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The language and poetry of flowers

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Poetry of Flowers.

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POETRY OF FLOWERS.

POETRY OF FLOWERS

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THOUGHTS ON THE
POETRY OF FLOWERS;

The Months and their Floral Gifts.

—♦♦—
A many-tinted garland will we twine
Of trumpet-flowers, and bugle blooms divine,
And cups and chalices ; all shapes that are
Most chastely beautiful, and rich, and fair ;
With crisp fresh petals, like hyperian curls
Besprent with dewdrops bright as orient pearls.

IF, as Keats says—and who shall doubt it?—"a thing of beauty is a joy for ever," then, most assuredly, must

"Queen lilies, and the painted populace
That dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives,"

be sources of great and abiding, as they are of pure and innocent, enjoyment to the contemplative mind. Frail and perishable as they are, yet do they typify and foreshadow things which are imperishable, and give to those who look upon them aright, a foretaste, as it were, of a better state of existence. They speak a language, eloquent though mute, to the outward sense, and tell of steadfast *faith*, and *hope*, and patient *submission*, and never-dying *love*, and *praise*, and *adoration*, and of all feelings, emotions, and passions, which are holiest and most sublime. But this is a branch of our subject on which volumes might be written—volumes which Horace Smith has compressed into his beautiful "Hymn to the Flowers"—that pure and perfect chrysolite of poetry, of which we can only quote a couple of verses :—

"Your voiceless lips, O flowers, are living preachers ;
Each cup a pulpit, every leaf a book,
Supplying to the fancy numerous teachers
From loneliest nook.

“Floral apostles ! that in dewy splendour
Weep without woe and blush without a crime,
Oh ! may I deeply learn, and ne'er surrender
Your lore sublime !”

Then there is another American poet, N. P. Willis, who describes

“Mild Sirius, touch'd with dewy violet,
Set like a flower upon the breast of eve,”

reminding us of Wordsworth's exquisite simile—

“A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye,
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.”

Listen, too, how Dr. Darwin addresses the stars—

“*Flowers of the sky!* ye, too, to time must yield,
Frail as your silken sisters of the field.”

And the German poet, Rampach, what says he?—

“The stars show fairly in the darksome night ;
They *gem* like flowers the carpet of the sky.”

And he is not the only one, by many, who have likened both stars and flowers to gems. The former have often been called the “jewellery of heaven,” and the old pastoral poet, William Browne, describes a bevy of maidens gathering flowers, as engaged

“In plucking off the *gems* from Tellus' hair.”

If Lord Byron might with truth exclaim—

“Ye stars, which are the poetry of heaven !”

so, with equal truth, might we say—

“Ye flowers, which are the poetry of earth !”

For what the stars are to the concave above us, such are the flowers to the earth beneath ; both are equally suggestive of pure and ennobling thoughts, and of lovely images and pleasant associations.

January, amid snow, sleet, and cold rain, yet brings some pledges of the opening year, to gladden the eye and warm the

heart of the poet, and to make him burst forth into song. Foremost among these is seen the Hellebore, or Christmas Rose, a medicinal herb, in whose virtues the Egyptian and Greek physicians of old believed ; though the moderns set small store by it. Darwin speaks of it thus :—

“Bright as the silvery plume or pearly shell,
The snow-white Rose, or Lily's virgin bell,
The fair *Helleborus* attractive shone,
Warm'd every sage, and every shepherd won.”

And Chambers, too, describes it as—

“Triumphant over winter's power,
And sweetly opening to the sight ;
'Midst chilling snows, with blossoms fair
Of pure and spotless white.”

Then, too, we may twine in our January wreath a slender branch or two of the Laurustinus, which is yet gay with its load of clustering blossoms, seeming, as Phillips tells us, to say, “I'll tarry with you till your friends return, and cheer the scene with my pale pink buds and pure white petals.”

Other flowers, that belong to the rough opening month of the year, are the sweet-scented Coltsfoot (*Tussilago fragrans*), the “Heliotrope of the gardens,” with its delicate lilac-tinted flowers, of which the poet sings—

“Tussilago, then 'tis sweet
To inhale thy soft perfume,
And thy lilac blooms to greet
'Mid surrounding gloom.”

And the hardy little yellow Aconite,—and the Rosemary, formerly considered an emblem of fidelity in lovers, and worn at weddings and funerals. And here we may notice Kirke White's ode commencing—

“Sweet scented flower, who art wont to bloom
On January's front severe,
And o'er the wintry season drear
To waft thy sweet perfume !
Come, thou shalt form my nosegay now,
And I will bind thee round my brow.”

A graceful ode it is, and a mournful, seeming in its melancholy strain to prefigure the early death of the gifted songster.

February, the dreary month of thaw, and hail, and deluged plains, has well been personified by Spenser as sitting

“In an old waggon, for he could not ride,
Drawn of two fishes, for the season fitting,
Which through the flood before did softly slide,
And swim away.”

But let us not be discouraged ; for ever and anon the clouds open, and glimpses of the blue sky are seen, and gleams of sunshine break out, and mild airs play around, on which are wafted the odour of the coming spring-flowers ; and here we have a whole group of blossoms of the

“Primrose, first-born child of Ver,
Merry spring-time’s harbinger.”

And, look ! some Violets, too,

“Like reflected stains
From cathedral panes.”

And here,

“Like pendent flakes of vegetating snow,”

as Mrs. Barbauld hath it, swing gracefully to the play of the rude winds, the pure white blossoms of the Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*), that old favourite of the poets, the *Pianterella* of the Italians—the *Schneegloekchen* (little Snow-bell of the Germans—the *Perce-neige* of the French—the Fair Maid of February of our ancestors—the emblem of purity—the flower whose botanical name, *Galanthus*, is derived from two Greek words which signify milk and flower. It is so touchingly, winningly beautiful, that all who look upon it must love it. Barry Cornwall describes it as—

“The frail Snowdrop,
Born of the breath of winter, and on his brow
Fix’d like a pale and solitary star.”

Thomson says—

“Fair-handed spring unbosoms every grace,
Throws out the Snowdrop and the Crocus first.”

With the Snowdrop the Crocus is here associated ; and rightly, for the two fair flowers, "those pretty orphans," the Crocuses and Snowdrops, those foundlings that belong neither to winter nor spring, show their modest faces scarcely an inch beyond the dark earth.

"Beside the garden path, the Crocus now
Puts forth his head to woo the genial breeze,
And finds the Snowdrop, hardier visitant,
Already basking in the solar ray."

March brings us the little pretty Daisy, worthily sung by the poets, from the time of old Chaucer downwards. The father of English poetry describes himself as going forth from his study to admire and rejoice in his favourite flower. For does he not say :—

"Of all the floures in the mede,
Then love I most those floures white and rede,
Such as men call Daisies in our town"?

And again :—

"And in special one called *eye* of the *daie*,
The Daisie—a flower white and rede,
And in French called *la Bel Margarete*—
A commendable floure and most in mind."

Nor shall we readily forget the tribute paid by Burns to the

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,"

that his ploughshare so ruthlessly overthrew. With the Italians, too, it is *Fiore di Primavera*—the springtide flower—suggestive and emblematical of all things fair, and fresh, and joyous. And next we have the flower sung by Horace Smith, and by many another poet—

"The coy Anemone, that ne'er uncloses
Her lips until they're blown on by the wind."

This was the wind-flower of the ancient Greeks, as its name indicates, being derived from *anemos*, wind. The French term this flower *l'Herbe au Vent*, and many of our own poets allude to it under this and similar titles, as Elliot, who exclaims—

"Courageous Wind-flower, loveliest of the frail!"

And, missing it from his daily walks, asks—

“Where is the Wind-flower with its modest cheek?”

Bidlake calls it the “child of the wind;” and Thomson, describing the indications of spring, speaks of Anemones

“On the soft wing of vernal breezes shed.”

Shakespeare speaks of the Daffodil

“That comes before the swallow dares, and takes
The winds of March with beauty.”

Milton makes it a funeral flower, and in his beautiful lament for Lycidas, says—

“And Daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.”

With Spenser it is a summer flower, for he speaks of

“The summer proude, with Daffodillies dight.”

But the favourite and emblematical flower is the Primrose.

“The Primrose, tenant of the glade,
Emblem of virtue in the shade,”

according to John Mayne, the *Primavera*, as it is called in the soft language of Italy—the true spring-tide flower—the *Primula* (from *primus*, first) of the Latin.

“Primroses, the spring may love them,
Summer knows but little of them,”

sings Wordsworth; and L. E. L. calls them

“Primroses, pale gems of spring,”—

that season when all things are so fresh and so fair, when the year is in its youthful prime, and the earth is so gladsome that

“A Primrose shower from her green lap she throws,”

as Mason assures us; while the Northamptonshire peasant sings—

“Oh, who can speak the joys of spring's young morn,
When wood and pasture open on his view,
When tender green buds blush upon the thorn,
And the first Primrose dips its leaves in dew?”

which reminds us of Herrick's exquisite little poem—

“To Primroses filled with morning dew ;

Nor can we by any means forget Shakespeare's

“Pale Primroses
That are unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength ;”

and again Shakespeare makes the shepherd, in “Cymbeline,”
say to the dead Fidele—

“Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, the pale Primrose.”

Now, too, we have the Mezereon, the *Daphne* of the woods,
which may be found alike in cold and temperate regions, and in
some so plentifully as to be used for brooms, as in certain islands
in the Levant, where it is called the Broom Plant ; this is, how-
ever, a silver-leaved variety, and is therefore not exactly like our

“Mezereon gay, with crimson-tinctured bush,”

that, as Evans says,

“Again revives coy Daphne's maiden blush.”

April and May bring us the Cowslip ; and the Cowslip has
always been a favourite flower of the poets.

“From calyx pale the freckled Cowslip's born,
Receive in jasper cups the fragrant dews of morn,”

it Charlotte Smith is to be believed ; and sure enough, there they
are, in bunches and clusters, those

“Bowling adorers of the gale,”

as Clare calls them, studding the bank, and even creeping out
into the open sunshine of the field beyond ; and, to use the
words of L. E. L.,

“Ringing, with golden bells, that fragrant peal
Which the bees love so.”

The *freckled* Cowslip !—this is the term rendered patent by
Shakespeare. Those little red spots which we observe towards

the bottom of the amber cup—what think ye they are? Let the delicate Ariel reply—

“Those be rubies, fairy favours;
In those freckles live their savours.”

Especially is it honoured by those of the Elizabethan era. Milton frequently alludes to it, and no pastoral poet of our own day but notices, like John Graham,—

“The golden Cowslip, who, with fairy bell,
Rings in the wild bee to his wonted thrift.”

And the Violet, too, what shall we say about that? We have enough transcribed, original and otherwise, to fill a goodly-sized volume about it. The Violet—

“Whose leaves,
Thick in their azure beauty fill the air
With most voluptuous breathings,”

according to L. E. L. Nor must we forget the beautiful Hawthorn.

The Rose is generally considered, par excellence, the flower of June—the summer flower—as she is almost universally acknowledged to be the queen of flowers. According to Millhouse—

“Oh! there’s a *wild* Rose in yon rugged dell,
Fragrant as that which blooms the garden’s pride;
And there’s a sympathy no tongue can tell
Breathed from the linnet chanting by its side.”

Another of those flowers to which an historical interest is attached, is “the Broom, the bonny Broom,” so celebrated in Scottish song. Listen to Burns :—

“Their groves of sweet Myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me is yon glen o’ lone breckan,
With the burn stealing down through the lang yellow Broom.”

Crabbe, that close observer of nature, has furnished us, in a few graphic and characteristic lines, with a description of several flowers, which we must certainly entwine in our June wreath.

“ 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.”

The fresh and lively green, the delicate perfume, and bracing airs of Spring, give place to the more luxuriant verdure and embowering shade, the brighter sunshine, and the softer gales of Summer ; and these, in turn, to the mellow tints, the yet more fervent heat, and luscious perfumes of Autumn ; which again fade, and die away, and merge into the universal deadness and desolation of winter, the sepulchre of the year.

With July the year is half over, of which we are reminded by the resplendent St. John's Wort—

“ *Hypericum*, all bloom, so thick a swarm
 Of flowers, like flies clothing her slender rods,
 That scarce a leaf appears,”

as Cowper tells us.

Now we have also the Harebell, declared to be beloved of the fairies, and most certainly beloved of the poets. Scott, in the “ Lady of the Lake,” says, alluding to this flower,—

“ A foot more light, a step more true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew ;
 E'en the slight Harebell raised its head,
 Elastic from her airy tread.”

Then there is the wild Thyme and the wild Marjoram, both possessing a fragrance peculiar to themselves, the one keeping close to the earth, and having blossoms of a purple hue, the other rising from one to two feet above it, with flowers of a chocolate colour, powdered, as it seems, with grey. In reference to the love of the bee for the blossoming Thyme, here is an extract from Claudian's poem of “ Proserpine :”—

“ Meanwhile, dispersed around, the roving maids
 Throng in each various path, as when a swarm

Of bees, led from their waxen citadel,
Built in some hollow oak, following their queen
O'er beds of Thyme, cluster with pleasing hum."

The French poet, Belleau, invites us to wander where

"Streak'd Pink, and Lily-cup, and Rose,
And Thyme, and Marjoram are spreading."

In August commences what Keats poetically terms "the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness," and before the month is over, in the more southern parts of Europe, the corn, which lately rustled to every passing breeze, and glorified the landscape with its rich golden hue, will be cut down, and stacked or gathered into the barn, for the sustenance of man. Now is the time which Tennyson describes, when he speaks of

"Youngest autumn in a bower
Grape-thicken'd from the light and blinded,
With many a drep-hued bell-like flower
Of fragrant trailers."

Tennyson, in his description of "youngest autumn," speaks of "fragrant trailers;" and one of these, the Clematis, is now in full flower, festooning the hedges in every direction. The poets have variously called it "Traveller's Joy," and "Virgin's Bower," and no description of a sylvan retreat, or a trysting-place for lovers, would be at all perfect without this elegant creeper. Look what a glorious bower Keats builds up for the moon-loved Endymion:—

"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 woodbine,
Of velvet leaves and bugle blooms divine—
Convolvulus in streakèd vases blush—
The creeper mellowing for an autumn flush—
And *Virgin's bower* trailing airily,
With others of the sisterhood."

Then there is the wild Mignonette, or Dyer's Weed, as it is popularly called, pushing up its spike of pale yellow flowers amid the nettles and long grasses of every hedgerow; and on the river's brink may be seen the tall Hemp Agrimony, with its flesh-coloured clusters of blossoms, close by where the Reed Mace, or Cat's Tail, gives its long streamer-like catkins and grey-green leaves to the wind. If you go to the marsh lands you will most likely find the Sea Southernwood putting forth its blossoms of a verdant tint; and the little glossy Sandworts, with their white flowers; and the Seaside Convolvulus, with its rose-coloured bells; and Thrift, or Sea Pink, giving a delicate flush to the face of the marsh; and the Horned Poppy, strewing its frail yellow petals upon every gale.

Who hath not seen, within her Saffron bed,

"The morning's goddess"?

says Drummond, alluding to the autumnal Crocus or Meadow Saffron, with its violet-tinged cups.

To September also belong the tall and handsome Golden Rod, and the little Cudweed, or everlasting flower. Well does Professor Henslow write, of the Everlasting Flower, or Immortelle:—"Some plants force us, as it were, to read their meaning. Who can look upon the Everlasting Flower without seeing in it a type of the immortal nature of our spirits? Its enduring property has occasioned its use as a token of remembrance by the friends of the departed."

Nature is glorious even in decay, and at no period of the year, perhaps, does she put on such rich attire, and assume such a magnificent appearance, as in October, when all things which are most bright and beautiful are fast fading and withering, and when the chilling influence of approaching winter is beginning to be felt and recognised on every hand. Professor Henslow says—"Name but the Ivy, and some beautiful remnant of the grandeur, taste, or piety of former days (over which Time, as he mars its fair proportions, gently throws a mantle of Ivy to supply a new grace),

"Will flash upon the inward eye,
Which is the bliss of solitude;"

and he compares the Ivy to *friendship*, as do also Phillips and many other writers.

The "fall of the leaf" is an expressive name given to the November season. During the last two months the leaves have been gradually changing from green to yellow, red, and russet-brown, and lately they have come wavering down at every breath of air, until now they strew the country walks and ways, giving occasion for the poetic moralist to say—

"Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground ;
Another race the following spring supplies,
They fall successive, and successive rise.
So generations in their course decay ;
So flourish these when those are past away."

