

Poetical Fragments
From
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Volume II
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compiled
by
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Note: As the chapter headings are not generally appropriate titles for the introductory poems, Blanchard, in arranging them for his *Life and Literary Remains*, provided titles of his own. In the few instances where he did not include them, the poems here either retain the chapter title or have been provided with a title that seems suitable.

CHAPTER I.

THE CORONATION.

What memories haunt the venerable pile!
It is the mighty treasury of the past,
Where England garners up her glorious dead.
The ancient chivalry are sleeping there —
Men who sought out the Turk in Palestine,
And laid the crescent low before the cross.

The sea has sent her victories : those aisles
Wave with the banners of a thousand fights.
There, too, are the mind's triumphs — in those tombs
Sleep poets and philosophers, whose light
Is on the heaven of our intellect.
The very names inscribed on those old walls
Make the place sacred.

In Blanchard

CHAPTER II.

PUBLISHING.

Life's smallest miseries are, perhaps, its worst :
Great sufferings have great strength : there is a pride
In the bold energy that braves the worst,
And bears proud in the bearing ; but the heart
Consumes with those small sorrows, and small shames,
Which crave, yet cannot ask for sympathy.
They blush that they exist, and yet how keen
The pang that they inflict !

Blanchard's title is:

SMALL MISERIES

CHAPTER III.

ALTERATION.

My heart hath turned aside
From its early dreams ;
To me their course has been
Like mountain streams.

Bright and pure they left
Their place of birth ;
Soon on every wave
Came taints of earth.

Weeds grew upon the banks,
And, as the waters swept,
A bad or useless part
Of all they kept,

Till it reached the plain below,
An altered thing
Bearing gloomy trace,—
Of its wandering.

Altered from *Stanzas in The Amulet, 1826*

Not in Blanchard

CHAPTER IV.

THE FÊTE.

Many were lovely there ; but, of that many,
Was one who looked the loveliest of any —
The youthful countess. On her cheek the dies
Were crimson with the morning's exercise ;
The laugh upon her full red lip yet hung ;
And, arrow-like, light words flashed from her tongue.
She had more loveliness than beauty — hers
Was that enchantment which the heart confers.
A mouth, sweet from its smiles ; a large dark eye,
That had o'er all expression mastery,
Laughing the orb, but yet the long lash made
Somewhat of sadness with its twilight shade ;
And suiting well the upcast look that seemed,
At times, as it of melancholy dreamed :
Her cheek was as a rainbow, it so changed
As each emotion o'er its surface ranged —
Her face was full of feeling.

Blanchard's title is:

A PORTRAIT

Adapted from *The Rose in The Golden Violet*

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST DOUBT.

Youth, love, and rank, and wealth — all these combined,
Can these be wretched? Mystery of the mind,
Whose happiness is in itself; but still
Has not that happiness at its own will.
She felt too wretched with the sudden fear —
Had she such lovely rival, and so near?
Ay, bitterest of the bitter this worst pain,
To know love's offering has been in vain;
Rejected, scorn'd, and trampled under foot,
Its bloom and leaves destroyed, but not its root.
“He loves me not!”—no other words nor sound
An echo in the lady's bosom found:
It was a wretchedness too great to bear,
She sank before the presence of despair!

In Blanchard

Adapted from *The Rose in The Golden Violet*

CHAPTER VI.

GAIETIES AND ABSURDITIES.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

What Shakspeare said of lovers, might apply
To all the world —“ ’Tis well they do not see
The pretty follies that themselves commit.”
Could we but turn upon ourselves the eyes
With which we look on others, life would pass
In one perpetual blush and smile.
The smile, how bitter !—for ’tis scorn’s worst task
To scorn ourselves ; and yet we could not choose
But mock our actions, all we say or do,
If we but saw them as we others see.
Life’s best repose is blindness to itself.

Blanchard’s title is:

SELF-BLINDNESS

The Shakespeare quote is from *The Merchant of Venice*

CHAPTER VII.

AN ALLUSION TO THE PAST.

