

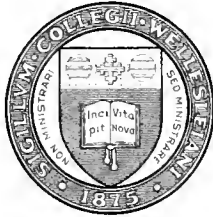
FLOWERS

from
HERE

and
THERE



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FLOWERS
FROM
HERE AND THERE

POEMS ARRANGED AND ILLUSTRATED

BY
SUSIE BARSTOW SKELDING

AUTHOR OF
*"The Flower-Songs Series," "Flowers from Hill and Dale," "Flowers
from Sunlight and Shade," etc., etc.*



NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES
SUCCESSOR TO
WHITE, STOKES, & ALLEN
1887

“Flowers are the alphabet of angels,
Whereby they write on hills and dales
Mysterious truths.”

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By WHITE, STOKES, & ALLEN.

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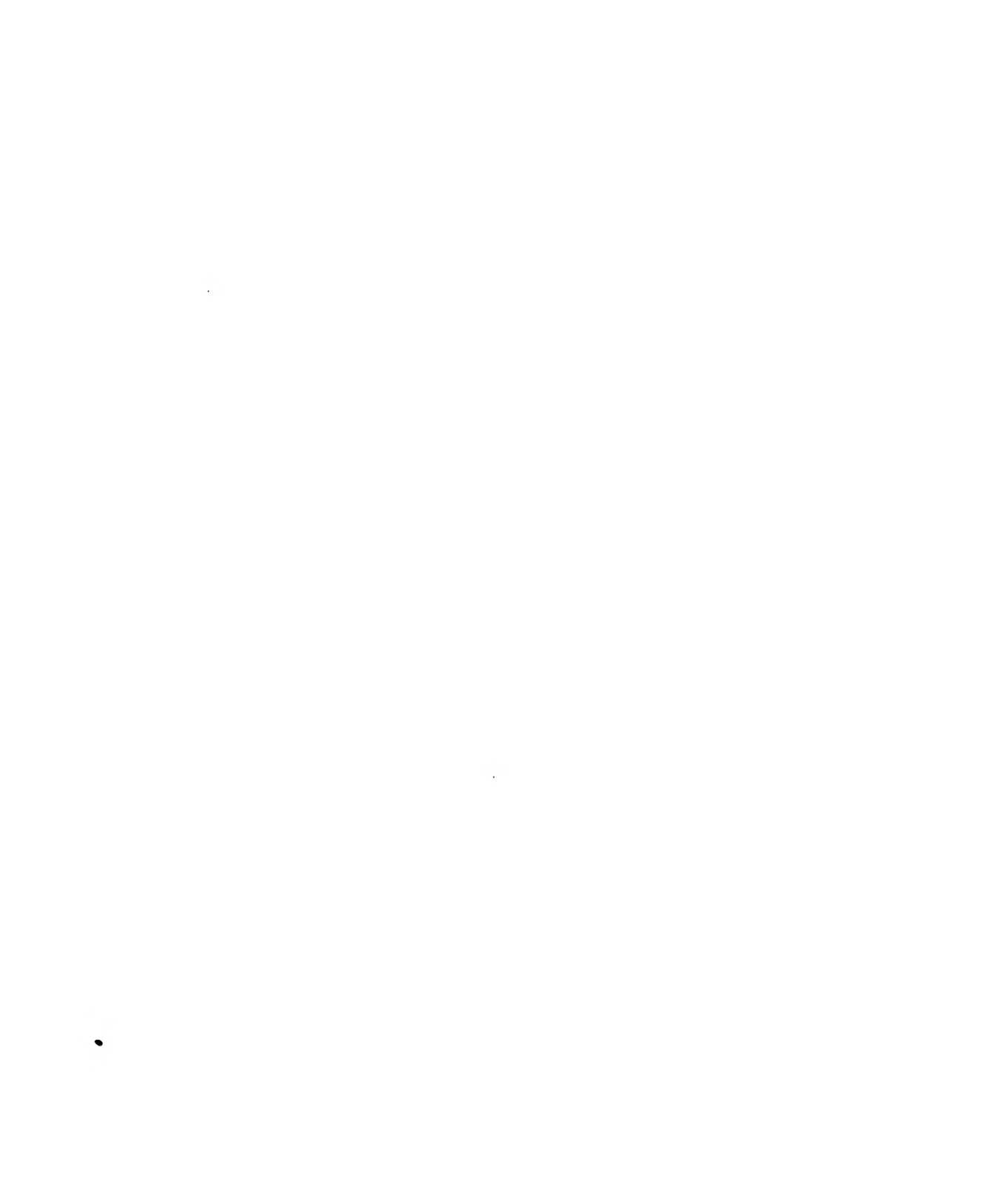
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S. B. S.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS.



