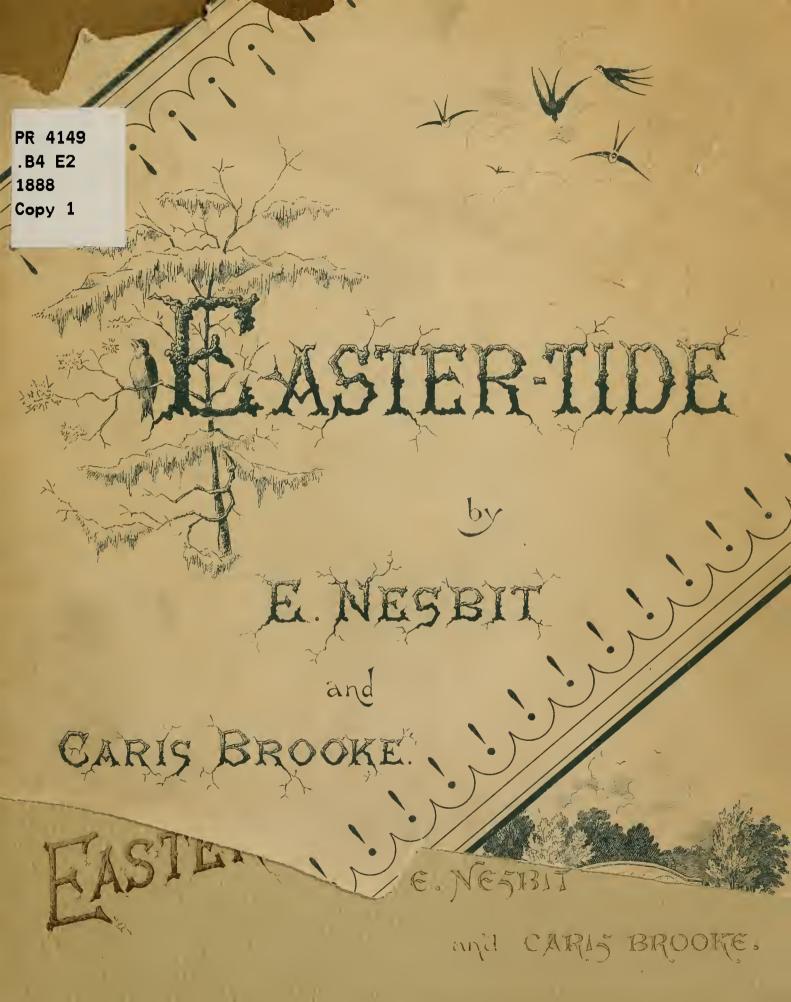
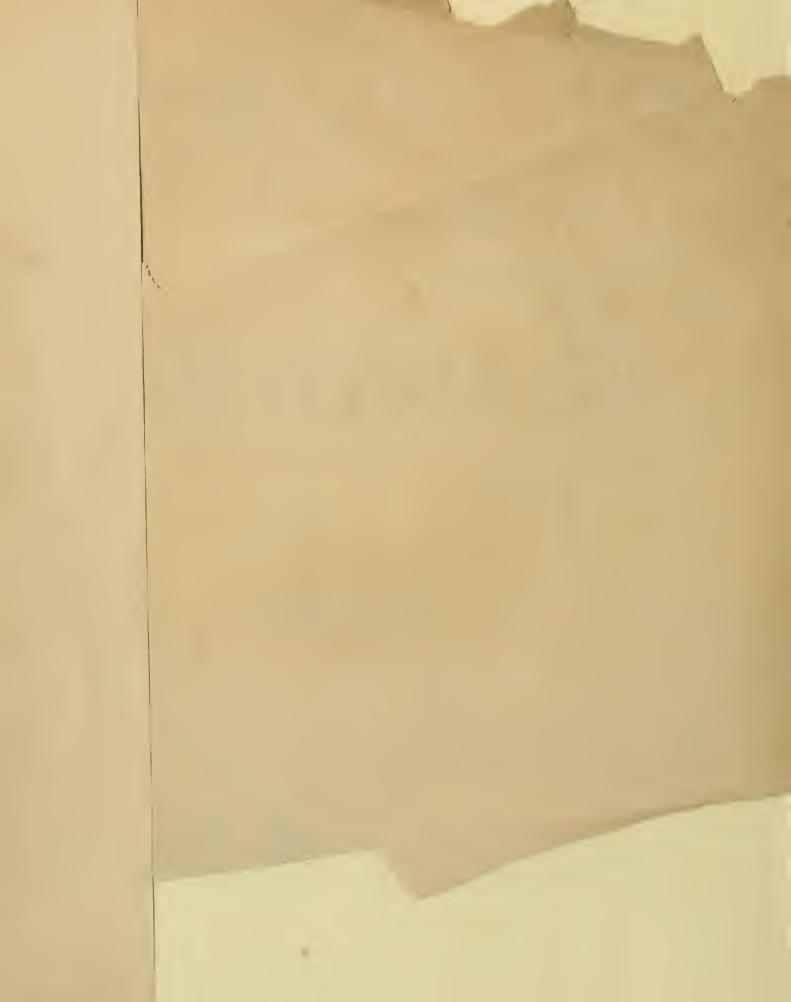
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EASTER TIDE by e. Ne5BIT

