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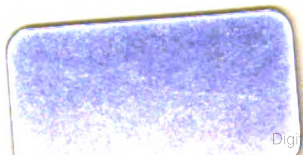
*The romance of nature; or,
The flower-seasons illustrated*

Louisa Anne Meredith



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To
Francis Barton Dickson
from
his affectionate Father
14th Jan. 22
1856.

THE
ROMANCE OF NATURE.



THE
ROMANCE
OF
NATURE.

CHARLES TILT LONDON

THE
ROMANCE OF NATURE;

OR,

The Flower-Seasons Illustrated.

BY

LOUISA ANNE TWAMLEY.

THE PLATES ENGRAVED AFTER ORIGINAL DRAWINGS FROM NATURE
BY THE AUTHOR.

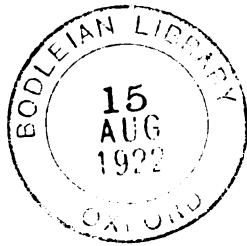
SECOND EDITION.

I sing of brooks, of blossomes, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers,
I sing of youth, of love too, and I write
How roses first came red, and lilies white;
I write of groves and twilight, and I sing
The court of Mab, and of the Fairie King.—HERRICK.
There's wit in every flower, if you can gather it.—SHIRLEY.

LONDON:
CHARLES TILT, FLEET STREET.

MDCCCXXXVI.

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TO

THE POET WORDSWORTH,

THESE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE FLOWER-SEASONS

ARE, BY HIS KIND PERMISSION,

INSCRIBED BY LOUISA ANNE TWAMLEY.

P R E F A C E .

My own love for Flowers, and the intense pleasure they afford me, are my best as well as my true reasons for writing and publishing this volume ; for I believed (and surely the feeling was pardonable, even if somewhat self-laudatory) that a record of the thoughts, fancies, and associations which combine to render Flowers and Flower Seasons so precious to me, might, if communicated, enhance the pleasure which others derive from the same sweet sources.

I aim not at conveying scientific information ; firstly, because the design of my work is purely poetical ; and secondly, because my own knowledge of botany is too limited to allow of my offering any instruction to others.

I love Flowers as forming one of the sweetest lines in the GOD-WRITTEN Poetry of Nature : as one of the universal blessings accessible to all nations, climes, and classes ; *blessings* in their own loveliness alone, and in the pleasure ever derivable from the contemplation of

loveliness; but trebly blessing us in the familiar and beautiful power they possess of awakening in our hearts feelings of wonder, admiration, gratitude, and devotion; teaching us to look from Earth to HIM who called it into existence, and to feel how worthy of our unceasing thankful adoration must be that Being, the meanest of whose creations is so wonderfully, so beautifully adapted to its appointed position in the vast whole. Flowers seem to form the easiest and pleasantest pathway to further love and knowledge of Nature's glories. They are indigenous to every soil, and familiar to every eye; a universal language of love, beauty, poetry, and *wisdom*, if we read them aright.

But, in thus prefacing my present volume, I am, perhaps, wrong, as in the following pages I have sought only to express the beauty, poetry, and Romance of Nature which appear in the forms and characters of Flowers. I have called in the aid of fiction to vary the strain for the ears of those unaccustomed to songs of simple truth; and I have, in one or two instances, ventured a half-fable, the better to illustrate my meaning.

Need I say that the Wild Flowers of mine own fair Land are dearer to me than any others? If it be requisite to tell this to my readers at the commencement of these sketches, they will certainly need no repe-

tion of the intelligence ; for, on glancing over my illustrative drawings, I find portraits of thirty natives among the comparatively few subjects which a work like the present could include. Many far more magnificent might have been selected ; but it is the poetry of our own meadows, and lanes, and dingles, and “little running brooks,” that I wished to point out to my readers. Had *I* only made acquaintance with Flowers in the costly conservatory, or the trimly laid-out garden (though I dearly love a garden), I should not feel their beauty and blessings half so deeply as I now do. Wild Flowers seem the true philanthropists of their race. Their generous and cheerful faces ever give a kindly greeting to the troops of merry village children who revel in their blossomy wealth ; and right welcome are they, gladdening the eyes of the poor town mechanic, when he breathes the pure, fresh country air on Sunday, and gathers a handful of Cowslips, or Daffodils, or prouder Foxgloves, to carry home and set in the dim window of his pent-up dwelling. So dear and beautiful are Wild Flowers, that one would think every body *must* love them ; to many persons, however, much of the delight they bring to me would seem out of place, extravagant—unintelligible ; but I hope to conciliate even these dissenters from my creed, by the extracts I have introduced from our great old

Poets. And it may be well here to mention, that my first intention was to admit passages from our ancient Bards alone; but, as I went on, familiar lines from a favourite author of later date recurred to my memory, which were so beautiful and appropriate, that I found myself almost compelled to make an exception in favour of Shelley. Some few of my extract gleanings are necessarily familiar ones; but I believe a far greater number are not generally known.

Among my own metrical illustrations are one or two short poems from a volume published by Mr. Tilt a few months ago.* I trust to be forgiven for their insertion here, they having been originally written for the present work, which I have had in contemplation several years. My first drawings and selections of poetry were made for it some time before the appearance of any of the now numerous publications on like subjects; though I have no doubt that some recent works will be supposed to have suggested the plan of this volume. I can, however, honestly say, that such an opinion, if formed, will be altogether erroneous, as my immediate friends and other persons are well aware; moreover, the entire design and arrangement of the present publication are essentially different from that of any contemporary work on Flowers.

* Poems, by Louisa Anne Twamley, with Illustrations drawn and etched by the Author.—London, Charles Tilt, 1835.

Of the Plates (on which authors usually compliment the artists) *I* can say nothing, but that they have been carefully engraved after my own drawings, which drawings were invariably made from NATURE. I have never been guilty of curving a stem on my paper, which I found growing straight in the field, or of magnifying a flower for the sake of gay effect. My models always appear to me too perfect in their beauty for me to dream of doing aught but attempt to copy, faithfully as I can, their various forms and colours: invention here must be positive error, and I anxiously strive to avoid *that* fault, however I may sin against the laws of picturesque effect or elegant arrangement.

That much more might be said on a subject so fertile as that implied in the title of my work, I am well aware; that many would have performed my assumed task far better than I have done, is also most true:—still, I trust to the good feeling of my readers to appreciate my desire to amuse, and, if possible, to benefit them: the evidence of my failure or success remains to be given.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THEY tell me, gentle Reader, that I must either write a new Preface, or add to the present one, on this pleasant occasion of "The Flower-Seasons Illustrated" reaching a second edition. Ill would it become a favoured writer to be uncourteous to her generous patrons, and I therefore gladly accede to the demand. But the feelings expressed in my former prefatory remarks would inevitably be repeated in a second essay, and they shall therefore remain as before:—then what have I to say?—nothing, save the presentation of my own poor thanks for the unmixed kindness with which my volume has been received. To render it in some measure more worthy, I have carefully corrected some typographical and other errors, and in a few places added to the matter.

I will here remark, in answer to several enquiries on the subject, that the metrical passages interwoven with the prose, are, when not marked otherwise, original.

I said I had nothing but thanks to offer,—I was wrong:—paradoxical as the term may appear, I have to *congratulate* my readers on the more than anticipated success of my work. I do heartily congratulate them on the proof they have given, by their approbation of these simple pages, that love of the great BOOK of NATURE dwells in their hearts, and leads them to regard with gratification even the efforts of so humble a votress as myself, in advancing, however feebly, the great and elevating feelings which its rightly-directed study cannot but create.

Birmingham, Nov. 20th, 1836.

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THE ROMANCE OF NATURE.

FLOWERS.

Ye are the stars of earth—ye glorious things!
And as your skiey kindred gem the night,
So ye, with hues like rainbows, yet more bright,
Gladden the day—and, as each sunburst flings
More wide your nectared leaves, where lab'ring sings
The honey-seeking bee, or in gay flight
Hovers the dainty butterfly, we might
Deem ye, too, insects—birds, without their wings.
Ye are the stars of earth—and dear to me
Is each small twinkling bud that wanders free
'Mid glade or woodland, or by murm'ring stream,
For ye to me are more than sweet or fair—
I love ye for the mem'ries that ye bear
Of by-gone hours, whose bliss was but a dream.

From "Poems, by L. A. TWANLEY."

AND are they not the stars of earth? Doth not
Our memory of their bright and varied forms
Wind back to childhood's days of guileless sport,
When these familiar friends of later years
"A beauty and a mystery" remained?
And were they not to infant eyes more dear
E'en than their starry kindred? For one glance
Of wondering love we lifted to the vault
Of the o'er orbèd sky, have we not bent
Full many a gaze of pleased affection down
To the green field, starred over with its hosts
Of daisies, countless as the blades of grass,

'Midst which they seemed to look and laugh at us?
 Oh! I can now recall th' unthrift delight
 That filled my basket and my tiny hands
 With buttercups, that shone in burnished gold,
 And daisies, with their rose-tipped silvery rays
 Spreading around the yellow boss within—
 And some, most prized, that had not yet displayed
 Their fairy circle, but emerging new
 From their green hermitage, seemed as they blushed
 Beneath the ardent sun's admiring gaze:—
 And then, the treasure housed, with what proud care
 The simple buds were ranged in vase or cup,—
 Nothing to us too costly for their use,—
 And set in sunny window with strict care
 That none molest our wealth.

Aye, we were rich

In those young, innocent days—rich in our love
 Of the not unveiled world—rich in our faith
 That all was as it seemed—that life was truth.
 Rich in its ignorance is infancy,
 And every added year but makes more poor,
 By added knowledge, childhood's guileless wealth—
 The wealth of an unblighted, unchilled soul.

FLOWERS never lose their charm. When older grown,
 See a child working in his little plot
 Of garden ground; and, if you chance to stand,

As I have often done, high in the love
 Of the young tyro of the spade and rake
 Look at the eager joyousness and pride
 With which the choicest of the little store
 Are plucked and offered you. The reddest rose—
 The tallest pink—and, treasure beyond all,
 The matron daisy and her circling brood,
 “The hen and chickens.” How I love the glance
 Of exultation that comes with the gift!
 And wish, aye, from my very soul, that each
 Young school-immured being could so learn
 From Nature's glorious book her marv'ulous works—
 Pedants might lose their *slaves*, but worlds win *men*.

And are not FLOWERS the earliest gift of *love*?
 Do they not, mutely eloquent, oft speak
 For absent or for trembling hearts, and bear
 Kisses and sighs on their perfumèd lips—
 And worlds of thought and fancy in their leaves
 Touched by the rainbow's dyes? Have ye ne'er prized
 Some token-flower—an early rose—a bunch
 Of young Spring's first and sweetest violets, culled
 And given into yours by hands so dear,
 That all Flowers seemed grown holier from that time?
 Have ye ne'er *hoarded* such a simple gift—
 Aye, through long years—e'en when each shrunken leaf
 Bore not a semblance to the thing it was,
 And the soft fragrance that had once been there

Had changed from sweet to noisome—and, e'en then,
 For very fondness could not fling away
 Those dim and faded records of the past,
 But laid the frail things in their wonted place,
 To gaze—and dream—and weep upon again?

'What slowly-pacing band is g iding, 'neath
 Yon aisle-like avenue of stately elms,
 Tow'rd the grey village church?' 'A fun'ral train;
 And she they mourn far fairer was than all
 Her maiden friends, who oft have gaily met
 Her bounding form amid the rustic dance,
 And now assemble round her early grave—
 The very tree from whence the wreath was plucked
 That crowned her Lady of the May, has given
 A chaplet of its flowers, the wan white rose,
 To lay upon her pall.'—

* * * * *

And have not FLOWERS,
 E'en from the earliest time, been *banquet* guests?
 Have they not wreathed alike the brow and bowl?
 Bright'ning and chastening, at once, the scenes
 Of revelry to which they gave a grace,
 A simple luxury, and a charm beyond
 What any aid of human art could bring?—

Beautiful, even in its error, seems
 The Pagan offering of Flowers as gifts
 To the Almighty Power; for what so fair—
 So pure, so holy as their fragile forms?
 Earth's loveliest offspring, whom the mighty sun
 Looks on with smiles—and whom the careful sky
 Nourishes with soft rain—and whom the dew
 Delights to deck with her enclustered gems,
 Which each, reflecting the soft tint it lights,
 Gains, while it gives, new beauty.

Oh!—they're fair!

Most wonderful and lovely are they all,—
 From our own daisy, "crimson-tipped," that greets
 Our English childhood with its lowly look,
 To the proud giants of the Western world,
 And gorgeous denizens of either Ind,
 Towering in Nature's majesty and might,
 And lifting up their radiant heads to hail
 The sun—their monarch—as he burns above.
 Who does not love them? Reader, if *thine* heart
 Be one unblessed by such affection, turn
 Far from these lays thy cold and careless eye,
 For less than dull to thee the page will seem.
 And if e'en NATURE glads thee not, then Art,
 With Nature for her model, will but tire:
 But *ye*; Creation's readers, oh! be mine,
 If ye do love that glorious book, whose leaves,

Interminably spread before our eyes,
Challenge our onward progress in its lore,—
Small though our utmost grasp of it may be—
Then will ye listen to the simple lyre,
That now, with changeful tone, or grave, or gay,
Wakes its wild music to a gentle theme,—
Gentle and sweet,—'Tis **THE ROMANCE OF FLOWERS.**

SONG OF THE FLOWERS.

SEE, we come dancing in sunshine and showers,
 Like fairies or butterflies—bright young Flowers;
 O'er vale and o'er mountain, though ever so steep,
 Go wander—we'll still on your rambles peep.
 Far from the city and smoke live we,
 With our neighbour, the rugged old forest-tree,
 Who, wrapped in his mantle of ivy green,
 Looks gay,—for his wrinkles are never seen.
 With the zephyrs we dance
 'Neath the bright warm sun;
 But the moon's pale glance
 Bids our sport be done,—
 Then we close our petals, nor, winking, peep
 Till the morning breaks our perfumed sleep.
 Oh! are we not beautiful, bright young Flowers,
 In stately garden or wild-wood bowers?
 To us doth the lover his love compare;
 Then, think ye, *can* aught be more sweet or fair?
 Her brow is the lily, her cheek the rose,
 Her kiss is the woodbine (more sweet than those);
 Her eye in the half-shut violet beams,
 When a bright dew-drop on its lustre gleams;

We are wreathed in her hair
 By the hands loved best,
 Or clustered with care
 On her gentle breast :

And oh ! what *gems* can so well adorn
 The fair-haired girl on her bridal morn ?

Blooming in sunshine, and growing in showers,
 Dancing in breezes—we gay young Flowers !
 How oft doth an emblem-bud silently tell
 What language could never speak half so well !
 E'en sister flow'rs envy the favoured lot
 Of that blue-eyed darling, *Forget-me-not*.
 Her name is now grown a charmed word,
 By whose echo the holiest " thoughts are stirred."

Come forth in the Spring,
 And our wild haunts seek,
 When the wood-birds sing,
 And the blue skies break :

Come forth to the hill—the wood—the vale—
 Where we merrily dance in the sportive gale !
 Oh ! come to the river's rim, come to us there,
 For the white water-lily is wondrous fair,
 With her large broad leaves on the stream afloat
 (Each one a capacious fairy-boat),
 The *swan* among FLOWERS ! how stately ride
 Her snow-white leaves on the rippling tide ;

And the dragon-fly gallantly stays to sip
A kiss of dew from her goblet's lip :
 Oh ! come in the glow
 Of the long summer's day,
 When the cool waves flow,
 And the zephyrs play ;
Oh ! dwell not in cities, 'mid cark and care,
But come to the river's rim, come to us there.

SPRING.

The Spring—
When proud-pied April dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing.

SHAKESPEARE.

Winter's wrath begins to quell,
And pleasaunt spring appeareth :
The grasse now ginnes to be refreshd,
The swallows peepes out of her nest,
And cloudie welkin cleareth.

SPENSER.

SPRING, AND SPRING FLOWERS.

— April with his showres sote,
 The droughte of March hath pierced to the rote,
 And bathed every veine in swiche licour,
 Of whiche vertue engendred is the flour ;
 Whan Zephirus eke with his sote brethe
 Enspired hath in every holt and hette
 The tendre croppes, and the yonge Sonne
 Hath in the Ram his halfe course yronne,
 And smale foules maken melodie
 That slepen alle night with open eye.

CHAUCER.

Appear, appear !
 And you, soft winds, so clear,
 That dance upon the leaves, and make them sing
 Gentle love-lays to the Spring,
 Gilding all the vales below
 With your verdure as ye blow ;
 Raise these forms from under ground,
 With a soft and happy sound.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

COME, thou beautiful blossoming Spring,
 And to me thy loveliest flow'rets bring ;—
 Come ! let their bright leaves encircle thy brow,
 And wave 'midst thy glittering tresses now ;
 Oh, linger no more 'neath the fleecy veil
 Flung o'er thee by Winter's congealing gale,
 But gently breathe on the snowy shroud,
 And 'twill vanish in tears like a summer cloud,
 As grieved to see thee its whiteness excel
 In the virgin hue of the snowdrop's bell.
 Then gaze upon earth with thine azure eyes,
 And bid their emblem, the violet, rise

On the green-wood bank, where the primrose pale
 Looks up, to welcome the nightingale;
 And the regal crocus, in purple and gold,
 Bursts into life from its leafy fold.

Come—we are weary of wind and storm;
 Gladden our hearts with thy fairy form;—
 Paint the first daisy's "wee crimson tip,"
 Like the roseate hue of a maiden's lip:
 And blest childhood's darling, the buttercup,
 With bright rays gild, as its flowers glance up;
 Let the hyacinth wave in the scented breeze,
 And the May-buds peep on the hawthorn trees,
 And the orchards dress in their gayest gear,—
 'Tis the holiday-time of the circling year:
 And bid the birds sing on each branch and spray,
 While the gay flowers dance in the genial ray.
 Merry and glad will the bright earth be
 When Winter retreats, and thou art free,
 Floating around us on fragrant wing,
 And gemmed with soft dew-drops—thou fair young Spring!



FRIENDS IN WINTER.

THE SNOW-DROP, CROCUS, AND ROBIN RED-BREAST.

Hark, hark ! with what a pretty throat
 Poor Robin Red. Breast tunes his note.

JOHN LYLIE, 1553.

COLD blew the wintry wind, as if it swept
 O'er frozen worlds, and caught their iciness :—
 The small birds, hopping 'mong the leafless twigs,
 Chirped cheerily as I around me flung
 Their wonted portion of my morning's meal ;
 And, leader of them all, the Robin, tame
 And free, came warbling and hopping on,
 Nearer and nearer yet ; his bright black eye
 Looking askance upon the scattered food,
 And his tail frisking, as he skipped about,
 Singing his glad good-morrow.

I do love

That fearless bird—all the long winter through,
 'Midst snow, and frost, and bitter cold he came,
 Greeting me daily with his rich, sweet voice,
 Nor e'er went unremembered.

E'en before

The poet's Nightingale, the Red-breast holds
 A place in *my* esteem,—for she seems coy,
 Distant, capricious—and commands you forth

To listen and admire her, in her pride
 Of conscious excellence; like beauty, vain,
 And claiming such our homage as her right:—
 While my own merry Robin comes to cheer
 Our gloomy winter with his lively song;
 He comes to *us*, and, perched on twig or gate,
 Or on the chimney top, or window sill,
 Sits warbling sweetly on his welcome lay.

The rose is for the nightingale,
 The heather for the lark;
 But the holly greets the red-breast
 'Mid winter drear and dark;
 And the snow-drop, wakened by his song,
 Peeps tremblingly forth,
 From her bed of cold still slumber,
 To gaze upon the earth.
 For the merry voice above her
 Seemed a herald of the Spring,
 As o'er the sleeping flowers
 Blithe robin came to sing—
 "Up, up! my lady snow-drop,
 No longer lie in bed,
 But dance unto my melody
 And wave your graceful head."
 The bulbul woos the red, red rose,
 The lark the heathery dell;
 But the robin has the holly tree
 And the snow-drop's virgin bell.

The snow-drop timidly looked out,
But all was dim and drear,
Save robin's merry song, that sought
Her loneliness to cheer.
And presently the crocus heard
Their greeting, and awoke,
And donned with care her golden robe
And em'rald-coloured cloak ;
And, springing from her russet shroud,
Stepped forth to meet the sun,
Who 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 red-breast warbled merrily
Above the flowerets bright.
Oh ! the nightingale may love the rose,
The lark the summer's heather ;
But the robin's consort-flow'rs come
And brave the wintry weather.

PYRUS JAPONICA.

THE FAIRIES' FIRE.

The flowers, which cold in prison kept,
Now laugh the frost to scorn,

RICHARD EDWARDS, 1523.

SEE, where the first pale sunbeams of the year
Fall faintly, fearfully, upon the snow,
That rests in wreathed flakes on every twig,
Trained with neat care around the window-frame.
So icy cold is every thing around,
That even sunshine trembles to alight,
Lest it be frozen too.

Ha! are *they* out?

My summer friends, the fairies? Surely not;
Yet who but they have lit these tiny fires,
That gleam and glow amid the wintry scene?
Yes, here they are, awarey of the storms,
And wrecking winds, and pinching frosts, that keep
Within their darksome prison-house of earth*
The gay and spendthrift flowers; here they are,
Lighting their ruddy beacons at the sun

* I may here be charged with purloining an idea from the lines of my motto. I can only say such charge were unjust, as "The Fairies' Fire" had been written many months, when in reading some old poems, the lines in Edwards struck me as appropriate to the subject.



To melt away the snow. See, how it falls
In drops of crystal from the glowing spray,
Wreathed with deep crimson buds—the fairy fires.
And now that there is something bright on earth,
The clouds are driven from the clear blue sky,
And heaven is bright'ning too. Serene and calm,
The very air is hushed into repose,
That not a breath may ruffle the young flowers,
Now gently waking into life and light.

TO A NARCISSUS IN JANUARY.

How beautiful art thou, my winter Flower!
 Lifting with graceful pride thy stately head,
 Heavy with its rich crown of pearl and gold:—
 Thou sheddest on the air such soft perfume,
 That I could deem 'twas incense, gently flung
 Before thy beauty's shrine by some fair sprite
 Enamoured of thy maiden loveliness.
 The hyacinth and violet entwined
 Have scarce so sweet an odour.

Thanks, my Flower,

My gentle, kind companion—for to me
 Thy silence is most eloquent:—I love
 Thy quiet steadfast gaze, as, o'er my desk,
 The long day through thou hast seemed watching me;
 And ever and anon, in glancing up,
 I still have met thy calm unchanging look,
 Reminding me, in silence, of the friend
 Whose gift thou wert to me. Yet thou wert then
 A mere unsightly root. Oh! how I watched,
 With almost childish eagerness, thy growth,
 And tended thee with more than common care.



How rich is my reward! My gentle Flower,
 I fain would never lose thee; but thou'lt *die*—
 Droop—wither—pass away like all fair things—
 Like all I ever loved.

But yet, not lost,
 Not *lost*, my beautiful; thou wilt but hide
 Thy quiet loveliness while Summer's sun
 Calls forth the courtiers of his glittering train
 To revel in their gay and festal 'tire:
 When Autumn dims them, and when winter chills,
 Thou wilt lay by thy cloak of russet brown,
 And spring up bright and beautiful once more.

So when thy fragrance breaths its faint perfume,
 And pallid droop thy petals round the stem,
 I will but think thy life one day has spent,
 And bid thee, sweet, sleep till we meet again.

TO A VIOLET,

GATHERED ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Sweet violets, Love's paradise, that spread
 Your gracious odours, which you couched beare
 Within your paly faces,
 Upon the gentle wing of some calm-breathing wind
 That plays amidst the plain ;
 If, by the favour of propitious stars, you gain
 Such grace as in my lady's bosom place to find,
 Be proud to touch those places.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

On old Hyem's chin and icy crown,
 A fragrant chaplet of sweet summer buds
 Is, as in mockery, set.

SHAKESPEARE.

FAIR child of the Spring,
 Loved gem of the year,
 Why thy fragrance fling
 Amid winter drear ?

Each kindred flower hath veiled her head,
 E'en the Autumn daisy is closed and dead.
 Dost come because Summer's bright laughing sky
 Can no more with thy sapphire radiance vie ?
 Nor when breathing thy scent through the leafless vale,
 No roses their rival perfumes exhale ?
 And com'st thou, loved flower, mine eyes to greet,
 Because *thou* art alone, the fair—the sweet ?



I know thou art oft
 Passed carelessly by,
 And the hue so soft
 Of thine azure eye

Gleams unseen, unsought, in its leafy bower,
 While the heartless prefer some statelier flower
 That they eagerly cull, and, when faded, fling
 Away with rude hand, as a worthless thing.
 Not such is *thy* fate: not thy beauty's gift
 Alone bids thee from thy bower be reft;
 Not thy half-closing, dewy, and deep blue eye;
 But the charm that doth not with beauty die.
 'Tis thy mild, soft fragrance makes thee so dear,
 Thou loveliest gem of the floral year!

And with joy, sweet flower,
 I welcome thee here,
 While dark clouds lour,
 And winds sound drear.

The Christmas wreath hath entwined my brow,
 But the Violet smiles in that chaplet now.
 Sweet wanderer!—gladly I greet thy form
 'Mid the loud shrill blast and the wintry storm.
 Thou callest up visions of happier times—
 Thou tellest of sunnier southern climes—
 Thou paintest bright pictures to memory's eye,
 Of bliss-fraught hours for ever gone by—

Thou speak'st of the distant—the lost—the dear ;
Thine azure is dimmed by a grief-fraught tear ;
Yet I will not be sad, for thou tellest to me
Of returning Spring and returning glee.

THE MAY MORN BOUQUET.

Come let us goe, while we are in our prime,
 And take the harmless follie of the time.
 There's not a budding boy or girl, this day,
 But is got up, and gone to bring in May.
 A deale of youth, ere this, is come
 Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
 Some have dispacht their cakes and creame,
 Before that we have left to dreame;
 And some have wept, and woo'd, and plighted troth,
 And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth;
 Many a green gown has been given,
 Many a kiss, both odde and even;
 Many a glance too has been sent,
 From out the eye, Love's firmament.
 Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
 Come, my Corinna, come, let's goe a Maying.

ROBERT HERRICK.

DORA alone.

OH! the morn is bright, the sky is blue,
 The sun is shining cheery;
 And the may-pole's dressed—but where are you,
 My Lubin—where's my dearie?

I've put on all my finest things,
 (This kerchief looks *so* natty!)
 My ears have now as handsome rings
 As those Will bought for Patty.

E

I wonder who'll be chosen queen,
 I know who'd *like* to play it;
 There's none so tall as me, I ween,
 Nor prettier—tho' I say it.

And Lubin always says I tread
 As stately as a Venus,
 When I've one milk-pail on my head,
 And another's held between us.

[*Enter LUBIN, &c.*

'Long looked for, come at last,' they say—
 I've wanted you for hours;
 And now you have not a bouquet!
 Here, take some garden-flowers.

LUBIN.

"No, Dora, none of these for me,
 To *you* I'll leave the rose,
 And violets, too—for both, I see,
 Your cheek and eye disclose.

And Marion may mate her pale
 And fair face with the lily;
 And jealous Nancy cannot fail
 To choose the daffodilly.

The honeysuckle give to Kate,
 So kindly and caressing;
 Whoever wins her for a mate,
 Will win both wealth and blessing.

Narcissus take to Roland Hay,
 The dandy of our village;
 Whose Sunday suit walks every day,
 Far from his farm and tillage.

Yon bramble fling to Rachel Rann,
 So crabby and so spiteful;
 The mignonette's for little Fan,
 Both darlings—they're delightful.

Sweet William flies to blushing Sue,
 For oh! she loves him dearly;
 The scarlet poppy, Meg, to you,
 Your lip's as red, or nearly."

The green is swept—the fiddler's come,
 And lads, to lasses glancing
 (While flourishes sound on the drum),
 Are eager to be dancing.

And Lubin now, without remorse,
 His bright blue vest's adorning
 With a gay bunch of yellow GORSE;
 While all the maids are scorning

Such "trumpery and queer" bouquet,
 'Till Lubin begged they'd hear him
 In its defence:—and soon the gay
 Young faces gather'd near him.

LUBIN'S SONG.

FAIR maidens, I'll sing you a song;
 I'll tell you the bonny wild flower,
 Whose blossoms so yellow, and branches so long,
 O'er moor and o'er rough rocky mountain are flung,
 Far away from trim garden and bower.

It clings to the crag, and it clothes the wild hill;
 It stands sturdily breasting the storm,
 When the loud-voiced winds sing so drearily shrill,
 And the snow-flakes in eddies fall silent and still,
 And the shepherd can scarce wrap him warm.

'Tis the bonny bright GORSE, that gleams cheerily forth,
 Like sunlight e'er lingering here,
 In the verdure of Spring, and when Summer on earth
 Has called all the fairest of blossoms to birth,
 As a crown for the noon of the year.

When the "fall of the leaf" in the forest is heard,
 And the naked boughs stretch through the air;
 And when rustling under each foot that is stirred,
 The crisp leaves are crushing;—and when the coy bird
 At your door pecks the crumbs scatter'd there;







Even then blooms the GORSE—not a month of them all
 But finds this true friend on his way;
 And does not its cheering presence recall
 An old proverb? *—sweet Dora, why suddenly fall
 Thy blue eyes? and why turn thus away?

I'll never rob thee of a lily nor rose,
 While the bonny bright GORSE may be mine;
 For that flower is a charter to love while it blows,
 And entitles thy Lubin, wherever it grows,
 To a kiss from those sweet lips of thine.

Nay, pout not, nor frown—though you thus prove the flower
 E'en more emblematical yet—
 For the golden bud lives in a weapon-girt bower,
 All around and about her are guardians of power,
 And countless spears valiantly set.

But as, when resolved the bright blossom to gain,
 We value not spear head nor lance;
 So when Lubin a kiss craves, sweet Dora in vain
 May frown a refusal. Come, now to the train—
 To the flaunting May-pole and the dance!

* "When gorse is out of blossom, kissing is out of fashion"—gorse being in bloom all the year.

LOVERS AND LILIES.

The Naiad, like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair, and passion so pale,
That the light of her tremulous bells is seen
Thro' their pavilions of tender green.

SHELLEY.

Then seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
Where scatter'd wild the lily of the vale
Her balmy essence breathes.

THOMSON.

COME, Lady, mine, into the woods, for there
The sweet May lilies their young beauty show,
Bending their slender stems, whose pearly bells,
Like cups o'er-filled with perfume, shed it forth,
Lading the fragrant air.

Come, Love, mine,
And I will show thee how the lilies fair
Are guardian'd by their tall and shelt'ring leaves,
Who brave themselves the rude and boisterous wind
To shield from every harm the fair things wrapped
Safe by their careful love.

I'll tell thee then,
That thou, e'en like the lily bell, should'st be
Guarded by fond and all-enduring love;





That thou, far fairer than a flower, should'st hide
From too familiar sight thy beauty's wealth,
And give it unto one whose long-tried heart
May claim a prize so rich.

Smile, Lady, mine,
And though thou art so passing fair, yet deign
To imitate the lily-bells—and I
Will shelter thee from every unkind breath,
And fold thee close in true and faithful love,
E'en as those leaves the flowers.

PANSIES; OR LOVE IN IDLENESS.

Oberon. My gentle Puck, come hither : thou remember'st
 Since once I sat upon a promontory,
 And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
 Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
 That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
 And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
 To hear the sea maid's music.

Puck. I remember —
Oberon. That very time I saw, (but thou could'st not)
 Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
 Cupid all armed : a certain aim he took
 At a fair vestal, throned by the west;
 And loosed his love shaft smartly from his bow,
 As it should pierce an hundred thousand hearts.
 But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
 Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon —
 And the imperial votress pass'd on
 In maiden meditation, fancy free ;
 Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell :
 It fell upon a little western flower,
 Before milk white, now purple with Love's wound —
 And maidens call it "Love in idleness."

SHAKESPEARE.

Ophelia. There's Rosemary — that's for remembrance ; 'pray you, love, re-
 member : and there is Pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laertes. A document in madness — thoughts and remembrance fitted.

IBID.