From UNDER THE WILLOWS.

FRANK-HEARTED hostess of the field and wood,
Gypsy, whose roof is every spreading tree,
June is the pearl of our New England year.
Still a surprisal, though expected long,
Her coming startles. Long she lies in wait,
Makes many a feint, peeps forth, draws coyly back,
Then, from some southern ambush in the sky,
With one great gush of blossom storms the world.
A week ago the sparrow was divine ;
The bluebird, shifting his light load of song
From post to post along the cheerless fence,
Was as a rhymer ere the poet come ;
But now, O rapture ! sunshine winged and voiced,
Pipe blown through by the warm wild breath of the West
Shepherding his soft droves of fleecy cloud,
Gladness of woods, skies, waters, all in one,
The bobolink has come, and, like the soul
Of the sweet season vocal in a bird,
Gurgles in ecstasy we know not what,
Save *June ! Dear June ! Now God be praised for June.*

James Russell Lowell.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

WHEN the last red leaves are shining in the rich October sun,
When the twilight, early falling, melts in dreamy dusk away,
Ere the sweet cicada's chirping in the aftermath is done,
Comes my favorite flower of autumn, to illumine the pensive day.

Pensive, though in stately splendor, sits the Year, her toiling o'er,—
Pensive still, though on her forehead gleam the jewels of a queen ;
For her roses and her lilies bloom around her feet no more,
And her waving fields have bent them to the sickle bright and keen.

CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

With a fragrance aromatic, with a wild and careless
grace,
As if somehow to the garden came the freedom of
the woods,
Lifts each fair chrysanthemum her dear, captivating face,
Filled with sympathy for us, in our fluctuating moods.

White as bridal robe of beauty, flushed with crimson,
blushing deep,
Flaming high with gold, which, torch-like, flings a
glory on the air,—
Through all changes seems this flower vestal purity to
keep,
And its breath hath less of passion than of soft,
entreating prayer.

Most, I deem, like woman's courage, strongest when the
skies are drear,
Is this fearless loveliness, lighting bravely all the way,
Through the autumn weeks, till winter with its storms
shall close the year,
And the fury of the tempest whirl athwart the dark-
ening day.

Margaret E. Sangster.

A FLOWER-PIECE.

WANDERING of late beside a northern shore
That longed for Summer, and the wild beach grass,
And dip of oar, and plash of pearly feet,
And happy laughter on its lonely sands,
I heard a young voice carolling some song,
Nor knew I was in elf-land while I heard.
It sang, and slowly trembled into rest—
Slowly, because the earth was loath to leave
The high melodious dalliance.

But before

The singing fled to silence, eagerly
A rustle and a rush of flying wings,
Like leaflets blown before a frosty blast
When woods stand shivering, caught and bore it off,

Lost in the airy clamor of their flight.
And, as they went, wild music followed them ;
The tune the breeze winds in and out the grass,
The tune to which the clouds and sunshine play

O'er slopes of blushing clover—faint at first,
With many a fluttered echo frolicking,
It fell its windy way—then loitered down,
With lingering cadence of a long delay,
Lightly as in the tenderest deeps of even
The yellow blossom of the new moon drops
Below the west that waits it.

'Twas the voice
Of all the elves of all the flowers that blow,
Flocking to find the Spring, who slumbered yet,
Nursed by the blue-eyed April. Willow plumes,
Harebell, and cowslip and anemone ;
The silver cinquefoil, and the columbine
That bursts, a lance of hoarded light, from earth,
And swings its red flame on the shining tip ;
The purple vetches, washed by salt sea sprays ;
The frail convolvulus, that, ere the year
Is at the flood, leagues with the building bird
And the rude way-side tangles o'er her nest.
Precious to plot and pleachéd alley, too,
The mimic nun of the snow-drop, and the friar
Dwelling within the hooded aconite ;
The maidens of the pale chrysanthemum,
The royal lady of the proud and fair

Japonica, and ev'n the merry mites
That balance on the trumpet-flower's edge,
Tippling their horns of honey. And with them
All the delightful things of old romance—
The royal violet, and Sappho's rose ;
The fleur-de-lis, the flower of chivalry ;
The lotus, born of eternities,
Holding immortal ichor—hovered there,
Hovered a moment, chiming in one strain,
Then falling, failing, ever on the wing,
Sought other skies.