and CARIS BROOKE.









E. NESBIT

and CARIS BROOKE.



New York
E.P. Dutton & C?
31 West Twenty Third Street.
(Produced in Germany.)

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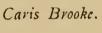


BAE2 1888

AN EASTER OFFERING.

EAR Lord I have no Easter flowers to bring, No roses fresh, nor lilies dewy sweet, Yet still one offering I may gladly bear And lay rejoicing at Thy dearest feet.

Enfold my weary love in Thy sweet will, And keep it closely to Thy piercëd side, So shall I rest, nor sad and helpless mourn, While safe in Thee my love and I abide.





Soft are the skies overhead,
Green is the ivy round brown hedge root,
Green is the moss where we tread.

Purple the woods are, and brown;
The blackbird is glossy and sleek,
He knows that the worms are no more kept down
By frost out of reach of his beak.

Grey are the sheep in the fold,

Tired of their turnip and beet,

Dreaming of meadow, and pasture, and wold,

And turf the warm rain will make sweet.

Leaves sleep, no bud wakens yet,

But we know by the song of the sun,
And the happy way that the world smiles, wet,
That the Spring—oh, be glad!—is begun.

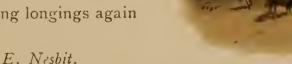
What stirs the heart of the tree?

What stirs the seed the earth bears?

What is it stirring in you and in me?

Longing for Summer, like theirs?—

Longing you cannot explain,
Yearning that baffles me still!
Ah! that each Spring should bring longings again
No Summer can ever fulfil!





POSSIBILITIES.

PRINCESS, sleeping in enchanted bowers, Earth springs to waking at Spring's voice and kiss,

And after Winter's cold unlovely hours, Laughs out to find how beautiful she is.

Spring flings a song across the field and fold,
And sighs it through the glad wood's tangled ways;
And million, million tales of love are told,
And dreams are dreamed of undivided days.

In hollows where so late the dead leaves lay,

Through the dead leaves the primroses push up;

And wind-flowers fleck the copse, and fields are gay

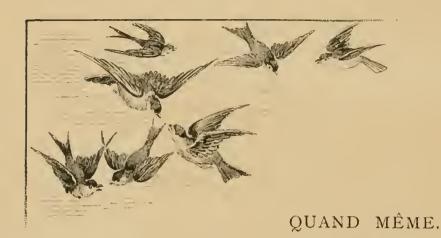
With daisies and the budding buttercup.

So in our hearts, though thick the dead leaves lie
Of grief—heaped up by winds of old despair—
May there not be a Spring-time by-and-by,
When flowers of joy shall blossom even there?

When late the trees were brown and hedges bare,
And keen east wind cut sharp as human pain,
Did the earth guess how soon she would be fair
With Spring's dear dainty loveliness again?