Most strangely true and beautiful hath grown
 The fancy of that line—PANSIES for *thoughts* ;
 And thought is changeful ever. So are now
 The fair Ophelia's token flowers more fit
 To be its emblems ; for their varying hues,
 Like thoughts, diversified with bright, and deep,
 And gay, and sombre tints, mirror the mind
 In every changeful mood. Some robe them still



In milk-white garb; and these are maiden thoughts.
 Then, "purpled with Love's wound," they're pencilled o'er
 With richer beauty; and fantastic oft,
 And fleeting, too, are these love-marks, I ween.
 Some prank them bravely out in courtier garb,
 Trimming with gold their purple.* Some, methinks,
 Their quiet humble-coloured heads bend down,
 Like gentle, modest beings, doomed to bear
 Much of earth's grief, subduing their young hearts
 Into a holy calm. Others again,
 With hues abruptly, almost harshly mixed,
 Are like the meteor-minded sons of earth,
 With whom wild genius dwells—brilliant and strange;—
 In them e'en error oft times glorious shows.
 Others, like hoarding misers, deep within
 Hide a rich golden treasure, guarded round
 With many a blackened line; and all the rest
 Sombre and dusk appears;—they would not seem
 To have such wealth, and so go dimly clad.

Oh! are not PANSIES emblems meet for thoughts?
 The pure, the chequer'd—gay and deep by turns;
 A hue for every mood the bright things wear
 In their soft velvet coats—

And let *his* name,
 Who thus entwined them in immortal song,

* Since writing these lines I have found that the name of the Pansy, thus described as a *courtier*, singularly coincides with my own fancy; it is the "George the Fourth."

Be ever honoured when they meet our gaze ;
And bring, as though 'twere writ upon their leaves,
All that most graceful fairy scene, where PUCK,
His elvish ears attentive, learns the tale
Of OBERON'S syren-song—and how the shaft
Of armed Cupid dyed this “ western flower,”
Which maidens now call “ LOVE IN IDLENESS.”

SPRING MEMORIES AND MUSINGS.

I have presented my graphic portraits of Spring's fair children to my readers, with little illustration save my own fanciful, and, it may be, feebly descriptive poems; but as several of the selected Flowers, and others (which, though not represented in the illustrative groups, are famed gems), have poetic fables connected with them, I shall now give a few brief *memoirs* of familiar favourites, illustrating and enlivening my dull prose with extracts from our great old Poets.

In suffering my own productions to take precedence of these jewels, drawn from the mines of poetic wealth bequeathed to us by our ancient Bards, I am not actuated by vanity, but by a very different feeling—that of policy; believing that my humble lays would be far more graciously received by my readers, before the memory of favourite passages on like subjects had been refreshed by my extract-gleanings; well knowing, how

As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious.

There are few persons to whom the return of Spring is not a source of delight, Even to the denizens of the dim and noisy town its approach is welcome, as bringing a promise of clean streets and fair weather, and offering the chance of an occasional peep of blue sky between the tall houses. But to the dwellers in pleasant country places, where the hills and dales are Nature's own—where the wide heaven is unsmirched by smoke, and the air is pure and bright, and fragrant with the springing Flowers and the fresh earth; where the birds are flitting gaily around, and trilling forth songs of liberty and love;—to all whose lives may happily be passed among such scenes, how glorious is the Spring-time!

How exhilarating are the first few warmer days—how joyously we fling aside portions of our cumbrous winter-walking attire, to ramble along “by hedge-row elms and hillocks green;” and, after the first small buds have burst forth on the branches, how anxiously we watch their growth, and fancy we may *see* the leaves expanding in the genial sunshine, and clothing the skeleton forms of winter with robes of young vernal beauty. The general hue of the evergreens, which have so kindly solaced us during the wintry months, seem to acquire a more sombre tinge, as the vivid yellow green of the other trees now quite eclipses their beauty, although, when the young shoots of firs and cedars are put forth, the alternation of colour in them is very striking.

The birds are now busy, too, and musically clamorous; hundreds of them are warbling, and chirping, and chattering at once, yet in their mingled voices we hear no discord. It is

all harmony—the music of nature. I often listen to the happy creatures, singing so merrily in their greenwood haunts, and flitting airily along in search of materials for their nests, those wonderful little things! or looking for food for the young callow brood within; and I do marvel how any being can be so wantonly cruel, how any spirit can be so blind to the glory and happiness of nature, as to ensnare or destroy creatures so harmless, so glad, so beautiful, as birds.

The fathers of English poetry have so lauded this, their favourite season, in undying verse, that of all poetical subjects, “*Spring*” has perhaps the least chance of receiving any thing like original treatment at the hands of their descendants, who must not only shrink to stars of small magnitude indeed beside the greater luminaries, but be content to appear, for the most part, as shining only with reflected light.

The Bards of old looked on nature with the eye of the naturalist, the fancy of the poet, and the grace of the painter. The simplest flower, or the most trivial incident, is described by the pencilling picture-like verse of CHAUCER with a bright, clear, gleesome expression, only equalled in its peculiar beauty by his simple, impressive, and touching pathos. He revelled in the merry Spring-time, and many are the bright and sparkling descriptions of reviving nature which he has left us, telling how

The shoures sote of rain descended soft
 Causing the ground fele timis and oft,
 Up for to give many an wholesome air;
 And every plain was y-clothed faire

With newe grene; and makith smale floures
 To springen here and there in felde and mede,—
 So very gode and wholesom be the shoures,
 That they renewin that was olde and dede
 In winter time; and out of every sede
 Springith the herbe; so that every wight
 Of this season wexith richt glad and light.

Spenser, in his "Cantos of Mutability," describes a procession of the seasons and months, from which I select the following. The attributes of each are very fancifully and appropriately marshalled forth.

So forth issued the seasons of the yeare,
 First, lusty Spring, all dight in leaves of floures,
 That freshly budded, and new bloosmes did beare,
 In which a thousand birds had built their bowres,
 That swetely sung to call forth paramoures;
 And in his hand a iavelin he did beare,
 And on his head, (as fit for warlike stoures,)
 A guilt engraven morion he did weare,
 That as some did him love, so others did him feare.

• • • • •

These marching softly, all in order went,
 And after them the months all riding came;
 First, sturdy March, with brows full sternly bent,
 And armed strongly, rode upon a ram,
 The same which over Hellespontus swam.
 Yet in his hand a spade he also hent;
 And in a bag all sorts of seeds y-same
 Which on the earth he strewed as he went.

Next came fresh April, full of lustyhed,
 And wanton as a kid whose horne new buds;
 Upon a bull he rode, the same which led
 Europa floating thro' th' Argolick fluds:
 His hornes were gilden all with golden studs,
 And garnished with garlonds goodly dight
 Of all the fairest flowres and freshest buds
 Which th' earth brings forth; and wet he seemed in sight
 With waves, thro' which he waded, for his Love's delight.

Then came faire May, the fayrest Mayde on ground
 Deckt with all dainties of her season's pryde,
 And throwing flowres out of her lap around:
 Upon two brethren's shoulders she did ride,
 The twinnes of Leda; which, on eyther side,
 Supported her like to their souveraine queene:
 Lord! how all creatures laught when her they spide,
 And leapt and daunced as they had ravisht beene!
 And Cupid self about her fluttred all in greene.

These alegorical stanzas are quite in the "Faëry Queen" spirit. In that great poem Spenser displays infinite grandeur, loftiness, and luxuriant imagery; but when we peruse or listen to it, we are no longer in the world of reality—the world of Chaucer; we are at once witched away to Faëry Land, where nature is arrayed in such gorgeous hues, that, much as the imagination may be fascinated and dazzled by the splendid dreams before us, we cannot walk in fancy side by side with the poet through his maze of enchantment, as we may, and do, with the poets of this world, our cheerful, simple-minded Chaucer especially, whose flowers, and trees, and arbours, and nightingales, are realities that seem to rise in social companionship around us, while listening to his truth-invested verse.

Spenser's descriptions in the Faëry Queen are grand and luxurious pictures, at which we gaze afar off, and wonder and admire, and gaze again; and by these he is chiefly known. But it is in his pastoral poems, his "Shepherd's Calendar," "Colin Clout," "Hymnes of Beauty," "Muiopotnos," "Prothalamion," and "Epithalamion," his many sweet sonnets, and his "Ruines of Time," that Spenser's truly natural poetry is found; and it is most true and beautiful. "*Poets paint with the pen*" said one of the Caracci; and plentifully scattered through the above mentioned poems are pictures of pure sylvan loveliness that the pencil of Claude himself could not exceed. We might almost fancy they were endowed with some spell of enchantment, they have such a delightfully calm, happy effect on the mind engaged in their contemplation.

We will now

"Pursue his footing light
Through the wide woods and groves, with greene leaves dight."

The following exquisite stanzas are in his "Virgil's Gnat:"

The verie nature of the place, resounding
With gentle murmure of the breathing ayre,
A pleasaunt bowre with all delight abounding
In the freshe shadowe did for them prepayre,
To rest their limbs, with wearines redounding.
For first the high palme-trees, with braunches faire,
Out of the lowly vallies did arise,
And high shoote up their heades into the skyes.

.

Here also grew the rougher-rinded Pine,
 The great Argoan ship's brave ornament,
 Whom golden Fleece did make an heavenly signe ;
 Which coveting, with his high top's extent,
 To make the mountaines touch the starres divine,
 Decks all the forest with embellishment ;
 And the black Holme that loves the watrie vale ;
 And the sweete Cypresse, signe of deadly bale.

Emongst the rest the clambring Yvie grew,
 Knitting his wanton armes with grasping hold,
 Least that the Poplar happely should rew
 Her brother's strokes, whose boughes she doth enfold
 With her lythe twigs, till they the top survew,
 And paint with pallid greene her buds of gold.
 Next did the Myrtle tree to her approach,
 Not yet unmindful of her old reproach.

But the small birds in their wide boughs embowring,
 Chaunted their sundrie tunes with sweete consent ;
 And under them a silver spring forth powring
 His trickling streames, a gentle murmure sent ;
 Thereto the frogs, bred in the slimie scouring
 Of the moyst moores, their iarring voyces bent ;
 And shrill grashoppers chirped them around :
 All which the ayrie Echo did resound.

In this so pleasaunt place the Shepheard's flocke
 Lay everie where, their wearie limbs to rest,
 On everie bush, and everie hollow rocke,
 Where breathe on them the whistling wind mote best ;
 The whiles the Shepheard self, tending his stocke,
 Sate by the fountaine side, in shade to rest,
 Where gentle slumbring sleep oppressed him
 Displaid on ground, and seized everie lim.

The following poem by Robert Herrick, entitled "Farewell Frost; or, Welcome Spring," is very descriptive, though not remarkable for the peculiar melody of sound usually found in his short but sweet writings.

Fled are the frosts, and now the fields appeare
 Recloth'd in freshe and verdant diaper;
 Thawed are the snowes, and now the lusty spring
 Gives to each mead a neat enameling;
 The palmes put forth their gemmes, and every tree
 Now swaggers in her leavy gallantry.
 The while the Daulian minstrell sweetly sings,
 With warbling notes, her Tyrrean sufferings,
 What gentle winds respire! as if here
 Never had been the northern plunderer,
 To strip the trees and fields, to their distresse,
 Leaving them in a pittied nakednesse.
 And look how when a frantick storme doth teare
 A stubborn oake or holme, long growing there,
 But lul'd to calmnesse, then succeeds a breeze
 That scarcely stirs the nodding leaves of trees;
 So when this warre, which tempest-like doth spoil
 Our salt, our corne, our honie, wine, and oil,
 Falls to a temper, and doth mildly cast
 His inconsiderate frenzie off at last,
 The gentle dove may, when these turmoils cease,
 Bring in her bill, once more, the branch of peace.

The changes from Winter to Spring, and from a time of war to that of peace, are here very happily compared. But in our Flower legends Herrick will be heard to greatest advantage; in grace, fancy, and the most melodious cadences of verse, he is unrivalled, either by old or modern writers. Yet while thus eulogising his really sweet poems, I ought, perhaps, to

add, that these shine out but as straggling stars in a clouded sky; and that in the entire collection of his works there is far more to pass over than to pause and admire; a selection of Herrick's poems would form so valuable and delightful a volume, I much wonder such a work has not yet been published.*

The gallant and graceful Earl Surrey, the lover of the fair Geraldine, has dedicated one of his sweetest sonnets to "A Description of Spring, in which eche thing renews, save only the lover."

The soote season, that bud and bloome forthe brings,
 With grene hath clad the hill, and eke the vale;
 The nightingall, with fethers new, she sings,
 The turtle to her mate hath told her tale.
 Somer is come; for every spray now springs,
 The hart hath hung his old head on the pale,
 The buck in brake his winter coat he flings,
 The fishes flete with new repayred scale.
 The adder all her slough away she flings
 The swallow swift pursueth the flies smale,
 The busy bee, her honey now she mings,
 Winter is worne, that was the floure's bale;
 And thus I see among these pleasant thynges
 Eche care decays, and yet *my* sorrow sprynges.

Of all the attributes of Spring, *Flowers* take the precedence; the very mention of "the soote season" brings with it the thought of the "bud and bloom" that form its chiefest beauty; and ere

———— well aparelled April on the heel
 Of limping Winter treads,

*"Choice fruits from Herrick's *Hesperides*" will shortly appear, edited by the Author of this volume.

we are eagerly longing for the time, when

Daisies pied, and violets blue,
 And lady smocks all silver white,
 And cuckoo buds of yellow hue,
 Do paint the meadows with delight.

How gracefully linked together in perfect poesy are the few sweet Spring Flowers which our divine Shakspeare represents the fair Perdita as wishing for to present to her guests—

O Proserpina,
 For the flowers now, that, frighted, thou let'st fall
 From Dis's waggon! Daffodils
 That come before the swallow dares, and take
 The winds of March with beauty. Violets, dim,
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
 Or Cytherea's breath. Pale primroses,
 That die unmarried, ere they can behold
 Bright Phœbus in his strength; a malady
 Most incident to maids. Bold oxlips, and
 The crown-imperial; lilies of all kinds,
 The flower-de-luce being one.

Having culled most of Shakspeare's floral gems for introduction in other parts of the present volume, I will only select one or two more *groups* of flowers, and then pass on to the fables, &c., connected with those forming the illustrations of Spring.

Ben Jonson—"rare Ben Jonson"—has a most beautiful scene in "Pan's Anniversary," where all the flowers familiarly known are thus lightly yet richly grouped.

Strew, strew the glad and smiling ground
 With every flower, yet not confound.
 The primrose drop, the Spring's own spouse,
 Bright day's eyes, and the lips of cows,
 The garden star, the queen of May,
 The rose, to crown the holyday.

Drop, drop your violets, change your hues,
 Now red, now pale, as lover's use ;
 And in your death go out as well
 As when you lived unto the smell :
 That from your odour all may say
 This is the shepherd's holyday.

SHEPHERD.

Well done, my pretty ones—rain roses still,
 Until the last be dropt ; then hence, and fill
 Your fragrant prickles for a second shower.
 Bring corn-flags, tulips, and Adonis-flower,
 Fair ox-eye, goldy-locks, and columbine,
 Pinks, goulands, king-cups, and sweet sops-in-wine,
 Blue hare-bells, pagles, pansies, calaminth,
 Flower-gentle, and the fair-haired hyacinth,
 Bring rich carnations, flower-de-luces, lilies,
 The chequed and purple-ringed daffodillies,
 Bright crown-imperial, kingspear, hollyhocks,
 Sweet Venus'-navel, and soft lady-smocks,
 Bring too some branches forth of Daphne's hair,
 And gladdest myrtle for these posts to wear,
 With spikenard weaved, and marjoram between,
 And starred with yellow golds, and meadow's queen,
 That when the altar, as it ought, is drest,
 More odour comes not from the phœnix' nest,
 The breath thereof Panchaia may envy,
 The colours China, and the light the sky.

Ben Jonson, with most of the old poets, studiously preserved the *sense* of the name given to each flower: for instance, instead of *daisy*, a word which at first seems to mean nothing, he says "bright day's-eyes," the flower having received that name from its habit of closing up in rainy weather and at night. Besides "eye of the day," it was also named "marguerite," a pearl, under which title it is celebrated by Chaucer.

In Feverere, whan that it was colde,
 Froste, snowe, haile, raine, hath dominacion,
 With changable elementes, and windes manifolde,
 Which hath of ground, flowre, herbe, jurisdiction,
 For to dispose aftir their correccion;
 And yet Aprillis, with his plesant showres,
 Dissolveth the snow, and bringeth forth his flowres.

Of whose invencion lovirs may be glade,
 For they bring in the Kalendis of Maie,
 And they, with countenance demure, meke,
 Owe worship to the lusty flowres alwaie.
 And in special one called iye of the daie,
 The daisie, or flowir white and rede,
 And in Frenche called La belle Marguerite.

Chaucer's love of the daisy is most fully and beautifully expressed in the "Prologue to the Legende of goode Women," one of the many gems we find in his works. He describes his great fondness for study, and how he delights in reading his "olde bookes," for which he has such faith and credence that no sport nor game can entice him away from them,

Save certainly, whan that the month of Maie
 Is comen, and that I hear the foules sing,
 And that the floures ginnen for to spring,
 Farewell my booke, and my devocion :
 Now have I than eke this condicion,
 That of all the floures in the mede
 Than love I most these flowres white and rede,
 Soch that men callen Daisies in our toun,
 To hem I have so great affectioun,
 As I sayd erst, whan comen is the Maie,
 That in my bedde there daweth me no daie,
 That I n'am up and walking in the mede
 To see this floure ayenst the Sunne sprede ;
 Whan it up riseth early by the morrow,
 That blissful sight softeneth all my sorrow.
 So glad am I, whan that I have presence
 Of it to done it alle reverence,
 As she that is of alle floures the floure,
 Fulfilled of all vertue and honoure,
 And ever ylike faire, and fresh of hewe,
 And ever I love it, and ever ylike newe,
 And ever shall, till that mine herte die,
 Alle swears I not, of this I wool not lie.

He then tells how, at evening, he goes to watch,

As soon as ever the Sunne ginneth west
 To seen this floure, how it will goe to rest,
 For feare of night, so hateth she darknesse,
 Her chere is plainly spred in the brightness
 Of the Sunne, for there it woll unclose :

He then complains that he has neither rhyme nor prose "suffisant this floure to praise aright," and describes his eagerness to go forth into the fields before sunrise, to wait the "resurrection" of the day's-eye.

And doune on knees anon right I me sette,
 And as I could, this freshe floure I grette,
 Kneeling alway, till it unclosed was,
 Upon the smale, softe, swete gras,
 That was with floures swete embrouded all,
 Of soch swetenesse, and soch odour all,
 That for to speake of gomme, herbe or tree,
 Comparison may not ymaked be,
 For it surmounteth plainly all odoures,
 And of the rich beaute of the floures :

• • • • •

And leaning on my elbow and my side
 The longe day I shope me to abide,
 For nothing els, and I shall not lie,
 But for to looke upon the daisie,
 That well by reason men it calle may,
 The daisie, or else the iye of the day,
 The Emprise, and floure of floures all,
 I pray to God that faire mote she fall,
 And all that loven floures for her sake :

• • • • •

Whan that the Sunne out of the south gan west,
 And that this floure gan close, and gan to rest ;
 For darkness of the night, the which she dred,
 Home to mine house full swiftly I me sped,
 To gone to rest, and earely for to rise,
 To seene this floure to sprede, as I devise.

The daisy has never received homage like Chaucer's; nor has any flower (Shakspeare's *Love-in-idleness* alone excepted) become so entirely associated with a poet's fame. How simply, and how lovingly he paints his affection for this darling of the year! Coleridge justly remarked, "how well we seem to know Chaucer;" and in these lovely descriptions of his early and late watchings of his favourite flower, how completely we seem

to behold him, "kneeling alway, till it unclosed was;" and at sunset, when its leaves were again folded, we see him hastening home, that he may rise early and watch it again expand. A beautiful portrait of a gentle, happy, and truly poetic mind may be found in Chaucer's passages descriptive of his own habits and fancies; and yet, comparatively, his works are known to but a small portion of readers, and are but little appreciated, chiefly for want of the attention at first required to understand the varying accents and form the correct rhythm in reading them. His poems are so replete with beauties, and so thoroughly English in spirit, that they *must*, ere long, occupy that place among familiar favourites which they have so long in vain deserved.

Shakspeare very gracefully introduces the daisy in the description of Lucrece sleeping.

Without the bed her other fair hand was,
 On the green coverlet; whose perfect white
 Showed like an April daisy on the grass.
 Her eyes, like marigolds, had sheathed their light,
 And, canopied in darkness, sweetly lay,
 Till they might open to adorn the day.

To our flower-loving Herrick I must be indebted for the last specimen of daisy eulogy which I shall quote here; it is a sweet melodious little fancy, and, as is usual in such compositions of his day, conveys a very elegant compliment to his mistress.

TO DAISIES, NOT TO SHUT SO SOON.

Shut not so soon ; the dull-eyed night
 Ha's not as yet begunne
 To make a seizure on the light,
 Or to seale up the sunne.

No marigolds yet closed are,
 No shadowes greate appeare ;
 Nor doth the early shepheard's starre
 Shine like a spangle here.

Stay but till my Julia close
 H^er life-begetting eye ;
 And let the whole world then dispose
 It selfe to live or dye.

Among the poetic groups of Spring Flowers, culled from the rich parterre of Britain's noble and immortal Bards, I cannot omit the following exquisite description of the vernal season, by Gawain Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld. The epithets in it are often peculiarly happy ; but to those of my readers who think Chaucer's language obscure, these truly beautiful lines will seem utterly unintelligible, even with the glossary appended.

And blissful blossoms in the bloomed sward
 Submit their heads in the young sun's safe-guard :
 Ivy-leaves rank o'erspread the *Barmekyn*^a wall ;
 The bloomed hawthorn clad his *pykis*^b all
 Forth of fresh *burgeons*^c ; the wine-grapis ying
 Endlong the twistis did on trestles hing.

^a *Barmekyn*—old mound, barbican.

^b *Pykis*—thorns.

^c *Burgeons*—buds.

The locked buttons on the gemmed trees
 O'erspreadand leaves of nature's tapestries ;
 Soft grassy verdure, after balmy showers,
 On curland stalkis smiland to their flowers.
 Beholdand them so many divers hue,
 Some *pers*^d, some pale, some *burnet*^e, and some blue,
 Some grey, some *gules*^f, some purple, some sanguene,
Blanchet^g or brown, *fauch-yellow*^h many ane.
 Some heavenly coloured, in celestial *gré*ⁱ,
 Some watry-hued, as the *haw-waly*^k sea ;
 And some depaint in freckles red and white,
 Some bright as gold, with aureate leavis *lite*^l :
 The daisie did unbraid her crownal smale,
 And every flower un-lapped in the dale.
 The flower-de-luce forth spread his heavenly hue,
Flower-damas^m, and columbo black and blue.
 Sere downis smale on dandelion sprung,
 The young green bloomed strawberry-leaves among :
 Gimp gilliflowers their own leaves *un-shet*ⁿ ;
 Fresh primrose, and the purple violet.
 The *rose-knobbis tetand*^o forth their head,
 Gan chip, and *kyth*^p their vernal lippis red ;
 Crisp scarlet leaves sheddand, baith at anes,
 Cast fragrant smell amid from golden grains.
 Heavenly lilies, with *lockerand*^q toppis white
 Opened, and shew their crestis *redemite*^r.

^d *Pers*—light blue.

^e *Burnet*—brownish.

^f *Gules*—scarlet.

^g *Blanchet*—white.

^h *Fauch-yellow*—fawn-coloured yellow.

ⁱ *Celestial gre*—sky blue.

^k *Haw-waly*—dark-waved.

^l *Lite*—little.

^m *Flower-damas*—damask rose.

ⁿ *Unshet*—unshut, opened.

^o *Rose-knobbis tetand*—rose-buds

peeping.

^p *Kyth*—show.

^q *Lockerand*—curling like locks of hair.

^r *Redemite*—crowned.

The expression "lockerand toppis," in speaking of the lilies, is very quaintly appropriate, as so many of that class of flowers have the petals, when fully expanded, turning back in a perfect *curl*, like the red tiger lily.

The balmy vapour from their silver *croppis*,^{*}
 Distilland wholesome sugar'd honey-droppis,
 So that ilk burgeon, scion, herb, or flower,
 Wox all embalmed of the fresh liquoure,
 And bathed did in dulce humoures fete,
 Whereof the beeis wrought their honey sweet.

Leaving the old Bards, I shall now introduce one of the loveliest flower scenes ever painted by poet's pen, and which has few rivals, even among the bright and beautiful creations of its author. It is a dream of Spring Flowers, by Percy Bysshe Shelley.

I dreamed that, as I wandered by the way,
 Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring,
 And gentle odours led my steps astray,
 Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
 Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
 Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
 Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
 But kissed it, and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
 Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
 The constellated flower that never sets ;
 Faint oxlips ; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
 The sod scarce heaved ; and that tall flower that wets
 Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
 When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
 Green cow-bind, and the moonlight-coloured May,
 And cherry blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
 Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day ;

* *Croppis*—heads.

And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
 With its dark buds and leaves wandering astray ;
 And flowers azure, black and streaked with gold,
 Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

We find Shelley, too, lavishing words of praise and fondness on the daisy. How exquisitely descriptive is the epithet "pearled Arcturi of the earth, the constellated flower that never sets;" the association of true and beautiful ideas is the happiest that can be conceived in so few words. The pearl-like whiteness of the flower; the name "Arcturi," from the star Arcturus, which is always visible to our hemisphere, as the daisy is ever in bloom; and the term "constellated flower," so beautifully realizing the starry groups in which they are seen clustering together, are ideas as truly as they are poetically emblematical of the subject.

Primroses and cowslips have ever been in high favour with the sovereigns of song. The Swedish name of the former, *majnycklar*, or the key of May, is very characteristic of the sudden arrival of Summer in high latitudes. The primrose comes, and, as if it unlocked the treasure-house of earth, all the other bright gifts of the season follow close upon it. In Beaumont and Fletcher's Bridal Song of Theseus and Hippolita, we find among "Nature's children sweet,"

Primrose, first-born child of Ver,
 Merry Spring-time's harbinger,
 With her bells dim.

And Herrick celebrates their meek, young beauty in one of his most musical, melancholy strains :

TO PRIMROSES FILLED WITH MORNING DEW.

Why doe ye weep, sweet babes ? can teares
 Speak grieve in you,
 Who were but borne
 Just as the modest morn
 Teemed her refreshing dew ?
 Alas! you have not known that shower
 That marres a flower ;
 Nor felt th' unkind
 Breath of a blasting wind :
 Nor are ye worne with yeares,
 Or warpt as we,
 Who think it strange to see
 Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
 To speak by teares before ye have a tongue.
 Speak, whimp'ring younglings, and make known
 The reason why
 Ye droop and weep,
 Is it for want of sleep,
 Or childish lullaby ?
 Or that ye have not seen as yet
 The violet ?
 Or broughte a kisse
 From that sweetheart to this ?
 No, no, this sorrow shown
 By your teares shed,
 Wo'd have this lecture read ;
 That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
 Conceived with grieve are, and with tears brought forth

The cowslip bells are generally named by poets as the resort of fairies; Shakspeare's "dainty Ariel" sings—

Where the bee sucks, there suck I ;
 In a cowslip's bell I lie :
 There I couch when owls do cry.

And the Fairy, talking to Puck, in the "Midsummer-night's Dream"—that "paradise of dainty devices"—says, in speaking of Titania—

The cowslips tall her pensioners be ;
 In their gold coats' spots you see ;
 Those be rubies, fairy favours,
 In those freckles live their savours :
 I must go seek some dewdrops here,
 And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

Herrick alludes to the cowslip gatherers in his sweet verses

TO MEDDOWES,

Ye have been fresh and green,
 Ye have been filled with flowres,
 And ye the walks have been
 Where maids have spent their houres.

Ye have beheld how they
 With wicker arks did come,
 To kisse and beare away
 The richer cowslips home.

Y've heard them sweetly sing,
 And seen them in a round :
 Each virgin, like a spring,
 With honysuccles crown'd.

But now, we see none here,
 Whose silverie feet did tread,
 And with dishevell'd haire
 Adorned this smoother mead.

Like unthrifths, having spent
 Your stock, and needy grown,
 Y'are left here to lament
 Your poor estates alone.

Another lovely Spring Flower, which is very familiar to us, and often found in company with the primrose, is the blue-bell, or wild hyacinth,—*scilla nutans*. The soft delicate blue of the bells hanging gracefully from the tall stem, and its waving leaves of bright green, which grow in great profusion, render it conspicuously beautiful; nor is its odour unworthy of its appearance. I intended to introduce *portraits* of the primrose and blue-bell, grouped, among the illustrations of Spring; but having exceeded the number of plates, that drawing, among others, is omitted. It is remarkable that two flowers, so distinct from each other as the Spring blue-bell and the fragile harebell of Autumn, should be so frequently described as one and the same flower. No one thinks of mistaking a snowdrop for a lily, and yet these two blue-bells are more unlike.

Two more popular favourites among Spring's rainbowed children are the celandine and buttercup; and their bright golden faces tell us many a tale of infancy and happiness,—of the time “when daisies and buttercups gladdened our sight like treasures of silver and gold.” There is the arum, too, with its curious sheaths, enfolding the singular spire of yellow, purple, or pink, which children call “cows and calves;” a title which my floral etymology has not yet enabled me to make any *sense* of: but I well remember the pleasure of seeking and gathering the plant; and now the sight of the arum's broad shining barbed leaves in a hedge or on a bank, is an irresistible attraction to peep for the well-known treasure. The modest “tender-hued wood-sorrel” gives to the lane its “neat enamelling,” with its triple crimson-lined leaves and soft blossoms. And how delicately do

the light blossoms of the wild strawberry gem the banks with their small silvery stars ! while above them the hawthorn gently waves its branches in the soft breeze, enwreathed and loaded with clustering *swarms* of flowers,

Speaking their perfume to the tell-tale air,
 Who, gently whispering, will gaily go,
 And all around the fragrant message bear.
 Come, let us rest this hawthorn-tree below,
 And breathe its luscious fragrance ere it flies,
 And watch the tiny petals as they fall,
 Circling and winnowing down our sylvan hall,
 Shook from the full-flowered spray by quiv'ring wing
 Of some gay bird, up-rushing to the skies
 Its wild out-pouring melody to sing,
 Exulting in its joy.*

The pink hawthorn is an elegant and brilliant ornament to the lawn or shrubbery, and forms a beautiful kind of raspberry-and-cream contrast to the white ; but our *affection* is for the hedge-row hawthorn, the true " May," whose lavish wealth of flowers and fragrance in Spring adds to our lovely scenery a charm peculiarly English.

All our true poets love this generous wayside friend ; Shakespeare, in Henry IV., says—

Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade
 To shepherds looking on their silly sheep
 Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy
 To kings, that fear their subjects' treachery ?

* From an unpublished Poem by the Author.

Chaucer thus alludes to the good and pleasant old custom of going a Maying, in his "Court of Love:—"

And forthe goeth alle the Courte, both moste and leste,
 To fetch the flowirs freshe, and braunche and bloome,
 And namely hawthorne brought both page and groome,
 With freshe garlantis partly blew and white.

Spenser makes frequent mention of this fragrant Spring flower, both in his "Faëry Queen," and his poems of this world. The allusion I think most appropriate and beautiful, is this opening dialogue of the fifth "Æglogue," in his "Shepherd's Calender:—"

PALINODE. PIERS.

- Palinode.* Is not thilke the mery moneth of May,
 When love lads maskee in fresh aray ?
 How falles it then, wee no merrier beene,
 Ylike as others, girt in gawdy greene ?
 Our bloncket liveries bene all to sadde
 For thilke same season, when all is ycladde
 With pleasaunce ; the ground with grasse, the woods
 With greene leaves, the bushes with bloosming buds.
 Youngthes folke now flocken in everie where
 To gather May baskets and smelling brere ;
 And home they hasten the postes to dight,
 And all the kirk pillours eare day-light,
 With hawthorne-buds, and sweete eglantine,
 And girlonds of roses, and soppes in wine.
 Such merrimake holy Saints doth queme,
 But wee here sitten as drownde in dreme.
- Piers.* For younkens, Palinode, such follies fitte,
 But wee tway bene men of elder witte.
- Palinode.* Sicker this morrow, no lenger agoe,
 I sawe a shole of shepheardes outgoe,

With singing and shouting, and iolly chere :
 Before them yode a lustie tabrere,
 That to the many a horn-pype playd,
 Whereto they dauncen eche one with his mayd.
 To see those folks make such iovysaunce,
 Made my heart after the pype to daunce :
 Tho to the greene wood they speeden hem all
 To fetchen home May with their musicall ;
 And one they bringen in a royale throne,
 Crowned as king ; and his queene attone
 Was Lady Flora, on whom did attend
 A fayre flocke of faeries, and a fresh bend
 Of lovely nymphes. O that I were there
 To helpen the ladies their May-bush beare !

