brook delivers
Its waters to the weir.

Thou laughest at the mill, the whirr and worry
Of spindle and of loom,
And the great wheel that toils amid the hurry
And rushing of the flume.

Born to the purple, born to joy and pleasance,
Thou dost not toil nor spin,
But makest glad and radiant with thy presence
The meadow and the lin.

The wind blows, and uplifts thy drooping banner,
And round thee throng and run
The rushes, the green yeomen of thy manor,
The outlaws of the sun.

The burnished dragon-fly is thine attendant,
And tilts against the field,
And down the listed sunbeam rides resplendent
With steel-blue mail and shield.

Thou art the Iris, fair among the fairest,
Who, armed with golden rod
And winged with the celestial azure, bearest
The message of some God.

Thou art the Muse, who far from crowded cities
Hauntest the sylvan streams,
Playing on pipes of reed the artless ditties
That come to us as dreams.

O Flower-de-luce, bloom on, and let the river
 Linger to kiss thy feet ;—
 O flower of song, bloom on, and make for ever
 The world more fair and sweet.

Longfellow.

THE LINDEN TREE.

THERE'S a song for thee—of the Linden Tree !
 A song of the silken lime !
 There is no other tree so pleaseth me,
 No other so fit for rhyme.

When I was a boy, it was all my joy
 To rest in its scented shade,
 When the sun was high, and the river nigh
 A musical murmur made :

When, floating along like a winged song,
 The traveller-bee would stop,
 And choose for his bower the lime-tree flower,
 And drink—to the last sweet drop.

When the evening star stole forth, afar,
 And the gnats flew round and round,
 I sought for a rhyme, beneath the lime,
 Or dreamed on the grassy ground.

Ah !—years have fled ; and the Linden, dead,
 Is a brand on the cottier's floor ;
 And the river creeps through its slimy deeps,
 And youth—is a thought of yore !

Yet—they live again, in the dreamer's brain :
 As deeds of love and wrong,
 Which pass with a sigh, and seem to die,
 Survive in the poet's song.

Barry Cornwall.