Very graceful and beautiful are the Flowering Ferns. Of the five hundred British species of these plants, not more than about twenty can be called common, and the most common of all is the Brake, or Bracken, which grows most plentifully on stony or sandy land, and may be found on heaths and commons, as well as in woods and parks, where it forms an excellent covert for game and shelter for deer, whose bell-like cry is often heard issuing from amid the waving fronds, where, as the poet says,

"The wild buck bells from the ferny brake."

"December must be expressed with a horrid and fearful aspect, clad in an Irish rug, or coarse frieze girt upon him ; instead of a garland upon his head, three or four nightcaps, with a Turkish turban over them. His nose red, his mouth and beard clogged with icicles ; at his back a bunch of Holly, Ivy, or Mistletoe ; holding in furred mittens the sign of Capricornus."



Flowers and Poems.

FLOWERS of all hues are struggling into glow
Along the blooming fields; yet their sweet strife
Melts into one harmonious concord. Lo,
Where winds the lone path through the pastures green,
Broad tapestr'ing summer fields! *Schiller.*

THE ACONITE. (*Misanthropy.*)

THOU comest, early Aconite,
With blossoms fair, to deck the ground,
When few that in such things delight
May walk where thou art found;
Content to beautify the earth,
Though none thy modest charms may scan,
And die, as thou hast sprung to birth,
Unnoted by proud man. *H. G. Adams.*

THE FLOWERING ALMOND. (*Hope.*)

MARK well the Flowering Almonds in the wood ;
 If odorous blooms the beamy branches load,
 The glebe will answer to the sylvan reign ;
 Great heats will follow and large crops of grain.
 But if a wood of leaves o'ershade the tree,
 Such and so barren will the harvest be ;
 In vain the hind will vex the threshing-floor,
 For empty chaff and straw will be thy store.

Dryden's "Virgil."

THE AMARANTH. (*Immortality.*)

To the ground
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns inwove with Amarant and gold,—
 Immortal Amarant, a flower which once
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
 Began to bloom ; but soon for man's offence
 To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
 And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,
 And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream ;
 With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
 Bind their resplendent locks enwreathed with beams,
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off ; the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Empurpled with celestial roses, smiled.

Milton.

THE ANEMONE. (*Expectation.*)

THERE, thickly strewn in woodland bowers,
 Anemones their stars unfold ;

There spring the Sorrel's vernal flowers ;
 And, rich in vegetable gold,
 From calyx pale the freckled Cowslips born,
 Receive in jasper cups the fragrant dews of morn.

Charlotte Smith.



THE ARUN. (*Ardour.*)

THE shining berry, as the ruby bright,
 Might please the taste and tempt the
 eager sight ;
 Trust not this specious veil ; beneath
 its guise,
 In humid streams, a fatal poison lies.
 So vice allures with virtue's pleasing
 song,
 And charms her victim with a siren's
 tongue.

Rowden.

THE ASPHODEL AND AMARANTH.

(*Regret & Immortality.*)

Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
 Passed o'er the village as the morning broke ;
 The dawn was on their faces, and beneath,
 The sombre houses capped with plumes of smoke.

Their attitude and aspect were the same,
 Alike their features and their robes of white ;
 And one was crowned with amaranth, as with flame,
 And one with asphodels, like flakes of light.

I saw them pause on their celestial way ;
Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed,
" Beat not so loud, my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest ! "

And he who wore the crown of asphodels,
Descending, at my door began to knock,
And my soul sank within me, as in wells
The waters sink before an earthquake's shock.

I recognised the nameless agony,
The terror, and the tremor, and the pain,
That oft before had filled and haunted me,
And now returned with threefold strength again.

The door I opened to my heavenly guest,
And listened, for I thought I heard God's voice ;
And, knowing whatso'er He sent was best,
Dared neither to lament nor to rejoice.

Then with a smile, that filled the house with light,
" My errand is not Death, but Life," he said ;
And, ere I answered, passing out of sight,
On his celestial embassy he sped.

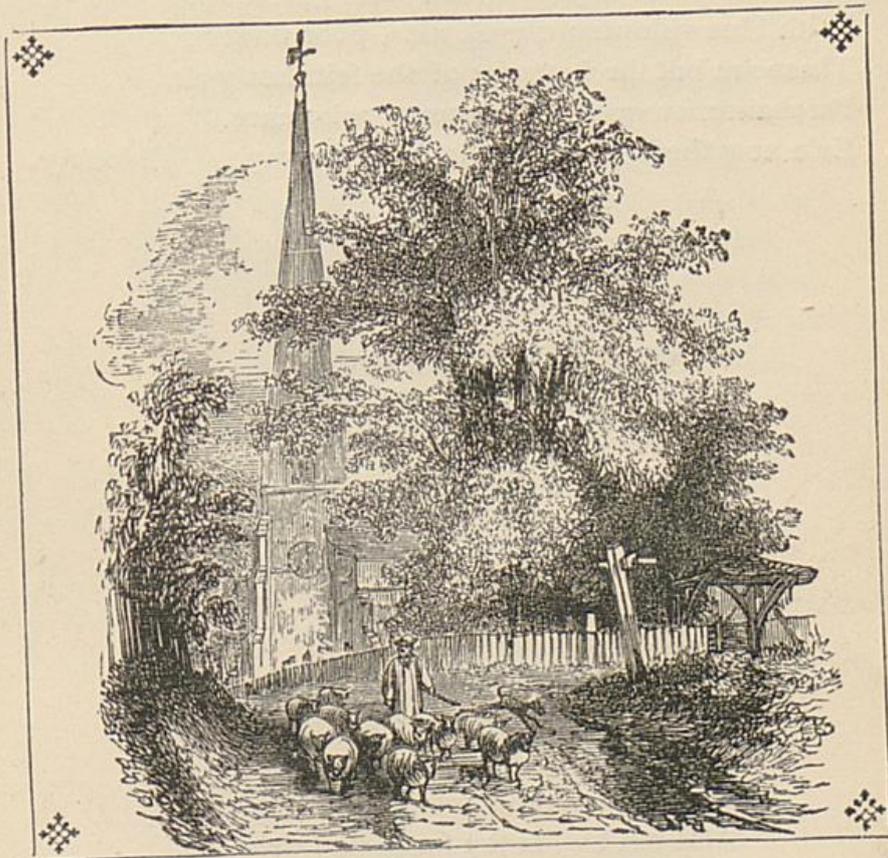
'Twas at thy door, O friend ! and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath
Pausing, descended, and with voice divine,
Whispered a word that had a sound like Death.

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features, fair and thin ;
And softly, from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in.

All is of God ! If He but wave His hand,
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud,
Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,
Lo ! He looks back from the departing cloud.

Angels of Life and Death alike are His ;
Without His leave they pass no threshold o'er ;
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,
Against His messengers to shut the door ?

Longfellow.



THE BARBERRY. (*Sharp temper.*)
THROUGH the green lanes of the country,
Where the tangled Barberry-bushes
Hang their tufts of crimson berries
Over stone walls grey with mosses.

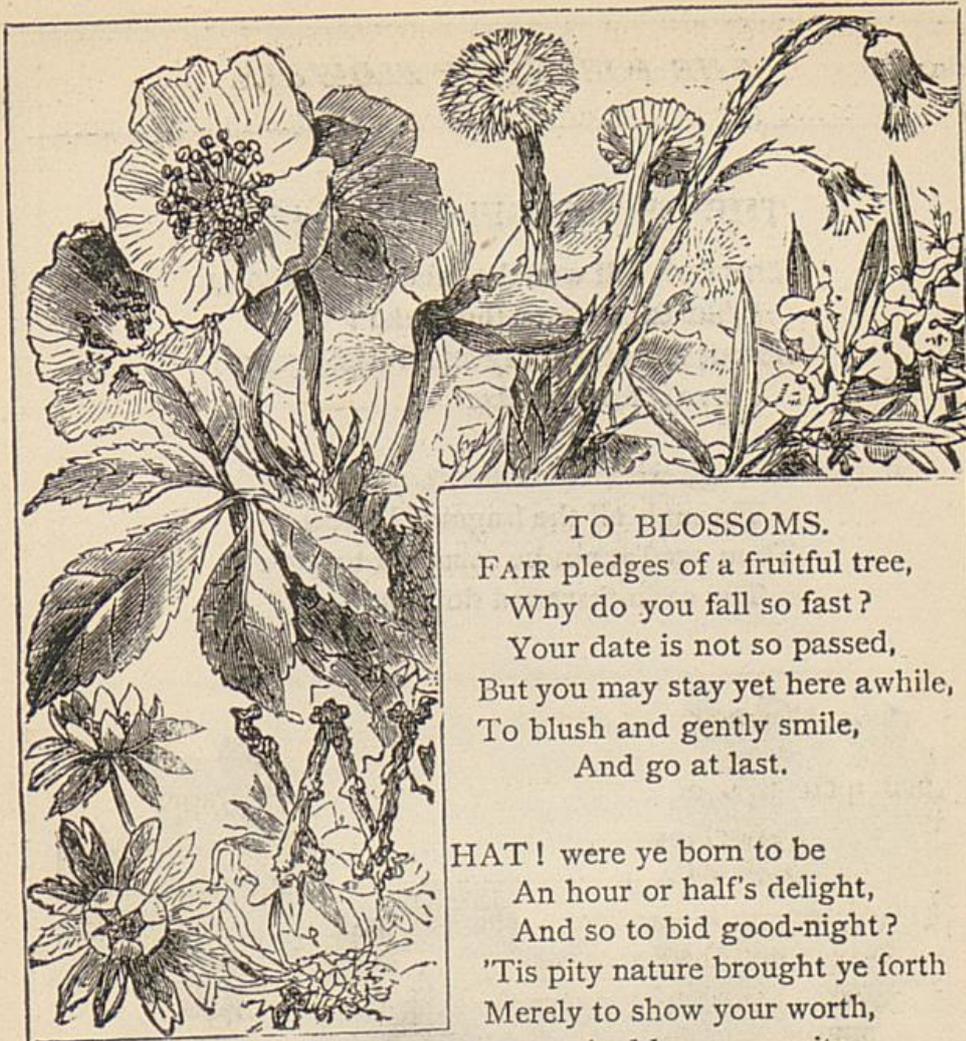
Longfellow.

AN EARLY BLOSSOM.

SWEET flower ! that, peeping from thy russet stem
 Unfoldest timidly (for in strange sort
 This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering month
 Hath borrowed Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon thee
 With blue voluptuous eye), alas, poor flower !
 These are but the flatteries of the faithless year.
 Perchance, escaped its unknown polar cave,
 Ev'n now the keen north-east is on its way. *Coleridge.*

SPRING BLOSSOMS.

MINDFUL of disaster past,
 And shrinking at the northern blast,
 The sleety storm returning still,
 The morning hoar, the evening chill,
 Reluctant comes the timid Spring :
 Scarce a bee, with airy ring,
 Murmurs the blossomed boughs around
 That clothe the garden's southern bound :
 Scarce the hardy primrose peeps
 From the dark dell's entangled steeps :
 O'er the field of waving broom
 Slowly shoots the golden bloom :
 And but by fits the furze-clad dale
 Tinctures the transitory gale.
 Scant along the ridgy land
 The beans their newborn ranks expand ;
 The fresh-turned soil, with tender blades,
 Thinly the sprouting barley shades ;
 Fringing the forest's devious edge
 Half-robed appears the hawthorn hedge ;
 Or to the distant eye displays,
 Weakly green, its budding sprays. *Warton.*



TO BLOSSOMS.

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do you fall so fast?
Your date is not so passed,
But you may stay yet here awhile,
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

HAT! were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Tis pity nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride,
Like you awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

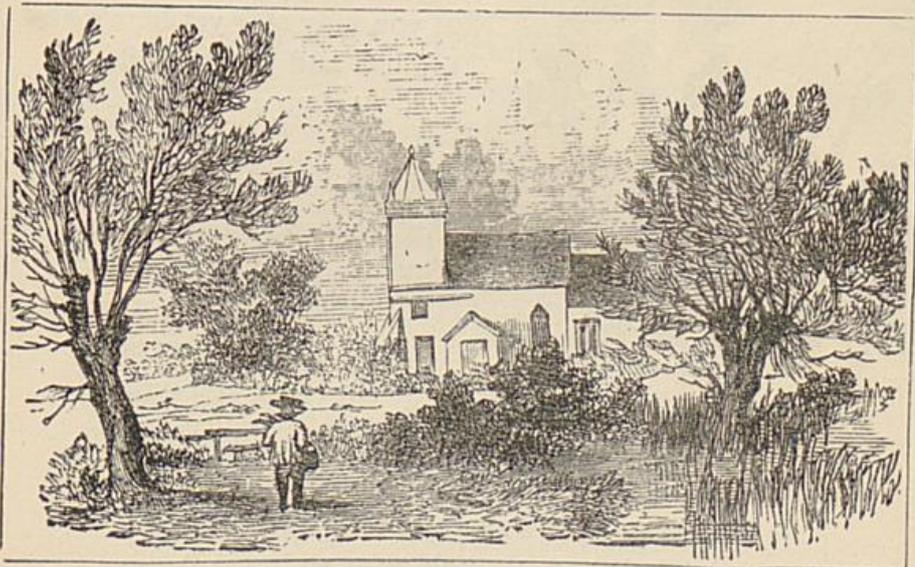
Herrick.



THE BRAMBLE-FLOWER. (*Envy.*)

THY fruit full well the school-boy knows,
Wild Bramble of the brake !
So put thou forth thy small white rose,
I love it for his sake.

Though woodbines flaunt, and roses glow
Through all the fragrant bowers,
Thou need'st not be ashamed to show
Thy satin-threaded flowers ;



For dull the eye, the heart is dull,
That cannot feel how fair,
Amid all beauty beautiful,
Thy tender blossoms are.

How delicate thy gauzy frill !
How rich thy branchy stem !
How soft thy voice when woods are still,
And thou sing'st hymns to them,

While silent showers are falling slow,
 And 'mid the general hush
 A sweet air lifts the little bough,
 Lone whispering through the bush !

The primrose to the grave is gone ;
 The hawthorn flower is dead ;
 The violet by the mossed grey stone
 Hath laid her weary head ;

But thou, wild Bramble, back dost bring,
 In all their beauteous power,
 The fresh green days of life's fair spring,
 And boyhood's blossom hour.

Scorned Bramble of the brake ! once more
 Thou bid'st me be a boy,
 To gad with thee the woodlands o'er,
 In freedom and in joy.

Ebenezer Elliot.

THE BROOM. (*Humility.*)

THEIR groves of sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
 Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume ;
 Far dearer to me is yon glen o' lone breckan,
 With the burn stealing down through the lang yellow
 Broom. *Burns.*

BUTTERCUPS AND DAISIES.

(*Ingratitude, Innocence.*)

BUTTERCUPS and Daisies,
 Oh ! the pretty flowers !
 Coming ere the spring-time,
 To tell of sunny hours.

While the trees are leafless,
While the fields are bare,
Buttercups and Daisies
Spring up everywhere.

Little hardy flowers,
Like to children poor,
Playing in their sturdy health
By their mother's door ;
Purple with the north wind,
Yet alert and bold,
Fearing not, and caring not,
Though they be a-cold.

What to them is weather?
What are stormy showers?
Buttercups and Daisies,
Are these human flowers !
He who gave them hardship,
And a life of care,
Gave them likewise hardy strength,
And patient hearts to bear.

Welcome, yellow Buttercups !
Welcome, Daisies white !
Ye are in my spirit
Visioned, a delight !
Coming ere the spring-time
Of sunny hours to tell ;—
Speaking to our hearts of Him
Who doeth all things well.

Mary Howitt.



THE COLTSFOOT.* (*Justice.*)

WHEN all other scents have fled,
 In the winter months so dreary,
 When all other flowers are dead,
 And the heart grows cold and weary,

Longing for the balmy hours
 Of the lagging, tardy spring—
 Longing for the leafy bowers,
 And bright creatures on the wing.

Tussilago, then 'tis sweet
 To inhale thy soft perfume,
 And thy lilac blooms to greet
 'Mid surrounding wintry gloom.

Ancn.

THE COMPASS FLOWER. (*Guidance.*)

LOOK at this delicate plant that lifts its head from the meadow,
 See how its leaves all point to the north, as true as the magnet ;
 It is the Compass-flower, that the finger of God has suspended
 Here on its fragile stalk, to direct the traveller's journey
 Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.
 Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,

* The sweet-scented Coltsfoot (*Tussilago fragrans*) is not an indigenous plant ; but we find it in almost every cottage garden, and as widely diffused amongst us as though it sprang spontaneously from the soil. It has been called the Heliotrope of the open gardens, and Phillips has attached to it the motto, "You shall have justice," because such was the exclamation of M. Villan of Grenoble, who found it at the foot of Mount Pilat, in his astonishment that it should not have been noticed and cultivated before.