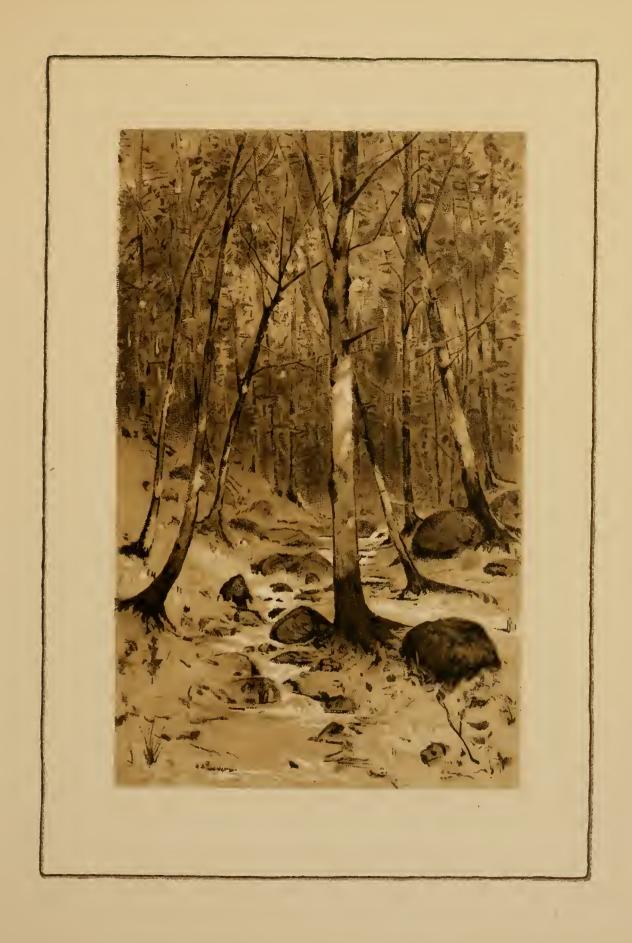




Out of a dream the bird-voice seemed to break,
As if it came from woods and fields of home,
—Proclaiming, "Spring is here. Awake! Awake!"
No mateless wanderer, I said, would roam
So far from sheltering copse and meadow bright,
To fling his challenge to the sleeping town:
Some prisoned thrush is trying thus to drown
Memories of love and spring that haunt him yet.
O restless songster! crying to be free,
Dost thou remember love and liberty—
And I forget?

I know where gold lent-lilies wave afield,
Where April keeps her white ungathered store
Of violets—where the trembling cuckoo flowers
Fringe the brown roots of budding sycamore—
Green nooks where birds between the Spring-tide
showers

Make passionate music; where old pastures yield
Their cowslip bells to little children's hands:
Ah, weary bird! these are but shadow lands!
Then the dawn showed me where, unfaltering,
A thrush unfettered on a blackened tree
Thrilled these wild strains of love and ecstasy,
In praise of Spring.



VIES MANQUÉES.

YEAR ago we walked the wood—
A year ago to-day;

A blackbird fluttered round her brood
Deep in the white-flowered may.

We trod the happy woodland ways,
Where sunset streamed between
The hazel stems in long dusk rays,
And turned to gold the green.

A thrush sang where the ferns uncurled,
And clouds of wind-flowers grew:
I missed the meaning of the world
From lack of love for you.

You missed the beauty of the year,
And failed itself to see,
Through too much doubt and too much fear,
And too much love of me.

This year we hear the bird's glad strain,
Again the sunset glows,
We walk the wild wet woods again,
Again the wind-flower blows

In cloudy white the falling may
Drifts down the scented wind,
And so the secret drifts away
Which we shall never find.

Our drifted spirits are not free
Spring's secret springs, to touch,
For now you do not care for me,
And I love you too much.

E. Nesbit.

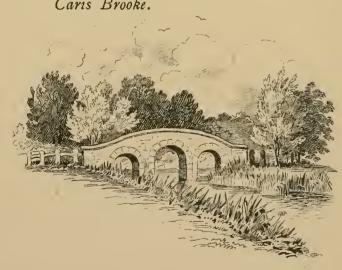


H the beautiful breathing earth, Clad in purple and decked with gold, Oh the wealth of blossom! the song of birds, The love that was told and untold! Oh the madness of Summer everywhere, In the still rapt sky and the wooing air, And we who were nothing, only a part Of the throbbing passionate mother-heart!