And I upon the shore
Watched a far bark into a bank of mist,
A dim blue bank built up along the sea ;
The bark still sailing, hull and tapering spire
A line of light, silvery sheathed about
With deepening vapors, slowly gliding on
To denser shadow, slow and even slower,
Fainting and fading, till a phantom craft
Was hid in sad recesses of the clouds,
A vanished apparition—and above,
Upon the paler of a peaceful sky,
Fair Hesper, like a flower, bloomed out in heaven.

Harriet Prescott Spofford.

PUSSY WILLOW AND CATKINS.



Forages on our River borders
These tassels in their tawny bloom
And willowy studs of downy silver
Have prophesied of Spring to come

Forages have the unbound waters
Smiled on them from their pebbly ken
And the clear carol of the robin,
And song of blue bird welcomed them!

John L. Whittier

MENOTOMY LAKE.

THERE'S nothing so sweet as a morning in May,
And what is so fair as the gleam of glad water ?
Spring leaps from the brow of old Winter to-day,
Full-formed, like the fabled Olympian's daughter.

A breath out of heaven came down in the night,
Dispelling the gloom of the sullen northeasters ;
The air is all balm and the lake is as bright
As a bird in brave plumage that ripples and glisters.

The enchantment is broken which bound her so long,
And Beauty that slumbered awakes and remembers ;
Love bursts into being, joy breaks into song,
In a glory of blossoms life flames from its embers.

I row by steep woodlands, I rest on my oars
Under banks deep-embroidered with grass and young
clover ;
Far round, in and out, wind the beautiful shores,
The lake in the midst, and the blue heavens over.

The world in its mirror hangs beautifully bright ;
The patriarch clouds in curled raiment that lazily
Lift their bare foreheads in dazzling bright light,
In that deep under-sky glimmer softly and hazily.

Far over the trees, or in glimpses between,
Peer the steeples and half-hidden roofs of the village.
Here lie the broad slopes in their loveliest green ;
There, crested with orchards, or checkered with tillage.

There the pines, tall and black, in the blue morning air ;
The warehouse of ice, a vast windowless castle ;
The ash and the sycamore, shadeless and bare ;
The elm-boughs in blossom, the willows in tassel.

In golden effulgence of leafage and blooms,
Far along, overleaning, the sunshiny willows
Advance like a surge from the grove's deeper glooms,—
The first breaking swell of the Summer's green billows.

Scarce a tint upon hornbeam or sumach appears,
The arrowhead tarries, the lily still lingers ;
But the flag-leaves are piercing the wave with their
spears,
And the fern is unfolding its infantile fingers.

Down through the dark evergreens slants the mild light :
I know every cove, every moist indentation,
Where mosses and violets ever invite
To some still inexperienced, fresh exploration.

The mud-turtle, sunning his shield on a log,
Slides off with a splash as my paddle approaches ;
Beside the green island I silence the frog,
In warm, sunny shallows I startle the roaches.

I glide under branches where rank above rank
From the lake grow the trees, bending over its bosom ;
Or lie in my boat on some flower-starred bank,
And drink in delight from each bird-song and blossom.

Above me the robins are building their nest ;
The finches are here—singing throats by the dozen ;
The cat-bird complaining or mocking the rest ;
The wing-spotted blackbird, sweet bobolink's cousin.

With rapture I watch, as I loiter beneath
The small silken tufts on the boughs of the beeches,
Each leaf-cluster parting its delicate sheath,
As it gropingly, yearningly opens its reaches ;

Like soft-wingéd things coming forth from their shrouds,
The bees have forsaken the maple's red flowers
And gone to the willows, whose luminous clouds
Drop incense and gold in impalpable showers.