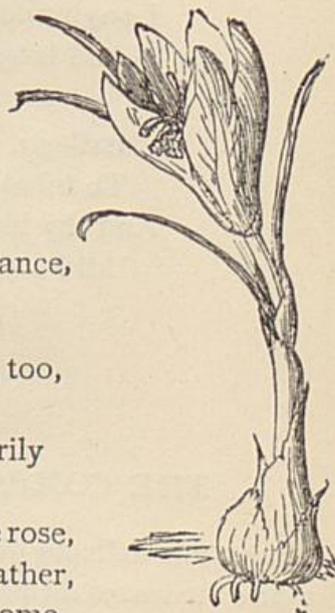
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,
 But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odour is deadly.
 Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter
 Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of
 nepenthe. *Longfellow.*

THE CROCUS. (*Abuse not.*)

AND presently the Crocus heard
 The greeting, and awoke,
 And donned with care her golden robe
 And emerald-coloured cloak ;
 And, springing from her russet shroud,
 Stepped forth to meet the sun,
 While broke the clouds with one bright glance,
 And his jocund race begun.

The Crocus brought her sisters, too,
 The purple, pied, and white,
 And the redbreast warbled merrily
 Above the flowerets bright.
 Oh, the nightingale may love the rose,
 And the lark the summer's heather,
 But the robin's constant flowers come,
 And brave the wintry weather.

Twamley.



THE DAFFODIL. (*Regard.*)

OH, Proserpine.
 For the flowers now that, frightened, thou lett'st fall
 From Dis's waggon ! Daffodils
 That come before the swallow dares, and take
 The winds of March with beauty !

Shakespeare.

TO DAFFODILS.

FAIR Daffodils we weep to see
You haste away so soon ;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attained his noon :
Stay, stay,
Until the hastening day
Has run
But to the even song ;
And having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you ;
We have as short a spring ;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or anything :
We die,
As your hours do ; and dry
Away
Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

R. Herrick.

THE DAISY. (*Innocence.*)

BRIGHT flower ! whose home is everywhere,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir
Of joy or sorrow—
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough !

Is it that man is soon deprest ?
 A thoughtless thing ! who, once unblest,
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason,
 And thou would'st teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind
 And every season ?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing :
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling. *Wordsworth.*

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY,

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL 1786.

WEE, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,*
 Thou's met me in an evil hour ;
 For I maun crush amang the stoure
 Thy slender stem.
 To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
 Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! It's no' thy neebor sweet,
 The bonnie lark, companion meet,
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet !

* Mr. Chambers says :—"The Mountain Daisy" was composed as the poet has related, at the plough. The field where he crushed the "Wee modest, crimson-tipped flower," lies next to that in which he turned up the nest of the mouse, and both are on the farm of Mossgiel, and still shown to anxious inquirers by the neighbouring peasantry.

Wi' spreckl'd breast,
When upward springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth ;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield,
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise ;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies !

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade !
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd !
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er !

THE DANDELION. (*Oracle.*)

GAY little Dandelion
Lights up the meads,
Swings on her slender foot,
Telleth her beads,
Lists to the robin's note
Poured from above :
Wise little Dandelion
Asks not for love.

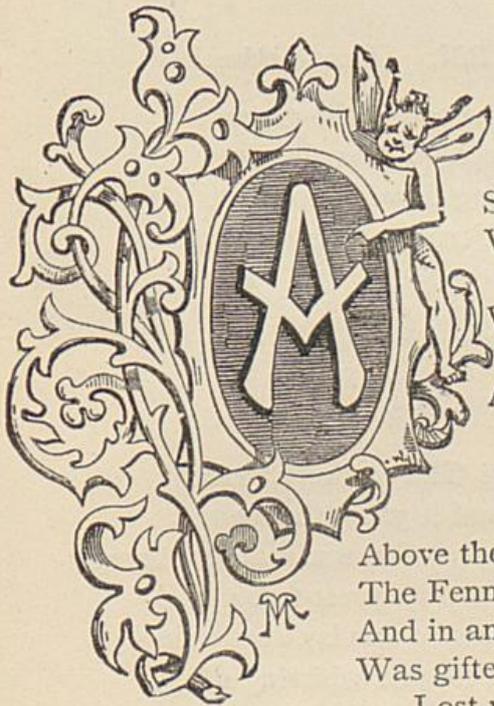
Cold lie the daisy banks
Clothed but in green,
Where, in the days agone,
Bright hues were seen.
Wild pinks are slumbering ;
Violets delay :
True little Dandelion
Greeteth the May.

Brave little Dandelion !
Fast falls the snow,
Bending the daffodil's
Haughty head low.
Under that fleecy tent,
Careless of cold,
Blithe little Dandelion
Counteth her gold.

Meek little Dandelion
Groweth more fair,
Till dies the amber dew
Out from her hair.
High rides the thirsty sun,
Fiercely and high ;
Faint little Dandelion
Closeth her eye.

Pale little Dandelion,
 In her white shroud,
 Heareth the angel-breeze,
 Call from the cloud !
 Tiny plumes fluttering
 Make no delay !
 Little winged Dandelion
 Soareth away.

Helen B. Bostwick.



FENNEL IN LIFE'S
 GOBLET. (*Worth.*)

As it mantling passes round,
 With Fennel is it wreathed and
 crowned,
 Whose seed and foliage sun-
 imbrowned
 Are in its waters steeped and
 drowned,
 And give a bitter taste.

Above the lowly plants it towers,
 The Fennel, with its yellow flowers,
 And in an earlier age than ours
 Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
 Lost vision to restore.

It gave new strength and fearless mood ;
 And gladiators, fierce and rude,
 Mingled it in their daily food ;
 And he who battled and subdued,
 A wreath of Fennel wore.

Then in Life's goblet freely press
 The leaves that give it bitterness,
 Nor prize the coloured waters less,
 For in thy darkness and distress
 New light and strength they give.

And he who has not learned to know
 How false its sparkling bubbles show,
 How bitter are the drops of woe
 With which its brim may overflow,
 He has not learned to live.

Longfellow.

THE LADY FERN. (*Fascination.*)

WHERE the copsewood is the greenest,
 Where the fountain glistens sheenest,
 Where the morning dew lies longest,
 There the Lady Fern grows strongest.

Scott.

THE FERN. (*Sincerity.*)

THE feathery Fern ! The feathery Fern !
 It groweth wild and it groweth free
 By the rippling brook and the whimpling burn,
 And the tall and stately forest-tree ;
 Where the merle and the mavis sweetly sing,
 And the pheasant flies on whirring wing,
 And the blue jay makes the woods to ring
 Beneath a verdurous canopy.

The feathery Fern ! the feathery Fern :
 An emerald sea, it waveth wide,
 Or seems to flash, and gleam, and burn,
 Like the scatter'd spray of a golden tide ;



THE HAUNT OF THE FERN.

On sunny slope, in leafy glade,
Amid the twilight depths of shade,
By intertwining branches made,
And trunks with lichens glorified.

The feathery Fern ! the feathery Fern !
Full oft with antler'd heads beset,
Whose nimble hoofs, the ground that spurn,
Dash through the fronds' with dew-drops wet,
Like giant ferns of an older day,
By megatheriums in their play,
Or creatures mightier than they,
For sport in the humid valleys met. *Anon.*

FAIR FLOWER ! FAIR FLOWER !

FAIR flower ! fair flower !
Though thou seem'st so proudly growing,
Though thou seem'st so sweetly blowing,
With all heaven's smiles upon thee,
The blight has fallen on thee,
Every hope of life o'erthrowing,
Fair flower ! fair flower !

Dear flower ! dear flower !
Vainly we our sighs breathe o'er thee,
No fond breath can e'er restore thee ;
Vainly our tears are falling,
Thou'rt past the dew's recalling ;
We shall live but to deplore thee,
Dear flower ! dear flower !

Poor flower ! poor flower !
No aid now to health can win thee ;
The fatal canker is within thee,
Turning thy young heart's gladness
To mourning and to madness ;
Soon will the cold tomb enshrine thee,
Poor flower ! poor flower !

Wan flower ! wan flower !
Oh, how sad to thee lying,
Meekly, calmly thus, though dying ;
Sweeter in thy decaying
Than all behind thee staying ;
But vain, alas, is now our sighing,
Lost flower ! lost flower !

W. T. Moncrief.





THE FRUIT-BEARER—SUMMER.

Now, welcome beautiful stranger,
Thou joy of Nature, hail!
With all thy wreaths and flowerets,
Art welcome in the vale!

Schiller.

THE BUD IS ON THE BOUGH.

"THE bud is on the bough,
 And the blossom on the tree ;"
 But the bud and the blossom
 Bring no joyousness to me.
 Wall'd up within the city's gloom,
 No pleasure can I know ;
 Eut like a caged linnet sing,
 To chase away my woe !

The bud will grow a blossom,
 The blossom will grow pale,
 And as they die the fruit will spring,
 But fall when o'er the vale
 Stern winter marches with his train
 In every wind that blows ;
 And I, unripe, with ripest fruit
 May in the dust repose.

But spring upon the seed will breathe,
 The seed become a tree ;
 And on the tree so beautiful
 Shall bud and blossom be :
 And shall I know a second spring ?
 Yes, brighter far than they ;
 When age puts on the blush of youth,
 And youth shall not decay !

Francis Bennoch.

PRECEPTS OF FLOWERS.

FLOWERS of the field, how meet ye seem
 Man's frailty to portray,
 Blooming so fair in morning's beam,
 Passing at eve away ;
 Teach this, and, oh ! though brief your reign,
 Sweet flowers, ye shall not live in vain.

Go, form a monitory wreath
For youth's unthinking brow ;
Go, and to busy mankind breathe
What most he fears to know ;
Go, strew the path where age doth tread,
And tell him of the silent dead.
But whilst to thoughtless ones and gay,
Ye breathe these truths severe,
To those who droop in pale decay,
Have ye no words of cheer?
Oh, yes! ye weave a double spell,
And death and life betoken well.
Go, then, where wrapped in fear and gloom,
Fond hearts and true are sighing,
And deck with emblematic bloom
The pillow of the dying ;
And softly speak, nor speak in vain,
Of the long sleep and broken chain ;
And say, that He who from the dust
Recalls the slumbering flower,
Will surely visit those who trust
His mercy and His power ;
Will mark where sleeps their peaceful clay,
And roll, ere long, the stone away.

Blackwood's Magazine.

FLOWERS—THEIR SANCTITY.

A FLOWER is not a flower alone,
A thousand sanctities invest it,
And as they form a radiant zone,
Around its simple beauty thrown,
Their magic tints become its own,
As if their spirit had possest it.

Allport.



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.



FLOWERS—THE GLADNESS OF NATURE.

Is this a time to be cloudy and sad,
 When our mother Nature laughs around,
 When even the deep blue heavens look glad,
 And gladness breathes from the blossoming ground?

There are notes of joy from the hang-bird and wren,
 And the gossip of swallows through all the sky ;
 The ground-squirrel gaily chirps by his den,
 And the wilding-bee hums merrily by.

The clouds are at play in the azure space,
 And their shadows at play on the bright green vale,
 And here they stretch to the frolic chase,
 And there they roll on the easy gale.

There's a dance of leaves in that aspen bower ;
 There's a titter of winds in that beechen tree ;
 There's a smile on the fruit, and a smile on the flower,
 And a laugh from the brook that runs to the sea.

And look at the broad-faced sun, how he smiles
 On the dewy earth that smiles in his ray,
 On the leaping waters and gay young isles,—
 Ay, look, and he'll smile thy gloom away !

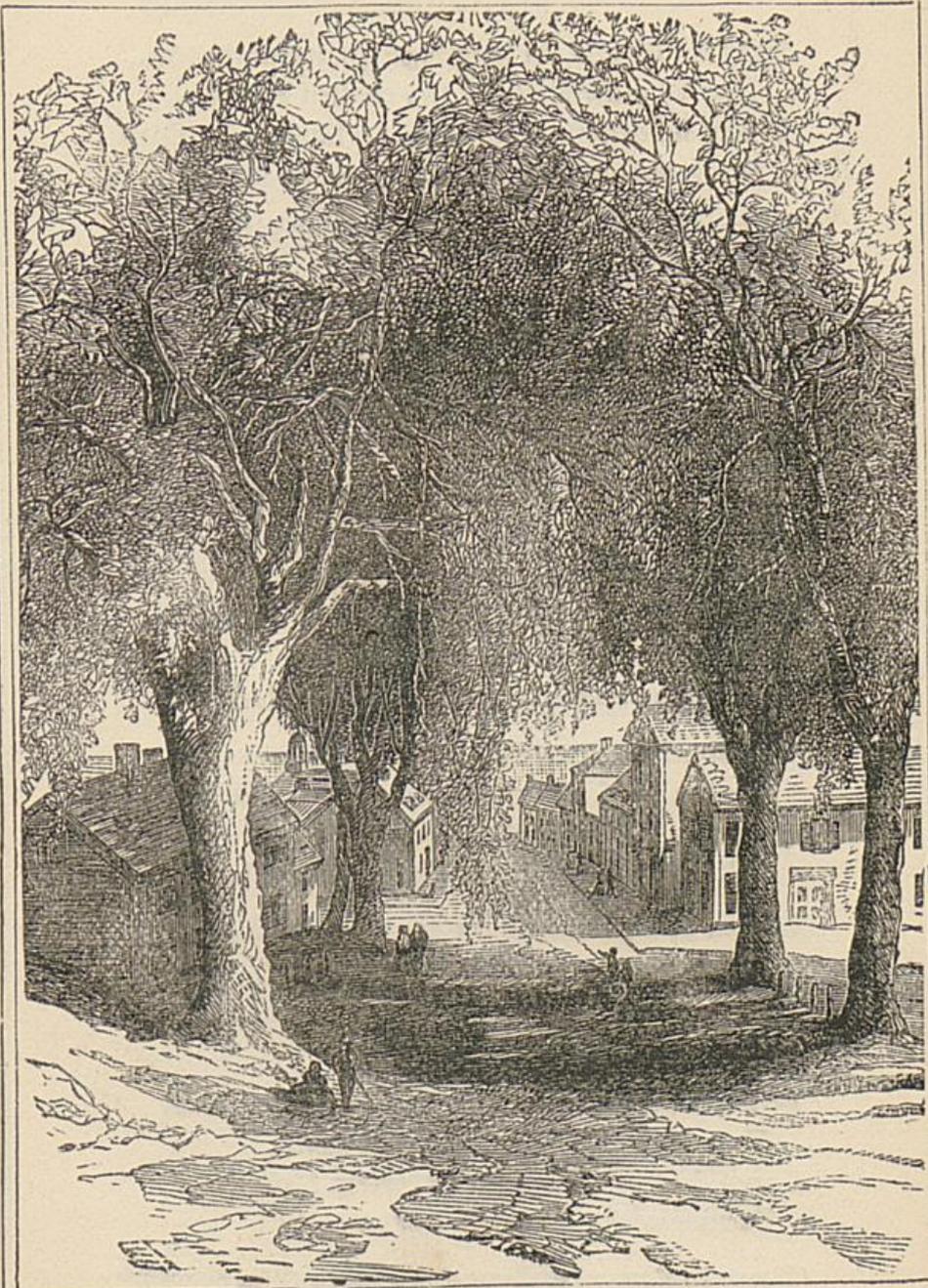
W. Cullen Bryant.

FLOWERS—PREACHERS.

YOUR voiceless lips, O flowers, are living preachers ;
 Each cup a pulpit, every leaf a book,
 Supplying to the fancy numerous teachers
 From loneliest nook.

Floral apostles ! that in dewy splendour
 Weep without woe and blush without a crime,
 Oh ! may I deeply learn, and ne'er surrender
 Your lore sublime !

Horace Smith.



THERE'S a dance of leaves in that aspen bower,
There's a titter of winds in that beechen tree.

Bryant.

FLOWERS.

SPAKE full well, in language quaint and olden,
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history,
As astrologers and seers of eld ;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars which they beheld.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in those stars above ;
But not less in the bright flowerets under us
Stands the revelation of His love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Written all over this great world of ours ;
Making evident our own creation,
In these stars of earth,—these golden flowers.

And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same, universal being,
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.

Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves, with soft and silver lining,
Buds that open only to decay !

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues,
Flaunting gaily in the golden light ;
Large desires with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes, blossoming at night !