Though I have devoted so large a space to eulogies of the hawthorn, I cannot quit the subject without quoting a stanza from my graceful favourite, Herrick, also commemorating the ceremonies used in the merry olden-time on May-day. Much do I regret that such *good* and poetical festivities have become nearly obsolete. Many of the sports and pastimes of our ancestors would now be unsuited to their more *cultivated* descendants ; but such as bring us into close communion with Nature's loveliness and glory must, of necessity, be yet more highly enjoyed as our minds become more elevated and capable of comprehending, appreciating, and, above all, heartily *feeling* the delightful influence of the harmony and beauty of creation.

But let us hear Herrick.

TO CORINNA, GOING A MAYING.

Get up, get up, for shame, the blooming morne
 Upon her wings presents the god unshorne.

See how Aurora throws her faire
 Fresh-quilted colours through the aire ;
 Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
 The dew bespangling herbe and tree ;
 Each flower has wept, and bow'd towards the east
 Above an hour since, yet you are not drest :
 Nay ! not so much as out of bed,
 When all the birds have mattens seyde,
 And sung their thankful hymnes ; 'tis sin,
 Nay, profanation, to keep in,
 When as a thousand virgins on this day
 Spring sooner than the lark to fetch in May.

Rise, and put on your foliage ; and be scene
 To come forth, like the spring-time, fresh and greene,
 And sweet as Flora. Take no care
 For jewels for your gowne or haire ;
 Feare not, the leaves will strew
 Gemmes in abundance upon you ;
 Besides, the childhood of the day hath kept
 Against you come, some orient pearls unwept.
 Come, and receive them, while the light
 Hangs on the dew-locks of the night ;
 And Titan on the eastern hill
 Retires himself, or else stands still,
 Till you come forth. Wash, dresse, be brief in praying ;
 Few beads are best, when once we goe a Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come ; and comming, mark
 How eche field turns a street, eche street a parke,
 Made greene, and trimmed with trees ; see how
 Devotion gives each house a bough,
 Or branch ; each porch, each doore, ere this
 An arke, a tabernacle is,
 Maide up of whitethorn neatly interwove,
 As if here were those cooler shades of love.
 Can such delights be in the street
 And open fields ; and we not see't ?

Come, we'll abroad, and let's obey
 The proclamation made for May :
 And sin no more, as we have done, by staying ;
 But, my Corinna, come, let's goe a Maying.

Is not this exquisitely beautiful ? I know of nothing, on a similar subject, which may bear a comparison with the sweetness, fancy, and delicate elegance of these lines. They are soft and musical enough to have been breathed out in the chime of Lily-bells. The melody of Herrick's true poetry is, to my mind, almost unequalled—Shelley alone rivals him ; and, as Shelley's poetry is of a far loftier character, a comparison may not well be drawn between them.

Next to the hawthorn-bloom, the lilac and laburnum contribute most to the adornment of the glad earth at this festive season ; and right gaily do they deck her out, with their countless clusters of amethyst and showers of gold.

One might invent a fable, or at least improve one, and represent Jupiter visiting Danæ in the form of a laburnum-tree in bloom, far more gracefully than in a fall of heavy clinking metal ; though if the fair ladies of those classic days loved parties and pin-money as well as modern beauties seem to do, methinks the celestial wooer would have sped but poorly in his courtship ; for, verily, and indeed, Plutus is far more in request than the blooming Flora ; and the exhibition of a diamond necklace in a close and heated midnight ball-room is a matter of higher importance, and, as they would fain persuade us, productive of more pleasure (though this I will not do them the wrong of believing) than a health-giving ramble in the

blessed country, and the acquisition of a cluster of bright wild flowers, glittering with nature's gems of dew.

Spring is certainly the season of England's greatest beauty. The vine-wreathed Autumn of southern climes may, and must be, rich and rare; but we will not envy them while our own dear Land has her fairy-like realm of orchards in blossom, and in loveliness, as in fame, is a queen indeed. What can be more luxuriantly picturesque than the appearance of the world of Flowers which our cider counties display at this season? Indeed, the small garden orchards attached to road-side cottages all over England are gems of beauty. The various tints and texture of the blossoms, from the pure white of the pear and cherry to the deep rose-coloured buds of the apple and crab, and the young delicate green of the just opening leaves, do truly seem like a festal robe worn by the joyous earth in honour of the Spring-time. The Broom too, "the bonny, bonny Broom," waves its slender sprays in the soft breeze, and we look from the gay, gold-coloured butterfly-blossoms it bears on the walls, to the small and more delicate white ones of the gardens, and know not which are most beautiful. The Guelder Rose trees look as if overburdened with their globes of silvery flowers; and the aromatic Syringa breathes afar off her delicious perfume, which emulates in sweetness, as her flowers do in beauty, the famed orange blossoms of southern lands.

It was during a delightful journey through scenes like this,
when

Zephirus and Flora gently
Yave to the flowers soft and tenderly
Hir sote brethe, and made hem for to sprede,
As God and Goddesse of the flourie mede,
In which, methoughte, I mighte daie by daie
Dwellen alway, the jolly month of Maie,

that the following "May Meditations" suggested themselves.

She came—the bright, beautiful, gladsome Spring!
She hath waved o'er the earth her glittering wing;
With her sunny smile, and her joyous voice,
She hath bid the chilled, weary earth rejoice;
Doff her wintry garb, and with flow'rets gay
Richly embroider her verdant array.
The Spring came forth; with her glance so bright,
Her song of glee, and her wing of light,
She hath flitted along o'er vale and hill
That in Winter's deep sleep lay dark and still;
She hath warbled her cheerful, arousing strain,
And they burst from their slumbers to life again.
She waved o'er the forests her magic wand,
And the leaves sprang forth 'neath her fairy hand.
The luxuriant lilac's bloom is there,
And laburnums waving their yellow hair;
The blossoms of snow on each clustered spray
Their light petals spread on her flower-gemmed way,—
Some purest white, and some with a streak
Like the fluttering blush on a maiden's cheek.

O'er field and hedge-row, by bank and stream,
 Her path we trace in the rainbow gleam
 Of the myriad flowers, that now unfold
 Their treasures of silver and burnished gold ;
 And, queen of wild buds, the hyacinth blue
 Rivals the skies with as bright a hue ;
 And the hedge-geranium, fair and brief,
 Twines 'mid each gay group her fragrant leaf,
 And star-like blossoms, that blushing, peep
 Down sheltered lane and o'er rocky steep.
 List! — 'twas the nightingale's note ye heard :
 To the fairest flower sings the sweetest bird,
 For the earliest rose has opened, to fling
 Her fragrant breath on the breeze of Spring.

Few trees are so magnificent in foliage as the horse-chesnut, with its large fan-like leaves, far more resembling those of some tropical plant than the garb of a forest tree in climes like ours ; but when these are crowned with its pyramids of flowers, so splendid in their distant effect, and so exquisitely modelled and pencilled when we gather and examine their fair forms—is it not then the pride of the landscape? If the oak—the true British oak—be the forest king, let us give him at least a partner in his majesty; and let the chesnut, whose noble head is crowned by the hand of Spring with a regal diadem, gemmed with myramids of pearly, and golden, and ruby flowers—let her be queen of the woods in bonny England: and while we listen to the musical hum of the bees, as they load

themselves with her wealth of honey, we will fancy they are congratulating their noble and generous friend on her new honours.

I am perhaps growing somewhat too excursive under the influence of these sweet Spring memories; and it may be thought, that in a work ostensibly devoted to flowers, I have no right to trespass upon the forest; but wherever I find such favoured children of Flora as the one last mentioned, be it in garden, grove, forest, or stream, I claim for them right of introduction among their fair and fragrant kindred.

The flowers which have been selected in illustration of Spring now demand a brief notice, especially as several of them are of very classic origin, according to the poets, whose graceful imaginings will well relieve my matter-of-fact prose.

It appears rather singular that the Snowdrop, which is considered an indigenous plant, is never, to my knowledge, mentioned by the old poets; this circumstance would seem to infer a comparatively recent introduction of the lovely flower, and I have found it growing wild in several situations (such as the site of a moated house, long since destroyed, where it flourishes in profusion) where it may originally have been planted as a garden flower. Had it been equally abundant in Chaucer's time, we may be tolerably sure so gentle and beautiful a thing, braving the bleakest season of the year, and excelling even the Daisy in lowly modesty, would not have remained unsung. Nor is it found either in the graceful chaplets of Shakspeare, the songs of Beaumont and Fletcher, or in the rich and many-

hued clusters of Ben Jonson or Spenser; but I must leave this enigma to be solved by abler minds than mine.

The SNOWDROP is hailed year after year with unchanged delight, as our earliest of

Spring's voluptuous paintings, when she breathes
Her first sweet kisses,

Shelley

and, as a native of our soil, "The fair maid of February" (for by that sweet name is she sometimes known) has an undisputed claim to a chief place in our list of floral friends. In real unpoetical truth, I believe the yellow aconite is "the ae first flower springs either in moor or dale;" but to acknowledge such precedence in any but a solely botanical work, would seem like robbing the heiress of her birthright; and poetry cannot suffer Spring's fair and virgin queen to be deposed in favour of any less qualified representative, or the Christmas Rose, which gladdens even a drearier season, might justly lay claim to more celebration than she now gains. It would thus appear that simple Audrey's suspicions of "our craft" are somewhat too well founded, when she enquires of Touchstone, if "poetical means *honest* in word and deed?"

The CROCUS is fancied by Prior as the bridegroom of the Lady Snowdrop. It is a graceful conceit, for they are a most faithful couple; rarely severed during their short lives. Together they rise from the snow—together bide the storm, or bask in the sunshine—and when one droops and dies, we know that both are leaving us.

THE CROCUS—PRIOR.

Dainty young thing
 Of life!—thou venturous flower
 Who growest through the hard cold bower
 Of wintry spring.

Thou various hued,
 Soft, voiceless bell, whose spire
 Rocks in the grassy leaves like wire
 In solitude.

Like patience, thou
 Art quiet in thy earth,
 Instructing Hope that virtue's birth
 Is feeling's vow.

Thy fancied bride,
 The delicate Snowdrop, keeps
 Her home with thee; she wakes and sleeps
 Near thy true side.

Will man but hear!
 A simple flower can tell
 What beauties in his mind should dwell
 Through passion's sphere.

The brilliant colours and woody growth of the *Pyrus Japonica*, make it contrast strikingly with the pale and fragile snow-drop, near whose modest bells this superb native of Japan may often be seen, exhibiting the singular appearance I have described in the illustrative lines. The buds and flowers of brightest crimson, with their golden-coloured anthers, come peering out through the snow wreaths, that lie lightly upon their trained stems; and, to a far less fanciful eye than mine, might well

seem to have melted their way, dissolving their glittering veil to come blushing again into sunshine. The white and pink varieties of the *Pyrus Japonica* are also very beautiful, but have not the rich and glowing splendour of my fairy favourite, which, through the months of late Autumn, Winter, and early Spring, when so few of our garden darlings venture to look upon the dreary earth, clothes the supporting wall or trellis with its cheering and vivid beauty, being, in this respect, more worthy our esteem than most of our foreign acquisitions, which generally require the additional warmth and shelter of the stove or conservatory.

The next gem of my floral chaplet is one of classic fame; one of the many fair flowers around which mythological fable has thrown its quaint legendary garb: even its botanical name brings a dream of romance with it—*Narcissus Poeticus*. Our own merry, dancing daffodil claims kindred with the *Narcissi*; and who does not love the daffodils,

That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty †

What a mine of wealth a bank sprinkled thickly with their bright golden crests and waving leaves seemed to us in childhood! And, if only precious as the memories of such innocent delight, we must love them still. Of *modern* Bards, however great, I have forbidden myself to speak, but what can be more beautiful, in thought, expression, and melody, than these sweet verses of Robert Herrick's?

Faire daffodills, we weep to see
 You haste away so soon ;
 As yet the early rising sun
 Has not attained his noon.
 Stay, stay,
 Untill the hasting day
 Has run
 But to the even song ;
 And, having prayed together, we
 Will goe 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 any thing.
 We die
 As your hours doe, and drie
 Away,
 Like to the Summer's raine,
 Or as the pearles of morning's dew,
 Ne'er to be found againe.

The Narcissus is celebrated by many of our old Poets, to whom the story of the beautiful youth growing enamoured of his own reflected form as he gazed into a fountain, and pining in hopeless love till transformed into the Flower bearing his name, was a most tempting subject for their quaint and fanciful muses. The bending heads of all the Narcissi favour the fable, which is certainly a very graceful one; and we do well to bear such in our memory, for they greatly enchanse and refine the enjoyment we receive from Flowers, in thus making mental tablets of their delicate and pencilled leaves. The Narcissus is one of the flowers spoken of by Emilia and her maid, in the beautiful garden scene in "The Two Noble Kinsmen," by Beaumont and Fletcher.

- Emilia.* This garden bath a world of pleasures in't.
What flower is this ?
- Servant.* 'Tis called Narcissus, Madam.
- Emilia.* That was a fair boy certain, but a fool
To love himself; were there not maids enough?
Or were they all hard-hearted?
- Servant.* They could not be, to one so fair.
- Emilia.* Thou would'st not ?
- Servant.* I think I should not, Madam.
- Emilia.* That is a good wench!
Canst thou not work such flowers in silk, wench ?
I'll have a gown full of 'em ; and of these,
This a pretty colour : will't not do
Rarely upon a skirt, wench ?
- Servant.* Dainty, Madam.

The most deeply and entirely *poetical* allusion to the fate of Narcissus is the following splendid passage by Ben Jonson. The love of Echo, and her half reproachful grief, give a real and touching pathos to what in other hands is a mere fable.

- Echo.* His name revives and lifts me up from earth—
See, see, the mourning fount, whose springs weep yet
Th' untimely fate of that too beauteous boy,
That trophy of self-love, and spoil of nature,
Who, now transformed into this drooping flower,
Hangs the repentant head back from the stream ;
As if it wished—" would I had never looked
Into such a flattering mirror !" O Narcissus !
Thou that wast once (and yet art) my Narcissus,
Had Echo but been private with thy thoughts,
She would have dropped away herself in tears,
Till she had all turned water, that in her
(As in a truer glass) thou might'st have gazed,
And seen thy beauties by more kind reflection.
But self-love never yet could look on truth
But with bleared beams ; slick Flattery and she

Are twin-born sisters, and do mix their eyes,
 As, if you sever one, the other dies.
 Why did the Gods give thee a heavenly form
 And earthly thoughts to make thee proud of it ?
 Why, do I ask ?—'Tis now the known disease
 That Beauty hath, to bear too deep a sense
 Of her own self-conceived excellence.
 Oh! hadst thou known the worth of Heaven's rich gift,
 Thou wouldst have turned it to a truer use,
 And not (with starved and covetous ignorance)
 Pined in continual eyeing that bright gem,
 The glance whereof to others had been more,
 Than to thy famished mind the wide world's store.

Shelley, in the exquisite description of flowers in his Poem
 of the "Sensitive Plant," calls

Narcissi, the fairest among them all,
 Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
 Till they die of their own dear loveliness.

The scent of the Narcissus, too, is extremely fragrant, and
 when adorning our windows in wintry weather, how delight-
 fully does the perfumed air of the snug, fire-enlivened study
 seem to whisper, or at least *breathe*, of Summer's sweet children
 and merry blue sky! Yes, the Narcissus is sweet, but it yields
 the palm of fragrance to its modest neighbour in the wreath.
 Who does not know that

VIOLETS, dim,
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
 Or Cytherea's breath,

have their humble dwelling-places in our English lanes?
 Who has not seen them on many a sunny bank, in early

Spring, clustering together, the purple and the white, hiding among their broad heart-shaped leaves, and, timidly unclosing their soft petals, filling the air with the sweetest of all sweet odours ?

William Habington, in his poems to Castara, thus prettily alludes to the retiring modesty of this oft-praised flower.

Like the Violet, which alone
 Prospers in some happy shade,
 My Castara lives unknown,
 To no looser eye betraid,
 For she's to herself untrue
 Who delights i' the public view.

Sir Henry Wotton in his most elegant compliments to the Queen of Bohemia, says

Ye Violets that first appeare
 By your pure purple mantles known,
 Like the proud virgins of the yeare,
 As if the Spring were all your own ;
 What are ye, when the rose is blown ?

To these lines, which, beautiful as they are, seem like a depreciation of our gentle friend we have a most complete and flattering contradiction from the melodious lyre of Herrick. We find him, in the following lines, allowing the Violet precedence of the rose :—

Welcome, maids of honour,
 You doe bring
 In the Spring ;
 And wait upon her.

She has virgins many,
 Freshe and faire ;
 Yet you are
 More sweet than any.

Y'are the maiden posies,
 And so grac't,
 To be plac't
 'Fore damask roses.

Yet, though thus respected,
 By and by
 Ye doe lie,
 Poore Girles, neglected.

In these our records of the Romance of Flowers, far be it from us to forget the graceful fables in which the Violet plays her part. Some relate, that the delicate and fragrant blossom was first produced by the earth at the bidding of Jupiter, to be food for Iö during her metamorphosis : others say that Venus, hastening to meet Adonis, trod on a thorn, and that the blood from her celestial foot dyed the flower, which was then white, with its present dim purple.

Herrick tells a story different from both these ; and though evidently the coinage of his own prolific brain, rather than a versification of any popular notion, it is too fanciful to be overlooked.

HOW VIOLETS CAME BLEW.

LOVE on a day, wise poets tell,
 Some time in wrangling spent,
 Whether the violet should excell,
 Or she, in sweetest scent.

But Venus having lost the day,
 Poore girles, she fell on you,
 And beat ye so, as some dare say
 Her blows did make ye blew.

Our divine Shakspeare, in his loftiest flights of thought and imagination, frequently pauses to cull the lowly Violet; and never does her soft hue and sweet perfume greet us in such power, and grace, and beauty, as when wrought into some spirit-stirring picture or mighty "fabric of a dream" among his wondrous works. How beautiful, in "Twelfth Night," is the comparison of soft music to the breath of wind upon the Violet!

That song again—it had a dying fall.
 O! it came o'er my ear like the sweet south
 That breathes upon a bank of Violets,
 Stealing and giving odour.

The Violets from which the illustrative drawing was made, were the late-flowering variety, the leaves of which are somewhat larger than the wild Spring ones; those having bloomed and passed away while the author's hand was powerless, and her pencil idle, during illness.

The occupant of the following plate must be equally well known with its more gentle companions, for, as the almost un-failing inhabitant of wild moor, mountain, and waste land, the yellow GORSE is one of our familiar road-side acquaintances; and rough though it be, there is a kind cheeriness in its bright golden face, that makes us ever greet its seeming smile

with pleasure—I should say *affection*. The Gorse appears the emblem, indeed the portrait, of many a kindly being, whose rough and even repulsive exterior so overshadows their better and brighter parts, that the careless and superficial observer would declare “all barren:” while they who look beyond the surface, find qualities and beauties in the friend’s mind and the flower’s scent, that prove, though “all is not gold that glitters,” the true treasure must often be sought in the hardest rock.

My reason for bringing my rough friend into such polished society as he here meets, was the wish to illustrate an old rustic proverb, which says, “When Gorse is out of blossom, kissing is out of season,” very adroitly choosing the Gorse as the test, from its never being wholly destitute of blossoms.

The ANEMONE, “blushing with faint crimson,” is another of our Spring Flowers invested with mythological fable. It first sprang, say the poets, from the blood of Adonis; and, in memory of its so imagined origin, Ben Jonson and many others name it Adonis-flower: in “Pan’s Anniversary,” he says—

Well done, my pretty ones—rain roses still,
 Until the last be dropt, then hence, and fill
 Your fragrant prickles for a second shower.
 Bring corn-flags, tulips, and Adonis-flower.

Shakspeare, in his “Venus and Adonis,” has the following beautiful passage descriptive of the Flower’s birth:

By this the boy that by her side lay killed,
 Was melted like a vapour from her sight,
 And in his blood that on the ground lay spilled,
 A purple flower sprung up, chequer'd with white :
 Resembling well his pale cheeks, and the blood
 Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood.

She bows her head, the new sprung flower to smell,
 Comparing it to her Adonis' breath ;
 And says, within her bosom it shall dwell,
 Since he himself is reft from her by death :
 She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears
 Green dropping sap, which she compares to tears.

Poor flower, quoth she, this was thy father's guise,
 (Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire)
 For every little grief to wet his eyes :
 To grow unto himself was his desire,
 And so 'tis thine ; but know, it is as good
 To wither in my breast, as in his blood.

Here was thy father's bed, here in my breast ;
 Thou art the next of blood, and 'tis thy right :
 Lo! in this hollow cradle take thy rest,
 My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night :
 There shall not be one minute of an hour
 Wherein I will not kiss my sweet Love's flower.

The Anemone is also called *Pasque-flower*, from its blossoming about Easter; and *Wind-flower*, from being formerly supposed to open only when the wind blew. Hence its name Anemone, from the Greek word *άνεμος*, *anemos*, wind. The wild wood Anemone, being a well-known and indigenous plant and most delicately beautiful too, would seem preferable, as an illustration of the Flower; but the deeper colours of the

cultivated kinds suit better the *romance* and the allusions of the poets.

The LILY of the Vale (for, despite the decision of botanists, that our modest little darling cannot claim kindred with the illustrious Lily family, a Lily—*the* Lily, we still fondly call it) is a native of our own fair plains and bosky dells; indeed, from the chill air of Lapland to the genial sunshine of bright beaming Italy, the fragile and fragrant Lily of the Valley may be found. In the woods of Eileriede, near Hanover, they grow in the most luxuriant profusion, and quite a festival is held during their time of flowering. Every house has a bouquet of

“The small-leaved, lesser Lilies,
Shading, like detected light,
Their little green-tipt lamps of white;”

and the woods are crowded with parties celebrating this floral anniversary.

We might almost believe the Lilies must sometimes blush in surprise and anger (if such gentle creatures could be imagined guilty of human feelings) at some of the quaint and extravagant comparisons which Poets of the olden time used to draw between the charms of their demi-goddess ladye loves, and this fairest of all fair flowers. Hear the following affirmation of an anonymous gentleman, who wrote in the year 1658, “to his Mistress:” —

I'll tell you whence the rose did first grow red,
And whence the Lilly whiteness borrowed.
You blushed; and then the rose with red was dight,
The Lilly kiss't your hands, and so came white.

Before that time the rose was but a stain,
 The Lilly naught but paleness did contain ;
 You have the native colour ;— these, they die,
 And only flourish in your livery !

How exquisitely graceful and melodious is this, yet straining even the wide licence of a poet's fancy.

The PANSY boasts a greater variety of *aliases* than most flowers ; it is known as the Heartsease, Love-in-idleness, La Pensée, from which significant name we derive the word Pansy ; and has also many rustic appellations, such as “ a Kiss at the Garden Gate,” “ Pink o' my John,” &c.

Although every flower which our divine Shakspeare has mentioned claims from us an immortality of love, yet the Pansy seems especially dedicated to him. Other Bards have written most sweet and dainty conceits about the blushing rose, and the fair lily, and the blue violet, and many another gentle bud and gorgeous blossom ; but none have so entirely appropriated any to themselves as Shakspeare has “ the Pansy freaked with jet.” He has given the fable to the Flower ; and a passage of more perfect poetical beauty cannot exist, than the scene where Oberon directs Puck to “ fetch him this herb ; but as it precedes my illustrative poem, I shall omit it here. How touchingly poor Ophelia mingles the Pansy in her gifts of token flowers : “ There's Pansies—that's for thoughts !”

Herrick, in his usual quaint, fanciful way, gives a different account,

HOW PANSIES OR HART'S-EASE CAME FIRST.

Frolick virgins once these were,
 Overloving, living here ;
 Being here their ends deny'd,
 Ran for sweethearts mad, and dy'd.

Love, in pitie of their teares,
 And their losse in blooming yeares,
 For their restlesse here-spent houres,
 Gave them hart's-ease turned to floures.

Thus the Heartsease is made the emblem-flower of those coquettish fair ones, whose youthful smiles and blandishments have failed in attaining the end so devoutly wished ; though, for my own part, I am much inclined to dispute the justice of Master Herrick's decision, inasmuch as coquetry, or, to use a more modern term, *flirtation*, in youth, cannot possibly procure *hearts' ease* in old age.

To attempt any thing like an *original* illustration of a flower so invested with poetry by our sovereign of song, would be, if not "to gild refined gold," at least to place the counterfeit beside the true metal, as if to betray itself. I have only endeavoured, by introducing some young and popular descendants of the Shakspearian favourite, to render the quoted passages yet more familiar, and the emblems more evident and varied. If my introduction of these modern beauties, as candidates for participation in the honours awarded to their ancient, but far less brilliant namesakes, should induce any Pansy fancier to acknowledge the *poetical*, as well as the

scientific and fashionable claims of the fair token-flowers, my sketches, both of pen and pencil, may happily prove something more than a matter of "love and idleness."

Here the author may be supposed to curtsy her adieu, for a season, to the kind readers who have companioned her in her prosaic ramble among the Flowers selected as Illustrations of Spring. Like an actress who performs several parts in one play, she must now change her character, and pray a "continuance of patronage in the poetic and pictorial line," until the next sweet Season, with its bright Flowers and fanciful fables, asks a similar introduction from her prosaic pen.

S U M M E R.

Now each creature joyes the other,
Passing happy days and howers ;
One bird reports unto another,
In the fall of silver showers ;
While the Earth, our happy mother,
Hath her bosome decked with flowers.

A SUMMER EVENING.

It was a bright and cheerful afternoon,
Towards the end of the sunny month of June,
When the north wind congregates in crowds
The floating mountains of the silver clouds
From the horizon—and the stainless sky
Opens beyond them, like eternity.
All things rejoiced beneath the sun—the weeds,
The river, and the corn-fields, and the reeds;
The willow-leaves, that glanced in the light breeze,
And the firm foliage of the larger trees.

SHELLEY.

Nay, we'll have music; let that sweet breath, at least,
Give us her airy welcome.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

SHAKESPEARE.

And at the last, the bird began to sing
So passing sweetely, that, by many fold,
It was more plesaunt than I couth devise:
And whan his song was endid in this wise,
The nightingale, with so mery a note
Answerid him, that alle the wode yrong
So sodainly, that, as it were a sote,
I stode astonied, and was with the song
Thorow ravishid; that, till late and long,
I ne wist in what place I was, ne where,
And ayen, methought, she song even by mine ere.

CHAUCER.

Oh! leave the dull dim house, and come with me
Down to the river's brink; and we will go
Floating in our light boat so silently,
Watching the sunset-tinged clouds, that glow
O'er the broad brow of heaven, and hanging low,

Like eyelids, curtain o'er the orb, whose hour
 Of sleep is well nigh come. Oh! 'tis so calm,
 So still, so holy, I could think each power
 Of sin and sorrow from the earth had flown,
 And Peace descending claimed it for her own,
 Shedding from out her dove-like wings the balm
 Which fills the evening air.

See, how the arrowy dragon-flies dart out!
 Now here, now there,
 They swiftly flit about;
 Restless, as if we roused them from still sleep,
 'Mid the tall river grass. Ha! what is that?
 Start not—'tis only a poor water-rat
 Crossing the river to his nest, that deep
 'Neath yon old willow he has burrowed out.
 See him, now, steering over;—his long tail
 Extended for a rudder; and his route
 Leaves on the glassy stream a double trail
 Stretching out, fork-like, to the farther bank,
 Where, from green nooks of Summer foliage rank,
 Peeps Myosotis—fair "Forget-me-not,"
 Looking with her bright blue eyes into ours,
 As though to ask, if, 'midst earth's rainbowed bowers,
 We ever had her gentle face forgot.
 The willows and "long purples," too, recall
 To fancy's eye the sad and fatal spot
 Where poor Ophelia, with her coronal
 Of wild-wood flow'rets, fell.

Now the low breeze
 Which speaks soft music in warm summer-eves,
 Comes sighing through the wood; but ere it pass
 To ripple the calm stream, the giant grass,
 Which one might fancy India's jungles bore,
 Stays the young wanderer, with her whisper soft,
 And each long streamer, trembling aloft,
 Discourseth tones that murmuringly pour
 Their music eloquent to listening ears;
 And from the hills, that bend on either shore
 Their gently-sloping and wood-clothed sides
 Down to the river's brim,
 Comes, through the twilight dim,
 Blent with the water's rippling as it glides,
 The last small chirp of many a sleepy bird,
 In varied tones, now near, now distant heard,
 As if disturbed when close within the nest,
 Their small heads warmly hid beneath their wings,
 The wearied warblers had gone to rest.

Yet hark! a gush of melody, that rings
 In rich full cadence o'er the silent earth;
 A burst of music, whose soft echo brings
 Tears, not of sorrow—smiles apart from mirth.
 Oh! 'tis the silvery-voiced bird of eve,
 The gentle nightingale, that now pours forth
 Her love-lorn lay—so deem they who believe
 That in her brilliant song she doth but grieve.

It is a fanciful imagining,
 To blend aught sad or sorrowful with one
 Who thus triumphantly doth round her fling,
 Far in the silent night, her wondrous spell;
 Reigning in air, upon her viewless throne,
 The sovereign queen of else subdued sound.
 The very leaves hang moveless—the small bell
 Of many a river flow'ret, that all day,
 Rang with the music of the busy bee,
 And danced, delighting in the sunshine gay,
 Now stilly hangs, as if attentively
 It listened to the night-bird's music sweet.

 Over the stream,
 Where drooping willow-leaves the waters meet,
 The moonbeams gleam,
 Broadly and calmly, in a radiant sheet
 Of lustre bright,
 Which e'en the pinion of the smallest breeze,
 With winnow light,
 May break to shining fragments. The huge trees,
 Bending their stately heads the river by,
 Are mirrored in it, as majestic
 As they now stand; while on each leaf-crest high
 The lady moon has placed a coronal
 Of her encrowning light. Now, over all
 The slumbering vale she holds her silent reign,
 Empress of sight, as the night-bird of sound,

Whose yet more rich and more exulting strain
Floats in its wondrous harmony around,
Rapid and changeful; varying in its tone,
Even as Flowers vary in their hue—
Each to the rest unlike, yet all her own.

Oh! they are Summer queens, the wondrous two,
The bird on earth, the fair moon in the sky;
Seems it as each from other magic drew:
The night grows brighter with that music nigh,
Whose thrilling tones are lit upon their way
Into our inmost spirit, by the soft
And harmonizing gleam of each clear ray,
Falling in smiling lustre from aloft,
And showing where the lilies lie asleep
Beneath their floating canopy.

THE LADYE'S CHAPLET.

And floures freshe, blue, red, and white,
 Be her about, the more for to delight ;
 And on her heade she hath a chapelet
 Of roses red, full pleasantly yset.

LYDOATE.

Hire yelwe here was broided in a tresse
 Behind hire back a yerde long, I gesse.
 And in the gardin, at the sonne uprist,
 She walketh up and down ; wher as hire list,
 She gathereth floures, partie white and red,
 To make a sotel gerlond for hire hed,
 And as an angel hevenlich she song.

CHAUCER.

At every turn she made a little stand,
 And thrust among the thorns her lily hand,
 To draw the rose ; and every rose she drew
 She shook the stalk, and brushed away the dew.

DRYDEN.

“ I SIGH for thee, Love, when the morning skies
 Their earliest beams of rosy radiance wear,
 And earthly things a heavenly brightness bear ;
 The bending Flowers upraise their tearful eyes,
 Heavy with pearly dew that on them lies,
 And the fond sun, with all a nurse's care,
 Kisses the shining drops that lingered there
 From each moist, downcast face ; and soon arise,
 In laughing beauty, all the glittering band.
 How gaily dance they on the wavy air !
 The fields and garden are a fairy land—
 And sportive Mab, on some tall lily fair,



Or gayer tulip, holds her radiant court—
 But I want *thine* eyes, Love, with mine upon the sport.

Without thee, Beauty is not beautiful—I know
 That when with thee I gaze upon a flower,
 E'en though the frailest bud that bears the name,
 To thee 'tis precious, and then dear to me;
 Love hides a charmed gem beneath each leaf,
 Giving them value in our partial eyes.
 But when alone, though Persia's roses bend
 In graceful fragrance o'er my garden path,
 And I may cull them,—yet they seem less fair,
 Their blush less soft, and their perfume less sweet,
 Than when thou last did'st sportively enwreath
 Roses from that same tree around my brow."

So murmured the fair Emmeline, and sighed—
 And then, the very flowers she had dispraised
 Would fain have twined amid her clust'ring hair,
 But that another's hand was gently laid
 Upon the blushing chaplet, which not then
 Out-crimsoned her soft cheek. Another's eye
 Gazed upon her's, that dropped their deep-fringed lids,
 As though o'ercome by full and sudden joy,
 Nor e'en glanced up, until a fervent kiss,
 Stealing the tear which weighed the dark lash down,
 Called a long look, half fondness, half reproof,
 On that proud, happy listener.

