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The language and poetry of flowers

London, 1877

The Thistle. - Duty.

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

THE THISTLE.

WHO gave the Thistle's feather'd seed its plumes,
 That, wing-like, waft it on each gentle breeze
 To sterile yet to it congenial soils,
 Investing them with purple beauty, rife
 With fragrant treasures for the wild bee's store?

Merritt.

THISTLES IN THE WASTE.

HERE thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
 And to the ragged infant threaten war ;
 Here poppies, nodding, mock the hopes of toil ;
 Here the tall bugloss paints the sterile soil ;
 Hardy and high above the slender sheaf
 The shining mallow waves her silky leaf ;
 O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade ;
 And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade.

Crabbe.

THE THISTLE.—DUTY.

DUTY, like a strict preceptor,
 Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown ;
 Choose her Thistle for thy sceptre,
 While youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it,—if thou shrink and tremble,
 Fairest damsel of the green,
 Thou wilt lack the only symbol
 That proclaims a genuine queen ;

And insures those palms of honour
 Which selected spirits wear,



Bending low before the Donor,
 Lord of heaven's unchanging year !
Wordsworth.

THE THORN.

THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,
 In truth, you 'd find it hard to say
 How it could ever have been young,
 It looks so old and grey.
 Not higher than a two years' child,
 It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;
 No leaves it has, no prickly points ;
 It is a mass of knotted joints,
 A wretched thing forlorn.
 It stands erect, and like a stone
 With lichens is it overgrown.