These in flowers and men are more than seeming ;
Workings are they of the self-same powers,
Which the Poet, in no idle dreaming,
Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us spring is born ;
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn ;

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing,
And in Summer's green emblazoned field,
But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing
In the centre of his brazen shield ;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain-top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink ;

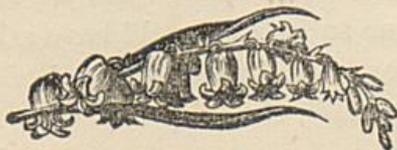
Not alone in her vast dome of glory,
Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,
On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone ;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers,
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient Games of Flowers ;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection
We behold their tender buds expand ;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

Longfellow.



THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.
Heap'd in the hollows of the grove, the withered leaves lie dead ;
They rustle to the eddyng gust, and to the rabbit's tread ;
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow, through all the gloomy day.
Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprang
and stood

In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood ?
Alas ! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.
The wind-flower and the violet, they perish'd long ago ;
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow ;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sunflower by the brook, in autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague
on men, [and glen.

And the brightness of their smile was gone from upland, glade,
And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days will
come,

To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home ;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees
are still,

And twinkle in the smoky light of the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he
bore,

And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more.
And then I think of one, who in her youthful beauty died,
The weak, fair blossom that grew up and faded by my side :—
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forest cast its leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief,
Yet not unmeet it was, that cherished friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

W. C. Bryant.



FLOWERS OF MAY.

THE month of May is here—the pleasant May !
Her merry laugh is ringing through the wood :
Her brow is decked with hawthorn blossoms gay ;
She speaketh softly, as a maiden should ;
Sunlight is round her, and a perfect flood
Of melody ; she goeth on her way
Rejoicingly, and bids each glistening bud
Of all its hidden charms to make display.
Come forth, oh, ye who are in cities pent !

Roam in the greenwood, wander by the stream ;
Health shall ye find, and careless merriment,
Where silver daisies in the meadows gleam.
Hark to the singing birds, the humming bee !
Come forth to join in nature's jubilee !

H. G. Adams.

HUMBLE FLOWERS.

NOR all-forgotten be those humbler flowers—
Daisies and Buttercups—the child's first love,
Which lent their magic to our guileless hours,
Ere cares were known.
Oh, joyous time! through verdant meads to rove,
With wild flowers strewn.

T. L. Merritt.

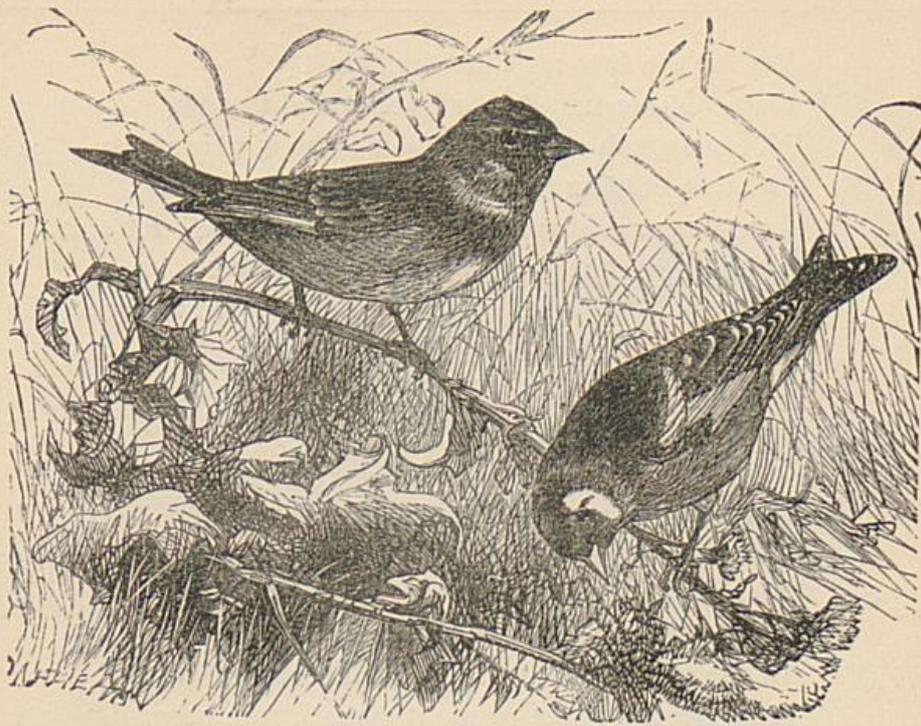
THE FORGET-ME-NOT. (*Remember me.*)

THE blue-eyed Forget-me-Not, beautiful flower,
Half woo'd and half stolen, I brought from her bower
By the bright river's bank, where she nestled so low,
That the water o'er stem and o'er leaflet might flow.

THE FURZE. (*Love enduring.*)

ON me such beauty summer pours,
That I am cover'd o'er with flowers ;
And when the frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay,
That you might look at me and say,
"This plant can never die."

Wordsworth.

THE GROUNSEL. (*Meeting.*)

I LOVE to see the little goldfinch pluck
 The Groundsel's feathered seed, and twit, and twit,
 And then, on bower of apple-blossoms perch'd,
 Trim his gay suit, and pay us with a song :
 I would not hold him prisoner for the world.

Hurdis.

THE HAWTHORN. (*Hope.*)

AMONGST the many buds proclaiming May,
 Decking the fields in holiday array,
 Striving who shall surpass in bravery,
 Mark the fair blooming of the Hawthorn tree,
 Who, finely clothèd in a robe of white,
 Feeds full the wanton eye with May's delight ;

Yet for the bravery that she is in
 Doth neither handle card nor wheel to spin,
 Nor changeth robes but twice ; she is never seen
 In other colours than in white or green ;
 Learn then content, young shepherd, from this tree,
 Whose greatest wealth is nature's livery.

W. Browne.

THE HEATH (*Erica*).

How many a vagrant wing light waves around
 The purple bells, Erica ! 'Tis from thee
 The hermit-birds, that love the desert, find
 Shelter and food. Nor these alone delight
 In the fresh heath. Thy gallant mountaineers,
 Auld Scotia, smile to see it spread, immense,
 O'er their unconquer'd hills ; and at the close
 Of the keen boreal day, the undaunted race,
 Contented, in the rude Erica sink
 To healing sleep.

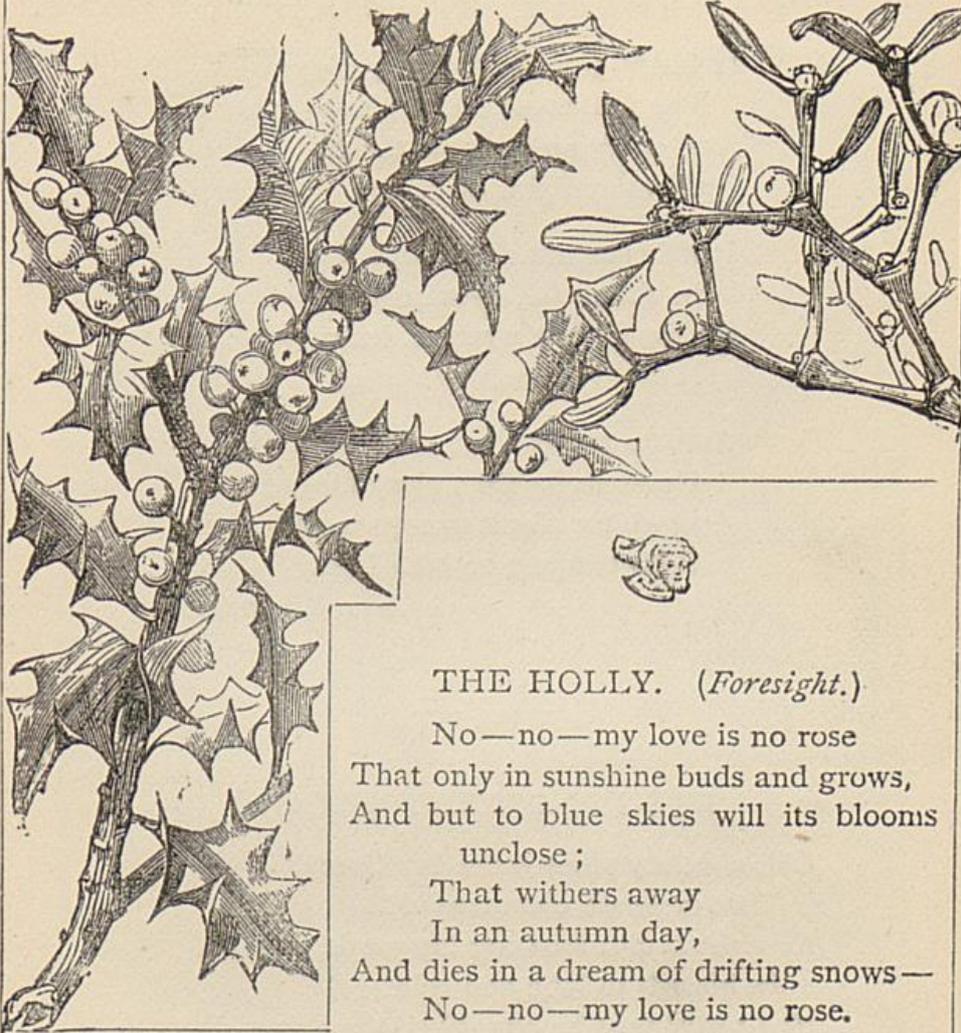
Carrington.

THE HELLEBORE. (*Scandal.*)

BRIGHT as the silvery plume or pearly shell,
 The snow-white rose, or lily's virgin bell,
 The fair *Helleborus* attractive shone,
 Warm'd every sage, and every shepherd won.

Darwin.



THE HOLLY. (*Foresight.*)

No—no—my love is no rose
 That only in sunshine buds and grows,
 And but to blue skies will its blooms
 unclose ;
 That withers away
 In an autumn day,
 And dies in a dream of drifting snows—
 No—no—my love is no rose.

No—no—my love is no rose—
 My love is the Holly that ever is green,
 Whether breezes are balmy or blasts are keen,
 The same that is still
 In days sullen and chill
 As when snowed with blossoms the orchards are seen—
 No—no—my love is no rose.

W. C. Bennett.

THE IVY. (*Friendship.*)

It is not gloomy, brightly play
The sunbeams on its glossy green ;
And softly on it sleeps the ray
Of moonlight, all serene.

It changes not as seasons flow,
In changeful, silent course along ;
Spring finds it verdant, leaves it so,
It outlives summer's song.

Autumn no wan or russet stain
Upon its fadeless glory flings ;
And winter o'er it sweeps in vain,
With tempest on his wings.

Mrs. Hemans.

THE IVY GREEN. (*Fidelity.*)

OH, a dainty plant is the Ivy Green,
That creepeth o'er ruins old !
Of right choice food are his meals, I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
The walls must be crumbled, the stones decay'd,
To pleasure his dainty whim ;
And the mould'ring dust that years have made
Is a merry meal for him.

Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

Fast he stealeth on, though he wears no wings,
And a staunch old heart has he ;
How closely he twineth, how tight he clings,
To his friend the huge oak-tree !



And slyly he traileth along the ground,
And his leaves he gently waves,
And he joyously twines and hugs around
The rich mould of dead men's graves.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

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.

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.

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.





THE GLORIES OF SKY AND EARTH.

THE hand of Him who built the skies,
Adorns His flowers with various dyes,
And clothes each beauteous plant.

Broad.

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.



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.—*Page 58.*

LOVE LIES BLEEDING.

You call it "Love Lies Bleeding,"—so you may,
Though the red flower, not prostrate, only droops,
As we have seen it here from day to day,
From month to month, life passing not away :
A flower how rich in sadness ! Even thus stoops
(Sentient by Grecian sculpture's marvellous power),
Thus leans, with hanging brow and body bent
Earthward in uncomplaining languishment,
The dying Gladiator. So, sad flower !
('Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led,
Though by a slender thread)
So drooped Adonis, bathed in sanguine dew
Of his death-wound, when he from innocent air
The gentlest breath of resignation drew ;
While Venus in a passion of despair
Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair,
Spangled with drops of that celestial shower.
She suffered, as immortals sometimes do ;
But pangs more lasting far *that* lover knew
Who first, weighed down by scorn, in some lone bower,
Did press this semblance of unpitied smart
Into the service of his constant heart,
His own dejection, downcast flower ! could share
With thine, and gave the mournful name which thou wilt
ever bear.

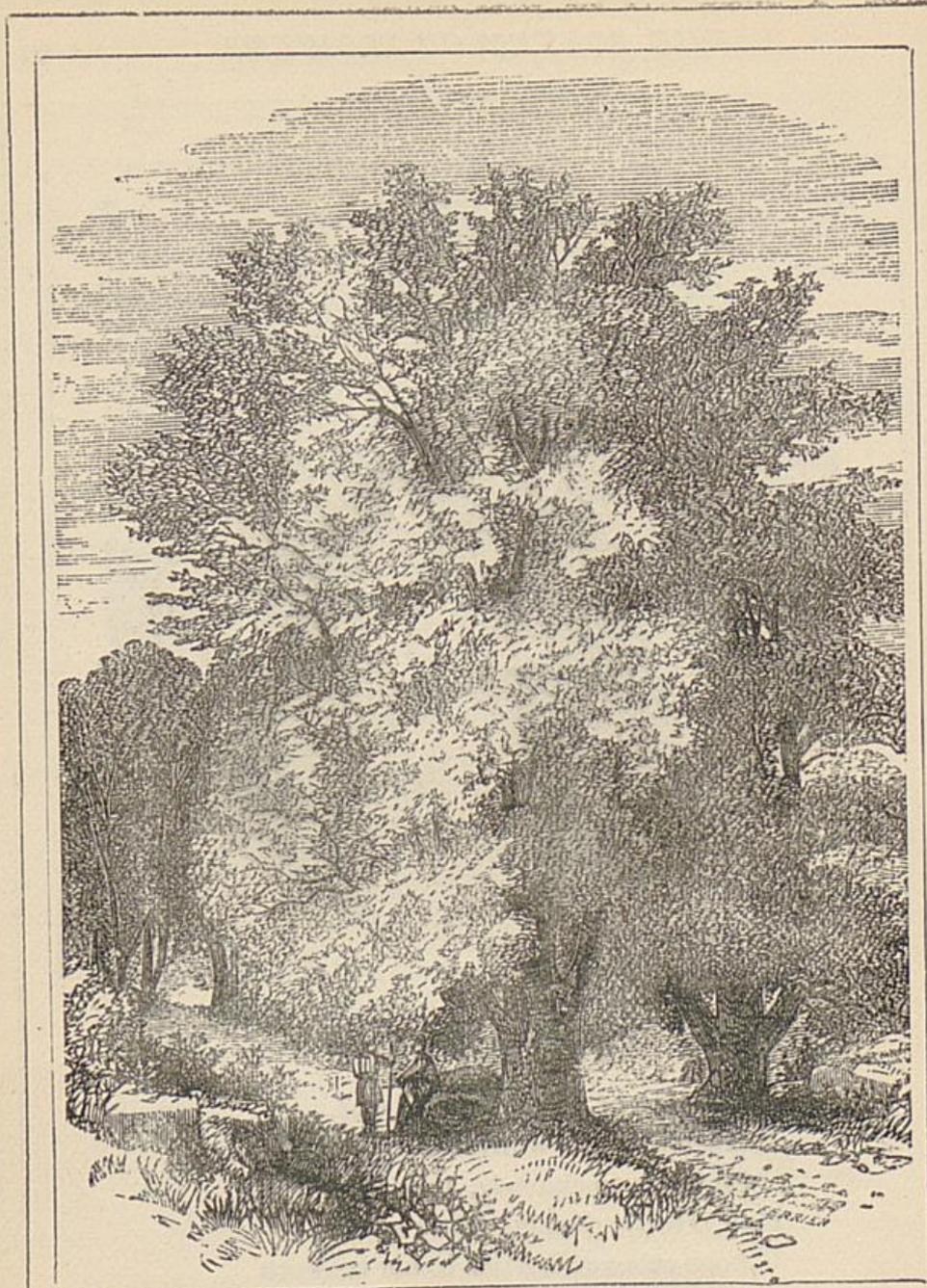
Wordsworth.





THE MISTLETOE.

HAIL, silvery, modest Mistletoe,
Wreath'd round winter's brow of snow,
 Clinging so chastely, tenderly !
Hail, Holly, darkly, richly green,
Whose crimson berries blush between
 Thy prickly foliage modestly :
Ye winter flowers bloom sweet and fair,
Though winter's garden else be bare—
Ye vernal glistening emblems, meet
To twine a Christmas coronet.



THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat.
Out of its head an oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
The time was March, a cheerful noon—

The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,
Breathed gently from the warm south-west :
When, in a voice sedate with age,
This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbour thus addressed :—

“ Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
Along this mountain's edge,
The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up ! and think, above your head
What trouble, surely, will be bred :
Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,
The splinters took another road—
I see them yonder—what a load
For such a Thing as you !

• • • • •
“ From me this friendly warning take ”—
The Broom began to doze,
And thus, to keep herself awake,
Did gently interpose :

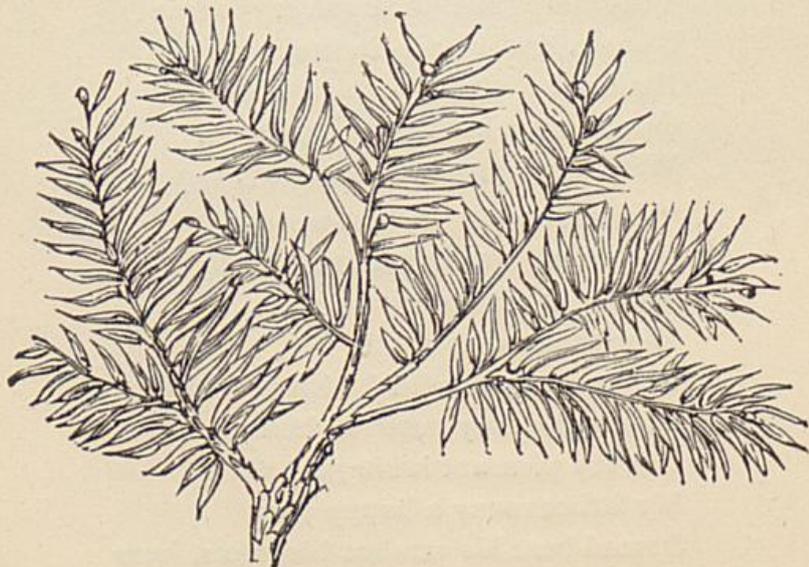
“ My thanks for your discourse are due ;
That more than what you say is true
I know, and I have known it long ;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, whether young or old,
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

“ Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small ;
And he is oft the wisest man
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam ?
This spot is my paternal home,
It is my pleasant heritage ;
My father many a happy year
Spread here his careless blossoms, here
Attained a good old age.

“ Even such as his may be my lot,
What cause have I to haunt
My heart with terrors? Am I not
In truth a favoured plant?
On me such bounty summer pours,
That I am covered o'er with flowers;
And, when the frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay
That you might look at me and say,
This plant can never die.”

One night, my Children! from the north
There came a furious blast;
At break of day I ventured forth,
And near the cliff I passed.
The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
And struck him with a mighty stroke,
And whirled, and whirled him far away;
And, in one hospitable cleft,
The little careless Broom was left
To live for many a day.

Wordsworth.





THE POPPY.

I WANDER'D forth one August morn,
When skylarks trilled their matin
tune,
Beside a field of waving corn,
With scarlet Poppies thickly
strewn ;
Where'er from out the fruitful
ground
The bending stalks most thickly
sprung,

There did the Poppies most abound,
And there their flaunting streamers hung :
I likened them, those Poppies red,
To *Pride*. My reason for't was this—
Pride e'er is gaily raimented,
And groweth most where plenty is.

H. G. Adams.



TO PRIMROSES
FILLED WITH MORNING DEW.

WHY do ye weep, sweet babes? Can tears
 Speak grief in you,
 Who were but born
 Just as the modest morn
 Teemed her refreshing dew?
 Alas! you have not known that shower
 That mars a flower,
 Nor felt the unkind
 Breath of a blasting wind;
 Nor are ye worn with years,
 Or warped as we,
 Who think it strange to see
 Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
 Speaking by tears before ye have a tongue.
Herrick.

THE PRIMROSE.—WISHING.

RING-TING! I wish I were a Primrose,
 A bright yellow Primrose, blowing in the spring!
 The stooping boughs above me,
 The wandering bee to love me,
 The fern and moss to creep across,
 And the Elm-tree for our king!

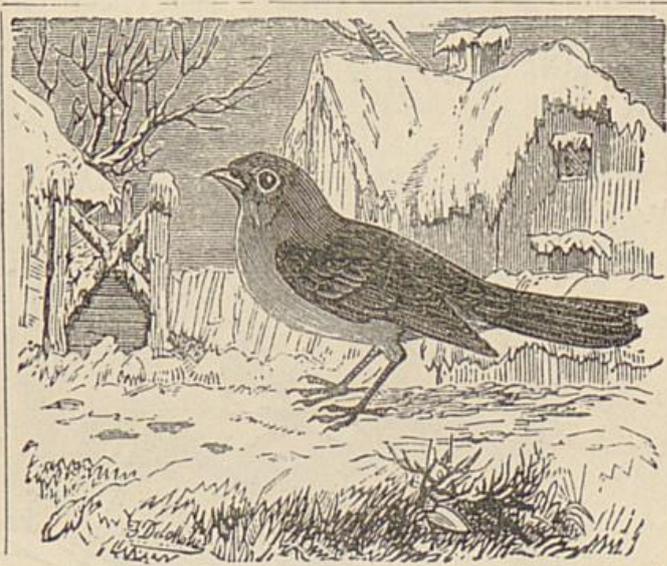
Nay—stay! I wish I were an Elm-tree,
 A great, lofty Elm-tree! with green leaves gay!
 The winds would set them dancing,
 The sun and moonshine glance in,
 The birds would house among the boughs,
 And sweetly sing.



“Ring-ting! I wish I were a Primrose,
A bright yellow Primrose, blowing in the spring!”

Page 66.

O—no ! I wish I were a Robin,
 A Robin or a little Wren, everywhere to go ;
 Through forest, field, or garden,
 And ask no leave or pardon,
 Till winter comes with icy thumbs
 To ruffle up our wing.



Well—tell ! Where should I fly to,
 Where go to sleep in the dark wood or dell ?
 Before a day was over,
 Home comes the rover,
 For mother's kiss—sweeter this
 Than any other thing.

W. Allingham.

OH, who can speak the joys of spring's young morn,
 When wood and pasture open on his view,
 When tender green buds blush upon the thorn,
 And the first Primrose dips its leaves in dew?

Bloomfield.



A SPRING NOSEGAY.

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

A ROCK there is whose homely front
The passing traveller slights ;
Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps,
Like stars, at various heights :
And one coy Primrose to that rock
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
What kingdoms overthrown,
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft

And marked it for my own ;
A lasting link in Nature's chain
From highest heaven let down !

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
Their fellowship renew ;
The stems are faithful to the root,
That worketh out of view ;
And to the rock the root adheres,
In every fibre true.

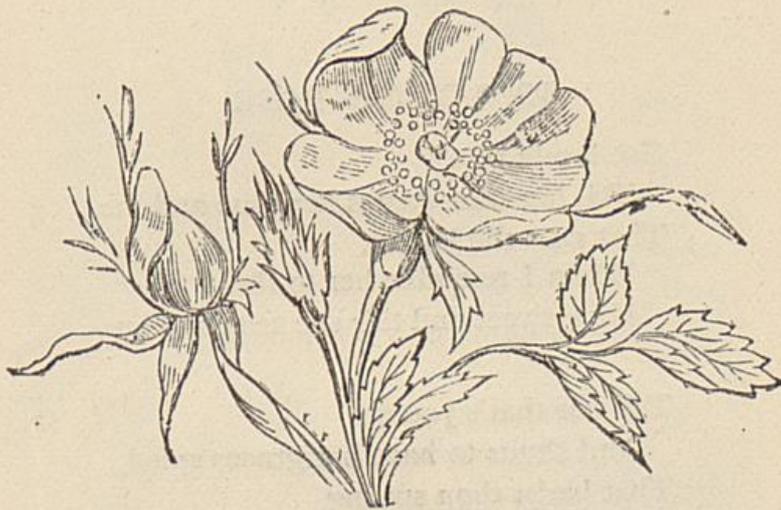
Close clings to earth the living rock,
Though threatening still to fall ;
The earth is constant to her sphere ;
And God upholds them all :
So blooms this lonely plant, nor dreads
Her annual funeral.

Wordsworth.

THE MOSS-ROSE.

THE angel of the flowers, one day,
Beneath a rose-tree sleeping lay ;
That spirit to whose charge 'tis given
To bathe young buds in dews of heaven.
Awaking from his light repose,
The angel whispered to the rose :
" O fondest object of my care,
Still fairest found, where all are fair ;
For the sweet shade thou giv'st to me,
Ask what thou wilt, 'tis granted thee !"
" Then," said the rose, with deepened glow,
" On me another grace bestow !"

The spirit paused in silent thought,—
What grace was there that flower had not?
'Twas but a moment—o'er the rose
A veil of moss the angel throws,
And, robed in nature's simplest weed,
Could there a flower that rose exceed?



GO, HAPPY ROSE.

Go, happy rose! and, interweave
With other flowers, bind my love.
Tell her, too, she must not be
Longer flowing, longer free,
That so oft has fetter'd me.

Say, if she's fretful, I have bands
Of pearl and gold to bind her hands;
Tell her, if she struggle still,
I have myrtle rods at will,
For to tame, though not to kill.

Take thou my blessing thus, and go,
And tell her this,—but do not so!
Lest a handsome anger fly
Like a lightning from her eye,
And burn thee up as well as I.

Herrick.

GO, LOVELY ROSE.

Go, lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee,—
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.



[Yet, though thou fade,
From thy dead leaves let fragrance rise ;
And teach the maid
That goodness Time's rude hand defies,—
That virtue lives when beauty dies.] *Waller.*
(*Last verse added by Kirke White.*)

THE ROSE.

How fair is the Rose ! what a beautiful flower,
The glory of April and May !
But the leaves are beginning to fade in an hour,
And they wither and die in a day.

Yet the Rose has one powerful virtue to boast,
Above all the flowers of the field ;
When its leaves all dead, and its fine colours lost,
Still how sweet a perfume it will yield !

So frail is the youth and the beauty of men,
Though they bloom and look gay like the Rose ;
But all our fond cares to preserve them is vain,
Time kills them as fast as he goes.

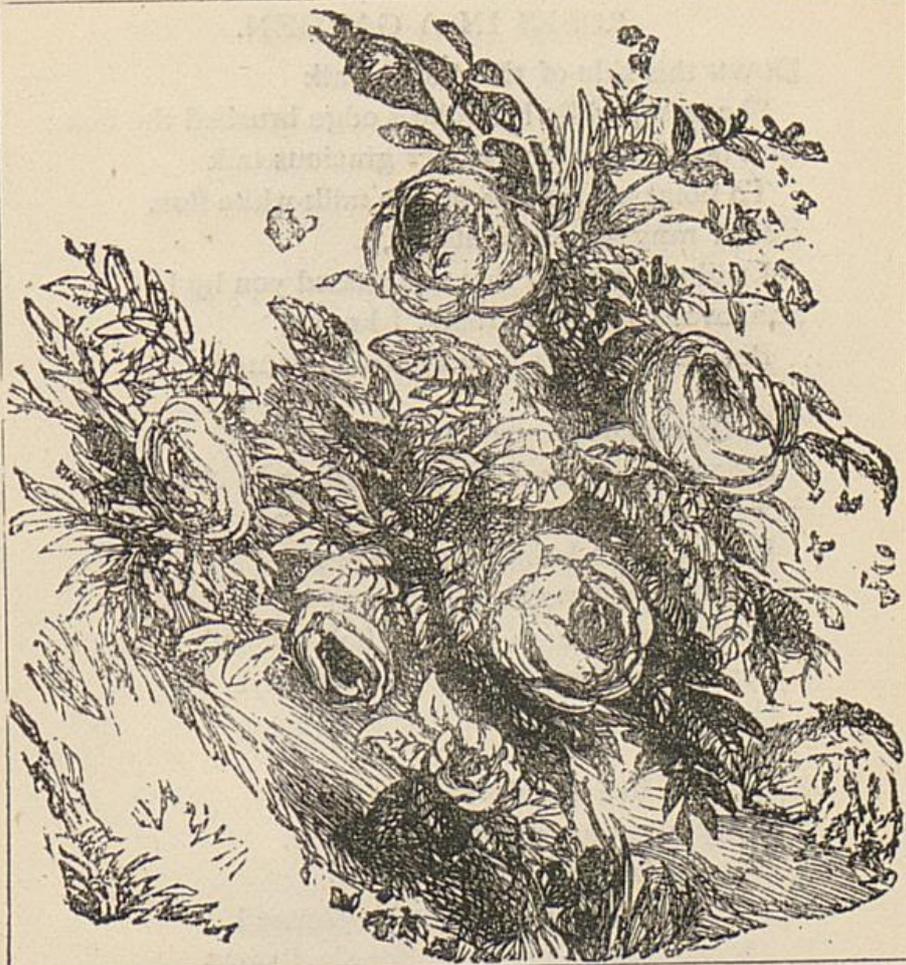
Then I'll not be proud of my youth nor my beauty,
Since both of them wither and fade ;
But gain a good name by well doing my duty ;
This will scent like a rose when I'm dead.

Watts.

THE ROSE.

THE rose had been washed, just washed in a shower,
Which Mary to Anna conveyed ;
The plentiful moisture encumbered the flower,
And weighed down its beautiful head.

The cup was all filled, and the leaves were all wet,
And it seemed, to a fanciful view,
To weep for the buds it had left with regret,
On the flourishing bush where it grew.



I hastily seized it, unfit as it was
For a nosegay, so dripping and drowned,
And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas !
I snapped it—it fell to the ground.
And such, I exclaimed, is the pitiless part
Some act by the delicate mind,
Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart
Already to sorrow resigned.
This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,
Might have bloomed with its owner a while ;
And the tear that is wiped, with a little address,
May be followed perhaps by a smile. *Cowper.*

ROSES IN A GARDEN.

DOWN this side of the gravel-walk

She went, while her robe's edge brushed the box :
And here she paused in her gracious talk

To point me a moth on the milk-white flox.
Roses, ranged in valiant row,

I will never think that she passed you by !
She loves you, noble roses, I know ;
But yonder, see where the rock-plants lie.

This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,
Stooped over, in doubt, as settling its claim ;
Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
Its soft meandering Spanish name.

What a name ! was it love or praise ?
Speech half-asleep, or song half-awake ?
I must learn Spanish, one of these days,
Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

Roses, if I live and do well,
I may bring her one of these days,
To fix you fast with as fine a spell,
Fit you each with his Spanish phrase !
But do not detain me now ; for she lingers
There, like sunshine over the ground,
And ever I see her soft white fingers
Searching after the bud she found.

Flower, you Spaniard, look that you grow not,
Stay as you are and be loved for ever !
Bud, if I kiss you 't is that you blow not,
Mind, the shut pink mouth opens never !
For while thus it pouts, her fingers wrestle,
Twinkling the audacious leaves between,
Till round they turn and down they nestle—
Is not the dear mark still to be seen ?



Where I found her not, beauties vanish ;
Whither I follow her, beauties flee ;
Is there no method to tell her in Spanish
June's twice June since she breathed it with me?
Come, bud, show me the least of her traces,
Treasure my lady's lightest foot-fall ;
Ah, you may flout and turn up your faces—
Roses, you are not so fair after all !

Robert Browning.

ROSEBUDS.

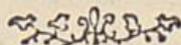
GATHER ye Rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying ;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer ;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry :
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

Herrick.



A ROSEBUD BY MY EARLY WALK.

A ROSEBUD by my early walk,
Adown a corn-enclosed bawk,
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk,
All on a dewy morning.

Ere twice the shades of dawn are fled,
In a' its crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head,
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush, her covert nest
A little linnet fondly prest,
The dew sat chilly on her breast
Sae early in the morning.

She soon shall see her tender brood,
The pride, the pleasure o' the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedew'd,
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jenny fair !
On trembling string, or vocal air,
Shall sweetly pay the tender care
That tends thy early morning.

So thou, sweet rosebud, young and gay,
Shalt beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parents' evening ray
That watch'd thy early morning.

Burns.

A RED, RED ROSE.

OH, my love's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June :
Oh, my love's like the melody
That's sweetly play'd in tune.
As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I ;
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
 And the rocks melt wi' the sun :
 I will love thee still, my dear,
 While the sands o' life shall run.
 And fare thee weel, my only love !
 And fare thee weel awhile !
 And I will come again, my love,
 Though it were ten thousand mile.

Burns.

ROSES IN THE BRIDAL GARLAND.