Ah! there are memories that will not vanish;
Thoughts of the past we have no power to banish;
To shew the heart how powerless mere will,
For we may suffer, and yet struggle still.
It is not at our choice that we forget,
That is a power no science teaches yet:
The heart may be a dark and closed up tomb;
But memory stands a ghost amid the gloom!

Blanchard's title is:

MEMORY

In the New York Mirror (10th March 1838), as *Memory*

CHAPTER VIII.

DOUBTS.

Ask me not, love, what may be in my heart
When, gazing on thee, sudden teardrops start ;
When only joy should come where'er thou art.

The human heart is compassed with fears ;
And joy is tremulous, for it enspheres
An earth-born star, which melts away in tears.

I am too happy for a careless mirth —
Hence anxious thoughts, and sorrowful, have birth ;
Who looks from heaven, is half returned to earth.

How powerless is my fond anxiety !
I feel I could lay down my life for thee,
Yet feel how vain such sacrifice might be.

Hence do I tremble in my happiness ;
Hurried and dim the unknown hours press :
I question of a past I dare not guess.

Not in Blanchard

Altered from *The Future* in *The Monthly Magazine*, 1834, Vol 1, a poem that is already in Blanchard's *Life and Literary Remains*.

CHAPTER IX.

A FIRST NIGHT.

It is a fearful stake the poet casts,
When he comes forth from his sweet solitude
Of hopes, and songs, and visionary things,
To ask the iron verdict of the world.
Till then his home has been in fairyland,
Sheltered in the sweet depths of his own heart;
But the strong need of praise impels him forth;
For never was there poet but he craved
The golden sunshine of secure renown.
That sympathy which is the life of fame,
It is full dearly bought : henceforth he lives
Feverish and anxious, in an unkind world,
That only gives the laurel to the grave.

Blanchard's title is:

THE POET'S FIRST ESSAY

CHAPTER X.

SUCCESS.

All things are symbols; and we find
In morning's lovely prime,
The actual history of the mind
In its own early time :
So, to the youthful poet's gaze,
A thousand colours rise,—
The beautiful which soon decays,
The buoyant which soon dies.

So does not die their influence,
The spirit owns the spell ;
Memory to him is music—hence
The magic of his shell.
He sings of general hopes and fears —
A universal tone ;
All weep with him, for in his tears
They recognise their own.

Yet many a one, whose lute hangs now
High on the laurel tree,
Feels that the cypress' dark bough
A fitter meed would be :
And still with weariness and wo
The fatal gift is won ;
Many a radiant head lies low,
Ere half its race be run.

Blanchard's title is:

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Adapted from *Introduction*, Fisher's Drawing Room Scrap Book, 1835

CHAPTER XI.

THE PAST.

Weep for the love that fate forbids ;
Yet loves, unhoping, on,
Though every light that once illumed
Its early path be gone.

Weep for the love that must resign
The soul's enchanted dream,
And float, like some neglected bark,
Adown life's lonely stream !

Weep for the love that cannot change ;
Like some unholy spell,
It hangs upon the life that loved
So vainly and so well.

Weep for the weary heart condemned
To one long, lonely sigh,
Whose lot has been in this cold world,
To dream, despair, and die !

In Blanchard

Altered from *Mardale Head* in Fisher's Drawing Room Scrap Book, 1835

CHAPTER XII.

GOSSIPING.

These are the spiders of society;
They weave their petty webs of lies and sneers,
And lie themselves in ambush for the spoil.
The web seems fair, and glitters in the sun,
And the poor victim winds him in the toil
Before he dreams of danger, or of death.
Alas, the misery that such inflict !
A word, a look, have power to wring the heart,
And leave it struggling hopeless in the net
Spread by the false and cruel, who delight
In the ingenious torment they contrive.

In Blanchard

CHAPTER XIII.

CONFIDENCE.

She had that charming laugh which, like a song,
The song of a spring-bird, wakes suddenly
When we least look for it. It lingered long
Upon the ear, one of the sweet things we
Treasure unconsciously. As steals along
A stream in sunshine, stole its melody,
As musical as it was light and wild,
The buoyant spirit of some fairy child ;
Yet mingled with soft sighs, that might express
The depth and truth of earnest tenderness.

Blanchard's title is:

MUSIC OF LAUGHTER

CHAPTER XIV.