The bee-peopled odorous boughs overhead,
With fragrance and murmur the senses delighting ;
The lake-side, gold-laced with the pollen they shed
At the touch of a breeze or a small bird alighting ;

The myriad tremulous pendants that stream
From the hair of the birches — O group of slim
graces,
That see in the water your silver limbs gleam,
And lean undismayed over infinite spaces !—

The bold dandelion embossing the grass ;
On upland and terrace the fruit gardens blooming ;
The wavering, winged, happy creatures that pass—
Pale butterflies flitting, and bumble-bees booming ;

The crowing of cocks and the bellow of kine ;
Light, color, and all the delirious lyrical
Bursts of bird-voices ; life filled with new wine,—
Every motion and change in this beautiful miracle,

Spring-time and May-time,—revive in my heart
All the springs of my youth, with their sweetness and
splendor :
O years that so softly take wing and depart !
O perfume ! O memories pensive and tender !

As lightly I glide between island and shore,
I seem like an exile, a wandering spirit,
Returned to the land where 'tis May evermore,
A moment revisiting, hovering near it.

Stray scents from afar, breathing faintly around,
Are something I've known in another existence ;
As I pause, as I listen, each image, each sound,
Is softened by glamour, or mellowed by distance.

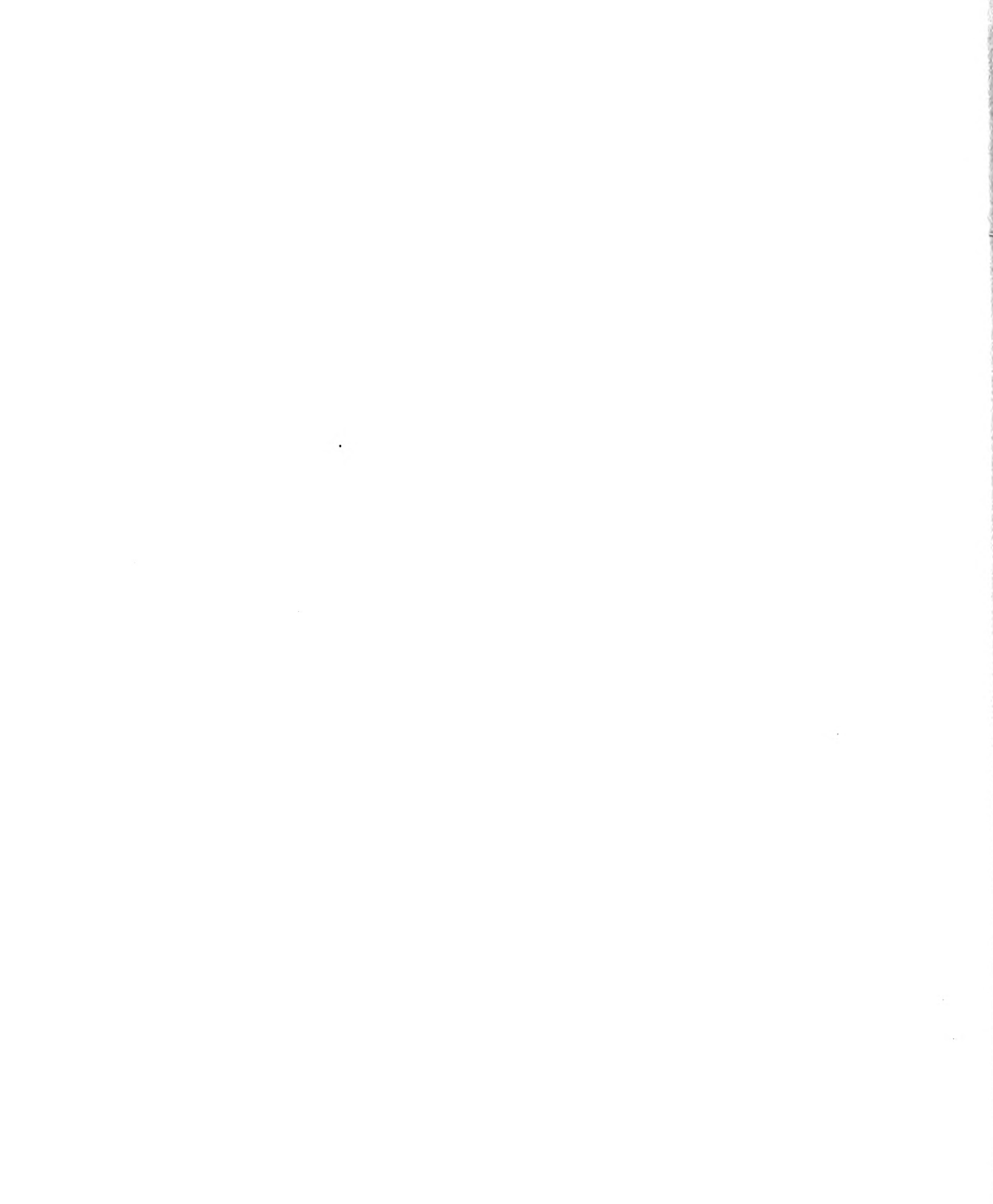
From the hill-side, no longer discordant or harsh,
Comes the cry of the peacock, the jubilant cackle ;
And sweetly, how sweetly, by meadow and marsh,
Sounds the musical jargon of blue jay and grackle !