ROSES, their sharp spines being gone,
 Not royal in their smells alone,
 But in their hue ;
 Maiden pinks, of odour faint,
 Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint.
 And sweet thyme true ;

Primrose, first-born child of Ver,
 Merry spring-time's harbinger,
 With her bells dim ;
 Oxlips in their cradles growing,
 Marigolds on death-beds blowing,
 Lark-heels trim ;

All, dear Nature's children sweet,
 Lie 'fore bride and bridegroom's feet,
 Blessing their sense !
 Not an angel of the air,
 Bird melodious or bird fair,
 Be absent hence !

Beaumont and Fletcher.



ROSEMARY.

SWEET-SCENTED flower, who art wont to bloom
On January's front severe,
And o'er the wintry season drear
To waft thy sweet perfume !
Come, thou shalt form my nosegay now,
And I will bind thee round my brow ;

And as I twine the mournful wreath,
I'll weave a melancholy song,
And sweet the strain shall be, and long
The melody of death.



SNOWDROPS.

My Snowdrops, oh my Snowdrops !
How gaily, every spring,
They covered all our mossy banks
With many a fairy ring ;
How delicately beautiful
Their little blossoms were,
Like tiny spirits hovering
Upon the chilly air.

My Snowdrops, oh my Snowdrops !
I shall never, without pain,
See your little fragile blossoms
In the early spring again :

For my only one, my loved one,
A fragile thing like you,
Both came to me and left me
In the spring, as Snowdrops do.

Like the crimson light of sunset
Streaming through a wreath of snow,
So soft upon her pallid cheek
The hectic fever's glow.
As fading Snowdrops gently sink
Upon the cold earth's breast,
So gently sank my holy child
To her eternal rest.

My only one, my loved one !
I shall see her yet again,
When I too am transplanted
From this world of grief and pain.
Her Snowdrops, oh ! her Snowdrops,
Shall be ever dear to me ;
I will cherish them as emblems
Of her immortality.
"Dove on the Cross."

SOLITUDE OF THE FOREST.

HAIL, old patrician trees, so great and good !
Hail, ye plebeian under-wood !
Where the poetic birds rejoice,
And for their quiet nests and plenteous food
Pay with their grateful voice.



Hail, the poor Muses' richest manor-seat !
Ye country houses and retreat,
Which all the happy gods so love,
That for you oft they quit their bright and great
Metropolis above.

Here Nature does a house for me erect ;
Nature, the wisest architect,
Who those fond artists does despise
That can the fair and living trees neglect,
Yet the dead timber prize.

Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds, above me flying,
With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying ;
Nor be myself, too, mute.

A silver stream shall roll his waters near,
Gilt with the sunbeams here and there,
On whose enamelled bank I'll walk,
And see how prettily they smile, and hear
How prettily they talk.

Ah, wretched and too solitary he,
Who loves not his own company !
He'll feel the weight of 't many a day,
Unless he call in sin or vanity
To help to bear 't away.

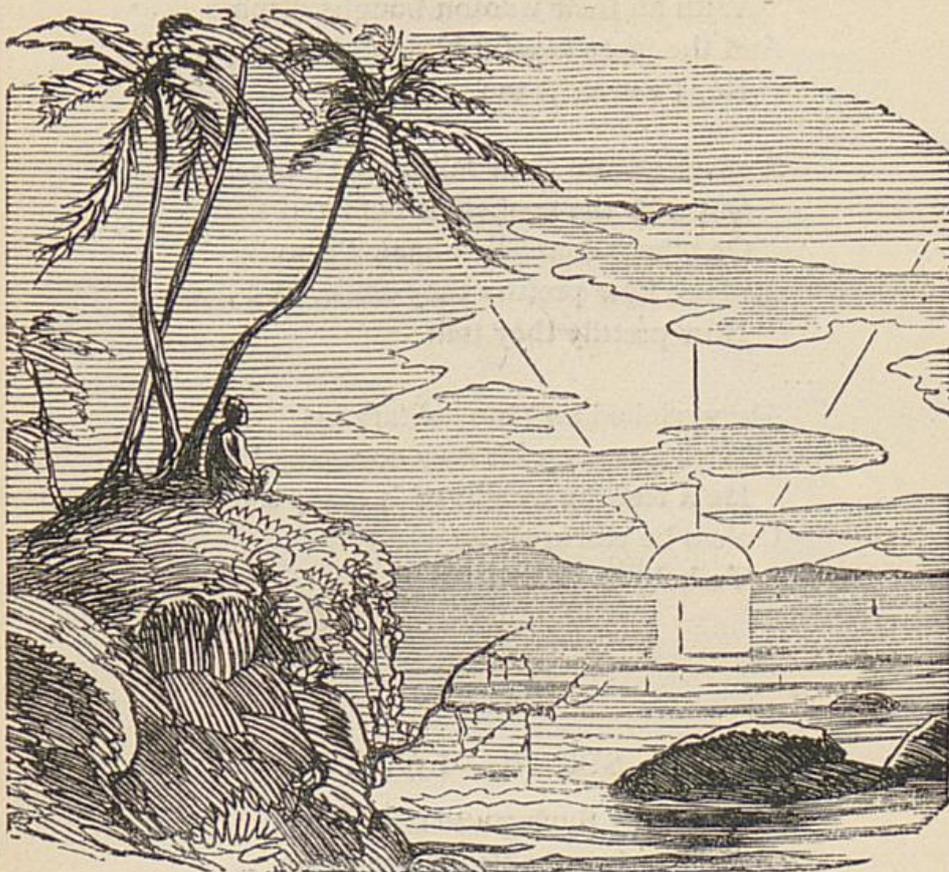
Cowley.

SPRING—LATE.

THE sleepy Spring was still in bed,
And to rise was slowly preparing,
When she heard the soft fall of the Zephyr's tread,
Who came to give her an airing.

She rose in haste, not dressed in blue,
But clad in her wintry mourning ;
Just stuck in her bosom a snowdrop or two
Her brow a faint smile adorning.

Then away over meadow, and garden, and wood,
Her light-winged courser bore her ;
But in her fair eyes the tear-drop stood,
To see the drear scene before her.



So long had the tyrant of northern birth
His iron reign extended,
The genial commerce of sky and earth
Had well-nigh been suspended.

The young birds had met on St. Valentine's feast,
All eager to get married ;
But the sullen saint refused to be priest ;—
For another red-day they tarried.

The crocus had put forth its feelers green,
But drew in its head in affright, oh ;
On hearing the peas, as soon as seen,
Had been all cut off in a night, oh.

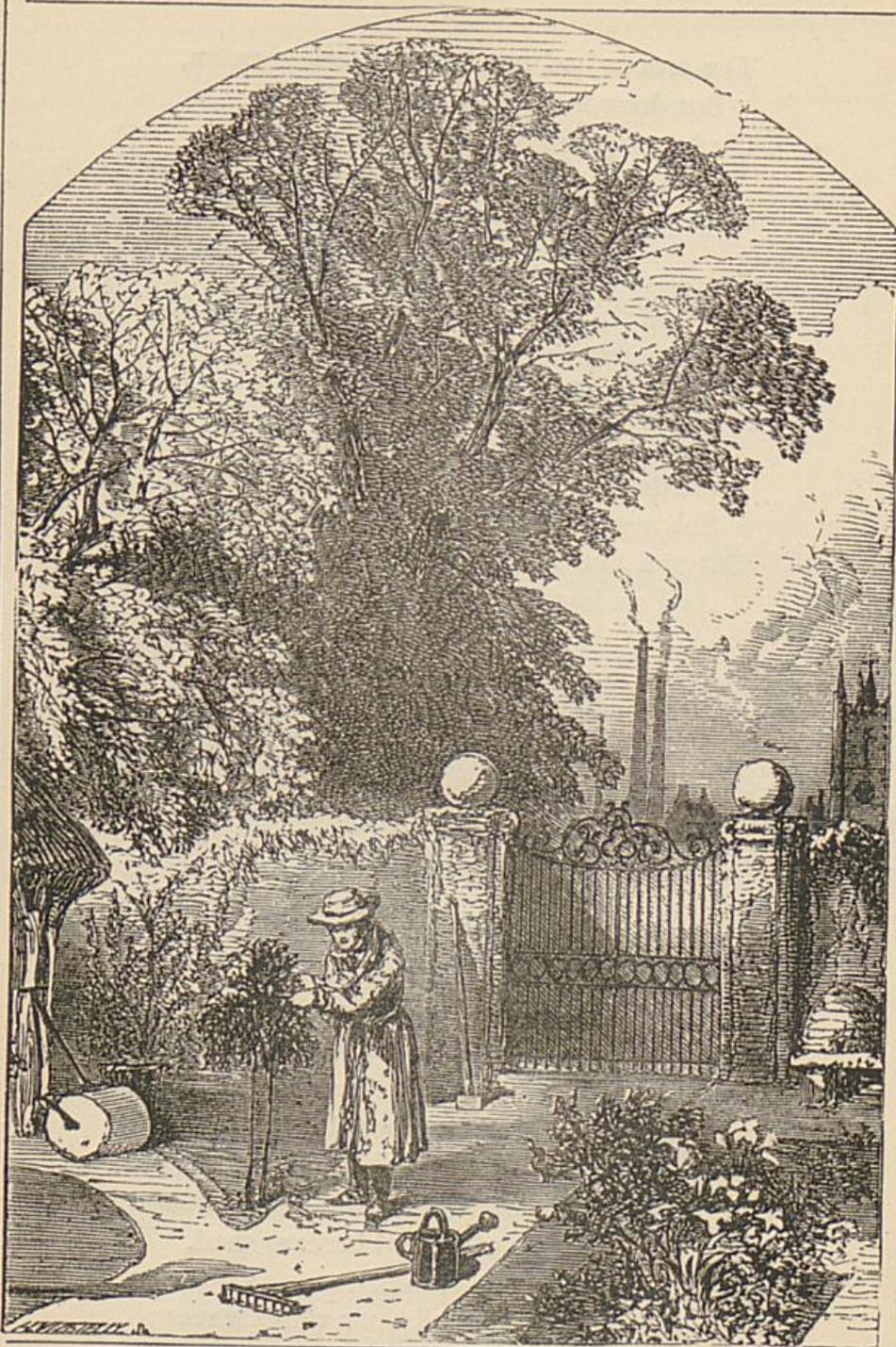
The lilac gay, that loves to be first,
Stood shivering still and pouting,
And many a bud was longing to burst,
But its orders as yet was doubting.

And the queen of the season, so ill did she feel,
She again took to bed in pure sorrow ;
But the Sun has been called in, her sickness to heal,
And we hope she'll be better to-morrow.

Conder.

SPRING.—THE GARDEN.

ALONG these blushing borders, bright with dew,
And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers,
Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace ;
Throws out the snowdrop and the crocus first ;
The daisy, primrose ; violet, darkly blue ;
And polyanthus, of unnumbered dyes ;
The yellow wall-flower, stained with iron brown,
And lavish stock, that scents the garden round ;
From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
Anemones ; auriculas enriched
With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves ;
And full ranunculas, of glowing red.
Then comes the tulip race, where beauty plays



Her idle freaks ; from family diffused
To family, as flies the father dust,

The varied colours run, and while they break
 On the charmed eye, th' exulting florist marks,
 With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
 No gradual bloom is wanting from the bud,
 First-born of spring, to summer's musky tribes :
 Nor hyacinths, of purest virgin white,
 Low-bent, and blushing inward ; nor jonquils,
 Of potent fragrance ; nor narcissus fair,
 As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still ;
 Nor broad carnations, nor gay spotted pinks ;
 Nor, showered from every bush, the damask rose.
 Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
 With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
 The breath of Nature and her endless bloom.

Thomson.

SPRING—ITS CLOSE.

THE garlands fade that Spring so lately wove,
 Each simple flower, which she had nursed in dew,
 Anemones that spangled every grove,
 The primrose wan, and harebell mildly blue.
 No more shall violets linger in the dell,
 Or purple orchis variegate the plain,
 Till Spring again shall call forth every bell,
 And dress with humid hands her wreaths again.
 Ah, poor humanity ! so frail, so fair,
 Are the fond visions of thy early day,
 Till tyrant passion, and corrosive care,
 Bid all thy fairy colours fade away !
 Another May new buds and flowers shall bring ;
 Ah ! why has happiness no second spring?

Charlotte Smith.

SPRING—PERPETUAL.

THERE is continual spring, and harvest there
 Continual, both meeting at one time ;
 For both the boughs do laughing blossoms bear,
 And with fresh colours deck the wanton prime,
 And eke at once the heavy trees they climb,
 Which seem to labour under their fruits' load ;
 The whiles the joyous birds make their pastime
 Amongst the shady leaves (their sweet abode),
 And their true loves without suspicion tell abroad.

Right in the midst of that paradise
 There stood a stately mount, on whose round top
 A gloomy grove of myrtle trees did rise,
 Whose shady boughs sharp steel did never lop,
 Nor wicked beasts their tender buds did crop,
 But like a garland compassed the height,
 And from their fruitful sides sweet gum did drop,
 That all the ground, with precious dew bedight,
 Threw forth most dainty odours and most sweet delight.

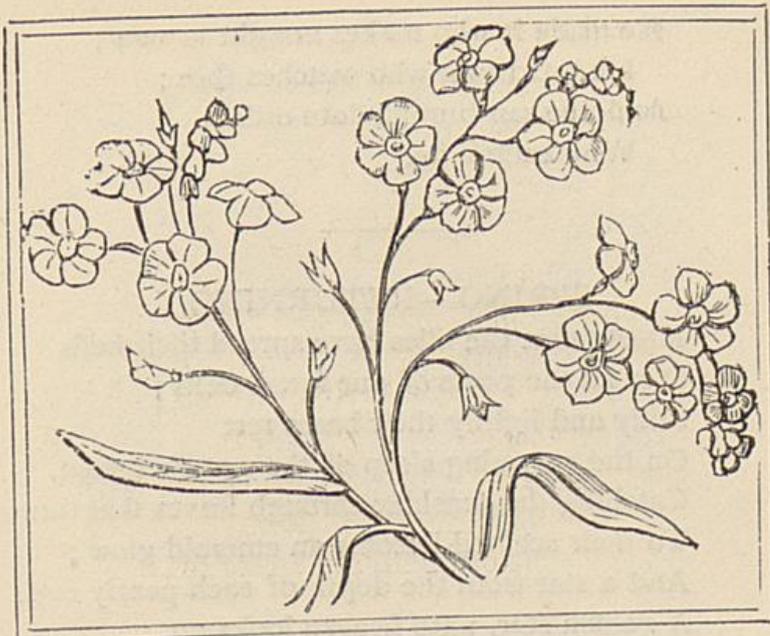
Spenser.

SPRING FLOWER—FADING.

OH spare my flower ! my gentle flower,
 The slender creature of a day !
 Let it bloom out its little hour,
 And pass away.

Too soon its fleeting charms must lie
 Decayed, unnoticed, overthrown ;
 Oh hasten not its destiny,
 So like my own.

The breeze will roam this way to-morrow,
 And sigh to find its playmate gone ;



The bee will come its sweets to borrow,
And meet with none.

Oh spare ! And let it still outspread
Its beauties to the passing eye,
And look up from its lowly bed
Upon the sky.

Oh spare my flower ! Thou know'st not what
Thy undiscerning hand would tear ;
A thousand charms thou notest not,
Lie treasured there.

Not Solomon, in all his state,
Was clad like Nature's simplest child,
Nor could the world combined create
One floweret wild.

Spare, then, this humble monument
Of the Almighty's power and skill ;
And let it at its shrine present
Its homage still.

He made it who makes nought in vain ;
 He watches it who watches thee ;
 And He can best its date ordain
 Who bade it be. *Lyte.*

SPRING.—RETURNING.

KNOW that the lilies have spread their bells
 O'er all the pools of our forest dells ;
 Stilly and lightly their bases rest
 On the quivering sleep of the water's breast,
 Catching the sunshine through leaves that throw
 To their scented bosoms an emerald glow ;
 And a star from the depth of each pearly cup,
 A golden star, unto heaven looks up,
 As if seeking its kindred, where bright they lie,
 Set in the blue of the summer sky.

Mrs. Hemans.

THE STRAWBERRY - BLOSSOM.

THAT is work of waste and ruin—
 Do as Charles and I are doing.
 Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,
 We must spare them—here are many :
 Look at it—the flower is small,
 Small and low, though fair as any :
 Do not touch it ! summers two
 I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !
 Pull as many as you can.
 —Here are daisies, take your fill ;
 Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower :
 Of the lofty daffodil
 Make your bed, or make your bower ;



Fill your lap, and fill your bosom ;
Only spare the Strawberry-blossom !
Primroses, the spring may love them —
Summer knows but little of them :
Violets, a barren kind,
Withered on the ground must lie ;
Daisies leave no fruit behind
When the pretty flowerets die ;
Pluck them, and another year
As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power
To the favoured Strawberry-flower.
Hither soon as spring is fled
You and Charles and I will walk ;
Lurking berries, ripe and red,
Then will hang on every stalk,
Each within its leafy bower ;
And for that promise spare the flower !
Wordsworth.