UNAVAILING REGRET.

Farewell! and when the charm of change
Has sunk, as all must sink, in shade ;
When joy, a wearied bird, begins
The wing to droop, the plume to fade ;
When thou thyself, at length, hast felt
What thou hast made another feel—
The hope that sickens to despair,
The wound that time may sear, not heal ;
When thou shalt pine for some fond heart
To beat in answering thine again ;—
Then, false one, think once more on me,
And sigh to think it is in vain.

In Blanchard

From *Leonora* in Heath's Book of Beauty, 1833

In the Bouquet (1846), under (Geranium-Scarlet) *Pelargonium inquinans* as
Thou art changed

CHAPTER XV.

Why, what a history is on the rose!
A history beyond all other flowers;
But never more, in garden or in grove,
Will the white queen reign paramount again.
She must content her with remembered things,
When her pale leaves were badge for knight and earl;
Pledge of a loyalty which was as pure,
As free from stain, as those white depths her leaves
Unfolded to the earliest breath of June.

Blanchard's title is:

THE ROSE

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CHURCH.

The altar, 'tis of death ! for there are laid
The sacrifice of all youth's sweetest hopes.
It is a dreadful thing for woman's lip
To swear the heart away ; yet know that heart
Annuls the vow while speaking, and shrinks back
From the dark future that it dares not face.
The service read above the open grave
Is far less terrible than that which seals
The vow that binds the victim, not the will ;
For in the grave is rest.

Blanchard's title is:

THE MARRIAGE VOW

CHAPTER XVII.

PRESENTIMENT.

I feel the shadow on my brow,
The sickness at my heart ;
Alas ! I look on those I love,
And am so sad to part.

If I could leave my love behind,
Or watch from yonder sky
With holy and enduring care,
I were not loath to die.

But death is terrible to Love :
And yet a love like mine
Trusts in the heaven from whence it came,
And feels it is divine.

In Blanchard

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FÊTE.

There was a feast that night,
And coloured lamps sent forth their odorous light
Over gold carvings, and the purple fall
Of tapestry ; and around each stately hall
Were statues pale, and delicate, and fair,
As all of beauty, save her blush, were there ;
And, like light clouds floating around each room,
The censers sent their breathings of perfume ;
And scented waters mingled with the breath
Of flowers that died as they rejoiced in death.
The tulip, with its globe of rainbow light ;
The red rose, as it languished with delight ;
The bride-like hyacinth, drooping as with shame,
And the anemone, whose cheek of flame
Is golden, as it were the flower the sun,
In his noon hour, most loved to look upon.
At first the pillared halls were still and lone,
As if some fairy palace, all unknown
To mortal eye or step :—this was not long—
Wakened the lutes, and rose the sound of song ;
And the wide mirrors glittered with the crowd
Of changing shapes : the young, the fair, the proud,
Came thronging in.

In Blanchard

This poem has appeared as *The Banquet*

In the Bouquet (1846), under (Parsley) *Apium petroselinum* as
Feasting, Entertainment

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SICK ROOM.

If ever angels walked on weary earth
In human likeness, thou wert one of them.
Thy native heaven was with thee, but subdued
By suffering life's inevitable lot ;
But the sweet spirit did assert its home
By faith and hope, and only owned its yoke
In the strong love that bound it to its kind.

Blanchard's title is:

HUMANITY ANGELIC

Also appeared as *Woman* in *Lyra Sacra*, 1862

CHAPTER XX.

The fountain's low singing is heard on the wind,
Like a melody bringing sweet fancies to mind ;
Away in the distance is heard the far sound
From the streets of the city that compass it round,
Like the echo of mountains, or ocean's deep call :
Yet that fountain's low singing is heard over all.

The turf and the terrace slope down to the tide
Of the Thames, that sweeps onwards a world at its side ;
And dark the horizon with mast and with sail
Of the thousand tall ships that have weather'd the gale ;
While beyond the arched bridge the old abbey appears,
Where England has garnered—the glories of years.

There are lights in the casement — how weary the ray
That asks from the night time the toils of the day !
I fancy I see the brow bent o'er the page,
Whose youth wears the paleness and wrinkles of age ;
What struggles, what hopes, what despair may have been,
Where sweep those dark branches of shadowy green !