And now,

Leave we the Lovers to their own sweet thoughts,
For love doth teach such language to the face,
In its own silent eloquence, that words,
Not needed, are forgotten—is't not so?



THE JASMINE TREE.

A BARD* once sang of a Jasmine tree
 That grew beside a castle wall,
 The castle where dwelt his ancestry,
 And where he is Lord of tower and hall.
 And passing sweet was his gentle lay,
 Much praising the fair and fragrant Flower,
 Which robeth now in its bright array
 The grey and ancient Border Tower.
 But he deemed that in days of foray rude
 The tree could not have flourished there,
 When warriors in the court-yard stood,
 And trumpets roused the slumb'ring air.
 He asked the silv'ry flowers if they
 Looked forth as now, when o'er the hill
 Moss-troopers rode to feud or fray,
 " And bugles blew for belted Will?"
 Then said he, that he might not dream
 Of deeds that stern old time did see,
 While gazing on the starry gleam
 Of his own graceful Jasmine tree.
 A maiden chanced to hear this lay,
 Who, marv'ling much it did not tell

* Lord Morpeth.

Of ladies beautiful and gay,
 Who must have loved the Jasmine well—
 Ventured, all humbly, then to sing
 Unto the Bard an answering strain,
 Which, while the flower we hither bring,
 Perchance ye'll listen to again.

And might not e'en the Jasmine tree
 In sterner days enwreath the tower,
 Which now it robes luxuriantly,
 With em'rald leaf and pearly flower?
 Were *none* but warriors tenants here—
 The armed serf, the belted knight,
 With falchion keen, and poised spear,
 Helm, shield, and cuirass gleaming bright?

I know *they'd* pass the Jasmine tree,
 Nor even glance at aught so frail,
 While o'er them waved triumphantly
 Their banner in the morning gale:
 I know the fragrance that it cast
Their rugged souls no joy could yield;
 They only heard the trumpet's blast
 That called them to the battle field.

But did *none* love the Jasmine tree?

Yes;—Beauty, in her turret bower,
 Cherished its gentle purity,
 And culled the fair and fragrant flower.
 It nestled 'midst her raven hair,
 It wreathed around her lofty brow,
 And, sooth, no easy task it were
 To say which wore the purer snow.

The free and sportive Jasmine-tree!

O'er the lone captive's darksome cell,
 How many a tale of liberty
 Could'st thou to his sad spirit tell!
 Each slender tendril floating there,
 Laughing in sunshine, nursed by showers,
 And gemming the perfumed air
 With winged wreaths of starry flowers.

The captive saw the Jasmine-tree,

Whose slight and fragile branches crept
 Through the dim loop-hole stealthily—
 He sadly gazed on them, and wept;
 Each wandering breeze their light leaves stirred,
 They looked up to the glorious sky,
 And, poised upon them, many a bird
 Trilled forth its free wild melody.

Perchance there grew a Jasmine-tree
 Beside his own ancestral hall,
 Where he had loved, in childhood's glee,
 To watch its short-lived blossoms fall:
 Alas! how soon those blossoms died,
 When severed from their native stem!
 Did not like early doom betide
 That captive? Drooped *he* not like them?

Well knew the slender Jasmine-tree
 Within which casement high to peep,
 And where on soft winds gracefully
 With pendant starry branch to sweep.
 She looked in bowers where ladyes sung
 Of love and knightly fealty,
 And silently her sweet sighs flung
 O'er many a tale of chivalrie.

And when to battle's sanguine plain
 Each gallant knight must fearless hie,
 And ladye-loves gazed on the train,
 With heaving breast and weeping eye,
 The lovely Jasmine drooped her head,
 As if in grief for those so dear,
 And from her snowy chalice shed,
 In sympathy, a dewy tear.



THE COUNTRY MAID AND THE PIMPERNEL-
FLOWER.*

“ I’LL go and peep at the Pimpernel,
And see if she think the clouds look well ;
 For, if the sun shine,
 And ’tis like to be fine,
 I shall go to the fair,
 For my sweetheart is there :—
So, Pimpernel, what bode the clouds and the sky ?
If fair weather, no maiden so merry as I.”

The Pimpernel-flower had folded up
Her little gold star in her coral cup ;
 And unto the maid
 Thus her warning said :
 “ Though the sun smile down,
 There’s a gathering frown
O’er the chequered blue of the clouded sky ;
So tarry at home, for a storm is nigh.”

* The Pimpernel, called familiarly “ Poor-man’s Weather-glass,” closes in damp or rainy weather.

The maid first looked sad, and then looked cross,
 Gave her foot a fling, and her head a toss;
 " Say you so, indeed,
 You mean little weed ?
 You're shut up for spite,
 For the blue sky is bright ;
 To more credulous people your warnings tell,
 I'll away to the fair—good day, Pimpernel.

Stay at home, quoth the flower!—in sooth, not I,
 I'll don my straw hat with a silken tie ;
 O'er my neck so fair
 I'll a kerchief wear,
 White, chequer'd with pink ;
 And then—let me think,
 I'll consider my gown—for I'd fain look well :"
 So saying, she stepped o'er the Pimpernel.

Now the wise little flower, wrapped safe from harm,
 Sat fearlessly waiting the coming storm ;
 Just peeping between
 Her snug cloak of green,
 Lay folded up tight
 Her red robe so bright,
 Though brodered with purple, and starred with gold,
 No eye might its bravery then behold.

The fair maiden straight donned her best array,

And forth to the festival hied away :

But scarce had she gone

Ere the storm came on,

And, 'mid thunder and rain,

She cried, oft and again,

“ Oh! would I had minded yon boding flower,

And were safe at home from the pelting shower.”

Now, maidens, the tale that I tell would say,

Don't don fine clothes on a doubtful day ;

Nor ask advice, when, like many more,

Your resolve was taken some time before.

THE WHITE WATER LILY.

THE QUEEN OF FLOWERS.

OH! vainly seek ye, 'mid the garden's store,
 For one Flower so pre-eminently fair
 O'er all the rest, that right of sovereignty
 Must seem her heritage. The ROSE is bright,
 And wondrous fragrant; yet the WOODBINE sheds
 From her long bloomy streamers, breath as sweet:
 And on them both the VIOLET might turn
 Her soft blue eye in gentlest reproach,
 That perfume such as *her's* should be o'erpast.
 E'en the white maiden JASMINE, in her pride,
 Would take the hue of jealousy, and turn
 To envious yellow her complexion pure,
 Were *she* deemed than the rest less fit to reign.

Seek not the Floral Queen among them all:—
 But, leaving far behind the garden trim,
 And shining palaces, where dwell the bright
 Sun-worshippers of many a fervid clime,
 Go to the lake's o'ershadowed margent, where,
 Over the waves like fairy-carpets spread
 For summer revelrie, lie leaves afloat,



1



Extending many a rood:* broad dark-hued leaves,
 Clothing the bosom of the water clear,
 And gently heaving up and down, as though
 Her breathing thus disturbed them. 'Midst these, rise
 In pure and stately beauty, urn-like forms,
 Just 'bove the water's height; some, not unclosed,
 Are tinged with tenderest green; while others spread
 Full to the warm down-gazing sun their deep,
 White, sculptured-like, and softly-glowing cups
 Of modelled petals, lit up from within
 By one large anthered star of golden flame:
 And, leaning on the dark green leaves, they lie,
 These lovely, nymph-like Lilies,—looking up
 In worship and in love unto the sun,
 On whom alone they smile; for when he goes
 From his blue mid-day palace over head,
 And the trees cast long shadows on the lake,
 The loving water-nymphs, no longer joyed
 By the bright presence of their radiant god,
 Fold their rich snowy robes, and, bending low,
 Suffer the waves to sing a lullaby
 Over their sleeping heads.

When morning's beam
 Looks gaily o'er the earth, the Lilies lift
 Slowly above the waters their fair forms,

* "Lay floating many a rood."—MILTON.

Yet still enwrapped close. When noontide brings
 Their worshipped deity to his wonted shrine
 O'er their blue-bosomed lake, they fondly rise,
 To greet and welcome him with every charm
 That lavish Nature has endowed them with :
 And ne'er did forms more exquisitely fair,
 More stately, chaste, or beautiful, emerge
 From earth to tell her praise.

Oh! well might they,
 The dusk, untutored Indians, bend before
 Such perfect loveliness in adoration ;
 Well might they deem some god or spirit shrined
 Within so bright a temple !

And shall we
 In fancy e'er create a meaner flower
 The sovereign of these sweet and beauteous ones ?
 No—seek the Lilies' still, calm haunts, and see
 The waters sporting round their pearly cups,
 And flinging sunny gleams upon their snow,
 Like smiles and blushes o'er a maiden's cheek.
 —If ye e'er gazed on aught more beautiful,
 Oh! tell me what it was—for ne'er have I.







COURTIERS.

I said the Lily was the queenly Flower,
And these bright creatures, sure, her Courtiers be!
For they are robed all so royally,
E'en like the glittering guests of regal bower;
And, like them too, their chiefest rank and power
Lie in their sounding titles, and we see
That both do value the embroiderie
Of their gay-tinted garb. In their first hour
Of modish fame, see how to both down bend,
In fashion's homage, all the wondering crowd
Of sycophant adorers! Should chance send
A newer star, how soon into a cloud
Shrink the late idols! whom no more ye find;
Nor have they either left ye any sweets behind.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE FORGET-ME-NOT,

SHOWING THE PAINS AND PENALTIES OF POPULARITY.

THE blue-eyed FORGET-ME-NOT, beautiful flower,
 Half-wooded and half-stolen, I brought from her bower,
 By the bright river's brink, where she nestled so low,
 That the water o'er stem and o'er leaflet might flow;
 As if, like Narcissus, she foolishly tried
 To gaze on her own gentle face in the tide.

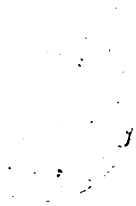
Half inclined, half reluctant, the flower bade adieu
 To the friends left behind in the dell where she grew;*
 And a few shining drops, from the river-spray flung,
 Like tears of regret on her azure eyes hung;
 But I kissed them away, as a lover had done,
 In joy that my fair river-beauty I'd won.

And then swiftly I hied to my lone desk away,
 Lest my flower should droop, grow dim, and decay;
 For methought I once more would pourtray the soft hue
 Of that smooth vivid green, and that delicate blue;
 And while o'er the semblance I silently bent,
 My fair sitter sighed forth this touching lament.

* 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.

COWPER.





Alas! it is a weary thing
 To have such great renown;
 Ten thousand bards my praises sing,
 Through city, shire, and town.
 From scribblers that earn pence a line,
 To those that win a pound,
 None think their poesy will shine,
 Till it *my* praise resound.

And misses, in those curious books
 Called "albums," and so forth,
 Paint a blue marigold, whose looks
 Proclaim her none of earth;
 On which the parson, if he's young,
 Or doctor, if he's handsome,
 Must perpetrate a doleful song:
 Oh! will no fairy ransom

My face from such a libel vile?
 And clear my reputation,
 So slurred by treachery and guile,
 From such an imputation,
 As that *I* set the twaddlers on
 To so be-rhyme and saint me?
 As I'm a flower, they know no more
 Of me,—than those who paint me.

The human beauties of the land
 Must sit for days and hours,
 To let the painter's mimic hand
 Each feature scan—but *flowers*,
 They think, may just be drawn
 As ignorance may like them ;
 Leaves snipt and shaped, like gauze or lawn,
 As whim or fancy strike them.

E'en "Botanists" mistake my form
 That's seen by brook and fountain,*
 For my rough cousin's,† who's clad warm,
 To dwell on moor and mountain.
 But this I'd pardon, if the Bards'
 And Poetasters' chorus
 Were silenced once—we'll give rewards
 To all who'll no more bore us.

That silly Lover, tumbling down
 And drowning in the Rhine,
 First set the jingle-makers on,
 And then that book of thine,
 Oh! Ackermann! like finger-post,
 Directed sumphs to me,
 And e'er since then, the buzzing host
 Have dinned incessantly.

* *Myosotis Palustris*.† *Myosotis Alpestris*.

Oh ! ye fair Ladies of Parnassus,
 (Although ye are old-fashioned),
If ever in your flights ye pass us,
 List to our prayer impassioned ;
And find another victim-bud
 To serve your superficial
Vot'ries—'twould do in wax, or wood,
 Or cambric artificial.
Give it a name that nicely heads
 An elegy or sonnet,
And the whole clan of X. Y. Z.'s
 Will start a-rhyming on it.

ON A FRIEND'S BIRTHDAY.

"BRING Flowers, young Flowers," a wreath I'll twine,
 A crown for that mind-written brow of thine—
 A radiant wreath—not one drooping spray
 Shall dim, with ill omen, thy natal day;
 Not a lurking dew-drop shall dare appear,
 For, though bright and lustrous, 'tis like a tear:
 And smiles must dimple each cheek to-day,
 Tears, sorrow, and care shall flee far away!

But, alas, for my wreath! The transient Flowers
 Have passed away with the Summer hours:
 They are all, all flown, the wild and the sweet,
 Their slight forms may never the cold winds meet:
 All flown and faded—or one loved gem
 I had sought and wreathed for thy diadem.
 Not the rose—that has thorns—and I would not bring
 In my simple garland so false a thing;
 Did I the leaves of thy destiny twine,
 No thorn should approach e'en a thought of thine.

Of the Flower I'd bring, I have often told
 How brightly its petals of blue unfold,
 And oft I've repeated its name, to tell
 What no other words breathe half so well.

Then know ye that Flower, so dear to me,
The flower that to-day should my offering be ?
For though less than nothing my gift and line,
To thee they would both be dear, as mine.
That flow'ret aye hallows the loneliest spot,
And its name is my boon—“*Forget-me-not.*”

FEUDS AMONG THE HEATHER.*

METHOUGHT, when these my flowers entwined were,
 I heard a tone,
 Like young leaves rustling in the Summer air,
 When every one
 Whispers forth gentle music:—and I bent
 To catch the sound
 (If sound that shadow of a voice might be),
 Which, murmuring round,
 Seemed as though one discoursed displeas'dly,
 And then another
 Answered in softer and more even speech;
 It was the Heather—
 And this the converse that mine ear did reach.

GREENHOUSE HEATHS.

Gems of the sheltered bower are we;
 What know we of wilding flowers like thee?
 Thy rugged stem, hung with purple bells,
 The tale of thy lowly lineage tells;

* The group contains two of our wild native heaths and three foreign ones.



Thou may'st be met on each open moor,
 'Mong gorse and ling,
 Thou common thing!
 Thy paltry blossoms the children poor,
 And gypsies, bring
 Bound up in bundles to sweep the street;
 And art thou for *our* high presence meet?

We have been bred up with tenderest care;
 We know not the breath of the common air;
 Our delicate stems and modelled forms
 Are shielded from winds, and frosts, and storms;
 For we are the beautiful, great, and rare;
 But what are ye?
 How can ye see
 Our stately pride, yet boldly dare
 Presumptuously
 To raise your heads of humble name
 With us, who have titles, and rank, and fame?

WILD HEATHER.

Buds of the mountain and moor are we,
 The dear and the gleesome, the fearless and free!
 Our strong stems shrink not from storm nor rain,
 We shake off the tears, and laugh out again.

When Zephyrus drives the red clouds i' the morn,
 The lark upsprings
 On her dewy wings,
 From our sheltering sprays to the sky upborne,
 And, soaring, sings
 Her love for the wild and purple Heather,
 Where her callow nestlings lie safe together.

Glorious, and glad, and dear are we,
 Ringing our bells o'er the heath in glee.
 Glorious and glad—and oh! most dear
 Is the Heather-bloom to the mountaineer;
 And dear to his children, who, laughing, come
 And carry bright wreaths to their cottage home.
 As the blessed things roam, 'neath their fairy feet
 We rustling dance,
 And our heads advance
 Their innocent hands to gift and greet;
 For childhood's glance,
 When playmates laugh merrily out together,
 Like sunlight shines on the bells of Heather

In our freedom we scorn such slaves as ye,
 Your empty pride, and your vanity:—
 Ye are fine, 'tis true—and neat and trim,
 But are ye not shut in a prison dim?
 Ye are captive slaves, though ye boast and sneer,
 And think we should bow to your grandeur here.

Ours be the grandeur, and ours the glee,
 For we o'er the hills and the heaths wave free.
 We bend not our purple and fearless crests,
 To meaner things, though in gaudier vests.
 Freely above us the wind may blow,
 Merrily round us the streamlet flow ;
 And the promise-toned hum of the busy bee,
 The glad day long,
 Seems a harvest song
 Of joy, for the sweets that from flower and tree,
 Around us flung,
 And the honeyed bells of the purple Heather,
 She hath gathered in store for the wintry weather.

Ye are sheltered, ye say, from the blights of even ;
 Oh ! are ye not hid from the sunlit heaven ?
 Ye are cultured, and cherished, and tended—true ;
 But are ye not exiles and captives too ?
 Are ye not victims of pride and art ?
 From Nature's paths do ye not depart ?
 For eve's gentle dew, and morn's bright beam,
 Have ye not fires, and stoves, and steam ?
 And while we quaff gaily our Summer rain,
 A few stagnant drops your lives sustain :
 And while we are kissed and rocked by the breeze,
 Ye stand erect in your palaces,
 Each, ranged in his special rank and place,
 Holding proudly on high his titled face.

Yet *ye* are the beings would smile in scorn
 At our claims—at “things on the wild heath born;”
 That would shrink from our presence as all unmeet,
 Because we are useful, and keep ye neat.
 Your dwellings, ye idlers, would soon look dim,
 If ye had not our kindred to keep them trim.
 Ye find even besoms of use, no doubt;
 Then let arrogance cease such things to flout.
 We may ask, perchance, of what use are *ye*,
 When such o'erstrained pride we feel and see.
 The lark dwells not in *your* slight weak sprays,
 Not glassing *your* blossoms the streamlet plays,
 The happy and hard-working bee ne'er comes
 Within *your* well-guarded and glittering domes—
 Ye suffer not even the breeze to bring
 A breath of *your* sweets on his downy wing—
 Ye do not—perchance ye too well feel
 Ye have nought he would condescend to steal—
 No—vain ones—we pity, but envy not
 Your rank and state,
 Ye *little* great;
 Ours is a prouder and happier lot—
 A nobler fate;
 For we live in gladness and love together,
 We fearless flowers of the mountain Heather!

THE FLOWER AND THE FAIRY.

I do wander every where,
 Swifter than the moone's sphere,
 And I serve the Fairy Queen,
 To dew her orbs upon the green.

SHAKSPEARE.

And that same dew, which sometimes on the buds
 Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,
 Stood now within the pretty flow'ret's eyes,
 Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.

IBID.

A FAIRY, whose task was to dwell upon earth,
 Watching the birth
 And height'ning the beauty of Summer Flowers,
 As the little buds oped to the dews and showers,
 Aweary grew
 Of each tint and hue
 That so long she had gazed on through days and hours.
 And the Fairy threw
 Around o'er the garden a wistful gaze,
 That rested on bower, and bank, and maze;
 And the Fairy sighed,
 And the flowers replied, •
 In echoes of fragrance, that fanned along
 Like a butterfly's wing or an elfin song.
 As the soft breath died
 Into stillness and calm o'er the garden wide,

The blushing Rose,
 The nightingale's young and gentle bride,
 Her delicate leaves begun to uncloze,
 And spread to the sunshine her grace and pride ;
 And then she spoke,
 In tones that like audible perfume broke
 On the wingless air—and each other flower
 Bent in listening mood on her slender stalk,
 To hear the Rose and the Fairy talk.

THE ROSE.

“ Beautiful spirit!—what grief is thine ?
 Why doth thine eye
 With less love and joy on thy children shine ?
 Why doth thy sigh
 Bid each petaled bosom to heave with fear ?
 What raiseth our Fairy's anger here ?

Do we not ever rejoice to greet
 Thy guardian love
 With tributes of homage ? Beneath thy feet,
 O'er lawn and grove,
 Do we not lift up our heads to bless
 Our Fairy's fond care and loveliness ?
 How have thy children displeased thee,
 Loved Fairy, tell :
 Oh ! look now around thee, Fairy, see
 Each bud and bell,

And star-like blossom, and trembling leaf,
Awaits thy wishes in fear and grief.

Has the Jasmine's perfume become less sweet ?

Or the Woodbine frail

Too eagerly flung her arms to greet

The Summer gale ?

Or has the Ceris-flower not blown ?

Sweet guardian, why is thine anger shown ?"

Then the Fairy besought the flowers to clear
From their glistening petals each dewy tear ;
And unfold on the breeze each pencilled leaf,
For they had not the power to ease her grief :
And she told them how long she had dwelt away
From her home-land, where sprite, and elf, and fay,
Were her frolic-mates—and where sky and air
Were brighter than ever earth's flow'rets were :
And she told them that much as she loved each face,
Blooming around her in light and grace,

Sometimes a sigh

Would rise in her breast, a tear to her eye,
As she thought on sweet Fairy-land's glittering sky ;

For though the hue,

To earthly view,

Of many a bud seemed soft and blue,

There was not one

Which recalled to her eye the exquisite shade
Of which Fairy-land's radiant heaven was made.

When this plaint had gone
 Wafting along o'er leaf and stem,
 Full many a flower
 Who deemed her own beauty a peerless gem,
 Began to lour,
 And sulkily shut up her leaves an hour
 Before the sun
 Had gone to his rest in his western bower.

One sly little bud resolved to see
 What the tint of this elfin heaven might be;
 And when the Fay
 Spread her gossamer wings, to fly away
 For a transient glimpse of her home so bright,
 There clung to her foot a seedling light
 Of the Commeline-flower—and up they go
 (While marvelled the Fairy what pinched her so)
 Aloft, aloft!
 On pinions soft,
 The Fairy flew onward with strengthening speed,
 And taking heed
 To be mute and still, and watchful, too,
 Went on the adventurous Commeline-seed.

And when over them, clear, and bright, and high,
 Rose the dazzling canopied fairy sky,
 No longer wondered young Commeline
 That the azure of earth as dim was seen
 By their gentle and guardian elfin queen;





For the Irises deep, and Convolvuli fair,
 And each *Blue-bell*, though brilliant, and sweet, and rare,
 Aye, even the famed Forget-me-not,
 Were dim 'neath the sky of that fairy spot.
 But the Commeline-seedling resolved to show,
 Among earthly flowers, that radiant glow,
 And eagerly gazed unwearied up,
 To catch a ray in her tiny cup,
 That when on *her* young stem flow'rets grew,
 They might robe them in Elf-land's purest blue.

When the Fairy returned to the flowers of earth,
 Young Commeline sank to her place of birth,
 And quietly slept in a darksome cell
 While the leaves grew sere, and brown, and fell.
 Through the chill frozen winter she lay asleep,
 Nor till Spring called her forth began to peep;
 But when Summer's gay wreaths had clothed the bowers,
 Then, brightest of all, came the Commeline-flowers,
 All clad in the pure and the beautiful hue
 Of the Fairy-land heaven—celestial blue.

The Flowers' Fairy-queen paused, pleased and amazed,
 As, descending one day, for the first time she gazed
 On the brilliant and deep hue the Commeline wore,
 So far fairer than e'er she had seen it before.
 And from that day the sprite to loved Fairy-land flew
 Less often than e'er she was wonted to do;

For whenever she pined for its brilliant blue sky,
 She need but to gaze on the Commeline's eye;
 And the garden grew fair, and the groves became tall,
 For their guardian was with them to cherish them all;
 The flowers sweetly replied to the smiles of the Fay,
 Who caressed them more tenderly day after day,
 And rarely to Elf-land's enchantments would roam,
 For all of its loveliness gladdened her home.

And now, my fair Dames, there's an *argument* due
 To this story of fairies and flow'rets of blue.
 Ne'er be vain over much of the charms you possess,
 For such vanity serves but to make those charms less;
 But ever and earnestly strive to acquire
 New wealth, such as they who best love you admire.
 And thus bind in wreaths of affection at home,
 Hearts, which otherwise oft might be tempted to roam.
 Be e'en like my Flower, who gained her bright tint
 By not feeling too proud to amend from a hint.



TO THE PASSION FLOWER.

WELL art thou named—thou warm-hued Passion Flower,
 Fit emblem of the ardour and caprice
 Of that wild passion, Love:—for thou dost change,
 Even like him, thy semblance; and thou art coy,
 Aye, as the fairest maiden whose young heart
 Thy namesake hath invaded. Coy, and proud,
 For thou, forsooth, must have the bright sun come,
 And wait, and gaze upon thy sleeping face,*
 Before thou wilt vouchsafe to ope thine eyes
 Of starry beauty to our wondering gaze.
 And then, ere long, the jealous petals close,
 And shut within their selfish clasp the gem
 They darken, not admire. And are there not
 Some other selfish things in this strange world,
 That do the like with flowers of lovelier growth?

Oh! ye are coy and proud—but beautiful—
 Wondrously beautiful is every one
 Among your varied tribes. Some of ye, pale,†
 That hang in rich profusion o'er the porch

* Alluding to the Passion-flower only expanding in sunshine.

† The White, or, as it is sometimes called, Blue Passion-flower, grows in luxuriant profusion about cottages in the south of England, and more especially in the Isle of Wight.

Of many a cottage in our own dear land,
 Clasping the Jasmine and the monthly Rose,
 As in affection, for that *they* are not
 The natives of our soil, but, like ye, deign
 To glad a clime less genial than their own.

And some of ye are bright as the young clouds
 That blush with joy to see the sun arise.
 Such was the flower* named after Her whose loss
 The isles long wept; alas! too true a type
 That fair frail flower of early fading youth.

And how fantastic ye do sometimes go!
 With nect'ries like to hair that stands on end,
 And long-lobed leaves, and tendrils curling close,
 Strongly upholding all the tangled mass.
 Oh! to behold ye in your native homes,
 Ye strange and glorious creations! There,
 Springing 'mong giant trees, whose soaring tops
 Are roofed by the o'er-arching sky, ye climb,
 And bloom, and flourish in uncultured pride,
 Gorgeously beautiful. I close mine eyes,
 And fancy paints a wilderness of wealth,
 In those scarce-trodden wilds, and forests vast,
 And sunny prairies, of the western world,

* One of the most brilliant *red* Passion flowers chanced to be first brought to England on the birth-day of the late Princess Charlotte, and thence was called *Passiflora Princeps*.

Where birds on wings of every glittering dye
Flit in gay freedom through their forest homes,
And insects, sparkling in the sunlight, fill
The solitude with Nature's eloquence.

THE FLOWER OF THE FOUNTAIN.

(IVY-LEAVED BELL FLOWER.)

Thereby a chrystal stream did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountain welled forth alway.

SPENSER.

Like to a little hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

It was a blest retreat where I did find

This modest gem :

The forest trees above were intertwined,

And, under them,

From an old ruined fountain, gurgled out

A small clear stream, that circled them about.

And rippling gently onwards through the wood,

Leaped into light

Beyond the last old gnarled oak that stood

Beside the bright

And sparkling rivulet, like hoary age

Smiling at the pursuits that youth engage.

Over the fount's damp, mossy stones there grew,

Luxuriantly,

These little bells of faint and tender blue,

Which gracefully



Bent their small heads in every breeze which strayed
From lawny sunshine to the woodland's shade.

And there they bud, and bloom, and close, and die,
In solitude.

Their lives are brief, but calm.—Alas! that I,
Not grief-subdued,
But innocently gay, as these small flowers,
In like retreat might pass my future hours!

SONNET.

(LAVATERA ARBOREA.)

WEARY with uncongenial employ

I sat in my lone room all spiritless,

The very type of gloomy idleness ;

My most-loved books I could not then enjoy,

But, like a tired child, craved some newer toy

To call back pleasure out of weariness.

My cheek leaned on my hand, and a stray tress
Of hair writhed in my idle fingers. To destroy

At one blest moment, my most gloomy mood,

A small hand oped the door—a loved friend stood

Smiling beside me, and these fair flowers placed

On my neglected palette: swift away

Flew my dark vapours, while aroused and gay,

Pencil in hand, the portrait-group I traced.

SUMMER, AND SUMMER FLOWERS.

Then came the iolly Sommer, being dight
 In a thin silken cassock, coloured greene,
 That was unlyned all, to be more light :
 And on his head a girlond well beseene
 He wore, from which, as he had chauffed beene,
 The sweat did drop, and in his hand he bore
 A bowe and shafts, as he in forest greene
 Had hunted late the libbard or the bore,
 And now would bathe his limbs with labour heated sore.

SUCH is Spenser's quaint description of Summer in the procession of the seasons and months before quoted from ; and it is a good portrait of the sultry part of the season in warmer climes than ours. Compared with the volumes of verse dedicated to Spring, Summer has found few laureates ; the rather that its attributes have been joined to those of its blithe fore-runner, than from any lack of love for its own boundless wealth and beauty.

Thomson, whose division of praise among the four seasons allowed him to pay them distinct attention, in few, but beautiful, words, thus paints the approach of Summer :

From bright'ning fields of ether fair disclosed,
 Child of the sun, refulgent Summer comes,
 In pride of youth, and felt through nature's depth :
 He comes attended by the sultry hours,
 And ever fanning breezes on his way,
 While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
 Averts her blushful face ; and earth and skies,
 All smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

Herrick, in his "Succession of the four sweete monthes," well expresses the progressive increase of the earth's floral wealth, and, much and beautifully as he lauds the Spring-time in several of his poems, yields the palm to Midsummer and July.

First April, she with mellow showres
 Opens the way for early flowres ;
 Then after her comes smiling May,
 In a more rich and sweet array ;
 Next enters June, and brings us more
 Gems than those two that went before ;
 Lastly, July comes, and she
 More wealth brings in than all those three.

In the following "most ancient song in the English language," written about the year 1250, in praise of Summer, *Spring* seems to be the season celebrated, from the allusions used, such as "springeth the wood new," and the mention of the cuckoo, whose song, or rather cry, becomes far from *merry* towards the Midsummer months.

Sumer is icumen in ;
 Lhude sing cuccu ;
 Groweth sed and bloweth med,
 And springeth the wde nu.
 Sing cuccu.
 Awe bleteth after lomb ;
 Lhouth after calve cu ;
 Merrie sing cuccu,
 Cuccu, cuccu ;
 Wel singes thou cuccu,
 Ne swik thee nauer.

Many of the Poet's darlings have departed with the early Spring-time. Snowdrops, Primroses, Violets, Daffodils, Cowslips, and Hawthorn have passed away; though the latter sometimes lingers among us, as if to show that *May* and June may live together. And when the last snowy blossoms fall winnowing down and wither, the hedges are decked with new chaplets of luscious Honeysuckles, which, in shady spots, where the sun's loving kisses have not called a blush upon their delicate complexions, are pale hued; but when free to catch his merry glances, they are brightly tinged with red. The Eglantine, too, or Wild Rose, stretches forth its thorny, arched branches across many a narrow lane, turning it into a natural arcade; and though the verdant canopy is not always lofty enough for an uncrouchable six foot cavalier to pass under, who would not carefully avoid deranging the beautiful bower? gemmed, as it is, with the "quaint enamelled eyes" of the fair roses, whose soft petals are scarcely painted, but slightly tinged with the most delicate pink, not positive enough to seem the colour of the flower, but like a blush or reflected glow, and redolent of an odour as appropriate to their own fragile beauty, as is a soft sweet voice to the lovely and fairy-like form of a young and gentle maiden.

There are many kinds of the wilding Rosebriar, and the colour varies in the different species from pearly white to deep crimson, but those I have most frequently gathered in my own fair county of Warwick, have been the light pink, though the pure white are also abundant in many situations.

How truly delicious is a quiet shady lane in Summer! I

do not mean a broad carriage-road lane, but one of those lovely little narrow winding dingles, arched over with Wild-briar and Woodbine, where the air is full of perfume and the banks bright with flowers. How refreshing it is to step into such an one, from the sunny and shadeless fields, to sit beneath the hedge of Hawthorn and Hazel-bushes,

'Mong the gay weeds and verdant grass; while high
 Into the slumbering air majestic trees
 Rear their proud leafy crests.— Below,
 Singing along its shallow pebbly bed,
 Sparkles a little rivulet, whose voice
 Tells soothingly of Summer's parching thirst
 In its cool wave allayed; and murmurs oft
 Its one unvaried tune, till listening ear
 Of weary wayfarer grows less acute,
 And, lulled by its soft music, he is lapped
 In some sweet dream of pleasant drowsyhead.

Spenser paints a scene like this in language like the colouring of Claude:

Then gan the shepheard gather into one
 His stragglng goates, and drave them to a foord,
 Whose cerule streame, rombling in pible stone,
 Crept under mosse as greene as any goord.
 Now had the sun halfe heaven overgone,
 When he his heard back from that water foord
 Drave, from the force of Phœbus' boyling ray,
 Into thick shadowes, there themselves to lay.