O Earth ! till I find more of heaven than this,
I will cling to your bosom with perfect contentment.
O water ! O light ! sky-enfolded abyss !
I yield to the spell of your wondrous enchantment.

I drift on the dream of a lake in my boat ;
With my oar-beat two pinion-like shadows keep
 measure ;
I poise and gaze down through the depths as I float,
 Seraphic, sustained between azure and azure.

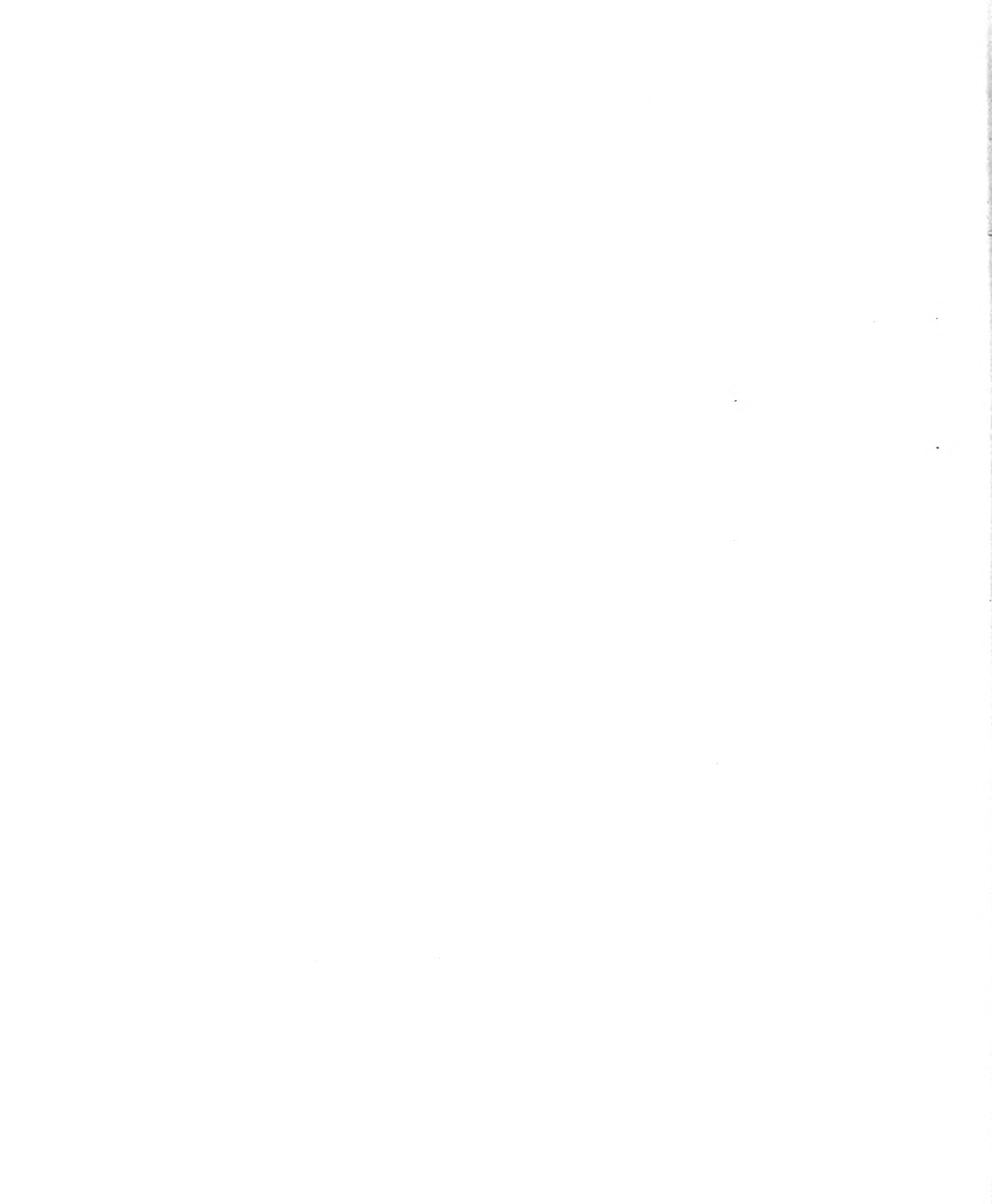
I pause in a rift, by the edge of the world,
 That divides the blue gulf of a double creation ;
Till, lo, the illusion is shattered and whirled
 In a thousand bright rings by the skiff's oscillation !