Blanchard's title is:

THE TEMPLE GARDEN

From *The Middle Temple Gardens* in *The Vow of the Peacock*

CHAPTER XXI.

Oh, what a waste of feeling and of thought
Have been the imprints on my roll of life!
What worthless hours! to what use have I turned
The golden gifts which are my hope and pride!
My power of song, unto how base a use
Has it been put! with its pure ore I made
An idol, living only on the breath
Of idol worshippers. Alas! that ever
Praise should have been what praise has been to me —
The opiate of the mind!

Blanchard's title is:

GIFTS MISUSED

Last four lines adapted from *Poetic Fragment, Fifth Series* - introduction,
17th December 1825, 'The opiate of my heart'

(Untitled)

Faint and more faint amid the world of dreams,
That which once my all, thy image seems,
Pale as a star that in the morning gleams.

Long time that sweet face was my guiding star,
Bringing me visions of the fair and far,
Remote from this world's toil and this world's jar.

Around it was an atmosphere of light,
Deep with the tranquil loveliness of night,
Subdued and shadowy, yet serenely bright.

Like to a spirit did it dwell apart,
Hushed in the sweetest silence of my heart,
Lifting me to the heaven from whence thou art.

Too soon the day broke on that haunted hour,
Loosing its spell, and weakening its power,
All that had been imagination's dower.

The noontide quenched that once enchanted ray;
Care, labour, sorrow, gathered on the day;
Toil was upon my steps, dust on my way.

They melted down to earth my upward wings;
I half forgot the higher, better things —
The hope which yet again thy image brings.

Would I were worthier of thee! I am fain,
Amid my life of bitterness and pain,
To dream once more my early dreams again.

Blanchard's title is:

A POET'S LOVE

CHAPTER XXII.

A MATRIMONIAL TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

These are the things that fret away the heart —
Cold, careless trifles ; but not felt the less
For mingling with the hourly acts of life.
It is a cruel lot for the fine mind,
Full of emotions generous and true,
To feel its light flung back upon itself ;
All its warm impulses repelled and chilled,
Until it finds a refuge in disdain !
And woman, to whom sympathy is life,
The only atmosphere in which her soul
Developes all it has of good and true ;
How must she feel the chill !

Blanchard's title is:

WANT OF SYMPATHY

CHAPTER XXIII.

PRUDENCE IN POLITICS.

How often, in this cold and bitter world,
Is the warm heart thrown back upon itself!
Cold, careless, are we of another's grief;
We wrap ourselves in sullen selfishness:
Harsh-judging, narrow-minded, stern and chill
In measuring every action but our own.
How small are some men's motives, and how mean!
There are who never knew one generous thought;
Whose heart-pulse never quickened with the joy
Of kind endeavour, or sweet sympathy.—
There are too many such!

Blanchard's title is:

BITTER EXPERIENCE

In *The New Yorker* (24th March 1838), as *Selfishness*

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

Love is a thing of frail and delicate growth ;
Soon checked, soon fostered ; feeble, and yet strong :
It will endure much, suffer long, and bear
What would weigh down an angel's wing to earth,
And yet mount heavenward ; but not the less.
It dieth of a word, a look, a thought ;
And when it dies, it dies without a sign
To tell how fair it was in happier hours :
It leaves behind reproaches and regrets,
And bitterness within affection's well,
For which there is no healing.

Blanchard's title is:

LOVE

First 8 lines, in the Bouquet (1846), under (Laurustinus) Viburnum tinus as
I die if neglected

CHAPTER XXV.

MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS.

How much of change lies in a little space !
How soon the spirits leave their youth behind !
The early green forsakes the bough ; the flowers,
Nature's more fairy-like and fragile ones,
Droop on the way-side, and the later leaves
Have artifice and culture — so the heart :
How soon its soft spring hours take darker hues !
And hopes, that were like rainbows, melt in shade ;
While the fair future, ah ! how fair it seemed !
Grows dark and actual.

Blanchard's title is:

CHANGE

In *The New Yorker* (23rd March 1838), as *Mutability*

CHAPTER XXVI.