• • • • •

To an high mountaine's top he with them went,
 Where thickest grasse did cloathe the open hills ;
 They now amongst the woods and thickets ment,
 Now in the valleies, wandring at their wills,
 Spread themselves farre abroad thro' each descent ;
 Some on the soft greene grasse feeding their fills,
 Some clambring through the hollow cliffes on hy,
 Nibble the bushie shrubs which growe thereby.

Others the utmost boughs of trees doe crop,
 And brouze the woodbine twigges that freshly bud ;
 This with full bit doth catch the utmost top
 Of some soft willow, or new growen stud ;
 This with sharp teeth the bramble leaves doth lop,
 And chaw the tender prickles in her cud,
 The whiles another high doth overlooke
 Her own like image in a christall brooke.

How beautiful, too, is Forest scenery now ! But it is always beautiful—whether in budding and vernal Spring—green and leafy Summer — many-tinted Autumn — or snow-wreathed Winter. Yet Summer is the time of all others when one fancies how blithely Robin Hood and his merry men lived in the bonny greenwood ; and we feel more than ever the oppressive gloomy closeness of the thickly-peopled town. It is in glad Summer weather that we are most ready to exclaim —

Oh, come from the city, and live with me,
 Merrily under the greenwood tree ;
 Where the antlered stag is the lord of all,
 And the old trees shelter the squirrel small ;
 And the birds are filling the breezy air
 With songs of rapture.—Come with us there !

The soft green grass shall our carpet be,
 O'er canopied high by the forest-tree ;
 And bank and brooklet, and far-off scene,
 Like pictures shall show round our haunt, I ween,
 And wind-flowers, and day's-eyes, and lilies fair,
 And woodbines and briar-roses sweet and rare,
 Shall be bower and garden.—Come with us there !

Spenser's "Shepherd's Calender" has many exquisite sketches of scenery, and in his June we find Hobbinol thus describing his favourite retreat.

Lo! Colin, here the place whose plesaunt syte
 From other shades hath weand my wandring minde,
 Tell mee, what wants mee here to worke delyte ?
 The simple ayre, the gentle warbling winde,
 So calme, so coole, as no where else I find ;
 The grassie grounde with daintie daysies dight,
 The bramble bush, where byrdes of every kinde
 To the waters fall their tunes attemper right.

Beautiful, in their rich, and calm, and sunlit Summer pride, are the rural scenes of our own dear England. Beautiful, even, is the memory of spots we have transiently beheld in such a season ; for though we may dwell in them but an hour, we remember them for a life : and often do they rise before the mind's eye like pictures, gladdening many a lonely hour with their silent and dreamy eloquence ; telling of the thousand "changes of time and tide," which we have seen and felt, since we gazed on the bright realities ; and proving how precious is

that spirit's wealth we gain from communion, however brief,
with the beauty, purity, and holiness of nature—

Imagination's momentary spell
Calls up a well-known scene—Oh! 'tis so fair,
So very real—we might wander there.
Come, let us rest on yon rude stile, where stand
The village children, and look o'er the sea
Of golden-coloured grain, that waves beneath
The gentle breath of the soft Summer's day;
Then, turning, glance upon those noble trees,
Between whose gnarled trunks the winding road
Leads onward, shaded and sunlit by turns,—
Chequered like life, but far more pleasantly.
Or, if the corn-field's bright blest English face
More lure ye than the beaten path-way, cross
That wealth o'er-laden treasury,—and then,
Pausing awhile, where rises the church-tower,
Ivied, and hoar, above the girdling wood,
On, to the hills away! until the brow
Of the o'er-crowning one lies 'neath your feet.
And, leaning, breath-spent, on the turf, look round;
First, earth-ward, where the human dwellings lie
Basking in sunlight;—then upon the hills,
Whose swelling sides, uprising, woo the clouds
In time of tempest, and enclothe themselves
With storm and darkness as a wintry garb,

To be flung off and uncreated by
 The first glad smiles of Spring-like sunniness.

Mountains, those perpetual thrones of sublimity and grandeur, acquire new beauty in this splendid season—the noon of the year. The rare plants peculiar to their rugged heights are mostly in bloom, and the wild thyme and the heather spread over waste and moorland their treasures of purple and crimson flowers,—making glad many a solitary place, and cheering the wanderer as he climbs crag above crag, till, from the crest of some mighty rock, he gains a scene of glory that were reward sufficient for thrice the labour he has spent. Perhaps his gaze is on one of the many spots of which England loves to boast, and justly too, that even the fabled happy Vale of Rasselas would suffer by comparison. Often such a scene gains added beauty from some stupendous work of other days, Castle, or Abbey's grey monastic pile; and how many thoughts do these mouldering remnants suggest? How strangely beautiful it is to see flowers of the gayest hues dancing in the light breeze, and flinging round their young perfume over the lingering death-bed of a thing of centuries!—The Wallflower, the Clove Pink, and the Snap-dragon, especially, may be seen growing in the most luxuriant profusion amid such spots, and literally making a garden of a grave. Daisies and Buttercups grow in the mouldered stone of the windows—Nettles spring on the sides of the crumbling buttress, and *trecs* may often be seen waving their long arms from tower and donjon, as if in mockery of

the flaunting banners of other days;—and the noisy jack-daws and downy, spectre-like owls, are the only disturbers of the utter silence, where formerly

Knights and dames in bower and hall
Held stately sport and festival.

Or where the solemn chant of the mass, and the far-heard vesper-bell told that many a “Friar of orders grey” there bent in “prayer and penance oft.”

In no place or season can the triumph of nature over art be so vividly expressed. The proud fabric of man’s ambition, toil, and ingenuity, totters and decays; while the frailest of NATURE’S works, the delicate flower, whose individual life is but a day, springs, ever renewed, in undiminished vigour.

I remember, where the bosomy hills
Lie, spreading in their fertile gladness round
A massive buttressed pile of other days,
That now in age is mould’ring: while the hills,
The ancient hills, which saw that Abbey rise
In its first youthful grandeur from the earth,
And still have looked upon it, year by year,
Are still as brightly verdant—still as rich
In the full time of harvest—still as young,
When Spring’s light finger wreaths their lofty brows
With her sweet, gem-like flowers,—as when at first,
In their slow-growing infancy, those towers
Caught the fair sunlight on their unrent sides.
So while Art’s noblest works are born and die,
Nature’s renewèd youth outlasteth all.

The radiant Summer far exceeds the gladsome Spring in her garden beauties; some few of them—alas! that they *are* few—we must gossip about presently: meanwhile we cannot do better than read, at the same time *fancy*, this very fanciful description of Panglorie's Garden, by Giles Fletcher; 1610.

The garden like a ladie faire was cut,
 That lay as if she slumbered in delight,
 And to the open skies her eyes did shut.
 The azure fields of heaven were 'sembled right
 In a large round, set with the flowers of light:
 The flow'rs de luce, and the round sparks of dew,
 That hung upon their azure leaves, did show
 Like twinkling starrs, that sparkle in the evening blew.

Upon a hillie bank her head she cast,
 On which the bowre of Vain-delight was built.
 White and red roses for her face wear plac't,
 And for her tresses marigolds were spilt:
 Them broadly she displaied, like flaming guilt,
 Till in the ocean the glad day wear drowned;
 Then up again her yellow locks she wound,
 And with greene fillets in their prettie cauls them bound.

Why should I here depeint her lillie-hand,
 Her veines of violets, her ermine brest,
 Which there in orient colours living stand;
 Or how her gowne with silken leaves is drest,
 Or how her watchman, armed with boughie crest,
 A wall of prim hid in his bushes bears,
 Shaking at every winde their leavie spears,
 While she supinely sleeps; ne to be waked fears?

The sculptor of old proposed to make a statue of Mount Athos; this landscape-gardening Poet, spreading his sleeping

lady over several acres, had a similar taste for colossal portraiture; but his flowers are disposed with infinite grace and poetic beauty. He very sweetly alludes to the Marigold closing at night, and partially hiding its golden petals within the green calyx, by saying that the ladie wound up her yellow locks, and hid them in a green caul or cap.

The "garden-queen," the Rose, outvies even the dainty Violet in the number and enthusiasm of her laureates; she is indeed unrivalled, both in popular and poetical fame; nor has she yet lost much of her renown, for a rarity in literature would be that poem, if of any length, which should fail to offer its homage at her fair and fragrant shrine. This favourite of gods and men, the emblem of love and beauty, and the mute but expressive monitress that "all that's bright must fade," has been in all ages the unwearying theme of the Poets, from the gay odes of Anacreon to the quaint moralizing songs and sonnets of our old English writers; and from them, through a long and glorious vista of names, illustrious among the mind's nobility, down to the present time, with its few great and countless lesser lights.

Spenser's sweetest allusion to the Rose is in this "lovely lay" from his *Faërie Queen*; it is very beautiful.

The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay :—
 "Ah! see, whoso fayre thing doest faine to see,
 In springing flowre the image of thy day!
 Ah! see the virgin Rose, how sweetly shee
 Doth first peep foorth with bashfull modestee,
 That fairer seems the lesse ye see her may.

Lo! see soone after, how more bold and free
 Her bared bosome she doth broad display.
 Lo! see soone after, how she fades and falls away!

“So passeth, in the passing of a day
 Of mortall life, the leafe, the bud, the flowre;
 Ne more doth florish after first decay,
 That earth was sought to deck both bed and bowre
 Of many a lady and many a paramoure.
 Gather therefore the rose whilest yet is prime,
 For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre:
 Gather the rose of love whilest yet is time,
 Whilest loving thou mayst loved be with equal crime.”

Well does the excelling beauty and exquisite perfume of
 this praised flower merit our admiration. We may say with
 the Poets, Beaumont and Fletcher—

Nature picked several flowers from her choice banks,
 And bound them up in thee—sending thee forth
 A posy for the bosom of a queen.

In the garden scene already quoted from, in the “Two
 Noble Kinsmen,” is this exceedingly poetic and graceful
 passage; it has few equals.

Emilia. Of all flowers
 Methinks a Rose is best.

Servant. Why, gentle Madam?

Emilia. It is the very emblem of a maid:
 For when the west wind courts her gently,
 How modestly she blows, and paints the sun
 With her chaste blushes! When the north comes
 near her.

Rude and impatient, then, like Chastity,
 She locks her beauties in her bud again,
 And leaves him to base briars.

Shakspeare, in his "Love's Labour Lost," has this pretty and gallant speech, made by the courteous Boyet to the Princess and her ladies when masking:—

Fair ladies masked are roses in their bud :
 Dismasked, their damask sweet commixture shown,
 Are angels veiling clouds, or roses blown.

The beauty and perfume of the Rose are celebrated in those sweet sonnets of Shakspeare, so familiar to all lovers of true and graceful poetry.

Oh! how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
 By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
 The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
 For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
 The canker blooms have full as deep a dye
 As the perfumed tincture of the roses;
 Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly,
 When Summer's breath their masked buds discloses.
 But for their virtue only is their show,
 They live unwoo'd, and unrespected fade;
 Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so,
 Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
 And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
 When that shall fade, my verse distils your truth.

Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
 Nor praise the deep vermillion in the rose;
 They were but sweet, the figures of delight,
 Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.

• • • • •

The forward violet I thus did chide :—
 Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
 If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
 Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells,
 In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dy'd
 The Lily I condemned for thy hand,
 And buds of Marjoram had stol'n thy hair.
 The Roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
 One blushing shame, another white despair ;
 A third, nor red nor white, had stolen of both,
 And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath ;
 But for his theft, in pride of all his growth,
 A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
 More flowers I noted, yet I none could see,
 But sweet or colour it had stolen from thee.

The two following sonnets are very elegant examples of the moralizing vein among the Bards of the olden time ; who, to say truth, were generally speaking, more prone to coin new and quaint compliments to ladye's charms while in their morning beauty, than to offer trite and unpalatable warnings of the decay and departure of such fleeting fascinations. The first, by Samuel Daniel (1562), concludes (as all proper sonnets should do) with what the lady addressed would gladly believe the cream and object of the effusion, but the preceding lines describing the Rose, and the havoc which "swift speedy time" makes in youthful loveliness, are exceedingly touching and graceful.

Look, Delia, how w' esteem the half-blown rose,
 The image of thy blush and Summer's honour,
 Whilst yet her tender bud doth undisclooe
 That full of beauty time bestows upon her ;

No sooner spreads her beauty in the air,
 But straight her wide-blown pomp comes to decline ;
 She then is scorned who late adorned the fair :
 So fade the roses in those cheeks of thine,
 No April can revive the withered flowers,
 Whose springing grace adorns thy glory now ;
 Swift speedy time, feather'd with flying hours,
 Dissolves the beauty of the fairest brow.
 Then do not thou such treasure waste in vain,
 But love now, whilst thou mayest be loved again.

Sir Richard Fanshawe (1607) addresses the fair flower herself on her vain display of loveliness, thus presenting an attractive fable to his gentle readers who could not well avoid perceiving the hidden moral.

Thou blushing rose, within whose virgin leaves
 The wanton wind to sport himself presumes,
 Whilst from their rifled wardrobe he receives
 For his wings purple, for his breath perfumes ;
 Blown in the morning, thou shalt fade ere noon,
 What boots a life which in such haste forsakes thee ?
 Thou'rt wondrous frolic, being to die so soon,
 And passing proud a little colour makes thee.
 If thee thy brittle beauty so deceives,
 Know then, the thing that swells thee is thy bane ;
 For that same beauty doth in bloody leaves
 The sentence of thy early death contain.
 Some clown's coarse lungs will poison thy sweet flower,
 If by the careless plough thou shalt be torn ;
 And many Herods lie in wait each hour
 To murder thee as soon as thou art born,
 Nay, force thy bud to blow, their tyrant breath
 Anticipating life, to hasten death.

The cheek of Beauty has ever been the allotted throne of this floral queen, and so it is, and will be; but alas! in many a fair face, the vermeil blush has given place to a pallid hue. 'Tis in the morning sunshine, and the hilly breeze, that the true-tinted *rose* is worn; but its fresh hues fade and blanch in the crowded saloon or the heated ball. It is of few votaries of dissipation's order that Herrick could say —

One asked me where the roses grew,
I bade him not go seek,
But forthwith bade my Julia show
A bud in either cheek.

In order to display their own elegant invention in explanatory fables, the classic Bards of old feign the Rose to have been originally white; and divers are the causes assigned for its change of complexion. Herrick, versifying one fancy, tells us —

'Tis said, as Cupid daunc't among
The gods, he down the nectar flung;
Which on the white rose being shed,
Made it for ever after red.

Another legend is, that Venus, hastening to protect Adonis, trod on the thorns of the rose, and, her foot being wounded, a few drops of her celestial blood served to make the flowers blush ever after for their cruelty to their patron divinity. Some Poets suppose the Rose to have sprung first, on this occasion, from the tears of Venus. Sir Walter Raleigh plaintively introduces this tradition in his poem of "the Shepherd to the Flowers."

Vermillion roses, that with new dayes rise,
 Display your crimson folds, fresh looking faire,
 Whose radiant bright disgraces
 'The rich adorned rayes of roseate rising morne !
 Ah! if her virgin's hand
 Do pluck your purse ere Phœbus view the land,
 And vaile your gracious pompe in lovely nature's scorne ;
 If chance my mistresse traces
 Fast by your flowres to take the Sommer's ayre,
 Then wofull blushing, tempt her glorious eyes
 To spread their teares, Adonis' death reporting,
 And tell Love's torments, sorrowing for her friend,
 Whose drops of blood, within your leaves consorting,
 Report fair Venus' moanes to have no end ;
 Then may remorse, in pittying of my smart,
 Drie up my teares, and dwell within her heart.

Herrick, in one of his many complimentary fancies, thus
 accounts for the Rose's change of colour, and the thought seems
 to have become public property since his day, for we find it
 versified in divers manners by bards of all degrees—

Roses at first were white,
 Till they could not agree
 Whether my Sappho's breast
 Or they more white should be.

But, being vanquished quite,
 A blush their cheeks bespread ;
 Since which, believe the rest,
 The roses first came red.

Being dedicated to the goddess of beauty and god of love,
 the Rose often plays her part in the tender and sentimental

scenes so especially patronized by those tutelary divinities, and many an oft-used but still current simile is drawn from the blushing hue, the surpassing loveliness, and the cruel thorns of the fair emblem-flower. When that reckless contemner of female charms, Memnon, the "Mad Lover" of Beaumont and Fletcher, sees the beautiful Calis, and, after gazing in mute astonishment and adoration at such a vision of light, exclaims, "Good Lady, kiss me!"—the flattered and amused Princess replies with poetic as well as witty elegance,

" Kiss you at first, my Lord? 'Tis no fair fashion ;
Our lips are like rose-buds, blown with men's breaths—
They lose both sap and savour ;—here's my hand, Sir."

The term "under the rose," applied to any secret transaction, is perhaps not generally known to be of classic origin. Cupid, once on a time, wishing to gain assistance from Harpocrates, the god of silence, gave him the rose, by way of bribe ; and from this circumstance, the custom formerly prevalent among some nations, of suspending a rose from the ceilings of rooms in which secret meetings were held, is evidently derived ; and hence the familiar expression, "under the rose," which is very insignificant unless the origin of it be known.

The Persian and Arabian Bards abundantly celebrate the Rose in their elegant and figurative poems ; and the Bulbul, or Nightingale, being the supposed lover of this beautiful flower, the description of their mutual faith, unrivalled perfections, and long-enduring love, occupies no small space in the works of Hafiz and his disciples. The celebrated hundred-leaved Rose

of the East, and the "Feast of Roses," have been made familiar to us by the mention of them in modern works of deserved fame. It would not become so true-hearted a lover of our own dear land as myself to forget that, while gay France entwines her brow with the Fleur-de-lis—Scotland, bonny Scotland, with the Thistle—and green Erin, that emerald gem on the blue sea's breast, has her modest Shamrock—England wreaths her diadem with the queenly Rose. Would that the memory of that emblem were undimmed—that we might look upon our Rose and know its fair fame was unspotted, its leaves unstained by the blood of England's children; but the struggles of the factions, who bore for badges in civil warfare the Red and White Roses, have left an ineffaceable blot upon the annals of both realm and flower. Shakspeare rather lengthily records the choice of the Roses on this occasion, but in terms of less beauty than his thoughts are usually arrayed in.

Herrick, in his "Parliament of Roses," ordains that their place, and that of the *rest* of the flowers, should be Julia's bosom; an invasion of sweets which would be more available to the garden portrait of a "Ladie faire" (quoted from Fletcher), than to any mortal Dame of such fair proportions as, from her Poet-Lover's numerous compliments, we must imagine the gentle Julia,

THE PARLIAMENT OF ROSES.—TO JULIA.

I dream't the Roses one time went
To meet and sit in Parliament;

The place for these, and for the rest
 Of flowers, was thy spotlesse breast.
 Over the which a state was drawn
 Of tiffanie, on cob-web lawne ;
 There in that parly, all those powers
 Voted the Rose the queen of flowers ;
 But so, as that herself should be
 The maide of honour unto thee.

In "The Gentleman of Venice," by Shirley (a dramatic writer of great merit but small popularity), is this very lively and poetic dialogue between a fair Lady and a young Gardener :—

- Belaura.* You are conceited, Sirra, does wit grow in this garden ?
Georgio. Yea, Madam, while I am in it, I am a slip myself.
Bel. Of rosemary or thyme ?
Geo. Of wit, sweet madam.
Bel. 'Tis pity, but thou should'st be kept with watering.
Geo. There's wit in every flower, if you can gather it.
Bel. I am of thy mind,
 But what's the wit, prethee, of yonder tulip ?
Geo. You may read there the wit of a young courtier ;
 Pride, and show of colours, a fair promising,
 Deare when 'tis bought, and quickly comes to nothing.
Bel. The wit of that rose ?—
Geo. If you attempt, Madam, to pluck a Rose, I shall find a
 moral in't.—

Signior Georgio expecting that in gathering the Rose the Lady would wound her hand, and thus show that pain often succeeds to pleasure.

Although not entirely in praise of the Rose, the following sonnet of Spencer is so good and graceful that I shall quote it here :—

Sweet is the Rose, but grows upon a Brere ;
 Sweet is the Juniper, but sharp his bough ;
 Sweet is the Eglantine, but pricketh nere ;
 Sweet is the Firbloome, but his branches rough ;
 Sweet is the Cypresse, but his rynd is tough ;
 Sweet is the Nut, but bitter is his pill,
 Sweet is the Broome-flower, but yet sowre enough ;
 And sweet is Moly, but his root is ill.
 So every sweet with soure is temper'd still,
 That maketh it be coveted the more,
 For easie things, that may be got at will,
 Most sorts of men do set but little store.
 Why then should I accompt of little paine,
 That endlesse pleasure shall unto me gaine !

In a very beautiful but I believe anonymous poem of the time of Charles I. is so elegant an allusion to the Rose, that I shall make it my concluding extract from these records of the Garden Queen ; especially as the warning tone may be listened to, with equal propriety, by the gay and "inconstant" fair ones of the present day as by their predecessors, the coquettes of the olden time.

INCONSTANCY REPROVED.

I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
 And I might have gone near to love thee,
 Had I not found the slightest prayer
 That lips could speak, had power to move thee :
 But I can let thee now alone
 As worthy to be loved by none.

I do confess thee sweet, yet find
 Thou'rt such an unthrift of thy sweets,
 Thy favours are but like the wind,
 That kisseth every thing it meets ;

And since thou canst by more than one,
Thou'rt worthy to be kissed by none.

The morning Rose, that untouched stands,
Armed with her briars, how sweetly smells!
But plucked and strained thro' ruder hands
Her sweet no longer with her dwells.
Her scent and beauty both are gone,
And leaves fall from her one by one.

Such fate, ere long, will thee betide,
When thou hast handled been awhile!
Like sere flowers to be thrown aside,
And I shall sigh, and some will smile
To see thy love to every one
Hath brought thee to be loved by none!

The pretty single Rose, from which my illustrative drawing was made, was more nearly free from thorns than any I have yet seen: indeed I could not find any of the "sharp spines" on its smooth stem, but I will not offend the manes of the moral and amatory Bards of old, by asserting the entire absence of Beauty's attendant evils.

Next follows, in this our humble portrait gallery of Flora's fair children, the pure JASMINE; one among the chosen plants in Milton's bower of Eden.

———— Each odorous bushy shrub
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, Roses and Jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic. Under foot the Violet,
Crocus and Hyacinth, with rich inlay,
Broider'd the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

Though born beneath a sunnier sky, and nourished by a kindlier soil than ours, yet the pure, the fragrant, the modest, maidenly Jasmine has become unto us as an old familiar friend, and is now as well known, and as frequently seen climbing round the cottage-porch, as our own luscious Honey-suckle, I love to see them twining together, the stranger and the native, and wooing into kindly companionship the delicate China-rose, with her clustered blossoms of faint pink, contrasting so well with the deep rich crimson of the unclosed buds.

We derive another pleasure, even greater than the fair flowers themselves can give, when we see the walls of many a lowly cottage which we pass in our Summer rambles, covered with sweet and oftentimes rare plants, trained even along the thatched roof and round the chimney-stack, with their blossoms peering in at the open lattice, and hanging in draperies gayer and more graceful than ever decked a Royal Hall, over the rude rough-hewn door-way. When we see a Cottage so full of beauty without, we may safely conclude there is a guiding *mind* within; and drawing a natural comparison between the culture and propagation of *plants* and *knowledge*, we cannot but rejoice to see the Jasmine, which on its first introduction into England was only attainable by the great and wealthy, for the adornment of their "Banqueting Houses," now equally possessed by the poor labourer, in his humble cabin garden. Nor can we see this, without gladly feeling that thoughts and things far more precious have spread to an equal extent, and are now alike available to Prince and Peasant.

Certainly, among the many heart-cheering sights which meet the eyes of the rambler in our favoured England, none are more pleasing than the trim-looking and fragrant little garden-plots fronting the modest and picturesque dwellings on each side the village-street. In many situations in the vicinity of Horticultural Societies, the offered prizes stimulate the cottagers to vie with each other in the culture and production of fine specimens, and the display of *choice* flowers in these little borders is such as to throw far into the shade the auriculas, tulips, anemones, stock-gilliflowers, flaunting holly-hocks, carnations, and all the other fragrant denizens of the "Squire's garden" or the "Rectory." The profusion of China-rosetrees beside the cottage doors is quite a feature in the landscape in many parts of England; and how beautiful and gratifying a one it is those best know who love the glory of flowers and the pleasure of fellow-beings as dearly as the writer.

The large yellow Jasmine (with which the white is grouped in the drawing) seems quite a different flower from her virgin relative, whose wreath of pearly stars cannot be approached in loveliness by the golden diadem of the more gaily-coloured variety. Both are natives of India.

I know of no fable connected with the Jasmine, but have sometimes fancied that the hue of the yellow ones came of jealousy; and Herrick, in a quatrain, entitled, "Why flowers change colour," seems somewhat of my mind—

These fresh beauties, we can prove,
Once were virgins sick of love;

Turned to flowers, still in some
Colours goe and colours come.

We must quit the garden's trim walks and flower-beds, if we would seek our next fair subject in its favourite haunts; for the fragrant and beautiful WALL-FLOWER, the *Cheiranthus Cheiri* of botanists, loves to dwell amid the relics of past magnificence, to hide the dismantled ruins with its robe of green and gold, and to crown with its wealth of blossoms the mouldering walls and towers of our old abbeys and castles, where

— “ Beautiful it blooms,
Gleaming above the ruin'd tower,
Like sunlight over tombs.”

I have myself gathered its exquisitely perfumed flowers on the Elizabethan Kenilworth; aye, even in her Majesty's chamber, and from the far-famed and peerless banquet-hall (*once* decked with other fabrics than the interlacing stems of ivy and wild flowers); I have found it blooming on the crumbling battlements of Conway Castle; springing from crannies in the proud and royal Eagle Tower of Caernarvon— and many another departing monument of royal and feudal magnificence and might in Cambria's mountain-realm; at Ludlow, the noble Castle Hall, where Milton's Masque of Comus was first represented, is richly adorned with the starry golden flowers. Goodrich and Magland equally share its bright smiles illumining their dim recesses, and crowning either ancient Keep with annual garlands; at Chepstow, it enwreaths the dim prison-house of Henry Marten; at Tintern,— that relic of surpassing beauty,—the Wall-flowers

seem to revel in luxuriance, and as the light Summer breeze comes sighing through the ivied tracery of the windows, it brings with it a gush of fragrance, far excelling the incense that was wont to float through the "long-drawn aisle" in times of yore.

And where the golden censers high had flung
 Their fragrant clouds around the imaged throne,
 The wall-flower shed its perfume, as it clung,
 And waved in wild luxuriance o'er the stone
 Chafed by the storms of years; an emblematic bloom,
 A halo coronal of light o'er grandeur's tomb.

The Wall-flower is very appropriately considered the emblem of love in adversity, for it never appears on the stately pile in its day of pride and grandeur; but when the buttresses fall, and the walls totter, and desolation reigns over the decaying glories of a bye-gone time, then the flower brings its beauty and fragrance to gladden the solitary place, and by its cheerful smiles to rob the sad scene of half its gloom.

So far we have looked on the serious and sentimental character of the Wall-flower; but now Master Herrick shall give us a somewhat different view of the subject in a fable "of his own composing."

HOW THE WALL-FLOWER CAME FIRST, AND WHY SO CALLED.

Why this flower is now called so,
 List, sweet maids, and you shall know.
 Understand, this firstling was
 Once a brisk and bonny lasse,
 (Kept as close as Danæ was;)

Who a sprightly springall lov'd
 And, to have it fully prov'd,
 Up she got upon a wall,
 Tempting down to slide withall ;
 But the silken twist unty'd,
 So she fell, and bruis'd, she dy'd.
 Love, in pity of the deed,
 And her loving lucklesse speed,
 Changed her to this plant, we call
 Now, the Flower of the Wall.

The PIMPERNEL, which I have grouped with the Wall-flower in the plate, is also a wild flower of English growth ; and few are more brilliantly, none more minutely, beautiful. The scarlet Pimpernel, the *Anagallis arvensis* of botanists, is also called by the pretty rustic name of the "poor man's weather-glass," from the susceptibility possessed by the flowers causing them to close at the approach of damp or rainy weather ; and "on this hint I spake," in the illustrative poem.

The blue Pimpernel, *A. carulea*, is also represented in the engraving ; that, as likewise the pink and white varieties, are natives of Britain, but not found nearly so often as the *A. arvensis*—the bright scarlet, which is very common in corn-fields and among hedge plants. By cultivation, the corolla of the anagallis is produced very much larger than in the *wild* state ; but in this, and many similar cases, I prefer the simple original plant to any new or educated variety.

To the peerless beauty of the River-queen, the pure and stately WHITE WATER-LILY, let us next pay homage due, as to the loveliest of Flora's gifts to our zone. In the splendid

“Flora Londinensis,” of Hooker, I find the following interesting “memoir” of this exquisite flower:—

“This truly beautiful plant, which may vie with the most splendid productions of the tropics, is familiar to every one, how little soever skilled in scientific botany, as an inhabitant of still pools and sluggish streams in almost every part of Great Britain. But it is in the little bays and inlets, the quiet recesses of Alpine lakes, that it is seen in the greatest perfection. On the banks of Loch Lomond, I have beheld acres literally covered with this lovely plant, which almost conceals the water with its large dark green floating leaves; these, again, forming an admirable contrast to the pure white of the blossoms, which rise just above them. In Holland, perhaps, only does the *Nymphæa*, there called the White Rose of the Waters, occur in greater profusion, where the canals are bordered and almost choked with it for miles; and its increasing so rapidly as to impede navigation is only prevented by the practice of cutting down the stems of the Water-Lilies twice every year. This plant blossoms in the Summer months, and the flowers are fully expanded in the middle of the day, closing in the afternoon, and sinking somewhat below the surface of the water during the night, which last fact, long reported, has finally been verified by Sir James Smith.

“Very similar to this species in the flower, but differing from it in the toothed leaves, is the *Nymphæa Lotus*, the Lotus of the Egyptians, by which people, as well as by the natives of India, it is held so sacred that the latter were seen to prostrate themselves on entering the study of Sir William Jones, where a flower of it chanced to be lying. The seeds, as well as the roots, are said to be eaten in those countries. From the leaves and flowers Sturm, in his *Deutschland Flora*, assures us that the Turkish ladies prepare an agreeable drink.”

After so admirable a description I have little left to say of my favourite flower, which, in pure and stately beauty, is truly “the Queen all flowers among,” the Empress of the River, the “Lady of the Lake.” How few, if any, of our foreign

acquisitions to the garden and conservatory, approach in loveliness to this native of our Highland lochs and lowland streams ! And there is something in its appearance of elegant luxurious refinement,—if I may be allowed so to speak of *nature*,—for flowering as it does, in the noon of Summer, when many spots are parched with drought, the Lily is refreshingly beautiful, reclining on the placid bosom of the water, her fair head pillowed on the spreading leaves, and gently undulating, as a tiny wavelet glides along the sunlit, glittering surface. The scent of the Lily, though faint, is exceedingly sweet; thus adding rich qualities to its rare charms.

The Yellow Water Lily, the *Nuphar Lutea*, is also beautiful, when not thrown into the shade by the peerless loveliness of its "white bosomed" relative. The leaves are equally fine, though different in form, being more arrow-shaped; but the flower is little more than a fourth part the size of the majestic *Nymphæa*. Many of our water-plants are highly ornamental and interesting; the tall and rare-flowering Rush may rank next to the Lily in beauty; and the yellow Iris, or Water-flag, the delicate Arrow-head, purple Loose-strife, and "foam-like" Meadow-sweet, with "the blue and bright-eyed floweret of the brook, Hope's gentle gem, the fair Forget-me-not," deck our river and lake banks with their rich enamel of rainbow-hues, and tremble in the sunshine, under the light feet of the dragon fly, as he darts, like a bright meteor, from leaf to flower; while the less brilliant but busy bee goes more heavily along, murmuring her story of industry and prudent foresight; and the gay

ephemeron revels away her day's life in merry sport, without care or fear. Shelley, in his dream of flowers, has an exquisite peep of such a spot:—

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple prank'd with white,
 And starry river-buds among the sedge,
 And floating Water-Lilies, broad and bright,
 Which lit the oak that overhung the edge
 With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
 And bulrushes and reeds of so deep green,
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Shakspeare beautifully describes a like scene, in Hamlet, when the Queen relates the manner of Ophelia's death. The passage is familiar to all—but few will object to its repetition here:—

There is a Willow grows aslant a brook
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream :
 There with fantastic garlands did she come,
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead-men's fingers call them:
 There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;
 When down the weedy trophies, and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
 And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up ;
 Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes ;
 As one incapable of her own distress,
 Or like a creature native and indu'd
 Unto that element ; but long it could not be,
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.