John Townsend Trowbridge.



PANSIES.





EXPECTATION.

THROUGHOUT the lonely house the whole day long
The wind-harp's fitful music sinks and swells,—
A cry of pain, sometimes, or sad and strong,
Or faint, like broken peals of silver bells.

Across the little garden comes the breeze,
Bows all its cups of flame, and brings to me
Its breath of mignonette and bright sweet peas,
With drowsy murmurs from the encircling sea.

In at the open door a crimson drift
Of fluttering, fading woodbine leaves is blown,
And through the clambering vine the sunbeams sift,
And trembling shadows on the floor are thrown.

I climb the stair, and from the window lean,
Seeking thy sail, O love, that still delays ;
Longing to catch its glimmer, searching keen
The jealous distance veiled in tender haze.

PANSIES.

What care I if the pansies purple be,
Or sweet the wind-harp wails through the slow hours,
Or that the lulling music of the sea
Comes woven with the perfume of the flowers?

Thou comest not! I ponder o'er the leaves,
The crimson drift behind the open door;
Soon shall we listen to the wind that grieves,
Mourning this glad year, dead forevermore.

And O my love, shall we on some sad day
Find joys and hopes low fallen like the leaves,
Blown by life's chilly autumn wind away,
In withered heaps God's eye alone perceives?

Come thou, and save me from my dreary thought!
Who dares to question Time, what it may bring?
Yet round us lies the radiant summer, fraught
With beauty; must we dream of suffering?

Yea, even so. Through this enchanted land,
This morning-red of life, we go to meet
The tempest in the desert, hand in hand,
Along God's paths of pain, that seek His feet.

PANSIES.

But this one golden moment,—hold it fast !

The light grows long ; low in the west the sun,
Clear red and glorious, slowly sinks at last,
And while I muse, the tranquil day is done.

The land breeze freshens in thy gleaming sail !

Across the singing waves the shadows creep ;
Under the new moon's thread of silver pale,
With the first star, thou comest o'er the deep.

Celia Thaxter.

MAY-DAY.

IF I were asked the season,
I could not tell to-day ;
I should say it still was Winter—
The Calendar says May.

If this indeed be May-day,
I must be growing old ;
For nothing I was used to
Do I to-day behold.

On May-day in New England,
In that old town of ours,
We rose before the daybreak,
And went and gathered flowers.

If there are woods in Hingham,
I have forgot ; I know
That there were woods in Seekoak
Some forty years ago.

PANSIES.

And thither went the children,
For there the wild flowers grew ;
They plucked them up by handfuls
With fingers wet with dew.

And then in pretty baskets,
With little sprigs of green
They placed them, and stole homeward,
And hoped they were not seen.

Along the roads and by-ways
The merry creatures crept,
And round their sweethearts' houses,
While still the sweethearts slept.

The baskets on their windows
They hung, and stole away ;
And no one knew who did it,
Or, knowing, none would say.

It spoiled her simple pleasure
If any maiden knew
Who sent her her May basket—
She had to guess out who.