REMINISCENCES.

Ah, tell me not that memory
Sheds gladness o'er the past ;
What is recalled by faded flowers,
Save that they did not last ?
Were it not better to forget,
Than but remember and regret ?

Look back upon your hours of youth —
What were your early years,
But scenes of childish cares and griefs ?
And say not childish tears
Were nothing ; at that time they were
More than the young heart well could bear.

Go on to riper years, and look
Upon your sunny spring ;
And from the wrecks of former years,
What will your memory bring ?—
Affections wasted, pleasures fled,
And hopes now numbered with the dead !

Blanchard's title is:

DESPONDENCY

In The New Yorker (10th March 1838), as *Memory*

CHAPTER XXVII.

AN INTERVIEW.

Why, life must mock itself to mark how small
Are the distinctions of its various pride.
'Tis strange how we delight in the unreal;
The fanciful and the fantastic make
One half our triumphs. Not in mighty things —
The glorious offerings of our mind to fate —
Do we ask homage to our vanities,
One half so much as from the false and vain :
The petty trifles that the social world
Has fancied into grandeur.

Blanchard's title is:

PRIDE IN TRIFLES

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A PROJECT.

The sun was setting o'er the sea,
A beautiful and summer sun ;
Crimson and bright, as if not night,
But rather day had just begun :
That lighted sky, that lighted sea,
They spoke of Love and Hope to me.

I thought how Love, I thought how Hope,
O'er the horizon of my heart
Had poured their light like yonder sun ;
Like yon sun, only to depart :
Alas ! that ever suns should set,
Or Hope grow cold, or Love forget !

Blanchard's title is:

HOPE AND LOVE

A 'Song' from The London Literary Gazette, 25th December 1824

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHANGES IN LONDON.

The presence of perpetual change
Is ever on the earth ;
To-day is only as the soil
That gives to-morrow birth.

Where stood the tower, there grows the weed ;
Where stood the weed, the tower :
No present hour its likeness leaves
To any future hour.

Of each imperial city built
Far on the Eastern plains,
A desert waste of tomb and sand
Is all that now remains.

Our own fair city filled with life,
Has yet a future day,
When power, and might, and majesty,
Will yet have passed away.

In Blanchard

CHAPTER XXX.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE AND HOUSE.

This is the charm of poetry : it comes
On sad perturbed moments ; and its thoughts,
Like pearls amid the troubled waters, gleam.
That which we garnered in our eager youth,
Becomes a long delight in after years :
The mind is strengthened, and the heart refreshed
By some old memory of gifted words,
That bring sweet feelings, answering to our own,
Or dreams that waken some more lofty mood
Than dwelleth with the commonplace of life.

Blanchard's title is:

INFLUENCE OF POETRY

Note: Chapter XXXI. is introduced by a quotation from Pope.

CHAPTER XXXII.

AN AUDIENCE.

Not with the world to teach us, may we learn
The spirit's noblest lessons. Hope and Faith
Are stars that shine amid the far off heaven,
Dimmed and obscured by vapours from below ;
Impatient selfishness, and shrewd distrust,
Are taught us in the common ways of life ;
Dust is beneath our feet, and at our side
The coarse and mean, the false and the unjust ;
And constant contact makes us grow too like
The things we daily struggle with and scorn :
Only by looking up, can we see heaven.

Blanchard's title is:

THE FALSE AND THE UNJUST

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A FRIEND AT COURT.

I did not know till she was lost,
How much she was beloved ;
She knows it in that better world
To which she is removed.

I feel as she had only sought
Again her native skies ;
I look upon the heavens, and seem
To meet her angel eyes.

Pity, and love, and gentle thoughts,
For her sake, fill my mind ;
They are the only part of her
That now is left behind.

Blanchard's title is:

THE LOST

In The New York Mirror (24th March 1838), as *Sorrow for the Departed*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DEAD.

Who are the Spirits watching by the dead ?
Faith, from whose eyes a solemn light is shed ;
And Hope, with far-off sunshine on the head.

The influence of the dead is that of Heaven ;
To it a majesty of power is given,
Working on earth with a diviner leaven.