In Beaumont and Fletcher's "Two noble Kinsmen," is a scene which always forcibly reminds one of the above-quoted passage of Shakspeare. The jailor's daughter having become enamoured of Palamon, goes distraught at his escape from prison and desertion of her, and is seen sitting by the water-side by a neighbour, who thus relates her condition to her Father :—

As I late was angling
 In the great Lake that lies behind the palace,
 From the far shore, thick-set with reeds and sedges,
 As patiently I was attending sport,
 I heard a voice, a shrill one, and attentive
 I gave my ear; when I might well perceive
 'Twas one that sung, and by the smallness of it
 A boy or woman. I then left my angle
 To his own skill, came near, but yet perceived not
 Who made the sound, the rushes and the reeds
 Had so encompassed it; I laid me down
 And listen'd to the words she sung; for then
 Thro' a small glade cut by the fishermen
 I saw it was your daughter.

• • • • • • •

She sung much, but no sense; only I heard her
 Repeat this often: "Palamon is gone,
 Is gone to the wood to gather mulberries,
 I'll find him out to-morrow.
 His shackles will betray him, he'll be taken;
 And what shall I do then? I'll bring a beavy,
 A hundred black-eyed maids that love as I do,
 With chaplets on their heads of daffadillies,
 With cherry lips, and cheeks like damask roses,
 And all we'll dance an antic 'fore the Duke
 And beg his pardon!" Then she talked of you, Sir;
 That you must lose your head to-morrow morning,

And she must gather flowers to bury you,
 And see the house made handsome. Then she sung
 Nothing but "Willow, willow, willow;" and between
 Ever was "Palamon, fair Palamon!"
 And "Palamon was a tall young man."—The place
 Was knee-deep where she sat; her careless tresses,
 A wreath of bull-rush rounded; about her stuck
 Thousand fresh-water flowers of several colours;
 That methought she appeared like the fair nymph
 That feeds the lake with waters; or as Iris,
 Newly dropt down from Heaven! Rings she made
 Of rushes that grew by, and to 'em spoke
 The prettiest posies: "Thus our true love's tied,
 This you may loose, not me," and many a one.
 And then she wept, and sung again, and sighed,
 And with the same breath smiled, and kist her hand.

"I said the Lily was the Queenly Flower," and here, as in
 allegiance bound, follow some of the gayest of the Floral
 Court—the richly-clad GERANIUMS. Fashion and culture
 have contributed so much to the aggrandizement of the beau-
 tiful tribe of Pelargoniums, or, as they are generally but erro-
 neously called, Geraniums, that they now count a greater
 number of royal and illustrious titles in their family than
 any other species of flower can boast. The two branches
 who did me the honour of sitting for their portraits in the
 illustration, display a curious historical anachronism, being
 no less personages than the fair *Ann Boleyn* and the renowned
 patriot-king *Caractacus*.

The Lily and the Rose, so long unrivalled in the annals of
 Poesy, are no more the absolute monopolists they have been,

for in these days a considerable share of metrical celebrity is awarded to the sentimental favourite of modern Poetasters, the FORGET-ME-NOT ; which, delicate, and dear, and beautiful as it is, the indiscriminate eulogy and fashionable preeminence, now given to it, serve to render less pure and poetical in the eyes of the true votaries of Nature and Romance than many a yet unpraised flower. The very libellous portraits, or rather caricatures, of this fair favourite, exhibited in *Albums* and graphic delineations of all grades, with the universal spirit for "illustrating" the said libels, suggested the rather unromantic lines accompanying the plate in the present volume.

The *Myosotis Palustris*, Great Water Scorpion Grass, or true Forget-me-not, grows very abundantly beside most of our running brooks and rivers, the roots being chiefly in the loose watery mud of the banks. The flowers, which are of a delicate blue, appear in June and July ; the leaves are smooth, without hairs on any part, and of a bright light green. I thus describe the features of the *real* Forget-me-not, because other species are continually being mistaken for the true one. Among other instances of this, the illustrator of a recent serious work on Flowers, although professedly a botanical draughtsman, gives the *Myosotis Alpestris* instead of the *M. Palustris*, and so exaggerates the hairy surface of the leaves that they seem equipped in winter clothing from some fairy-furriers. The rough-leaved Scorpion Grasses are found in sandy fields, on mountains, &c. ; and a very minute kind flourishes in beautiful little tufts on old walls and ruins. The very origin of the name establishes the *Myosotis Palustris* as the *real* owner

of the sentimental renown attached to it. The story is this—
Two German Lovers were walking by a river (the Rhine, I believe), when the Lady seeing and wishing for a flower of the *Myosotis Palustris*, the Cavalier attempted to gather it for her, and in so doing slipped, and was drowned, exclaiming, as he sunk—"Vergils mich nicht!"—

My next group is formed of natives and foreigners, namely three African and two wild British HEATHS: the former splendid in colours and magnitude, and the latter dear in their luxuriant and wild simplicity. Though bonny Scotland claims the Heather as her own especial emblem, and her moorlands and mountains are richly and gaily clad with its verdure and bloom, yet England and Wales are alike enlivened by its merry bells along many a tract of country otherwise bare and barren.

I shall not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau
If birds confabulate or no;
'Tis clear that they were always able
To hold discourse, at least in fable;
And e'en the child, who knows no better
Than to interpret by the letter
A story of a cock and bull,
Must have a most uncommon skull.

In like manner do I think it unnecessary to appeal either to philosophical authority or poetic licence for my frequent floral *conversazioni*, such as the 'Feuds among the Heather,' and the like, seeing we may quite as readily find sermons

in flowers as in stones; and often do their fair lips speak as eloquently as "tongues in trees, or books in the running brooks."

The beautiful **COMMELINE**, whose bright celestial blue I have attempted to account for by a fanciful fairy-tale, well merits its name *Cælestis*, for of all the blue flowers of garden or greenwood, this wears the clearest and brightest tint. It is pure ultramarine, and the delicate cruciform anthers of vivid yellow, with the peculiar construction of the whole flower, give it a most elegant and gay appearance. The individual flowers are short-lived; opening at sunrise, they fade in the intense heat of noon, and shrivel away, being succeeded by others, closely hidden in the large green sheath until ready to expand, and reminding one of little half-fledged birds in a nest.

The small **CONVOLVULUS**, represented in the same plate with the Commeline, is a very common species: it does not attain nearly the height of the large white Bindweed, but creeps plentifully about banks, hedges, and fields, twining round bents of grass, or any thing capable of lending support to its circling stems. The small and graceful flowers are tinged with faint and deeper shades of pink, like the inside of some delicate tropical shells, which they almost resemble as they peep from the footpaths we are treading on.

The splendid **PASSION-FLOWERS** next demand our notice in these remarks on the subjects selected for pictorial and

poetic illustration. The rich crimson one is named *Buonapartia*, the two others, purple and white, are the *Racemosa Cærulea*, and *Colvillii*. The lines accompanying this group might, perhaps, induce some of my readers to regret my seeming ignorance of the whimsical but much-patronized fancy, that the Passion-flower is a natural tablet,—a medal struck by nature in memory of the Crucifixion. This idea I have often seen, both in prose and poetry; and it is not from ignorance of it, but doubt of its propriety, that my illustration has other allusions. I shall, perhaps, be told, that it is *but* a fable, and should have been allowed a place at least in a work where so *many* fables and fanciful legends are assembled; but the subject is too serious to rank with the mere fanciful creations of our classic mythologists and quaint poets. For myself, I consider the fancy the most groundless that has yet been linked with the fair tribes of Flora. Even had the Passion-flowers been natives of Palestine, the notion would have more apparent reason, but they are denizens of the wild forests of a world undiscovered till centuries after the event they are said to commemorate. There are many flowers, too, with cruciform parts, quite as aptly emblematical as this splendid tribe, which bears no analogy to the subject but in its triple-headed stigma. The petals are ten in number, the anthers five, and the long pencilled threads of the star-like nectary are various in number, and almost countless in many varieties. I shall therefore leave the emblem study of the beautiful *Passiflora* to minds more superstitiously imaginative than my

own; content to read, humbly and adoringly, in the meanest herb and the frailest flower given to me by nature's lavish hand, His power and might, who clothed them all in their wondrous beauty, and who bestowed on us the yet more wonderful senses, enabling us to see, admire, and enjoy it:—

Was it not ever one of nature's glories,
 Nay, her great piece of wonder, that amongst
 So many millions, millions of her works,
 She gave the eye distinction to cull out
 The one from other?

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

The last of my Summer sketches contains two of the MALLOW family, flowers of the *Lavatera Arborea*; and, if grace of form or delicate beauty always received their merited praise, these fair things would have their poetic or legendary tale to tell. As it is, in these unjust times, I cannot conjure up one name of Bardic Chivalrie whose "troops of the line" may do efficient service to the flowers who are now my clients; for no mythological nor theological fables have yet contributed to render illustrious their genealogical tree. But their own welcome luxuriance and delicate beauty need no other claim on our admiration.

The Mallow is, in floral emblems, used to personify a "sweet disposition," and in that character, remembering all its other good and graceful qualities (*and more than any flower possesses*), it may well image to me the beloved and faithful friend, whose gentle hand laid upon my desk the originals of

the illustrative drawing ; and whose ever kind and cheering voice is as welcome to my ear as her prized affection is dear to my heart.

The Ivy-leaved BELL-FLOWER, represented in the Mallow group, is an indigenous plant, growing in moist shaded situations, by no means common. It is found creeping about stones, and among the damp moss of fountains or rocky borders of rivulets, where its delicate little bells of palest blue wave in "every wind that under heaven doth blow."

Though not illustrative of the flower, the following description of a spot similar to those where we most often find it, may claim a place here ; it is from the " Faithful Shepherdess" of Beaumont and Fletcher :—

For to that holy wood is consecrate
 A virtuous well, about whose flowery banks
 The nimble-footed Fairies dance their rounds
 By the pale moonshine ; dipping oftentimes
 Their stolen children, for to make them free
 From dying flesh and dull mortality.
 By this fair fount hath many a shepherd sworn
 And given away his freedom ; many a troth
 Been plight, which neither envy nor old time
 Could ever break, with many a chaste kiss, given
 In hope of coming happiness. By this
 Fresh fountain many a blushing maid
 Hath crowned the head of her long-loved shepherd
 With gaudy flowers, whilst he happy sung
 Lays of his love and dear captivity.

Herrick devotes one of his little poems to the giving of directions " where he would have his verses read : " perhaps, if

every author could so command, and be so obeyed, they would gain more fame, and their readers more pleasure. Following his very good example, I would, in all deference and humility, suggest to my kind and most gracious readers, that these simple lays and legends of Summer Flowers, however dull and profitless they may be, cannot fail of exciting interest in the *realities* they attempt to celebrate, if their perusal be vouchsafed in scenes such as gave them birth,—in their native haunts of the quiet shady wood, the breezy heath, or the river's rim.



A U T U M N .

Then came the Automne, all in yellow clad,
As tho' she loyed in her plenteous store,
Laden with fruits that made her laugh, full glad.

* * * * *

Upon her head a wreath, which was enroid
With ears of corne of every sort, she bore ;
And in her hand a sickle she did holde,
To reape the ripen'd fruits the which the earth did yold.

SPENSER.

THE THREE SWEET SEASONS.

A Dirge for the Departed Ones,
AND A MERRY GREETING TO AUTUMN.

(*Piu penseroso.*)

FAIR SPRING died months ago ;
She pined for jealousy,
That Summer's radiant glow
Brought brighter flowers than she.

Spring had the Snowdrop pure,
And the soft-eyed Violet ;
But these might not endure
With Rose and Mignonette.

Spring wore the Primrose pale,
And the glowing Fairy-fire ; *
But e'en such gems must fail
By Summer's brave attire.

* The *Pyrus Japonica*, page 18.

And Spring hung down her head,
 And her children, one by one,
 Drooped, mingled with the dead ;
 And soon they all were gone.

And Spring did slowly wane,
 Till one sun-glorious day
 She yielded up her reign,
 And vanished away.

And SUMMER then came forth,
 A proud and happy mother ;
 Her children graced the earth,
 Each fairer than the other.

She looked from out the sky
 With eyes of laughing blue,
 And the fervid sun on high
 Smiled gaily earthward too.

She laid her hand on sea,
 River, and brook, and lake,
 And all flowed peacefully,
 And scarce a wave did make.

She stripped the hoary hills
 Of all their capes of snow,
 And bade the mountain rills
 Run singing as they go.

She spread out far and wide
 The bonnie blooming Heather,
 And bade the Water Lilies ride
 Yellow and white together.

She made the day-break glad and bright,
 And softly calm the gloaming,
 For lovers fond, who in the light
 Of the silver moon were roaming.

Oh! Summer was a glorious queen,
 But sorrow soon came o'er her;
 Her flowers of beauty waned, I ween,
 Like Spring's young buds before her.

The Rose, her fairest darling, fell,
 And left but thorns behind;
 The Woodbine, Jasmine, lost their smell,—
 The lilies all declined.

And one by one they drooped and died,
 Till all had passed away;
 And where triumphant Summer's pride
 Had been—'twas dim decay.

And Summer in bright tears of dew
 Their mournful loss so wept,
 That she made dim her eyes of blue,
 And then—poor Summer slept.

AUTUMN.

(Allegro e spiritoso.)

COME, greet merry AUTUMN, she's heiress of Spring,
 Who left her a fortune of Flowers;
 Come, welcome her in, let the Heather-bells ring,
 And the Harebell's soft music be ours.
 Sing, hey for bright Autumn! her triumphs we'll speak,
 And love her rich gifts and her bonny brown cheek.

She has wealth all uncounted; the blossoms of Spring
 Fell fluttering down from the spray,
 But they left in their place each a germ that should bring
 A rich treasure for Autumn to-day.
 Then, hey for the heiress! her treasures we'll seek,
 And love the deep tinge of her bonny brown cheek.

She hath swelling hills girdled with broad belts of gold,
 All waving so bright i' the sun;
 She hath fruits fair as jewels, that cannot be told;
 And all this vast wealth may be won!
 Then, hey for rich Autumn! and, ere the trees break,
 Go gather the fruit with the bloom on its cheek!

To the orchard, the garden, ye epicures go,
 Where the smooth luscious Nectarines shine;
 But afar o'er the hills do the Blackberries grow,
 And the Blackberry's fruit shall be mine.
 Away! o'er the hills where the breezy winds speak,
 Singing hey for rich Autumn's bright eye and brown cheek!

Away o'er the mountains! where Heather-bells ring,
 Away, where the tall Foxgloves wave,
 Where the wild Rose we loved 'mid the flow'rets of Spring
 Hath a monument left o'er her grave;
 For her bright berries stand like an epitaph there,
 To remind us of one so short-lived and so fair.

Away o'er the hills, to the deep dingle, where
 O'er the rocks, like a tapestry, flung,
 Hang broadly the Blackberry bushes, for there
 No statelier tree would have sprung.
 Then clinging and clambering warily down,
 Beware of your footing—and eke of your gown.

The gourmand may smile at our rustic dessert,
 But there's a sweet infantine thrill
 Of gladness and glee that comes over *my* heart
 In these scenes, and I feel a child still:
 Oh! I would not exchange a rough Blackberry dell
 For aught that in orchard or garden may dwell!

Then forth to the golden-crowned corn-field pass on,
 Where the sickle is merrily plied,
 And, flashing out brightly beneath the warm sun,
 It tells where the poppies have died,—
 Where the petals of scarlet will wither and fade,
 For the young flowers in death by the ripe corn are laid.

They fall in their beauty ere rent by a storm,
 They are gone, ere the wandering bee
 Hath nestled within e'en one delicate form
 Now lying all wan on the lea.
 Alas! for the young and the beautiful now,
 The fairest must oft 'neath the keen sickle bow.

Come now to the Forest, for Autumn is there,
 She is painting its millions of leaves
 With colours so varied, so rich, and so rare,
 That the eye scarce her cunning believes;
 She tinges and changes each leaf o'er and o'er,
 And flings it to earth when 'twill vary no more.

The glorious Cedars she ever in vain
 Tries to dress in chameleon hue,
 For they brave all her arts, and the verdure retain
 Of their Spring-time the whole Winter through.
 And the sturdy Scots Fir lifts its dark-crested head
 Unchanged o'er the path where the brown leaves are spread.

Autumn strove hard to deck out the Holly's rough coat
 With touches of yellow and red ;
 But the honest old hero her fair fingers snote
 With his weapon-girt leaves till they bled ;
 And some drops that were caught on the berries he bore,
 Gave the deep ruddy glow that they ever since wore.

The Ferns, too, are waving all stately here,
 With seed-stored fronds thickly laid ;
 And shedding, when hastily brushed by the deer,
 Their light fertile dust o'er the glade.
 Oh, beautiful—beautiful ! stately, yet gay,
 Is a deep forest-glen on a bright Autumn day !

Oh ! look on the strange and the whimsical things
 That among the wild fungi we find ;
 And lichens, and moss that like fairy-work springs,—
 If ye love them not all, ye are blind ;
 Ye are blind unto Nature's most glorious looks,
 If ye read not and love not her forest-born books.

Then welcome we Autumn, rich heiress of Spring,
 Who fills our dear home-land with glee :
 True, Winter is coming—yet still will we sing
 Thrice welcome, gay Autumn, to thee !
 And oft o'er the uplands our voices shall speak
 Of Autumn's bright treasures and bonny brown cheek.

CARNATIONS AND CAVALIERS.

Oh! Ladyes—ye who Lovers have,
 (And I can guess full well
 Ye are too fair to sigh alone),
 List to the tale I tell.

A Ladye and her Lover once,
 In a Summer evening-tide,
 Within a stately garden walked,
 And whispered, side by side.

The Ladye fair and graceful was,
 And well-beloved, I ween,
 By her true Cavalier; than whom
 A braver ne'er was seen.

And in the garden wandered they,
 Nor wist which way they went:
 They gazed into each other's face
 In Love's own blest content.

On paced they through the pleached paths,
 Where honey-suckles crept,
 And, drooping from the boughs o'erhead,
 The pensile streamers swept



In graceful chaplets round
 The Lovers as they walked ;
 And with soft glances more than words,
 They eloquently talked.

The Knight had dwelt in southern climes
 Beneath a warmer sun,
 And learned the language of the Flowers,
 And fancies many a one

That Poet-Lovers gave
 To herb, and leaf, and flower,
 That they might Love's ambassadors
 Be in the fair-one's bower.

Without a line of written vows
 Fond hearts were oft-times plighted ;
 And flowers, too, could tell whene'er
 A proffered suit was slighted.

The Heartsease promised " perfect love ;"
 Hope in the Hawthorn lay ;
 Despair and death with hemlock dwelt,
 And glory claimed the Bay.—

And so to all the garden's hues
 Some fair conceit was given,
 By which young Cupid's bonds might be
 Locked closer still, or riven.

Now, to the Lady Edith oft
 Sir Rupert had told o'er
 The emblem of each glowing bud
 In this quaint graceful lore:—

But Edith (as dames mostly do),
 Liked Learning less than Love;
 The owl of Pallas she would shun
 To seek Cytherea's dove.

And so it chanced that she forgot
 Full many a fancy sweet,
 And sometimes gave, in careless mood,
 Flowers for the time unmeet.

The eve I tell of 'gan to close,
 Fast fell the soft twilight;
 And the young moon amid the leaves
 Peeped forth, all chaste and bright.

So *very* innocent she looked,
 As if she ne'er had seen
 Lovers before, and, curious, strove
 To hide behind a screen
 Of leaves,—which Zephyr waved
 That she might peer between.

And o'er the shut and sleepy flowers
 'Gan weep the Summer-dew;

And o'er the lakelet's breast there glow'd
A yet intenser blue.

As from the breast of heaven looked out
The few and timid rays
Of the first stars that venture forth
After the Sun-God's blaze.

And our fond Lovers twain must part—
The Ladye Edith sighed—
And whispered—"Here again, my Love,
We meet at even-tide?"—

Sir Rupert smiled—and from the bank
A PINK then gather'd he,
And said—"sweet Ladye of my Love,
Edith—take this, from me."

Now ye who read this tale, perchance,
Than Edith know no more
The language that fair flower would speak,
In Flora's emblem-lore?

Ladyes—take heed how ye *refuse*,
And Knights—to whom ye bring
That mystic flower—for the next gift
Should be—a *plain gold ring*.

Now Edith knew its meaning not,
Or had forgotten quite;

And all unconsciously she thus
 Grieved her own true Knight:—

“And is the paltry pink the flower
 That I must wear for thee?—
I'll find a brighter, fitter one,
 That thou shalt take from me.”

Then, where the deep CARNATIONS showed
 Their rich and glowing hues,
 And filled the air with spicy scent,
 Hied she a flower to choose.

And once again she sighed—“Farewell!”—
 The Knight alone was left—
 And in his hand the token-flower—
 Fair Edith's parting gift.

The Pink, by Knight to Ladye given,
 Prays her to be his Bride—
 The proud Carnation answering tells
 That fervent prayer's denied.

Now ye who know what 'tis to love,
 Think what Sir Rupert felt,
 As on that flower, with wond'ring grief
 His eyes still sadly dwelt.

He dreamed not that 'twas idly done,
 In careless sportive freak;

To him that token-flower brought
 Woe more than words could speak ;
 And the brave Rupert's true heart seemed
 Full even as 'twould break.

The Ladye to her Father's Hall
 Went gaily bounding back :
 More pensively Sir Rupert paced
 Along his homeward track.

And welcome was a gallant guest
 Who that night sat him by ;
 They had been friends in early youth,
 Brothers in chivalrie.

“What aileth thee,” Sir Maurice said,
 “That thou dost shun the bowl?
 That cloud upon thy brow bespeaks
 A sorrow on thy soul—

Ha! is it Love? that thou dost wear
 Yon token on thy breast?”
 For now the fatal flower peeped out
 From Rupert's broidered vest.

And all the tale of woe is told—
 And all Love's misery—
 And Maurice cried, “The morrow's morn
 Thou shalt away with me—

I go to join a gallant band
 I' the merry fields of France;
 Thou shalt along—and once again
 In tourney break a lance.

Now, out upon thy Ladye-Love,
 Who's falser far than fair;
 I'll show to thee a lovelier one
 Whose favours thou shalt wear.

My own sweet sister—she shall weave
 A scarf to grace her Knight,
 And glad thee with her laughing eyes,—
 Those eyes so blue and bright.

And if thou can'st e'en then be sad,
 She'll take her harp, and sing,
 And music for thy weighty woes
 Shall make each one a wing.

And bid all sadness fly away—
 Nay, I will have it so,
 And forth at morning's early beam,
 All bravely dight we go."

* * * * *

Ere long, in battle's dread array
 Fought bravely side by side
 These Knights—alas! that e'er should hap
 What did one eventide!

The battle's strife was well nigh o'er;
 When an archer, slight and slim,
 At Rupert aiming twanged his bow—
 Fate sped the shaft to him.

From off his steed down sunk the Knight;
 The Archer-youth looked on
 A moment's space—then bow and shafts
 Flung from him every one,

And by the wounded Rupert knelt—
 'Twas strange to see a foe
 Striving all tenderly to staunch
 The blood he caused to flow!

'Twas stanger yet to mark the tears,
 That in a quick warm shower,
 Streamed from that archer's eyes, when fell
 A crushed long-faded flower

From Rupert's vest.—It seemed, in sooth,
 Some charm of wizard power,
 Which thus that Archer's spirit quelled
 In such a stirring hour.

Stranger and yet more strange it seemed,
 When cap and waving plume
 Unheeded from his brow fell down,

And i' the sun, like shining gold,
 Rich wavy hair in many a fold
 Shaded his cheek's soft bloom.

His cheeks!—No—Rupert, as he gazed,
 Knew well that clear fair brow,
 And wond'ring, murmured faintly forth,
 “ My Edith!—is it thou ? ”—

* * * * *

And it was woman's love or hate—
 Call it whate'er ye will—
 Had braved the Ladye to the field,
 Her own true Knight to kill.

He deemed *her* false—and she soon knew
 Herself and love forsaken;
 And with a woman's recklessness,
 This wild revenge had taken.

“ And could'st thou dream thine Edith false,
 Who was so true to thee?
 Oh! that a whim should seem to break
 Vows kept so faithfully—

And thou hast wooed another love—
 Her favour decks thy crest.”

“ Hush thee, mine Edith—*who* was't gave
 The flower found next my breast ?

Even that fatal flower was kept
 By this fond heart of mine;
 'Twas the last gift I ever had
 From that dear hand of thine.

And now, mine Edith—we will still
 In *sport* use floral lore,
 But never, Love, in sober truth,
 Trust such frail emblems more.

And oft again, when loit'ring late
 In garden or in grove,
 We'll wreath our brows with woodbine sweet,
 That fragrant 'tie of Love;'

And when, with orange blossoms crowned,
 My Edith walks a bride,
 Her pathway shall be strewn with flowers,
 In all their rainbow pride."

And so they talked—these lovers twain—
 And pleased themselves full well—
 But few, methinks, will wish that I
 Their talk again should tell.

For though, no doubt, each pretty word
 To them was music sweet,
 I ne'er yet found a third who thought
 Such converse any treat,

The Ladye Constance—so was called
 Sir Maurice' sister fair—
 On Rupert had bestowed a scarf,
 And a ring of dark brown hair.

She smiled upon his moody brow,
 And at his downcast eye;
 But ne'er did love for Rupert cost
 Gay Constance one light sigh.

She gave to him the broidered scarf—
 She gave the glossy hair—
 But they were cheated sore, who thought
 The maiden's heart was there.

And while Sir Maurice fought in France,
 Gay Constance hied away
 With her young Chieftain to his Tower,
 High o'er the salt sea spray.

Sir Maurice vowed that woman kind
 Too changeful were for him—
 But may be he'll be changing too,
 Ere many moons be dim.

ARGUMENT.

Now, Ladye—when a Cavalier
Presents a chequered PINK,
'Tis time to ascertain, my dear,
His rent-roll you may think ;
And then—provided his estate
Don't meet your approbation,
It cannot, surely, be too late
To cut—with a CARNATION.

THE CHIME OF THE HAREBELLS.

OVER the moorland, over the lea,
 Dancing airily, there are we ;
 Sometimes, mounted on stems aloft,
 We wave o'er Broom and Heather,
 To meet the kiss of the zephyr soft :
 Sometimes, close together,
 Tired of dancing, tired of peeping,
 Under the whin you'll find us sleeping :
 Nodding about and dreaming too ;
 Dreaming of fairy cups of dew—
 Dreaming of music, soft and low
 As the melodies that flow
 In tiniest ripples along the pool,
 In Summer twilights dim,
 When the night-wind's breath is cool,
 And downy owlets skim
 Lightly along from shore to shore,
 Flitting about, as if they bore
 Upon their trembling wings
 (That ne'er are seen by day)
 Dreams and visions, fantastic things,
 That people the Lily's slumberings
 With a shadowy array



Of forms that Flowers know and see
 When they are dreaming, e'en as we
 Merry Harebells do
 On the heathery lea.
 Maiden—do not you
 Often wish you were a Flower,
 Spending one or two
 Merry days in greenwood bower,
 As the Harebells do,
 Dancing, and waving, and ringing in glee,
 Over the moorland and over the lea?

Daintily bend we our honeyed bells
 While the gossiping bee her story tells,
 And drowsily hums and murmurs on
 Of the wealth to her waxen storehouse gone,
 And though she gathers our sweets the while,
 We welcome her in with a nod and a smile.

Darting about
 Now in, now out,
 Aloft, adown, in angles, rings,
 And every form of swiftest flight,
 Like arrows, guided by glittering wings,
 The dragon-flies play in the sunshine bright,
 That tinges their forms of chameleon hue
 With emerald, ruby, amber, and blue.

You'd fancy the rainbow's painted dome
 A fitting home
 For creatures so airy, so light, so gay,
 As the dragon-flies all in the breeze at play.
 And, poised on the tips
 Of their tiny feet,
 They steal from our lips
 A kiss so fleet,
 That ere our delicate heads are tost
 In feigned anger, the thief is lost,
 Gone—flitting along o'er moor and lea,
 Where the thistle-down sails so airily.

 How soft in the gloaming
 Our melody floats,
 When night-winds are roaming
 And wafting our notes
 Around and about in cadence sweet!
 Oft, when this breezy strain ye meet,
 Ye gaze around,
 Chasing the sound,
 And, marvelling whence the strain is springing,
 Murmur, " how softly the wind is singing!"
 We chime too gently for *ye* to tell
 The silvery voice of the little Harebell.

No rock is too high—no vale too low—
 For our fragile and tremulous forms to grow:

Sometimes we crown
 The castle's dizziest tower, and look
 Laughingly down
 On the pigmy men in the world below,
 Wearily wandering to and fro.

Sometimes we dwell on the cragged crest
 Of mountain high ;
 And the ruddy sun, from the blue sea's breast
 Climbing the sky,
 Looks from his couch of glory up,
 And lights the dew in the Harebell's cup.

We are crowning the mountain
 With azure bells
 Or decking the fountain
 In forest dells,
 Or wreathing the ruin with clusters gay,
 And nodding and laughing the live-long day,
 Then chiming our lullaby, tired with play.

Are we not beautiful? Oh! are not we
 The darlings of mountain, and moorland and lea?
 Plunge in the forest—are we not fair?
 Go to the high road—we'll meet ye there,
 Oh! where is the flower that content may tell
 Like the laughing, and nodding, and dancing Hare-
 bell?

FOXGLOVES AND FERN.

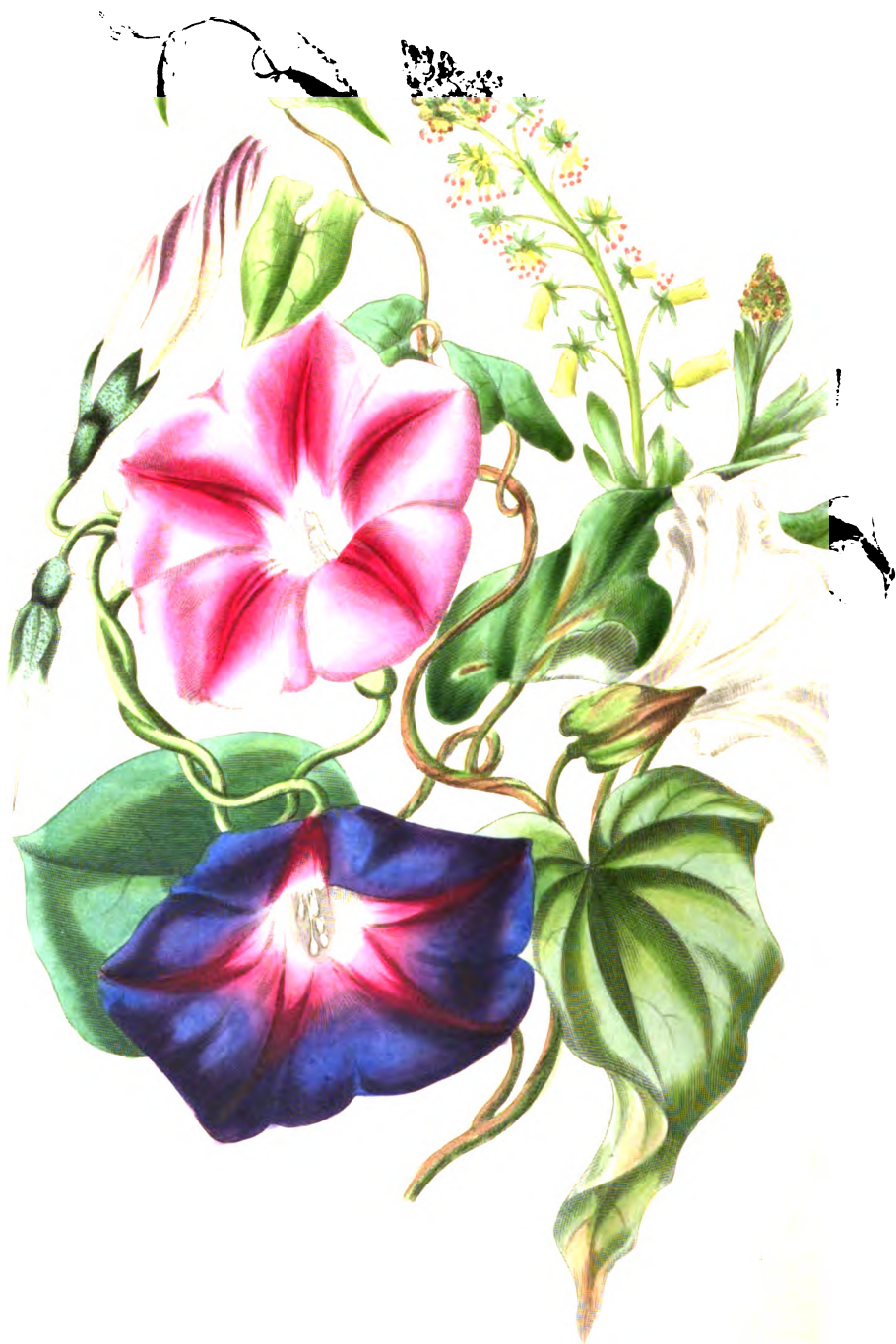
The Foxgloves and the Fern,
 How gracefully they grow
 With grand old oaks above them,
 And wavy grass below!
 The stately trees stand round
 Like columns fair and high,
 And the spreading branches bear
 A glorious canopy
 Of leaves, that rustling wave
 In the whispering summer air
 And gaily greet the sunbeams
 That are falling brightly there.
 The miser-leaves!—they suffer
 Not a gleam to twinkle through,
 And in the Foxglove's hairy cup,
 At noonday, drops of dew
 Are hanging round like tears
 Of sorrow, that the sun
 Gives to other flowers his kisses
 But to her soft lips not one—
 Yet are they wondrous sweet,
 As the honey-bee knows well,
 When murmuring all busily,
 Hid in each purple bell



That, drooping, clusters round
 The tall and spiral stem,
 Each one bedecked and broidered
 With many a fairy gem :
 Why *Foxgloves* are they hight ?
 They're *Fairy-caps*, I ween—
 Oft in the moony light
 The elfin folk are seen
 Trooping and frisking out,
 With tiny silv'ry shout,
 Forth to the circlet green ;
 And trumpet-notes, through woodbine florets blown,
 Herald King Oberon, whose royal throne
 Poised on a snow-white mushroom straight appears ;
 His retinue, well armed with keen grass spears,
 Proud Foxglove helms, and daisy shields, stand round,
 Like strange flowers, spell-called from the dew-bright ground.
 Queen Mab and her gay fairy-maidens trace
 A measure on the turf, with airy grace :
 Their music the soft Harebell's silv'ry peals,
 And distant rippling of the brook, that steals
 Through the dim forest shade. Such fairies be,
 Creatures of fancy, joy, and revelrie.