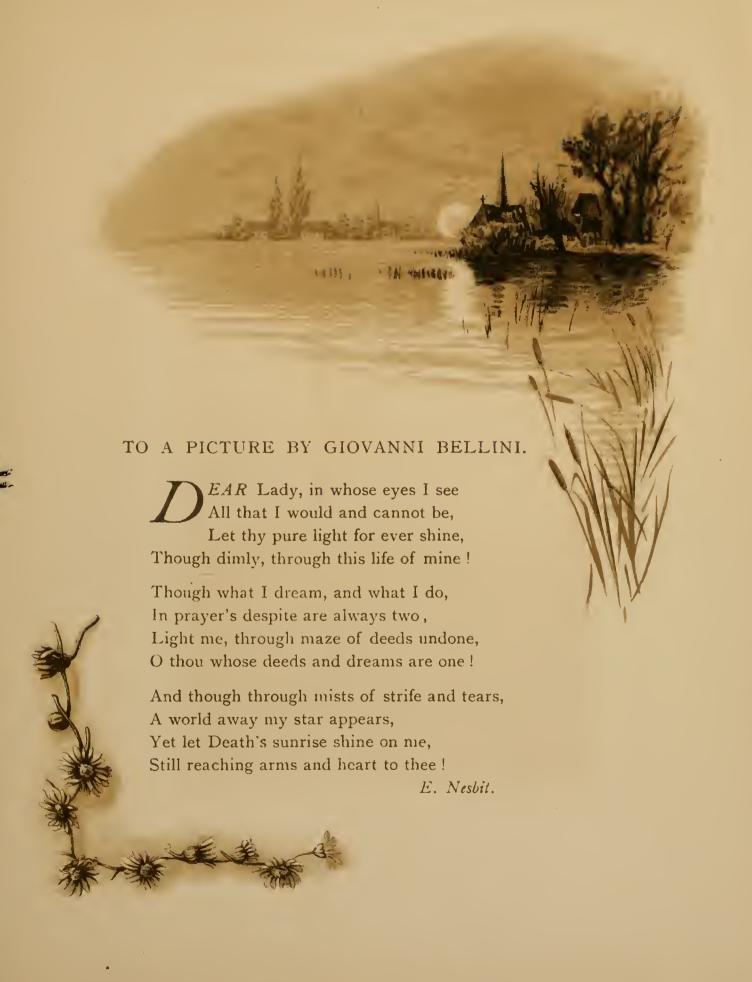
Oh the bitter desolate sea

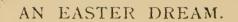
Wild with hunger and waste with woe, Wailing the pain of speechless souls In its restless ebb and flow! Oh the sob of life! oh the dirge of death, That moaned in its voice, and breathed in its breath;

And you and I, who stood by the shore Alone and apart for evermore!









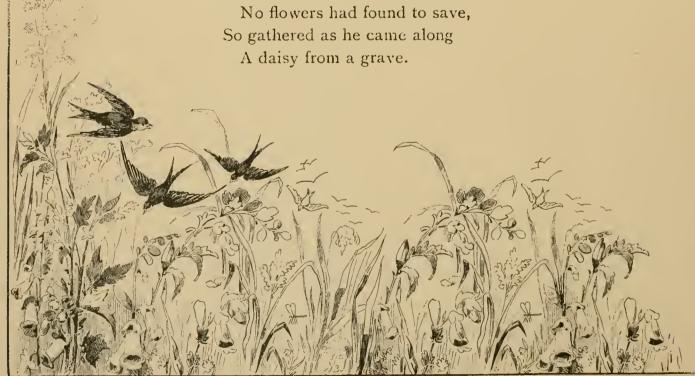
HE Easter flowers all freshly bloomed To grace my dear Lord's feast; And where the guests so thickly thronged I stood, the last and least.

For here were gathered offerings sweet, From wood and garden fair, And hidden lanes and lonely dells, Had heaped their treasures there.

One brought a rose, whose crimson heart A life's deep incense breathed; And one with blue forget-me-nots His chalices had wreathed.

A carpet all of buttercups Gleamed golden in the sun, These, little children's hands had plucked, And strewn there one by one.

One, in the garden of his life, So gathered as he came along A daisy from a grave.



And one a little store of herbs
In humble faith had brought,
And laid them 'neath a lily's leaf,
Nor greater notice sought.

No flower had I, no herb nor leaf,
Alone beyond the gate,
I dared not enter where the guests
Christ's speedy coming wait.

"Yet do I love as well as they, Yet would I sup, dear Lord, No more at any earthly feast But at Thy sacred board."

Could my deep sorrow plead my cause?
Would Christ yet hear my prayer?
Or when His guests had entered in,
Must I stay lonely there?

Ah, doubting heart! could it not know That His dear love would greet, More than all fading earthly flowers, A heart laid at His feet?

For while I murmured at my dearth,
I heard His tender call,
I looked, and saw a woven crown
Upon my pathway fall.

And while I fitted to my brows
That twisted crown of thorn,
I woke, and heard the happy bells
Ring out the Easter morn.





BEFORE SUMMER.