To them belongs all high and holy thought :
The mind, whose mighty empire they have wrought ;
And grief, whose comfort was by angels brought.

And gentle Pity comes, and brings with her
Those pensive dreams that their own light confer ;
While Love stands watching by the sepulchre.

In Blanchard

In The New York Mirror (24th March 1838), as *The Kind Spirits*

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE LAST LETTER.

Strong as the death it masters, is the hope
That onward looks to immortality :
Let the frame perish, so the soul survive,
Pure, spiritual, and loving. I believe
The grave exalts, not separates, the ties
That hold us in affection to our kind.
I will look down from yonder pitying sky,
Watching and waiting those I loved on earth
Anxious in heaven, until they too are there.
I will attend your guardian angel's side,
And weep away your faults with holy tears ;
Your midnight shall be filled with solemn thought :
And when, at length, death brings you to my love,
Mine the first welcome heard in Paradise.

Blanchard's title is:

IMMORTALITY

In The New York Mirror (24th March 1838), as *Hopes of Immortality*

In the Bouquet (1846), under (Locust) Robinia pseudo-acacia as
Affection beyond the grave

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A REQUEST REFUSED.

Age is a dreary thing when left alone :
It needs the sunshine brought by fresher years ;
It lives its youth again while seeing youth,
And childhood brings its childhood back again.

But for the lonely and the aged man
Left to the silent hearth, the vacant home
Where no sweet voices sound, no light steps come
Disturbing memory from its heaviness —
Wo for such lot ! 'tis life's most desolate !
Age needeth love and youth to cheer the path —
The short dark pathway leading to the tomb.

Blanchard's title is:

AGE

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE TRUTH OF PRESENTIMENTS.

I felt my sorrow ere it came,
As storms are felt on high,
Before a single cloud denote
Their presence on the sky.

The heart has omens deep and true,
That ask no aid from words ;
Like viewless music from the harp,
With none to wake its chords.

Strange, subtle, are these mysteries,
And linked with unknown powers,
Marking mysterious links that bind
The spirit world to ours.

Blanchard's title is:

THE HEART'S OMENS

In The New York Mirror (24th March 1838) under the chapter heading.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

RETURN HOME.

'Tis not my home — he made it home
With earnest love and care ;
How can it be my own dear home,
And he no longer there ?

I asked to meet my father's eyes,
But they were closed for me ;
My father, would that I were laid
In the dark grave with thee.

Where shall I look for constant love,
To answer unto mine ?
Others have many kindred hearts,
But I had only thine.

Blanchard's title is:

THE FATHER'S LOVE

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE LAST NIGHT WITH THE DEAD.

How awful is the presence of the dead !
The hours rebuked, stand silent at their side ;
Passions are hushed before that stern repose ;
Two, and two only, sad exceptions share —
Sorrow and love,—and these are paramount.
How deep the sorrow, and how strong the love !
Seeming as utterly unfelt before.
Ah ! parting tries their depths. At once arise
Affection's treasures, never dreamed till then.
Death teaches heavy lessons, hard to bear ;
And most it teaches us what we have lost,
In losing those who loved us.

In Blanchard

CHAPTER XL.

THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE DEAD.

Pale Memory sits lone, brooding o'er the past,
That makes her misery. She looketh round,
And asks the wide world for forgetfulness :
She asks in vain ; the shadow of past hours
Close palpable around her ; shapes arise—
Shadows, yet seeming real ; and sad thoughts,
That make a night of darkness and of dreams.
Her empire is upon the dead and gone ;
With that she mocks the present, and shuts out
The future, till the grave, which is her throne,
Has absolute dominion.

Blanchard's title is:

REMEMBRANCE

CHAPTER XLI.

THE LABORATORY.

'Tis a fair tree, the almond-tree: there Spring
Shews the first promise of her rosy wreath;
Or ere the green leaves venture from the bud,
Those fragile blossoms light the winter bough
With delicate colours, heralding the rose,
Whose own Aurora they might seem to be.
What lurks beneath their faint and lovely red?
What the dark spirit in those fairy flowers?
'Tis death!

Blanchard's title is:

DEATH IN THE FLOWER

In The New York Mirror (10th March 1838), as *The Almond-Tree*