The green and graceful Fern,
 How beautiful it is !
 There's not a leaf in all the land
 So wonderful, I wis.

Have ye ever watched it budding,
 With each stem and leaf wrapped small
 Coiled up within each other
 Like a round and hairy ball?
 Have ye watched that ball unfolding
 Each closely nestling curl,
 And its fair and feathery leaflets
 Their spreading forms unfurl?
 Oh! then most gracefully they wave
 In the forest, like a sea,
 And dear as they are beautiful
 Are those Fern leaves to me.
 For all of early childhood—
 Those past and blessed years
 To which we ever wistfully
 Look back through memory's tears—
 The sports and fancies then my own,
 Those Fern-leaves dear and wild
 Bring back to my delighted heart—
 I am once more a child—
 " Oh! cull the tallest, fairest branch,
 My banner it shall be,
 And twine a circlet for my brow,—
 Crown me all royally:
 A Foxglove sceptre my right hand
 So gravely shall sustain: "—
 Oh! blessings on the bonny Fern—
 I *am* a child again!



CONVOLVULI AND MIGNIONETTE.

(BEAUTY AND SWEETNESS.)

How well two maidens may be imaged here!
 One in Convolvula's all-beauteous face,
 That with the richest colour deeply glows,
 Conscious and proud of her great loveliness:—
 And then in Mignonette's meek humble form,
 Without one tint upon her modest garb
 To draw the idle stare of wandering eyes,
 Which greedily the other's beauty drink.

How well the young and fair are here shown forth!
 For some—aye, *many*, prize a rosy cheek,
 A sparkling eye—or lip where rubies strive
 With coral the bright mastery to gain,
 Above all other wealth. E'en like this flower,
 The gay Convolvulus, which spreads her form
 Of fragile short-lived loveliness before
 The flattering beams of the deceitful sun,
 And basks her in his light, and thinks, poor bud
 Of foolish vanity—that such will last:—
 But soon the noontide glare falls scorchingly
 Upon her waning charms—she hangs her head—

Her boasted beauty shrivels and decays,
 And outward show, her only gift, is gone.

Now look ye on the plain and modest guise
 Of yon unlovely flower—*unlovely?*—no—
 Not *beautiful*, 'tis true—not touched with hues
 Like her's we late have gazed on; but so rich
 In precious fragrance is that lowly one,
 So loved for her sweet qualities, that *I*
 Should woo her first amid a world of flowers;
 For she is like some few beloved ones here,
 Whom *eyes*, perchance, might slightly pass o'er,
 But whose true wisdom, gentleness, and worth,
 Unchanging friendship, ever-faithful love,
 And countless minor beauties of the mind,
 Attach our *hearts* in deep affection still.



LOVE AND THE THISTLE.

As CUPID was flying about one day,
 With the flowers and zephyrs in wanton play,
 He 'spied in the air,
 Floating here and there,
 A winged seed of the Thistle-flower,
 And merrily chased it from bower to bower.

And young Love cried to his playmates, "See,
 I've found the true emblem-flower for me,
 For I am as light
 In my wavering flight
 As this feathery star of soft Thistle-down,
 Which by each of you zephyrs about is blown.

See, how from a Rose's soft warm blush
 It flies, to be caught in a bramble bush;—
 And as oft do I,
 In my wand'rings, hie
 From beauty to those who have none, I trow;
 Reckless as Thistle-down, on I go."

So the sly little God still fits away
 Mid earth's loveliest flow'ret's, day by day;

And oh! maidens fair,
Never weep, nor care
When his light wings waft him beyond your power,
Think—'tis only the down of the Thistle-flower!



FLOWER-FANTASIES.

(LOBELIA FULGENS—CARDINAL FLOWER.)

CAN ye whose eyes now rest upon my page
 Read souls in flowers?
 Do ye delight to fancifully trace,
 In the bright bowers
 Of clustered blossoms that in gardens are,
 Semblance of things as radiant and fair?

Ye should be "high fantastical," to feel,
 With perfect zest,
 All the fine subtle fancies, that like dreams
 Softly invest
 The thought and memory of each bright bud
 That we do cull in forest, field, or flood.

Oh! there is music to the spirit's ear
 In every sigh
 Heaved by the rose's bosom to the air
 That winnows by;
 And there is poetry in every leaf,
 Whose blush speaks pleasure, or whose tears tell grief.

There is romance in every stem that bends
 In motion soft
 Beneath the wind that rustles in the tall
 Tree-tops aloft,
 And mid their branches whistlingly doth blow,
 While it but fans the flowers that sleep below.

We know they sleep; at eve the daisy small
 Foldeth all up
 Her blush-tipped rays; and the wave's empress* hides
 Her star-lit cup:
 And each fair flower, though some with open eye,
 Listens and yields to nature's lullaby.

The nodding Foxglove slumbers on her stalk;
 And fan-like ferns
 Seem poised still and sleepily, until
 The morn returns
 With singing birds and beams of rosy light,
 To bid them dance and frolic in delight.

The drowsy Poppy, who has all the day
 Proudly outspread
 His scarlet mantle, folds it closely now
 Around his head;
 And, lulled by soothing balm that his own leaves distil,
 Sleeps, while the night dews fall upon the moonlit hill.

* The Water-lily.

Now, rocked upon her fragile trembling stem,
 The soft Harebell
 Is slumbering light and dreamily ;—for sure
 Bright dreams may well
 Be thought to visit things so pure and fair,
 Whose deaths no anguish have, whose lives no care.

Oh! that I were a flower to slumber so!
 To wake at morn
 E'en with as lithe a spirit; and to die,
 As these return
 Unto their mother-earth, when air and sky
 Have caught their od'rous immortality.

The fragrance is the spirit of the flower,
 E'en as the soul
 Is *our* ethereal portion, We can ne'er
 Hold or control
 One more than other. Passing sweet must be
 The visions, gentle things, that visit ye!

How happily ye live in the pure light
 Of loveliness :—
 Do ye not feel how deeply—wondrously—
 Ye cheer and bless
 Our chequered sojourn on this weary earth,
 Whose wildest, dreariest spots to FLOWERS have given birth ?

Do ye not joy to know the pure delight
 With which we gaze
 Upon your glorious forms?—Are ye not glad
 E'en in the praise
 Which our enraptured wonder ever tells
 While poring o'er the wealth that in ye dwells;—

That wealth of thought, of beauty, and of love.
 Which may be found
 In each small common herb that springs from out
 The teeming ground?
 Do ye not feel that ye do deeply bless
 Our harsher souls by your dear loveliness?

Oh! if 'tis given unto ye to know
 The thrilling power
 Of memories and thoughts that can be read
 E'en in a flower,
 How ye must all rejoice beneath each look
 Which reads your beauty like an open book!

We love its silent language: strong, though still,
 Is that unheard
 But all-pervading harmony:—it breathes
 No uttered word,
 But floats around us, as, in happy dream,
 We feel the soft sigh of a waveless stream.

And when once listened, it is ne'er forgot,
 But thenceforth forms
 A part and parcel of our being; for not all
 Earth's jarring storms
 Can scare that gentle music from the heart
 It once hath entered: ne'er doth it depart,

But dwelleth like a fount within a cave
 Or forest deep,
 Answering to each light breeze whose gentle wing
 Doth o'er it sweep,
 And making doubly bright each tender beam
 Of star or sun-light that doth o'er it gleam.

So, love of nature's harmony can bless
 And gladden ever
 The heart and fancy, as pellucid wave
 Of fount or river
 Flings back more bright what bright doth on it fall,
 And its own radiance lends where else were none at all.

But I, in wandering rhymes, too long have chased
 The shadowy things
 Which oft-times flit before fantastic thought
 On fancy's wings;
 And though I well love dreamy themes like these,
 Wend we now nearer to realities.

Turn ye, kind reader, a few pages back,
 And deign to gaze
 Upon the portrait-flowers that there ye meet;—
 One, in such blaze
 Of brilliant beauty and of gorgeous glow,
 That ye ne'er saw an Empress robed so.

With proud disdain how she uprears her stem,
 Unbending, tall;
 As if she arrogantly, vainly said—
 “What are ye all
 Pale, paltry buds, that trail and creep around,
 Scarce rising from the base and sordid ground?”

See, how the butterflies, with gay-plumed wings
 On me alight—
 Attracted by my tow'ring, stately stem,
 And colours bright—
 None in *my* presence cast a thought on you—
 Their homage paid to me, away they go.”

So seemed this gaudy flower to discourse
 Unto the fair,
 Humble, and lowly buds, which all around
 Disposed were;
 And much her scorn on their mean rank was bent;
 Which scorn, howe'er, brought them no discontent.

But even while I watched these flowers, the queen
 Began to droop,
 Her proud array flagged quickly, her high head
 Low, low, did stoop,
 And soon the cause of this I could descry;
 The vase, whose waters fed her pride, was dry.*

And she, deprived of this distinctive wealth,
 No more might rank
 Among the great, or beautiful, or proud,
 But dimly sank,
 In loathsome dusk deformity, beside
 The very things o'er whom her swollen pride

Had been most arrogant. And when I saw
 Her swift decay,
 And marked the giddy flies on other flowers
 As fondly play,
 As they had toyed with her so lately lost,
 Methought how false was all her haughty boast!

How vain that pride of birth, or wealth, or state,
 Or fleeting power,
 Which blots the vaunted reason of *our* race,
 To whom this flower

* The *Lobelia fulgens*, or Cardinal-flower, here alluded to, requires a constant and plentiful supply of water;—if deprived of it, the long stem bends to the ground, the flowers flag—and, unless soon indulged with its wonted libations, the plant dies.

May read a wholesome lesson.—Are not *they*
As soon forgot when wealth doth pass away?

Do not *their* flattering parasites desert

The drooping stem?—

How long in sorrow will the courtly crowd

Hover round them?

Are they not all forgotten in the hour

Of dark dishonour—like my garish flower?

Oh! bid them learn that beauty, riches, state,

And noble birth

Are but choice accidents that do befall

A few on earth—

And bid them less haught and conceited be,

Who have drawn prizes in this lottery.



THE LADYE, THE LOVER, AND THE CROCUS.

A LEGEND OF LOVE.

THE Ladye was fair as Ladye could be,
 And had lands both broad and fine,
 And was wooed by bold Barons of high degree,
 Yet blushed at a suit like mine.

She lent to them all a ready ear,
 Joined hands with them in the dance;
 And each deemed himself to her most dear,
 While cheered by her sunny glance.

Her voice was gay, and her step was light
 Mid them, in hall and bower,
 But soon 'neath my gaze she shrunk, as a blight
 Withers the summer-flower.

And then she shunned me, as the dove,
 When the hawk soars, shuns her fate:
 And I—I deemed not this was *Love*,
 That looked so much like hate.

I seemed a shadow in her path,
 A cloud upon her sky,
 I deemed it scorn, perchance e'en wrath,
 In her averted eye.

* * * * *

It was her natal day. A crowd
 Of cringing nothings came—
 I call them nothings—for they showed
 Nought noble save a name.

And flowers were offered—and I brought
 Mine from the brook's bright rim,
 With Autumn's Crocuses: not wrought
 Into a garland trim.

But they were wild, and fresh, and sweet,
 And innocent and fair
 As she whom others sought to greet
 With off'rings rich and rare.

Yet a rose-wreath her brow entwined,
 By daring suitor placed;
 A gay exotic was enshrined
 Close by her girdled waist.

My humbler offering she took,
 Red, trembling, as in scorn,
 Nor deigned vouchsafe me e'en a look—
 And 'twas her birth-day morn !

Oh ! had her angel eye the power
 To kill, or turn to stone,
 I'd better borne such glance that hour
 Than that averted one.

And forth I wandered—and I vowed
 My fond wild dream was o'er;—
 I would but mingle in the crowd
 And gaze on her once more.

* * * * *

It was the evening of that day,
 That day when laughter glad
 Rang out, mid dance and mirthful play,
 From some—while I was sad.

'Twas evening, and the crowded hall
 Mocked the less dazzling day;
 And rainbow-like the hues that all
 Shone in that festal ray.

And when the minstrel-melody
 Rang out in cadence loud,
 Then with a heavy heart did I
 Mingle in that gay crowd :

For all were then so deep intent
 Upon their own delight,
 That not one curious glance was bent
 On me—poor woe-eyed wight !

I looked the gay ranks through ; but not
 A sight of her could gain—
 I gazed and gazed—and, lest a spot
 Escaped, looked through again.

She was not there—and then the Hall,
 Before so bright, seemed dim ;
 Alas ! in Lover's eye, what change
One form doth make to him.

And on I passed through gay saloons
 Where guests by three and two
 Were list'ning to the softened tones
 O' the music, and some few,
 Methought, were whispering words which they
 No doubt, far sweeter knew.

And passing by these whisperers, I
 Yet farther might have gone,
 But that within an oriel sat
 A Ladye—only one.

A wreath of roses lay flung by
 Her feet, upon the floor,
 And choicer buds, whose smell, I ween,
 And loveliness were o'er.

She did not hear my coming step,
 And I might watch her take
 Flowers from her bosom,—happy they
 Who such a home might make!

She took a drooping cluster thence
 Not rich and rare like those
 Which, spurned were lying at her feet,
 But such as nature shows,

And spreads with lavish hand
 O'er bank and moor and field;
 No cultured garden's glittering wealth
 Those treasured ones did yield.

Oh, joy! they were the same I gave!
 I saw her kiss them o'er—
 I saw her place them whence they came
 And I was mute no more.

I told her all my love, and sure
 Joy made me eloquent,
 For though her blush was deep, her brow
 No frown upon me bent.

Little she spoke, but her small hand
 Was not withdrawn from mine,
 And the bright tear which I might see
 Under the eyelash shine

Told not of sorrow, but deep joy ;
 And soon a smile o'erspread
 Her blushing face, that chased away
 The tear-drop ere 'twas shed.

Together joined we that gay throng
 'That happy birth-day eve ;
 Our loneliness had passed away,
 As ye may well believe.

Such was the story told by one
 Who well might love to gaze
 Upon the lowly bud that bore
 Such dreams of earlier days.

But ever does that humble flower
 That gems the aging year,

Pale Autumn's purple Crocus, seem
 Than other flowers more dear.

I meet it on the cold bleak hill
 When sunshine there is none,
 And all the Summer darlings have
 Departed, every one.

I look upon its outward form
 So delicate and frail;
 And wonder how so slight a thing
 May breast the boisterous gale.

But it is humble; o'er its head
 The blast that reuds the oak
 Passes all harmless, though the flower
 A fairy's foot had broke.

I gaze into its vasselike cup
 Of amethyst, where low
 A star of deep rich gold doth round
 Fling a warm yellow glow.

Hid from the spendthrift breeze, the flowers
 Their wealth all meekly keep,
 Till they who know the treasure's worth
 The golden harvest reap.*

* Saffron is made from the yellow anthers of the Autumn Crocus.

Oh! many a glorious flower there grows
 In far and richer lands:
 But high in *my* affection e'er
 The Autumn Crocus stands.

I love their faces, when, by one
 And two, they're looking out:—
 I love them, when the spreading field
 Is purple all about.

I loved them in the by-gone years
 Of childhood's thoughtless laughter,
 When I marvelled why the flowers came first
 And the leaves the season after.

I loved them then, I love them now,
 The gentle and the bright;
 I love them for the thoughts they bring
 Of Spring's returning light;

When, first-born of the waking earth,
 Their kindred gay appear.
 And, with the Snowdrop, usher in
 The hope invested year.

But they are passing from us now,
 And round each frail, white stem
 The purple petals faded droop;
 Winter will chase e'en them.

So farewell to the Crocus, which
In amethyst is dight;
And may we live to welcome back
The yellow and the white!

THE ARBUTUS.

Some deep empurpled as the hyacine,
 Some, as the rubine laughing sweetly red,
 Some like fair emeralds, not yet well ripened :
 And them amongst were some of burnisht gold,
 Which did themselves amongst the leaves enfold,
 As lurking from the vew of covetous guest,
 That the weake boughes with so rich load opprest
 Did bow adowne as overburdened.

SPENSER.

Like faithful Lovers, that full true are seen
 Though fickle fortune frown, and work them woe
 So those fair trees still wear their summer-green,
 When Autumn's breath hath yellowed, and laid low
 The vesture of the bare and shivering grove,
 Where Winter's bitter winds might all unhindered rove.

WHY should we grieve, that to the chilly air
 Of our beloved, yet dim and wintry land
 The luxuries of other climes deny
 Their stately growth?—What though we may not roam
 'Mid groves where orange-blossoms perfume breathe
 From the same branch where hangs the golden fruit ;
 Have we not, even 'neath our bleakest sky,
 A tree as beautiful—whom snow, nor frost,
 Nor the loud-chiding, many-voiced wind
 May e'er affright or wither?—Know ye not
 The verdant Arbutus?—which ever fair
 The whole four seasons round, is loveliest now,
 When Winter's scowling brow hath driven all
 The frailer blossoms from the leaf-strewn earth.



12

13

See, like a Ladye in a festal garb,
 How gaily decked she waits the Christmas time!
 Her robe of living emerald, that waves
 And, shining, rustles in the frost-bright air,
 Is garlanded with bunches of small flowers,—
 Small bell-shaped flowers, each of an orient pearl
 Most delicately modelled, and just tinged
 With faintest yellow, as if, lit within,
 There hung a fairy torch in each lamp-flower.
 Some have a pinky hue, soft as a shell
 Painted by Amphitrite's hands; for they, less white
 Than Lilies when they ope, blush e'en to know
 That Summer hath a flower more pure than they.
 Nor are her pearls the only wealth displayed
 By this fair Winter Queen; for, all around,
 Among those bead-like wreaths do gleam and glow
 Jewels of many hues; globes of rich gold
 Hanging beside the pale green chrysoprase;
 And those contrasted by the ruby's light,
 Or coral, snatched from out some sea-maid's cell;
 Against which amber soft and palely shines,
 Fast deep'ning to the hue the topaz wears.
 And these, with ceaseless changefulness of shade,
 Broider that Ladye's pearl-enwreathed robe
 Of vernal emerald,—When chilling storms
 Howl dismally around, and Winter shakes,
 Wide spreading to the blast, his hoary locks,
 Till they array the frozen earth in snow;

E'en then *her* beauty wanes not—for she wears
The white and glittering vesture like a veil
Over her festal robe, and when the breeze
Ruffles the silv'ry folds, coquettish peeps,
Smiling and blushing, from her cold, chaste screen.





A NOVEMBER STROLL.

'Twas in late Autumn, that I rambled lone
 Along a country path—nay, 'twas a *road*—
 A common turnpike road;—that thing so far
 From landscape loveliness, as Poets deem;
 Yet I could find that myriad beauties lay
 E'en in that beaten track :—*beauties to me*,
 Though hundreds daily passed along, to whom
 The things I gloried in were all unknown,
 Unseen—unloved; and, doubtless, I must seem
 A strange, odd, uncouth being unto them—
 Because I sought delightful lore in books
 Whose language they knew not; while foreign tongues,
 And fashion's erudition, they would strive,
 Ambitious, to acquire. Had they e'er read
 One page of *Nature*, with the love devout
 Which some are blessed withal, they would not think
 That mind distraught, which could delight itself
 In contemplation of the smallest weed,
 Pebble—leaf—insect—which the lap of earth
 Holds in exhaustless wealth. *Envy* they might
 In their small spirits suffer to arise,
 Could they conceive the pleasures, high, refined,

Derivable from things so plenteous,—
 Pleasures not bought with gold—nor giving toil
 Nor pain to living creature.

Oh! that all
 Partook the feelings which companioned me
 That bright Autumnal morning! The clear sky
 Was blue unbroken, save by one or two
 Small downy clouds of silvery white, that served
 (In artist-phrase) to *tell* the azure's depth,
 And sailed along so silently and soft,
 That I did long to be a cloud myself,
 Soaring beside them:—and the Sun's warm rays
 Fell kindly on the earth, whose fading garb,
 Though torn by recent storms that had nigh stripped
 The woodlands of their leavy wealth, looked gay.

I wandered on—along the beaten path,
 Musing most happily;—and often paused
 Beside the ragged hedgerow, picking out
 From the rough tangled mass, despite the thorns
 (Which, sooth to say, defended their charge well),
 Bunches of wild red berries, faded leaves,—
 And straggling nettle-tops. Sometimes a stick,
 O'er which the pale-green Lichen mantling, wrought
 A forest-scene in miniature. Now, a long,
 Far-creeping, many-angled stalk of that fair plant,
 Fair-seeming, yet oft treach'rous, woody nightshade:—

The few keen frosts had nipped its verdant leaves,
 And most of them had fallen; some remained,
 But they were yellow, and the footstalks small
 So brittle, that they dropped off at a touch;
 But the bright luscious-looking berries hung
 In bunches of rich crimson, juicy, ripe,
 And tempting e'en to those who know their bale,
 Much more to childish lips!—yet those might find
 A better treat upon a neighb'ring spray,
 That long, arched, prickly streamer, which bent o'er,
 Down from the hedge's top, its garland rough,
 Bearing the loved *Black-berries*—though these now
 Were “few and far between,” and tasteless, too:
 Yet frost, which steals the sweetness from the fruit,
 Gives to the leaf strange beauty—tinting it
 With every various hue, from healthy green
 To sickliest yellow—and from that again
 Through every soft and brilliant shade that 'longs
 To flaming scarlet—richer crimson—brown,
 In all its myriad grades—purple—and that
 Dappled again with black. Oh! I have culled
 An hundred of these painted leaves, and gazed,
 And, wondering, looked again upon them all,
 Yet ne'er found one whose form of shade or hue
 Resembled any other—all unlike;
 And then the under surfaces of each
 Are white, and smooth, and downy, as if wind,
 And frost, and rain, did never come to them.

All o'er the hedge—as if some wealthy nymph
 From Neptune's ocean-palace had flung forth
 A shower of coral—gleam the polished hyps,
 In many a smiling cluster, and we read
 An ever-welcome message in their smile:—
 It tells us that where they on naked stems,
 Leafless and winter-worn, do greet us now,
 Summer again will spread her lavish bloom,
 And, 'neath the blue sky, bid the roses blush.

Near these, in dark, rich crimson all yclad,
 With a soft velvet bloom upon their cheek,
 The Hawthorn's winter progeny are seen,
 In groups of fruit, which, flavourless to us,
 Is a kind harvest to the hungry birds,
 And small field mice, who other sustenance
 In wintry weather may full seldom find.
 So, every thing in Nature hath some end
 Of good and useful to achieve—though we
 In our small knowledge of her mystic laws
 Discern not clearly her appointed path.
 Half hid in grass and its own broad bright leaves,
 A Summer-flower is lingering e'en yet
 Upon the moist hedge-bank—and timidly,
 As if it marvelled at its own brave act,
 Looks out from its close bower; a prized gem,
 Now that its gayer rivals all are gone;
 And lovingly we greet the Mallow-flower,
 With its striped purple garb and humble mien.

All these were happy meetings unto me —
 The leaves, weeds, berries with their lively tints,
 Pale flowers, and pleasant musings. But ere long
 A dearer and more joyous form than all
 Came hopping friskily about. 'Twas he,
 The wintry warbler—poor Robin Red-breast,
 As blithe and brisk, and merry as his wont,
 Singing and chirruping, as by my side
 In kind companionship he skipped along,
 Or flew from tree to tree. And as he sung,
 Methought his gay notes shaped themselves to sense—
 Language like ours; and thus my fancy framed,
 From his sweet music, unmelodious words.

Farewell to Autumn! She's passing away,
 Silently, swiftly going—
 She is shaking the last brown leaves from the spray,
 And they fall on the earth, where the Sun's slant ray
 Finds only damp moss growing.

Autumn is parting; mute and fast
 Her few faint flowers are dying;
 The noon of the year is gone and past,
 And every moaning and muttering blast
 The Summer's dirge is crying.

But let us be merry—though Summer is gone,
 And Autumn away is gliding;
 And hoary Winter, now hurrying on,
 With storms and snows, will be here anon,
 'Mid winds all loudly chiding.

Still, ever be merry, as I am now,
 Thorough the wintry weather;
 For ye have the bright hearth's cheering glow,
 While for me the ruddy hedge-berries grow,
 So let us be gay together!

Oh! ever be merry!—what do ye gain
 By murmuring, fretting, sighing?—
 Why ever strive to discover pain?
 Why court the things of which ye complain?
 Why on life's dark side be prying?

Cease—cease, and be merry;—Oh come to me,
 E'en a bird shall teach ye reason—
 Shall show ye how gaily and happily
 Poor Robin can sing in a leafless tree,
 And love e'en the dreariest season.

Then ever be merry—a lesson take now,
 That well ye may aye remember;
 A contented heart and a cloudless brow
 Can light life's shadowy path with a glow,
 Like sunshine in dim November.

AUTUMN SCENES AND FLOWERS.

To the mind accustomed to contemplate and enjoy Nature, every season is so full of beauty, that in describing or alluding to them successively, we unconsciously give to each a seeming preference.

“The flowering Spring, the Summer’s ardent strength,
And sober Autumn, fading into age,”

each in its turn calls forth our loving praise. To Spring and Summer we have already paid all the brief tribute which the limits of these pages allow:—and brown Autumn must now succeed her more brilliant, but not more beautiful sisters.

Thomson’s opening lines in this season, are too finely descriptive to be forgotten here:—

Crown’d with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
While Autumn, nodding o’er the yellow plain,
Comes jovial on, the Doric reed once more,
Well pleased, I tune. Whate’er the Wintery frost
Nitrous prepared; the various-blossomed Spring
Put in white promise forth; and Summer suns
Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme—

• • • • • •

From Heav'n's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
 Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
 With golden light enliven'd, wide invests
 The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
 Sweet-beamed, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
 A pleasing calm; while broad and brown below,
 Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
 Rich, silent, deep they stand, for not a gale
 Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain:
 A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
 Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
 Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
 The clouds fly different; and the sudden Sun,
 By fits effulgent, gilds th' illumined field,
 And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
 A gaily-chequer'd, heart-expanding view,
 Far as the circling eye can shoot around
 Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.

Autumn in England is a joyous and a glorious season,
 the time when nature's wealth of field and tree is most
 lavishly displayed, and gathered with thankful merriment.
 How richly, glowingly beautiful are corn-fields now!—with
 their troops of reapers, gleaners, and country maidens—
 heavily-laden waggons, sleek, sturdy horses, and gambolling
 children.

Herrick's "Hock-cart, or Harvest-home," well describes
 such scenes, though he seems to allude to ceremonies not
 now in use at that festive time—

Come, sons of Summer, by whose toile
 We are the lords of wine and oile;
 By whose tough labours and rough hands,
 We rip up first, then reap our lands.

Crown'd with the ears of corn, now come,
 And, to the pipe, sing Harvest-home.
 Come forth, my lord, and see the cart
 Drest up with all the country art.
 See here a maukin, there a sheet,
 As spotlesse pure as it is sweete;
 The horses, mares, and frisking fillies,
 Clad all in linen white as lillies.
 The harvest swains and wenches bound
 For joy, to see the Hock-cart crown'd.
 About the cart heare how the rout
 Of rural younglings raise the shout,
 Pressing before, some coming after,
 Those with a shout, and these with laughter.
 Some blesse the cart, some kisse the sheaves,
 Some pranke them up with oaken leaves:
 Some cross the fill horse, some with great
 Devotion stroak the home-borne wheat.

The younger portion of the Harvest-throng find abundant employment in searching the hedges for the favourite and refreshing fruit of the Blackberry—and we see them standing in groups in lanes and fields, with their plump, rosy faces dyed, in no very becoming style it is true, with the dark purple juice; while many a woful rent in frock and pinafore tells of their exploits among the tangled and prickly briars. In the woods, too, both blackberry-gathering and nutting may now be enjoyed to perfection; and in autumn's *Forest* scenery the Poet and Painter find her greatest glory. Every tree, aye, almost every leaf has a different tint, and the distant woody landscape is touched with every hue of the painter's palette, laid on by the delicate and harmonious finger of Nature. Few spots can display this magnificent

effect so perfectly, as the scenery on the Wye. The lofty hills which rise on either side of the river's bed, some gradually swelling upwards and others abruptly lifting their craggy summits towards the sky are clothed with rich hanging woods, composed of all varieties of trees; and which, from the different forms of the ground catching the sunlight and shadow in every shade and position, offer an unceasing and ever beautiful change of effect; heightened materially by the yew and fir trees, which are irregularly distributed through the woods, and with their steady sombre hues enhance the brilliant beauty of the rest. Beneath, the water reflects the magical scene, and high above the wooded banks, rise distant mountains, mingling their proud cloud-capped heads with the sky; in such scenes Autumn is truly glorious.

All evergreens are now strikingly beautiful by contrast; for while most of the leavy trees, such as the Oak, Elm, Beech, Sycamore, Chestnut, &c., are decked out in red, yellow, purple, and orange, the majestic Cedar looks grandly around,—the stoic of the forest—disdaining to suffer the Summer's drought or the Autumn breeze to scatter his dark attire, or even discompose his stately demeanour.

The Fir waves his blackening crest against the sunset clouds, as if conscious how greatly he adds to the pictorial beauty of the landscape; and, indeed, few trees can do so much towards *making* a picture. Its tall trunk, springing so high without foliage, hides none of the earthward view while the deep mass of its shadowy crest often "comes in" most happily to break the uniformity of the sky-tint. The

Yew's sombre, darksome branches seem always to have been deemed emblematical of death and mourning. Herrick thus plaintively addresses the Yew and Cypresse.

Both you two have
Relation to the grave ;
And where
The fun'rale trump sounds, you are there.

I shall be made
Ere long a fleeting shade ;
Pray come
And doe some honour to my tomb.

Do not deny
My last request, for I
Will be
Thankful to you, or friends for me.

With far gladder feelings and memories do we meet the Holly's glossy and shining leaves ; they tell us of Christmas merry-makings and kindly greetings ; and though too many of the gleesome old customs have passed away, yet Christmas is still a festive season. The Laurel, too, is both an Autumn friend and a Christmas guest. We will quote Herrick again ; he wished a Laurel-tree to grow upon his grave.

A funerale stone
Or verse, I covet none ;
But only crave
Of you that I may have
A sacred laurel springing from my grave ;

Which being seen
 Blest with perpetual greene,
 May grow to be
 Not so much call'd a tree,
 As the eternal monument of me.

The Ivy, the last flowering plant of the waning year, now puts forth its plentiful clusters of pale blossoms, the berries of which become ripe the ensuing Spring.