GOLDEN halo floats above the hills,
And Spring hath touched the crisp brown
woods below,

The cuckoo loudly calls, and birds build nests,
When orchards gleam beneath their tinted snow.
Love thrills the earth, but calls to her
Too late, too late.

Child of what other Summer dost thou dream, What summons wait?

Paler than drifted bloom upon the grass,
Sad-eyed and meek as any mateless dove,
Spring cannot woo thee with her sweetest songs,
Nor Summer teach my only love to love;
Sweet syren voices call me loud and clear,
Too late, too late!
Child if thou beckon from the other shore,
My heart will wait.

"YESTERDAY."

E heard the thrush's five long notes of woe, Or joy—who learns the song may say, We only listened when the sun was low;

But that was yesterday.

We found some violets underneath the hedge,
We gather'd blue-bells in the wild wood way,
We pull'd the king-cups from the rustling sedge;
But that was yesterday.

We watched the river's further ripple leap,

To catch the sun's last kiss, and grey

Soft mists of evening up the valley creep;

But that was yesterday.

Alone I wait, and watch the sun go down,

Counting dumb hours that I must stay

Till that supreme one comes which death shall crown,

And bring back yesterday.

Caris Brooke.



THE BETTER PART.

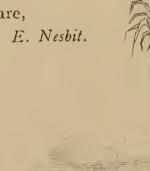
The same dull dreary up-hill way,
While the ideals we deem divine
So fair and far above us shine,
As unattainable as dear,
To us who grope and stumble here.

'Tis hard to hold our flag on high, And never faint until we die— To spread our banner on a wind Scented with roses left behind— To give up all life's joy, that we May humble banner-bearers be. 'Tis hard to sing, in faith, of light
Through endless-seeming hours of night—
To tune the harp, the voice upraise
For freedom's sake, in honour's praise—
To sing of good that is, not seems—
To sing of duties, not of dreams.

'Tis hard to fix one's sleepy eyes
On faint, faint streaks of new sunrise,
When all one's being yearns to weep
Its tiredness out, and turn to sleep—
Sleep, and forget, and cease to care,
If sunrise be, if darkness were.

'Tis weary fighting all one's life
In one long bitter desperate strife
'Gainst hydra-headed rampant wrong—
When one is fain of dance and song,
To smell the rose, and hear the fair
Soft wings of pleasure in the air.

And yet we choose the weary way,
The fighting, not the feasting day—
To wear the armour, not the flowers—
To sing of truth, while voice is ours,
Because good fight's worst wounds are far
More dear than any pleasures are,





RONDEAU.

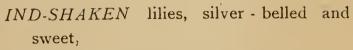
ONG ago when youth was gay,
We two dreamed our life should grow
Like two flowers in one sweet May—
And we told each other so.
You are gone. Time's fingers gray
Blind my eyes with showered snow,
Youth and hope seem far away—
Long ago.

Yet the Summer winds, I know.
Will blow soft one perfect day,
Melt the snows and roses strow;
"Ah what cold winds used to blow
When I was alone," you'll say,

" Long ago!"

E. Nesbit.

A STREET IDYLL.



Pearls floating down the dusty London street; Embodied dreams, a resurrection bright Of some forgone, forgotten, lost delight!

Who drew them from their dusky, cool retreat,
Where they could hear the Spring's first pulses beat
In deep green woods, or by the silvery gleam
Of some slow rippling, forest shadowed stream?

Where are they drifting in that snowy dress?

To make death tender with their loveliness;

Or stir within some weary, death-cold breast,

Thoughts which the dull hard word had laid to rest.

O myriad-voiced! beneath the summer sky, To some a song, to some a bitter cry, Pass to your mission, while I hear the beat Of angel footsteps flutter from the street.



LOVERS.

ITH Spring's first breath of scented air Come vague sweet thrills of memory—Remembrance of the days that were, And that again shall never be.

Dear ghosts of days for ever dead,
When we were young, and young the year—
Of all the foolish things we said
When you and I were lovers, dear.

Pale ghosts of days that could not last,

—Youth is so fleet, and time so strong—
Yet, oh, be glad that from our past
One treasure has been held so long.

The years have come, the years have fled,
With gain and loss our hearts to fill,
And youth's sweet rose its leaves has shed,
Yet you and I are lovers still!

Lovers, although my hair is gray
And all your gold is turned to snow,
Lovers, thank God, as dear to-day,
As in the Spring-time, long ago!

E. Nesbit.