SUMMER SWEETS.

(The Nosegay.)

Oh, luve will venture in
 Where it daurna weel be seen ;
 Oh, luve will venture in
 Where wisdom ance has been ;
 But I will down yon river rove,
 Amang the wood sae green—
 And a' to pu' a posie
 To my ain dear May.

The primrose I will pu',
 The firstling of the year ;

And I will pu' the pink,
 The emblem o' my dear ;
 For she's the pink o' womankind,
 And blooms without a peer—
 And a' to be a posie
 To my ain dear May.

I'll pu' the budding rose,
 When Phœbus peeps in view,
 For it's like a baumy kiss
 O' her sweet, bonny mou' ;

The hyacinth's for constancy,
Wi' its unchanging blue—
And a' to be a posie
To my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure,
And the lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom
I'll place the lily there ;
The daisy's for simplicity,
And unaffected air—
And a' to be a posie
To my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu',
Wi' its locks o' siller gray.
Where, like an aged man,
It stands at break of day.
But the songster's nest within the bush
I winna tak away—
And a' to be a posie
To my ain dear May.

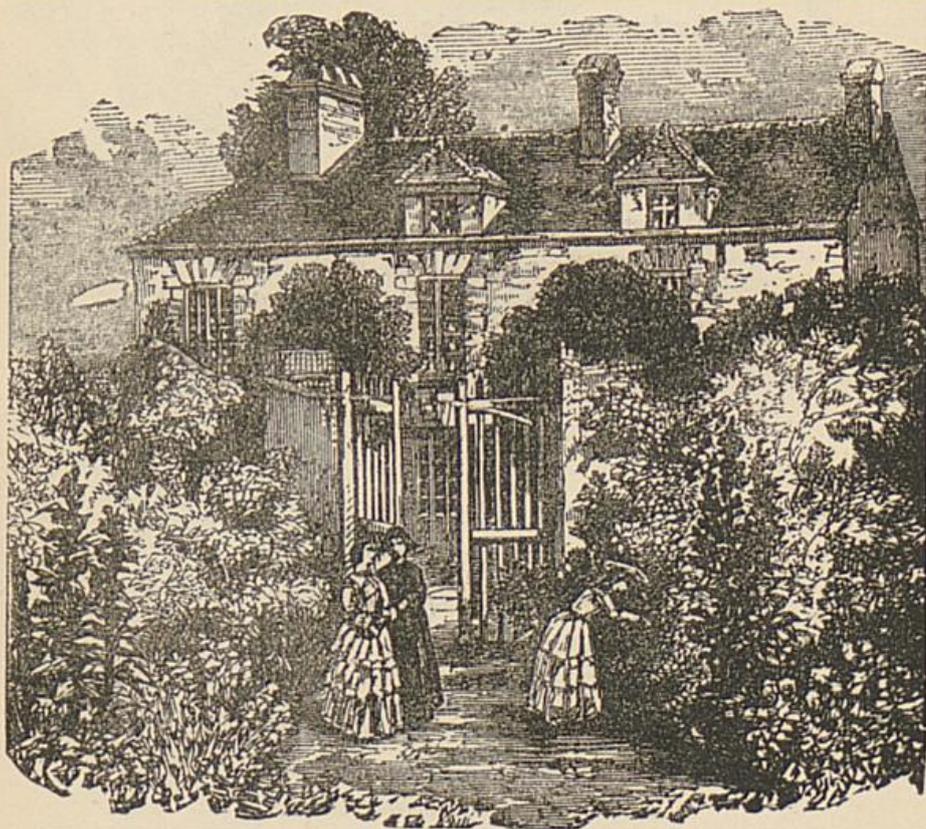
The woodbine I will pu',
When the evening star is near,
And the diamond draps o' dew
Shall be her een sae clear ;
The violet's for modesty,
Which weel she fa's to wear—
And a' to be a poisie
For my own dear May.

I'll tie the posie round
With the silken bands o' luvie,
And I'll place it in her breast,
And I'll swear by all above

That to my latest draught o' life,
The band shall ne'er remove ;
And this will be a posie
To my ain dear May, *Burns.*

THE SWEET-BRIER.

THE Sweet-brier under the window-sill,
Which the early birds made glad,
And the damask rose by the garden fence
Were all the flowers we had.



I've looked at many a flower since then,
Far brought, and rich, and rare,
To other eyes more beautiful
But not to me so fair ;

For those roses bright, oh, those roses bright!
I have twined them with my sister's locks,
That are laid in the dust from sight!

Phæbe Cary.



THE THISTLE.

AND, in our vacant mood,
Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake,
Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand!
And starting off again with freak as sudden;
In all its sportive wanderings, all the while
Making report of an invisible breeze
That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul. *Wordsworth.*

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.

Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown
With lichens to the very top,
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
A melancholy crop :
Up from the earth these mosses creep,
And this poor Thorn they clasp it round
So close you 'd say that they are bent
With plain and manifest intent
To drag it to the ground ;
And all have joined in one endeavour
To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

And, close beside this aged Thorn,
There is a fresh and lovely sight,
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
Just half a foot in height.
All lovely colours there you see,
All colours that were ever seen ;
And mossy network too is there,
As if by hand of lady fair
The work had woven been ;
And cups, the darlings of the eye,
So deep is their vermilion dye.

Ah me ! what lovely tints are there
Of olive green and scarlet bright,
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
Green, red, and pearly white !
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,
Which close beside the Thorn you see,
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,
Is like an infant's grave in size,
As like as like can be :
But never, never anywhere,
An infant's grave was half so fair.

Wordsworth.



VIOLETS.

UNDER the green hedges, after the snow,
 There do the dear little Violets grow,
 Hiding their modest and beautiful heads
 Under the hawthorn in soft mossy beds.

Sweet as the roses, and blue as the sky,
 Down there do the dear little Violets lie ;
 Hiding their heads where they scarce may be seen,
 By the leaves you may know where the Violet hath been.

F. Moultrie.

LONG as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are Violets,
 They will have a place in story.

Wordsworth.

VIOLETS.—LOWLINESS OF MIND.

'Twas a summer morn, and the softened breeze
Scarce ruffled the tiny flowers,
As they lay half hid in the velvet grass
Or nestled in leafy bowers.

And a happy child was wandering there,
And with a wild delight,
Stooped down to pluck the Violets sweet,
Half hidden from his sight.

And down he lay on that cushion green,
To gather the fragrant buds ;
For he loved them better than any flower
Which the blossomed earth bestuds.

And so do the wise and pure of heart,
Of all the human kind,
Esteem and love with a closer bond
A lowly heart and mind.

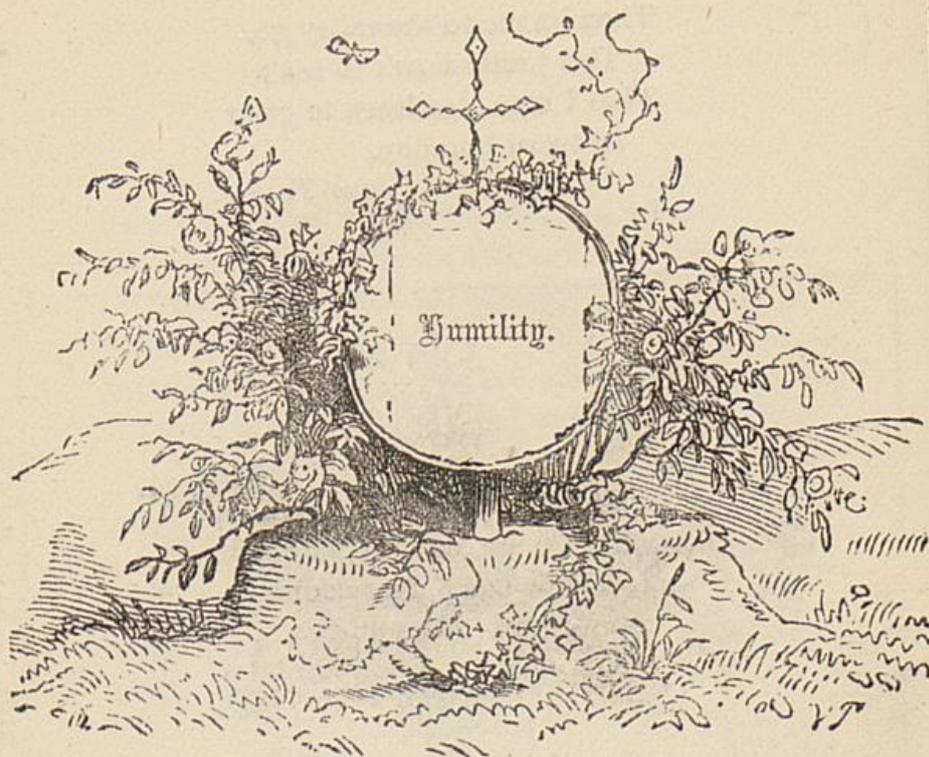
So does the Wise One who dwells above
Look down on the meek below,
And causes the fragrance of inward peace
Round the hearts of such to flow.

Irne.

THE VIOLET—A TYPE OF LOVE.

It has a scent, as though Love, for its dower,
Had on it all his odorous arrows tost ;
For though the rose has more perfuming power,
The Violet (haply 'cause 'tis almost lost,
And takes us so much trouble to discover)
Stands first with most, but always with a lover.

Barry Cornwall.



THE VIOLET.

DOWN in a green and shady bed
A modest violet grew ;
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flow'r,
Its colours bright and fair ;
It might have graced a rosy bow'r,
Instead of hiding there.

Yet there it was content to bloom,
In modest tints array'd ;
And there diffused its sweet perfume,
Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,
This pretty flow'r to see ;
That I may also learn to grow
In sweet humility.

Jane Taylor.



WILD FLOWERS.

NOT a pastoral song has a pleasanter tune
Than ye speak to my heart, little wildings of June ;
Of old ruinous castles ye tell,

Where I thought it delightful your beauties to find,
When the magic of Nature first breathed on my mind,
And your blossoms were part of her spell,

Even now, what affections the violet awakes !
What loved little islands, twice seen in their lakes,
Can the wild water-lily restore !
What landscapes I read in the primrose's looks,
And what pictures of pebbled and minnowy brooks,
In the vetches that tangled their shore.

Earth's cultureless buds, to my heart ye were dear,
Ere the fever of passion, or ague of fear,
Had scathed my existence's bloom ;
Once I welcome you more, in life's passionless stage,
With the visions of youth to revisit my age,
And I wish you to grow on my tomb.

Campbell.

WOODLAND FLOWERS AND TREES.

Up this green woodland path we'll softly rove,
And list the nightingale ; she dwelleth here.
Hush ! let the wood-gate gently close, for fear
Its noise might scare her from her home of love.
Here have I heard her sing for many a year,
At noon and eve, ay, all the livelong day,
As though she lived on song. In this same spot,
Just where the old-man's beard all wildly trails
Its tresses o'er the track, and stops the way,
And where the child the fox-glove flowers hath got,

Laughing and creeping through the moss-grown rails,
Oft have I hunted, like a truant boy,
Creeping through thorny brakes with eager joy,
To find her nest, and see her feed her young ;
And where those crimped ferns grow rank among
The hazel boughs, I've nestled down full oft,
To watch her warbling on some spray aloft,
With wings all quivering in her ecstasy,
And feathers ruffled up in transport high,
And bill wide open to relieve her heart
Of its outsobbing song ! But, with a start,
If I but stirred a branch, she stopped at once,
And flying off swift as the eye could glance,
In leafy distance hid, to sing again.
Anon from bosom of that green retreat,
Her song anew in silvery strains would gush,
With *jug, jug, jug*, and quavered trilling sweet,
Till roused to emulate the enchanting strain,
From hawthorn spray piped loud the merry thrush
Her loud bravura through the woodlands wild !

J. Clare.

THE WOODS AT NIGHT.

THE moon rose majestic unclouded and bright,
And in triumph she rode through the blue eastern sky,
While the wave 'neath her splendour was dancing in light,
Just ruffling its hues as the low breeze passed by.

How sweet on the ear broke the glad sound of mirth,
As by distance 't was mellowed and wafted along ;
Oh ! it seemed not a sound that belonged to the earth,
But some sweet fabled lay, like the Syren's soft song.

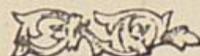
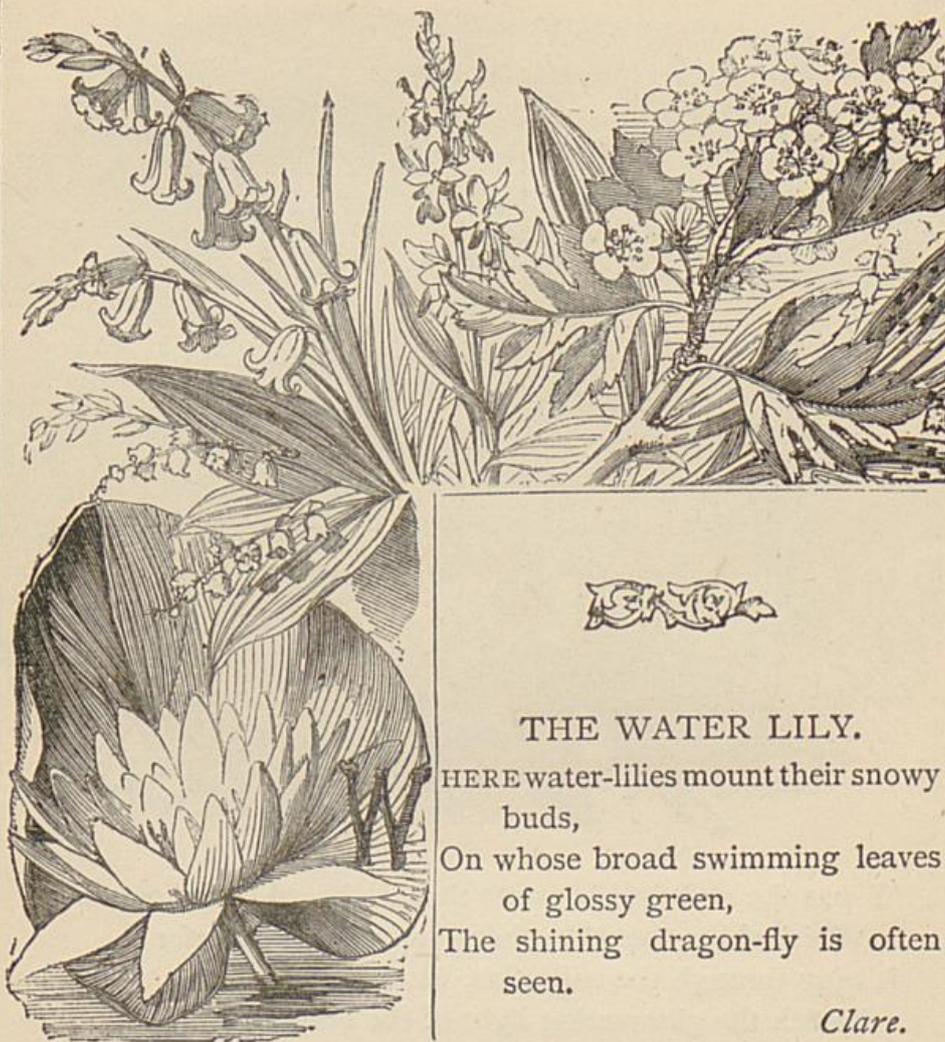


'T was the nightingale's note that we heard in the wood,
Which skirts the wide plain dimly seen from afar ;
It rang through the valley, as, listening we stood
'Neath the glimmering light of the evening star.

The wind moved the leaves, and uplifted thine hair
Through the woods, as it blew them so gentle and low,
One might have forgotten this world had a care.
For you looked like an angel of peace, love, below.

That evening, that hour, I shall never forget,
While memory her seat in my bosom doth hold ;
Round my heart it is twined, as the ivy's green net
Clasps the tree that is young which it clings to when old.

Geo. King Matthews.



THE WATER LILY.

HERE water-lilies mount their snowy
buds,
On whose broad swimming leaves
of glossy green,
The shining dragon-fly is often
seen.

Clare.