The Ivy, that staunchest and firmest friend,
 That hastens its succouring arm to lend
 To the ruined fane, where in youth it sprung
 And its pliant tendrils in sport were flung.
 When the sinking buttress and mouldering tower
 Seem only the spectres of former power,
 Then the Ivy clusters around the wall,
 And for tapestry hangs in the moss-grown hall,
 Striving in beauty and youth to dress
 The desolate place in its loneliness;—
 In all seasons the Ivy is green and bright,
 Bring garlands of Joy for Christmas night!

Mosses, Lichens, and the strange, fantastic Fungi, are now in full perfection, and in forests may be studied in all their wonderful varieties of form, size, and colour. But we must now turn to our more especial subjects—Flowers—and going back to the corn-field, we see myriads of bright scarlet Poppies, Blue-bottles, and other lovely wild flowers fall beneath

the keen glittering sickle. Foxgloves, Ferns, Thistles, and the delicate Harebells adorn bank, lane, moorland, and forest, filling the covetous, grasping hands of little wanderers with magnificent nosegays, among which may sometimes be detected the luscious sweetness and pallid tint of a lingering Honeysuckle.

On the glorious hills of our Mountain-land, Wales, I have gathered myriads of minute and exquisite Autumn flowers, among which the sweet wild Thyme is eminently beautiful. How often have I exclaimed in the language of Shakspeare—“I know a bank whereon the wild Thyme grows,” where it covers the dark rock with large soft beds of its delicious purple clusters, “lulled in whose bowers” the Fairy Queen might well repose, while its aromatic perfume would greet her with delicate incense.

In the garden we have many gay and popular favourites. The giant Sunflower, so contradictorily alluded to by Poets, sometimes as a parasite, sometimes as a constant lover, turns to the deity-king of heaven its yellow ray-like petals and broad brown disk, where the busy bees are ever creeping about and humming, as they draw the sweets from its multitude of florets. The splendid and infinitely various Dahlia raises its luxuriant form, crowned with modelled flowers of every imaginable shade of colour. The *double* Dahlias have, in my opinion, too entirely superseded their single ancestors, whose deep-gold, powdery centres were so very beautiful. I cannot partake the great admiration bestowed by fancy-florists upon all double monstrosities.

Double flowers are showy, and all very well as varieties; but when the *original* is single, it should never be so entirely lost sight of, as is now generally the case. I always marvel how any one can prefer seeing the cup-like corolla of the Snowdrop or Daffodil, crammed with a multitude of petals crushed and squeezed out of all form and beauty, with the central arrangement of the flower, the stamens, anther, &c., wholly hidden from sight.*

The elegant, veined flowers of the Hibiscus are among our Autumn darlings; and the China-asters look cheerfully out from their many-leaved calyces. The Sweet Peas still adorn the trellis with their winged blossoms, and the gay Golden-rod bears aloft its rich yellow crown. The pink and lilac Michaelmas Daisies, though favourite guests, are sad ones, from the presage they bring of the departure of all their fair companion-flowers. But a mere enumeration of these garden inmates, has little interest—we will proceed to look more closely at the subject of the Autumn illustrations.

“The year growing ancient—
Nor yet on Summer’s death, nor on the birth
Of trembling Winter, the fairest flowers o’ the season
Are our CARNATIONS.”—

So says our Shakspeare’s lovely Perdita, when, “playing as she had seen them do in Whitsun pastorals,” she distributes her token flowers to Polixenes and Camillo: and

* Since writing the above, I have heard of a *double Pansy*!—Are these refined barbarians, the “fashionable” florists, to have no bounds set to their enormities?

in truth, for fragrance and beauty, too, the Carnation is the first for fame among our Autumn flowers, and well merits the proud name bestowed on it by Linnæus, of *Dianthus*, or flower of Jove. All the varieties of the richly-perfumed Clove Carnation, are derived from our native Clove Pink (*Dianthus caryophyllus*), so often found growing luxuriantly on ruins, and adding its spicy breath to the luscious sweetness of the Wall-flower. Two of these wild Pinks are introduced on the right of the large Carnation in the illustrative group. The smaller ones on the left are the Chinese Pinks (*Dianthus Chinensis*).

Spenser and Ben Jonson generally mention the Carnations by the fanciful name, popular in their day, of "Sops in wine," it being customary to put the flowers into wine by way of improving its flavour by their spicy properties. In Colin's song, in Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar," they are thus grouped among a variety of other flowers—

Bring hether the pincke and purple cullambine
 With gelliflowers;
 Bring Coronations and Sops in wine,
 Worn of Paramoures:
 Strowe me the grounds with daffadowndillies,
 And cowlslips, and kingcups, and loved lillies:
 The pretie pance
 And the chevisaunce
 Shall match with the fayre flowerdelice.

Herrick addresses "to Carnations" a pretty little song, which is as full of *tune*, as if every word were a note of music; it is an air of itself.

Stay while ye will, or goe,
 And leave no scent behind ye;
 Yet trust me, I shall know
 The place where I may find ye.

Within my Lucia's cheeke,
 Whose livery ye weare,
 Play ye at hide or seeke,
 I'm sure to find ye there.

In another complimentary poem the same Bard thus introduces the Clove Pink—

So smell those odours that do rise
 From out the wealthy spiceries;
 So smells the flower of blooming Clove
 Or roses smother'd in the stove;
 So smells the air of spiced wine
 Or essences of Jessamine.

In the following dialogue poem, by the same writer, are so many sweet thoughts, I shall quote it entire—

Among the mirtles as I walk't,
 Love and my sighs thus intertalk't;
 Tell me, said I, in deep distresse,
 Where I may find my Shepheardesse.
 Thou foole, said Love, know'st thou not this?
 In every thing that's sweet she is.
 In yond' Carnation goe and seek,
 There thou shalt find her lip and cheeke,
 In that ennamell'd pansie by,
 There thou shalt have her curious eye;
 In bloom of peech, and rose's bud,
 There waves the streamer of her blood.
 'Tis true, said I, and thereupon
 I went to pluck them one by one,

To make of parts an union,
 But on a sudden all were gone,
 At which I stopt; said Love, these be
 The true resemblances of thee;
 For as these flowers, thy joyes must die,
 And in the turning of an eye;
 And all thy hopes of her must wither
 Like those short sweets ere knit together.

Though so similar in nature and appearance, yet Pinks and Carnations are expressive of very opposite sentiments in floral language. A Pink, presented by a gentleman to a lady, is an offer of marriage:—a Carnation, given by a lady to a gentleman, signifies her refusal of his addresses. On this very important point rests the chief events of the illustrative romance which accompanies the plate.

The simple, delicate, and fragile HAREBELL (*Campanula rotundifolia*) is a very common way-side flower, as well as a constant guest in the more lonely scenery of the mountain and moorland. It does not shun even the dusty turnpike roads, but suffers its exquisitely formed bells of twilight blue to gleam out, and tremble and wave over the oft-trodden path, as gracefully as in the still solitude of the heathery moor. The extreme thinness of the stems, and their buoyant elasticity, give a bounding, dancing effect to the flowers when stirred by the lightest breeze; and they do, indeed, seem "to a fanciful" eye, to be ringing out a merry peal of fairy-like music:—

Have ye ever heard, in the twilight dim,

A low soft strain,

H H

That ye fancied a distant vesper hymn,
 Borne o'er the plain
 By the Zephyrs that rise on perfumed wing
 When the sun's last glances are glimmering ?

 Have ye heard that music with cadence sweet,
 And merry peal,
 Ring out like the echoes of fairy-feet
 O'er flowers that steal ?
 And did ye deem that each trembling tone
 Was the distant vesper-chime alone ?
 The source of that whispering strain I'll tell,
 For I've listened oft
 To the music faint of the Blue Harebell,
 In the gloaming soft.
 'Tis the gay fairy-folk that peal who ring
 At even-time for their banquetting.

 And gaily the trembling bells peal out
 With gentle tongue,
 While elves and fairies career about
 'Mid dance and song.
 Oh! roses and lilies are fair to see,
 But the wild Blue Bell is the flower for me !

None of our garden Campanulas approach this habitant of
 the heaths in delicacy and beauty. The small white Cam-
 panula is an elegant little gem, but its dwarfish growth renders
 it very inferior to the springy—pliant—waving and ever

graceful wild Harebell. And *wild* flowers are so much dearer than cultivated ones,—at least *I* find them so—having been ever fonder of seeking chance beauties in the field, lane, and woodland, than of contemplating the gayer tribes of the garden. It is such a delightful surprise to discover one of one's darling wild flowers in a spot and season when we dreamed not of meeting it; it is an unlooked-for boon of nature: but in gardens we *expect* to find abundance of fair things,—and very rarely does the disposal of the flowers, or the general arrangement, please my fancy; though a wild hedge-bank, or a heathy moor, leave me nothing to wish for.

Where is the Garden-guest that may outshine the stately, tall, magnificent FOXGLOVE? This is as remarkable for its majestic, lofty demeanour, as the light, lithe Harebell for its modest playfulness. The tall spiral stem, springing up from the group of broad leaves, and thickly hung with the beautiful purple blossoms, gradually lessening in size from the large open bells on the lower portion of the stalk, to the little buds on the summit, still wrapped up in their close green calices, is an object so strikingly beautiful, that I should think any person who had once given it an attentive observance must inevitably be a lover of flowers to the end of his days. I know many of my readers will say I am an enthusiast in my affection for them; but I ought to add that my enthusiasm is the result of love and admiration, little aided by scientific knowledge as yet; though I gladly anticipate the time when a better acquaintance with the fascinating study of Botany will unfold to me many myriad

beauties now unobserved, even in the fair forms of my most familiar favourites. The extreme beauty of each bell of the Foxglove will well repay a minute examination: even a cursory glance tells us how gracefully swelling is its outline, and how rich its colour; but look within, where the variously-shaped markings of deep marone, like the spots on a leopard's skin, are edged with a lighter bordering than the ground-colour of the corolla, shewing the pattern more distinctly. Then, attached to the upper side of the bells, and so hidden from us, as they hang round the stem and look modestly down, are the long white filaments, with their fine yellow anthers, so placed as to be in no danger of receiving injury from rain, to avoid which many flowers are endowed with the power of closing the corolla, such as the Daisy, Pimpernel, Marygold, &c., and thereby preserving their various minute organs of fructification unhurt; but the arrangement of the Foxglove's stamens renders this beautiful precaution needless; they lie safely nestling beneath their rich purple dome-like canopy, curtained from wind and storm. There is something very curious, too, in the manner the mouths of the Foxglove bells are pursed up before expanding;—they look as if compelled to keep a secret against their own inclination, and ready to burst to divulge it; yet, full of swelling importance and sedate wisdom, merely nod their clever heads, with a look of “I could an' I would;” and then some sun-shiny day, the lips that have been growing brighter and brighter, and pouting with yet more

consequential expression, are unsealed, and the bells gossip of their honey secrets to every wandering wind.

“ The green and graceful FERN ” I have grouped with the Foxglove in the illustrative plate ; for where we meet one, we generally find the other. Foxgloves and Fern have so constantly been associated in my Autumn garlands, that I never think of dissolving their partnership of beauty : indeed, both would suffer by separation. Dearly as I have, from childhood, loved the Fern, yet now it is yet more welcome ; for it always recalls to my mind's eye a magnificent scene, to which it added peculiar beauty.

In the neighbourhood of a friend's house at which I was visiting, in Bedfordshire, was (and I hope still *is*) a *grand* oak wood. The trees, of unusual height in England, were remarkably erect and pillar-like, as if grown “ to be the masts of some great admirals.” They sprung into the air, seeming to support the very clouds ; and with their dense mass of foliage spread like a roof above, and stately trunks, like columns standing round, with here and there a distant avenue offering a peep of sunlit meadow scenery, the place might well appear a glorious temple framed by Nature's hand. Beneath waved an ocean of Fern, so high, that when walking on the ground we had a verdant wall, or rather arcade, on each side, reaching far above the head of an ordinary-sized person. But in some places trees had recently been felled, and by climbing upon their prostrate trunks and branches, and looking *over* the Fern, we gained a scene of

surpassing beauty. The wind, rustling in the lofty trees above, seemed to glide lightly over the fan-leaves of the Fern, among which the deer were sportively bounding about, tossing their antlered heads, and chasing each other through the wavy sea of verdure. Squirrels were scampering about the trees, whisking their bushy tails, and playing a thousand merry antics; while the more timid rabbits peeped from their burrows among the Fern roots, with their long sleek ears attentively bent to catch the least suspicious sound, which would send them springing home again. Nor were birds wanting to complete the picture; the "deep mellow crush of the wood-pigeon's note" was heard in the trees, besides other more shrill voices. Altogether, the spot, season, and incidents were so beautiful, that I should cherish the Fern, were it only for its bringing me the memory of feelings so delicious as those I then enjoyed.

Before the curious fructification of the Fern was understood, many superstitious fancies were afloat respecting it; one of which was, that the possession of Fern seed, gathered under peculiar circumstances of time, place, incantation, &c., rendered the wearer invisible—

"We have the receipt of fern-seed—we walk invisible."

A kind of divination, too, is wrought by its means, for the same purpose as that served by the *Hallow-e'en* mysteries, and by so many other experiments of credulous minds, namely, the all-important one of ascertaining the inquirer's destiny in love matters.

The Fern I have drawn, and hitherto alluded to, is a very common kind; but many of our native Ferns are very diminutive, rare, and flourish only in peculiar situations. The singular one called Maiden-hair, may often be found on ruins; and old stone walls are frequently very productive of other small kinds. The curiously coiled up ball in which the Fern first springs from the ground, and its gradual growth and expansion, are among some of Nature's most interesting phenomena. I well remember the extreme delight with which I first examined one of the rough brown knobs, when told that it contained the graceful leaves of the plant I loved so much.

The "little darling" MIGNIONETTE is too familiar and dear a friend to need a formal introduction to any company in which we may chance to find her. Her homes are as various as ours who cherish her. From the royal garden, the stately terrace, or the boudoir-balcony, to the small flower-bed of the cottager,—and the narrow, dark, patched window of the poor town artisan, where an old broken jar, or rough box, holds the petted plant,—we find Mignonette an unfailing guest. And right worthy is her modest form and exquisite fragrance of such universal love.

Shelley alludes to it in these few sweet lines "To E. V."—

Madonna, wherefore hast thou sent to me
 Sweet basil and mignonette;
 Embleming Love and Health, which never yet
 In the same wreath might be.
 Alas, and they are wet!
 Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?

For never rain or dew
 Such fragrance drew
 From plant or flower—the very doubt endears
 My sadness ever new,
 The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed for thee.

Mignonette owes nothing of its fame to outward show or splendour of attire, few flowers being robed more soberly; but the uncloying sweetness of its perfume, and its abundant growth, render it one of our best garden treasures. It should be the emblem of those whose beauty and excellence are found in the mind instead of the face.

External loveliness may well be imaged by the gay and brilliant flowers with which the modest Mignonette is grouped in the illustration. The MAJOR CONVULVULUS is one of the most elegant of our common annuals; but it is devoid of fragrance, and is of very short duration. A summer's day finds it withered ere noon; and each morning decks it with new blossoms, to bask a few brief hours in the sunshine, then shrivel, fall, and pass away. But it would ill become me to disparage the beauty of this fair and favourite flower; the great profusion and luxuriance of its blossoms amply compensating for their short-lived beauty; and when many stems are intertwined, the variety of colour is extremely gay and ornamental.

My own fond love for Wild Flowers is by this time so well known by my readers, that they will not marvel when I mention the common WHITE BIND-WEED as being, in my estimation, the most beautiful of all the Convolvuli. It is so very graceful—so lavish of both bloom and foliage—so

elegant, yet so wild and free. Frequently its fine large leaves hang in a curtain or drapery of verdure over the ragged hedgerow, or spring in festoons from tree to tree, with myriads of the purely white tent-shaped bells lying on the foliage in wreaths of the most graceful and fanciful forms. The leaves are far more beautiful in shape than the cultivated ones, being arrowy instead of round; and the calyx is also more ornamental. Like most wild flowers, when gathered, they quickly fade, though when immediately placed in water, I have had yards of the chaplet tendrils last several days in great freshness and beauty.

Most persons have some sort of acquaintance with the THISTLE family, and divers are the feelings with which its members are regarded. When seized by fair cullers of wild buds, albeit with well gloved hands, the sturdy mountaineer generally leaves a few sharp spines behind him, to remind the assailing fingers he may not be attacked with impunity; and this very natural self-defence gains him the character of a rough pugnacious personage, not fit for gentle company. The agriculturist considers him as an intrusive "ne'er do weel," whose acquaintance he is especially desirous to cut altogether. The Naturalist and the Poet—and the terms *ought* to be synonymous, for the true source of all their inspiration is the same—spend many an hour in examining the curious and beautiful arrangement of the seeds, and their gradually developed wings of delicate downy filaments, which, when ripe and expanded, fly away with the tiny germs of the

young plants to an almost incredible distance. These seeds are very beautiful, too, as well as curious. Floating about in the air, and so light as to be seen scudding along before a breeze so soft that you can scarcely feel it upon your cheek, they form one of the great beauties of Autumn. Who has not in childhood chased the hairy Thistle-down? for it furnishes much better sport than a feather, from its extreme lightness; and being spread out in a globular form, rolls along like a fairy-wheel upon the air. Were I to build a chariot for Queen Mab, I would certainly employ the Thistle-down for wheels.

As an emblem-flower of bonny Scotland, too, the Thistle has acquired no small degree of notoriety. And over many a kindly missive of gentle and loving words do seals keep guard, bearing the impression of a Thistle, and the posy, "Dinna Forget." For my own part, I think a finely grown tall Thistle-plant, with its *chevaux-de-frise'd* leaves, and bright purple flowers, swelling out from the bristling calyx, like a full petticoat from under a green boddice, a very handsome and ornamental addition either in field or garden (I am no *farmer*); and the evident relish with which I have seen poor hedge-feeding donkies crunching its rough stalks and leaves, is to me a very conclusive argument in favour of the persecuted Thistle-tribe; which seems to occupy a similar position in the race of flowers to that held by the Gypsies in our own.

The illustrative drawing represents the Holy Thistle (*Carduus Benedictus*), which is more remarkable for the

beauty of its variegated leaf, than its blossom. In Shakspeare's "Much Ado about Nothing," the following mention is made of the plant, by way of quizzery to Beatrice, on her suspected regard for Benedict.

Beatrice. By my troth, I am exceeding ill, hey ho!

• • • • •

By my troth, I am sick.

Margaret. Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart, it is the only thing for a qualm.

Hero. There thou prick'st her with a Thistle.

Beatrice. *Benedictus!*—Why Benedictus?—you have some moral in this Benedictus.

Margaret. No, by my troth, I meant plain Holy-Thistle.

The little creeping CINQUE-FOIL, sketched with the Thistle, is common in most parts of the kingdom, enlivening the grass amongst which it creeps with its gay and prettily formed flowers of bright yellow.

We find the originals of our next group in the garden or conservatory. The LOBELIA, or Cardinal-flower, as, from its scarlet attire, it is frequently termed, exhibits one of the most brilliant and intense colours of any among Flora's exquisite hues. It is positively dazzling, when intently looked upon, and baffles every attempt at imitation. Being naturally an aquatic plant, it requires a great supply of water, which circumstance has contributed to the *morale* of my poem. The small blue Lobelia is delicately beautiful, and easily cultivated. I have often fancied these flowers admirable portraits of two sisters; the one, proudly beautiful, haughty,

and receiving admiration as a right; the other, gentle, unaffected, humble, and blessed with all the unobtrusive loveliness of simplicity and innocence. Every Flower may be so read; nor is the study an idle or unprofitable one, for it induces us to *read* NATURE, that God-written book, open to every eye, creed, and comprehension—that universal language, in which the CREATOR addresses his creatures—that eternal and exhaustless source of knowledge, devotion, and enjoyment, whose study is a labour of love, which no adverse circumstances can wholly interrupt.

The showy and magnificent flower of the large TIGER-LILY occupies the chief place in the following plate, and both the grand outline of its fine form, and its very brilliant colour, deserve our admiration. The great length of the filaments, and their elegant shape, with their dark powdery anthers, add a remarkable feature to this superb flower, which is more beautifully spotted than any other of its tribe, and each mark being raised from the surface of the curved petal in a kind of bas-relief gives it a singularly rich appearance.

The AUTUMN CROCUS, whose modest tint of lilac is a striking contrast to the splendid Lily, is now one of our wild flowers. It is supposed to have been brought originally from the East, where its bulbous roots are in high esteem as eatables. It was introduced into England by Sir Thomas Smith in the reign of Edward the Third, and first planted at Walden in Essex, which, from the quantity of saffron

manufactured there from the pointals of the Crocus, has acquired the name of Saffron Walden.

This delicate flower is now generally distributed over England, though in many parts it flourishes in far greater luxuriance than in others. In some districts of Herefordshire and Shropshire (as I am informed by a friend, whose Autumn rambles led him among much of the picturesque scenery of both counties), this Crocus grows in such profusion, as to clothe the fields and hills in one beautiful robe of amethyst. Nor is it to be disregarded, even when flowering less abundantly, for in our meadows and gardens a few groups of its delicate bells form at this season a precious treasure.

The economy of the Autumn Crocus is extremely curious. The flowers appearing so late in the year, when the seeds could not be ripened by exposure to the sun and air, an entirely different organization is adopted by nature for the propagation of the plant; the fructification takes place under ground, and the following Spring the seed vessels rise to the surface accompanied by leaves, which do not appear with the flower in Autumn.

Spenser weaves in the Saffron Crocus very gracefully, in the following group of flowers in his translation of "Virgil's Gnat:"—

And round about he taught sweet floures to grôwe;
 The Rose engrained in pure scarlet die;
 The Lilly fresh; and Violet belowe;
 The Marigold: and cheerful Rosemarie;

The Spartan Mirtle, whence sweete gumb does flowe ;
 The purple Hyacinthe, and fresh Costmarie ;
 And Saffron, sought for in Cicilian soyle ;
 And Lawrell th' ornament of Phœbus' toyle.
 Fresh Rhododaphne ; and the Sabine flower,
 Matching the wealth of th' ancient Frankincence ;
 And pallied Yvie, building his own boure ;
 And Box, yet mindful of his olde offence ;
 Red Amaranthus, lucklesse Paramoure ;
 Oxeye still greene, and bitter Patience,
 Ne wants there pale Narcisse, that, in a well
 Seeing his beauty, in love with it fell.

The flower and fruit of the ARBUTUS, or Strawberry-tree, are represented in the following plate. We have few shrubs which contribute so much and so constantly to the adornment of our gardens and lawns as this. Its deep glossy ever-green leaves are alone beautiful ; but when in Autumn these are gemmed with its clusters of delicate flowers, and the richly-hued ripening fruit (which is a year in attaining maturity, and so appears with the succeeding blossoms), I know few objects so beautiful as a fine Arbutus. At the famed lakes of Killarney, the abundance and magnitude of these splendid trees constitutes one of the great charms of that fairy region.

The spray, from which my illustration was made, ripened its many-tinted berries under the shelter of Warwick Castle, where the Arbutus trees, in the great court, are truly magnificent.

The last subjects of my pencil, in this small portrait-

gallery of Nature's beauties, are mere memories of flowers the offspring of our Summer friends, who possess our love, rather for the sake of their parents than their own loveable qualities. But the *Blackberry* claims much of our affection on its own account, were it only for the happy scenes of childhood which it can bring back to our mind's eye. I always have loved it—and do yet as dearly as ever; and during a merry day's rambling last Autumn, was fairly *immersed* in a Blackberry-dingle; whence my extrication was matter of some hazard and difficulty. There are few out-door *childish* amusements which are not ~~not~~ as welcome to me now, as they ever were, and I think they will retain their charm to the end of my earthly pilgrimage; I do not like to hear people say, when speaking of country strolls and scrambles, "Oh! I am too *old* to enjoy such things,"—"it is all very well for children, but quite unbecoming in persons of *my* age, &c." If people would but be *wise* enough, through life, to derive enjoyment from such innocent pleasures as delighted them in childhood, we should find far fewer sour tempers, cold hearts, and narrow minds in the world. All, except positive idiots, are endowed by God with a portion of that beautiful poetry of existence which in childhood is so conspicuously evident, teaching even the infant in the nurse's arms to snatch at flowers, and laugh in the sunshine. But as men and women grow up, the capability of deriving pleasure from such sources is gradually destroyed instead of developed; inherent love of all created things is changed to selfishness and cruelty; admiration to

indifference; eager curiosity and enquiry are chilled by the present semi-barbarous systems of "education;" true, natural devotion choked and often uprooted by bigotry and fanaticism; and that glorious work of ALMIGHTY GOD—reasonable and gifted MAN, reduced to a mere mechanical automaton, progressing along life's ever-changeable, and, so often, beautiful path, without turning an eye to the right or left in observance of the wondrous works so lavishly spread around, and only intent on sweeping on, and accumulating a heap of rich dust, which may in a moment be scattered to the winds, and which he must at last leave behind. Fortunately for the rising generation the study of Natural History is become "fashionable," and heartily do I pray that to *be* natural in heart, mind, and feeling may become "fashionable" too.

But to return.—I would counsel every one, but especially the young, and of my own sex, never to suffer that poetry of childhood to be effaced from their hearts;—never to fancy, with ridiculous pride, "Oh! I am growing up now; I shall soon be a woman, and it is *childish* to gather daisies, and to run about the fields; I must walk straight along the turnpike road, look right before me, and be "*lady-like!*" Perhaps few *say* this; but many, many a young heart thinks it, and is taught to think it by teachers more ignorant than their victim pupils. Oh! for an educational revolution, or reform at least! which, however, could not well make *my* country rambles more erratic than they are, though it might give me the

happiness of seeing others as *childish* as myself—and as *unladylike* too, if active enjoyment in pleasure-giving scenes merits that dreaded epithet. I remember that when perched on the top of a high and somewhat steep bank, in the act of gathering the branch of Gorse which I have drawn in this work, a party of most correct looking promenaders passed along the road below me, and hearing a rustling in the bushes, looked up with no small astonishment on beholding a figure, they were accustomed to see walking in the town with infinite staidness and propriety, perched up at a height that implied a necessity for most resolute scrambling. My amusement far exceeded their surprise; but I have no doubt my flower-love in this instance gained me the character of a most uncouth young person.—Be it so—I had my reward, in the pleasure of possessing, and in some degree, perpetuating the beauty of my prickly prize; and I much doubt if the line-and-rule saunter of the astonished fashionables was half as serviceable to their minds or bodies as *I* found my wild scramble. But I have again left my Blackberries! however, they occupy so large a space in the versified ramble annexed to the plate that I need say little of them here. The infinite variety of brilliant colours displayed in the Autumnal tinting of their leaves must have attracted the notice of the most careless observer.

The hedge-rows at this season are very beautiful, adorned with the bright polished coral of the Dog-rose Hips, the deep, rich bloom of the Haws, and here and there, in the most graceful festoons, hang the not quite leafless sprays of

the Woody Nightshade, with its treacherous berries looking lusciously crimson and juicy. The illustrative poem being "a fact, literally rendered," I need give no prose description of the same scene. The Blackberries, Haws, Hips, and the clustered Nightshade berries are represented in the plate.

Here must end my third and last sociable gossip—for such these chapters seem to me, rather than formal deeds of authorship, and such I would fain have them appear to my readers. My book cannot play the part of a literary and scientific omnibus, and transport its friends at once into the Fairy-realm of Nature's Romance; but if it only serves as an humble finger-post on the road, pointing towards the clime its author loves so well, her effort will not have been a vain one, nor unproductive of some degree of *good* to her fellow sojourners in this proverbially "matter of fact" world. We have abundance of books published for the purpose of making us *wiser*: *My* ambition would be, that mankind—in which *woman-kind* is ever prominently ranked—should be made *happier* by some fortunate work of mine:—and if by any added associations of thought or fancy, I have in these pages enhanced the pleasure with which *one* person contemplates a flower, "e'en though the meanest bud that bears the name,"—I shall have attained a step nearer to my object.

THE ICE-KING.

The wrathful Winter prochyng on a pace,
 With blust'ring blastes had al ybared the treen,
 An old Saturnus with his frosty face
 With chilling colde had pearst the tender green :
 The mantles rent wherein enwrapped been
 The gladsom groves that nowe longe overthrown,
 The tapets torn, and every bloms down blowen.

The soyle that earst so semely was to seen,
 Was all despoyled of her beautes hewe :
 And soote freshe flowers (wherewith the summer's queen
 Had clad the earth) now Boreas blastes downe blewe,
 And small fowles flocking in their song did rewe
 The winter's wrath, wherewith eche thing defaste
 In woful wise bewayled the summer past.

Hawthorne had lost his motley lyverye,
 The naked twigges were shivering all for colde ;
 And dropping down the teares abundantly ;
 Eche thing (me thought), with weping eye me tolde
 The cruell season, bidding me with-holde
 My selfe within, for I was gotten out
 Into the feldes, wheras I walcke about.

SACRIVILLE.

SCOWLING WINTER looked grimly out
 From the gate of his icy Hall ;
 But the forest-trees were still wrapped about
 In their painted splendour, and in the route
 Of the merry breeze waved they all.

Too gay and bright
 Seemed their garb to him,

K K 2

Whose array is chill, and dark, and dim—
 It irked his sight,
 And he longed to hold
 His stern, harsh, cold
 Dominion o'er all the shivering land,
 And grasp it tight in his frosty hand.

He threw o'er the earth a wrathful look ;
 The Sun grew pale, and the strong trees shook,
 At the icy glance of his withering eye ;
 And then his loud voice came rushing by,
 Calling to Autumn; he bade her fling
 Prone to the earth each verdant thing
 That bloomed in the path of the cold Ice-king.
 " Thy reign is o'er"—he sternly cried,
 " Passing away are thy power and pride,
 Thy golden throne
 Is carried away from the bare hill-side ;
 Thy flowers all flown
 From field, wood, moorland, garden, and lea,
 Then yield up thy desolate realm to me.
 Yet, ere thou go
 Shake the last brown leaves from the forest tree,
 And lay them low ;
 Lay them low, as a carpet spread
 On the mossy ground—
 Strew them around,
 Beneath my feet—not o'er my head ;

" For I shall bring
 Curtains all wove of the silvery snow,
 And drop them around—above—below,
 While not a thing
 That thou hast cherished its face shall show.
 Fling away all
 Thy fluttering leaves and faded flowers;
 Too slight—too small
 Their forms would seem in *my* lofty bowers;
 For wreaths and garlands are sculptured there
 Like marble, yet whiter than ever were
 The chisel's triumphs—and all so light,
 Like down, or gossamer streamers slight,
 That a breeze can shake the branches bare.

" Oft in the night,
 When wearied mortals lie warmly sleeping,
 I o'er the world through the air am sweeping;
 Roaming about
 And tricking out
 Each familiar scene like a Fairy Land;
 Hanging pendants of icicles clear
 From roof, shed, window—there and here,
 In many a crystal and diamond spear;
 And flinging pearls with a lavish hand
 O'er hedge, field, fence, bush, grove, and tree,
 All set in a silvery filagree.

And my feats are ever so silently done
 They're all unguessed, till the morning sun
 Ruddy and round, 'mid vapours tost
 Looks on a kingdom of white hoar-frost.
 These are my sports—and oft I fling
 A glassy floor from rim to rim
 Of the lake that shines i' the valley low;
 And then—how merrily, swiftly go
 The skaiters along!—They dart—they skim—
 Or circle in many a mazy ring;
 Oh! these are the sports of the cold Ice-king.

And what hast thou to show,
 In thy russet bower and leavy pall,
 Can match with my boundless and glittering Hall?"

Queen of the sober shroud,
 Haste thee away—begone—
 For the Ice-king hurryeth on:
 He travels along on a swift black cloud;
 The strong winds his coursers are;
 He travels along—and their roar so loud
 Before him rolls afar—
 He comes—and the leafless woods bend down
 Before the King of the Icy crown.
 He comes in terror, and wrath, and dread;
 Around him the storm and the blast outspread
 Their awful wings—and the darken'd sky
 Frowns on the earth most gloomily—

Oh! the Ice-king's reign is dreary!
 But though dreary without—'tis glad within,
 For now the Christmas sports begin,
 With merry meetings of kith and kin,
 And hearts so light and cheery—
 The wintry eves we will e'en prolong
 With the bounding dance, and the festive song,
 And the ancient goblin-story:
 The great yule-log on the hearth shall blaze,
 And old gossips chat of their by-gone days,
 And England's Christmas glory;
 The Holly's bright leaves and berries red
 In wreaths o'er the picture-frames bespread,
 And the Mistletoe-bough above them,
 For maidens who covet, yet seem to dread,
 A kiss from the lips who love them.

 Farewell to the year!—the fair young Spring
 In Summer's glow did vanish;
 Autumn fled from the stern Ice-king,
 Whom Spring again will banish.

THE END.



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