OH, beautiful thou art,
Thou sculpture-like and stately river-queen !
Crowning the depths as with the light serene
Of a pure heart. *Hemans.*





WHEAT RIPENING IN SUMMER.

DOWN with a touch the mellow'd soil is laid,
And yon tall crop next claims his timely aid ;

Thither well pleased he hies, assur'd to find
 Wild, trackless haunts, and objects to his mind.
 Shot up from broad rank blades that droop below,
 The nodding wheat-ear forms a graceful bow,
 With milky kernels, starting full, weigh'd down,
 Ere yet the sun hath ting'd its head with brown ;
 There thousands in a flock, for ever gay,
 Loud chirping sparrows welcome on the day,
 And from the mazes of the leafy thorn
 Drop one by one upon the bending corn.
 Giles with a pole assails their close retreats,
 And round the grass grown dewy border beats,
 On either side completely overspread,
 Here branches bend, their corn o'ertops his dead.

Bloomfield.

WILLOW TREE.

THOU art to all lost love the best,
 The only true, plant found,
 Wherewith young men and maids distrest,
 And left of love, are crowned.

When once the lover's rose is dead,
 Or laid aside forlorn ;
 Then willow garlands, 'bout the head,
 Bedewed with tears, are worn.

When with neglect, the lover's bane,
 Poor maids rewarded be,
 For their love lost ; their only gain
 Is but a wreath from thee.

And underneath thy cooling shade,
 When weary of the light,
 The love-spent youth, and love-sick maid,
 Come to weep out the night. *Herrick.*

THE WINTER-TREE (LAURUSTINUS).

FAIR tree of winter ! fresh and flowering,
When all around is dead and dry ;
Whose ruby buds, though storms are louring,
Spread their white blossoms to the sky.
Green are thy leaves, more purely green
Through every changing period seen ;
And when the gaudy months are past,
Thy loveliest season is the last.
Be thou an emblem—thus unfolding
The history of that maiden's mind,
Whose eye, these humble lines beholding,
In them her future lot may find :
Through life's mutations may she be
A modest evergreen like thee :
Though bless'd in youth, in age more bless'd,
Still be her latest days the best.

J. Montgomery.

WOODLAND FERN.

THAT tall fern,
So stately, of the queen Osmunda named ;
Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
On Grasmere's beach, then Naiad by the side
Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.

Wordsworth.



WOODBINE AND OTHER FLOWERS.

YE valleys low, where the mild whispers rise,
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks ;
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rath primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The musk rose, and the well-attired woodbine,



With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears :
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.

Milton.

WOODLAND DELIGHTS.

THRICE happy he who by some shady grove,
 Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own,
 Though solitary, who is not alone,
 But doth converse with that eternal Love :
 O how more sweet is bird's harmonious moan,
 Or the hoarse sobbings of the widowed dove,
 Than those smooth whisperings near a prince's throne,
 Which good make doubtful do, the evil approve !
 O how more sweet is Zephyr's wholesome breath,
 And sighs embalmed, which new-born flowers unfold,
 Than that applause vain honour doth bequeath !
 How sweet are streams, to poison drunk in gold !
 The world is full of horrors, troubles, slights ;
 Woods' harmless shades have only true delights.

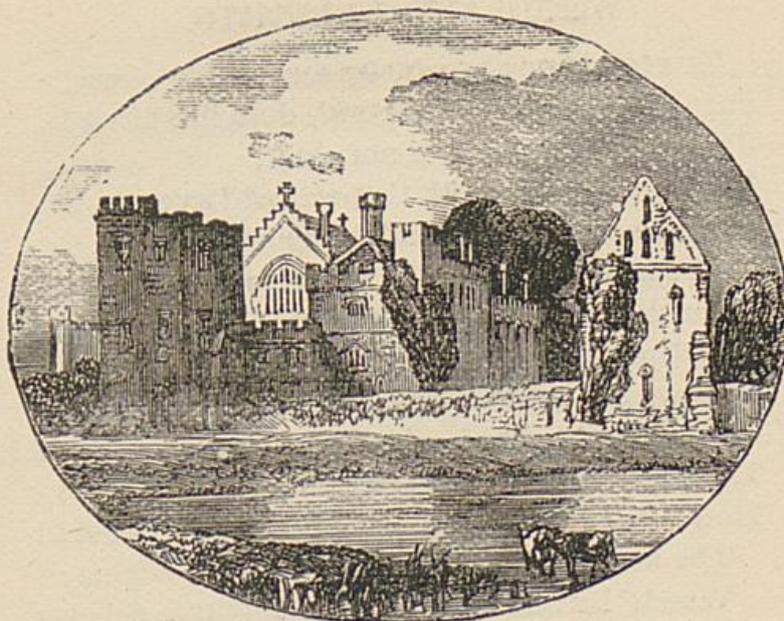
Drummond.

WOODLANDS IN SPRING.

"Thou givest me flowers, thou givest me songs ;—bring back
 The love that I have lost !"

WHAT, wakest thou, Spring? Sweet voices in the woods,
 And reed-like echoes, that have long been mute :
 Thou bringest back, to fill the solitudes,
 The lark's clear pipe, the cuckoo's viewless flute,
 Whose tone seems breathing mournfulness or glee,
 E'en as our hearts may be.

And the leaves greet thee, Spring ! the joyous leaves,
 Whose tremblings gladden many a copse and glade,
 Where each young spray a rosy flush receives,
 When thy south wind hath pierced the whispery shade,
 And happy murmurs, running through the grass,
 Tell that thy footsteps pass.



And the bright waters—they too hear thy call,
 Spring, the awakener ! thou hast burst their sleep !
 Amidst the hollows of the rocks their fall
 Makes melody, and in the forests deep
 Where sudden sparkles and blue gleams betray
 Their windings to the day.

And flowers—the fairy-peopled world of flowers !
 Thou from the dust hast set that glory free,
 Colouring the cowslip with the sunny hours,
 And pencilling the wood anemone :
 Silent they seem—yet each to thoughtful eye
 Glows with mute poesy.

But what awakest thou in the *heart*, O Spring !
 The human heart, with all its dreams and sighs ?
 Thou that givest back so many a buried thing,
 Restorer of forgotten harmonies !
 Fresh songs and scents break forth where'er thou art ;
 What wakest thou in the heart ?

WOODLAND REVERIE.

THERE were thick leaves above me and around,
And low sweet sighs like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
As of soft showers on water ; dark and deep
Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still
They seemed but pictured glooms : a hidden rill
Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
Under the fern-tufts ; and a tender gleam
Of soft green light, as by the glow-worm shed,
Came pouring through the woven beech-boughs down
And steeped the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown,
A tale of Palestine. Meanwhile the bee
Swept past me with a tone of summer hours ;
A drowsy bugle, wafting thoughts of flowers,
Blue skies, and amber sunshine : brightly free,
On filmy wings, the purple dragon-fly
Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by ;
And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
Where sat the lone wood-pigeon.

But ere long,
All sense of these things faded, as the spell
Breathing from that high gorgeous tale grew strong
On my chained soul. 'Twas not the leaves I heard ;
A Syrian wind the Lion banner stirred
Through its proud floating folds. 'Twas not the brook,
Singing in secret through its glassy glen ;
A wild shrill trumpet of the Saracen
Pealed from the desert's lonely heart, and shook
The burning air. Like clouds when winds are high,
O'er glittering sands flew steeds of Araby,
And tents rose up, and sudden lance and spear
Flashed where a fountain's diamond wave lay clear,



Shadowed by graceful palm-trees. Then the shout
Of merry England's joy swelled freely out,
Sent through an Eastern heaven, whose glorious hue
Made shields dark mirrors to its depths of blue :
And harps were there—I heard their sounding strings,
As the waste echoed to the mirth of kings.
The bright mask faded. Unto life's worn track,
What called me from its flood of glory back ?
A voice of happy childhood ! and they passed,
Banner, and harp, and Paynim's trumpet blast.
Yet might I scarce bewail the splendours gone,
My heart so leaped to that sweet laughter's tone.

Hemans.

WOODS IN AUTUMN.

ERE, in the northern gale,
The summer tresses of the trees are gone,
The woods of autumn all around our vale
Have put their glory on.

The mountains that in fold,
In their wide sweep, the coloured landscape round
Seem groups of giant kings, in purple and gold,
That guard the enchanted ground.

I roam the woods that crown
The upland, where the mingled splendours glow,
Where the gay company of trees look down
On the green fields below.

My steps are not alone
In these bright walks ; the sweet south-west at play,
Flies, rustling, where the painted leaves are strown
Along the winding way.

And far in heaven, the while,
The sun, that sends that gale to wander here,
Pours out on the fair earth his quiet smile,—
The sweetest of the year.

Where now the solemn shade,
Verdure and gloom where many branches meet ;
So grateful, when the noon of summer made
The valleys sick with heat ?

Let in through all the trees
Come the strange rays ; the forest depths are bright ;
Their sunny-coloured foliage, in the breeze,
Twinkles, like beams of light.

The rivulet, late unseen,
Where bickering through the shrubs its waters run,
Shines with the image of its golden screen,
And glimmerings of the sun.

But 'neath yon crimson tree,
Lover to listening maid might breathe his flame,
Nor mark, within its roseate canopy,
Her blush of maiden shame.

Oh, autumn ! why so soon
Depart the hues that make thy forests glad,—
Thy gentle wind and thy fair sunny noon,—
And leave thee wild and sad ?

Ah ! 't were a lot too blessed
For ever in thy coloured shades to stray ;
Amid the kisses of the soft south-west
To rove and dream for aye ;

And leave the vain low strife
That makes men mad—the tug for wealth and power,
The passions and the cares that wither life,
And waste its little hour.

Bryant.





UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE.

UNDER the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat ;

Come hither, come hither, come hither,
 Here shall he see
 No enemy
 But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
 And loves to live i' the sun,
 Seeking the food he eats,
 And pleased with what he gets,
 Come hither, come hither, come hither,
 Here shall he see
 No enemy
 But winter and rough weather.

Shakespeare.

WOODLAND VIOLET.

THE Violet in her greenwood bower,
 Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
 May boast herself the fairest flower
 In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Sir W. Scott.

WOODLAND INVITATION.

COME ye, come ye, to the green, green woods ;
 Loudly the blackbird is singing ;
 The squirrel is feasting on blossoms and buds,
 And the curled fern is springing.
 Here ye may sleep in the woods so deep,
 While the moon is so wan and so weary,
 And sweetly awake, when the sun through the brake
 Bids the fauuet and whitethroat sing cheery.

R. Howitt.



THE WELLINGTONEA GIGANTEA.

YEW TREES.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore :
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched

To Scotland's heaths ; or those that crossed the sea
 And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
 Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
 Of vast circumference and gloom profound
 This solitary Tree ! a living thing
 Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
 Of form and aspect too magnificent
 To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
 Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
 Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;
 Huge trunks ! and each particular trunk a growth
 Of intertwined fibres serpentine
 Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved ;
 Nor uninformed with Phantasy and looks
 That threaten the profane ;—a pillared shade,
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
 By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
 Perennially.

Wordsworth.

OSMUNDA FERN.

THAT tall fern,
 So stately, of the queen Osmunda named ;
 Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
 On Grasmere's beach, then Naiad by the side
 Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
 Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.





THE YEW.

LAY a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew ;
Maidens, willow branches bear ;
Say I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth,
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

Beaumont and Fletcher.

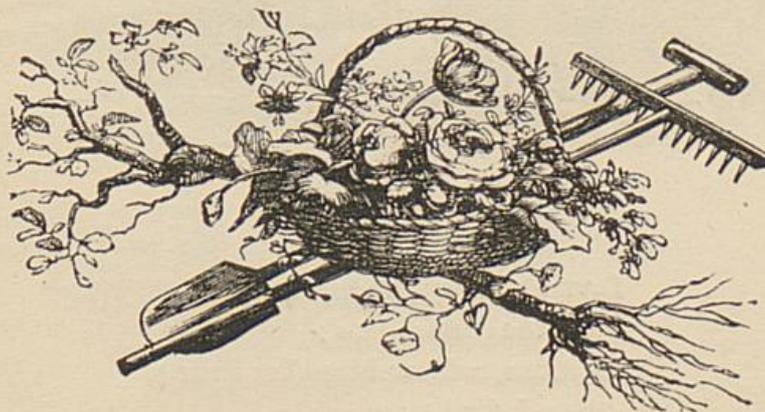
YOUTH—THE TIME OF FLOWERS.

THE lily of the vale, of flowers the queen,
Puts on the robe she neither sewed nor spun ;
The birds on ground, or on the branches green,
Hop to and fro, and glitter in the sun.

Soon as o'er eastern hills the morning peers,
From her low nest the tufted lark upsprings ;
And, cheerful singing, up the air she steers ;
Still high she mounts, still loud and sweet she sings.

Now is the time for those who wisdom love,
Who love to walk in virtue's flowery road,
Along the lovely paths of spring to rove,
And follow Nature up to Nature's God.

Bruce.





Miscellaneous.

DIALOGUE OF THE FLOWERS.

THE HELIOTROPE.

THROUGH all the changes of the day
 I turn me to the sun ;
 In clear or cloudy skies I say
 Alike—Thy will be done !

THE VIOLET.

A lowly flower, in secret bower
 Invisible I dwell ;
 For blessing made, without parade,
 Known only by the smell.

THE LILY.

Emblem of Him, in whom no stain
 The eye of heaven could see.
 In all their glory, monarchs vain
 Are not array'd like me.

THE ROSE.

With ravish'd heart that crimson hail,
 Which in my bosom glows :
 Think how the lily of the vale
 Became like Sharon's rose.

THE PRIMROSE.

When Time's dark winter shall be o'er,
 His storms and tempests laid ;
 Like me you'll rise, a fragrant flower,
 But not like me to fade.

THE GARDEN.

The bower of innocence and bliss,
 Sin caus'd to disappear ;
 Repent, and walk in faith and love—
 You'll find an Eden here. *G. Horne.*

FLOWERS OF SPRING.

THUS, in the train of Spring, arrive
 Sweet flowers ; what living eye hath view'd
 Their myriads ? endlessly renewed,
 Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray ;
 Where'er the subtle waters stray ;
 Wherever sportive breezes bend
 Their course, or genial showers descend !
 Mortals, rejoice ! the very angels quit
 Their mansions unsusceptible of change,
 Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,
 And through your sweet vicissitudes to range !
Wordsworth.

THE BOWER OF ADAM AND EVE.

THUS talking hand in hand alone they passed
 On to their blissful bower ; it was a place
 Chosen by the sovran Planter when He framed
 All things to man's delightful use ; the roof
 Of thickest covert was unwoven shade,
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
 Of firm and fragrant leaf ; on either side
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub

Fenced up the verdant wall ; each beauteous flower,
 Iris all hues, roses and jessamine
 Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
 Mosaic ; under foot the violet,
 Crocus and hyacinth with rich inlay
 Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone
 Of costliest emblem. *Milton.*

FLOWERS IN THE PRISON.

YE are from dingle and fresh glade, ye flowers !
 By some kind hand to cheer my dungeon sent ;
 O'er you the oak shed down the summer showers,
 And the lark's nest was where your bright cups bent,
 Quivering to breeze and raindrop, like the sheen
 Of twilight stars. On you heaven's eye hath been,
 Through the leaves pouring its dark sultry blue
 Into your glowing hearts ; the bee to you
 Hath murmured, and the rill. My soul grows faint
 With passionate yearning, as its quick dreams paint
 Your haunts by dell and stream—the green, the free,
 The full of all sweet sound—the shut from me !

Hemans.

A POET'S GARDEN.

AND all about grew every sort of flower
 To which sad lovers were transformed of yore ;
 Fresh Hyacinthus, Phœbus' paramour
 And dearest love ;
 Foolish Narcisse, that likes the watery shore ;
 Sad Amaranthus, made a flower but late,
 Sad Amaranthus, in whose purple gore
 Me seems I see Amyntas' wretched fate,
 To whom sweet poets' verse hath given endless date.

Spenser.

FLOWERS OF PARADISE.

AWAKE ! the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us ; we lose the prime to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.

Milton.

A FAREWELL.

I go, sweet friends ! yet think of me
When spring's young voice awakes the flowers ;
For we have wandered far and free
In those bright hours, the violet's hours.

I go ; but when you pause to hear
From distant hills the Sabbath-bell
On summer-winds float silvery clear,
Think on me then—I loved it well !

Forget me not around your hearth,
When cheerly smiles the ruddy blaze ;
For dear hath been its evening mirth
To me, sweet friends, in other days.

And oh ! when music's voice is heard
To melt in strains of parting woe,
When hearts to love and grief are stirred,
Think of me, then ! I go, I go !

Hemans.