PANSIES.

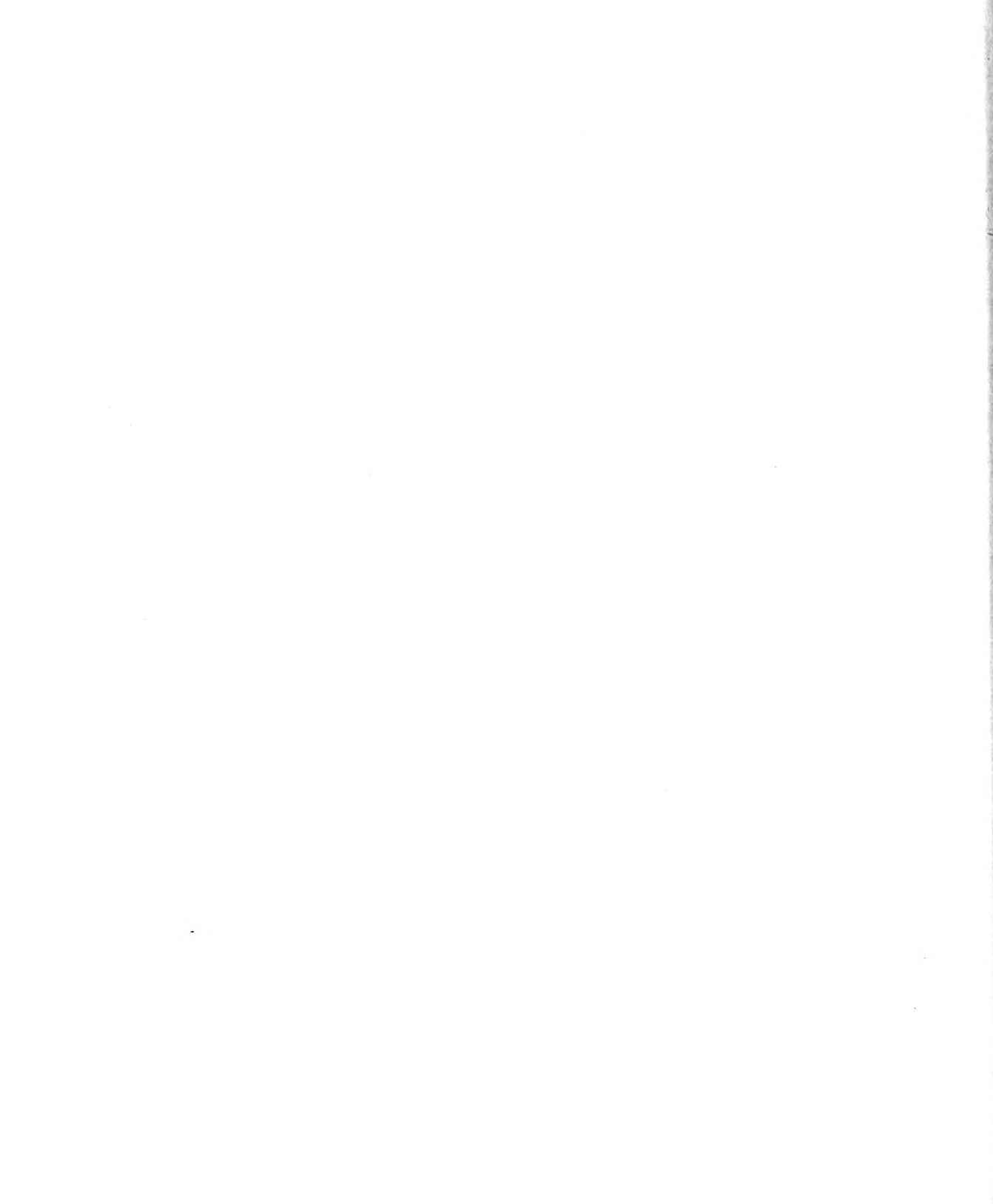
Ah, those indeed were May-days,
But *this*, this dreary day,
The Calendar's mistaken—
'Tis not the first of May!

Why, if it were, my lady,
I would have gone in time,
And made you your May basket,
If only one of rhyme!

But I haven't done it, darling,
For the words that I have sung
Are only recollections
Of May when I was young.

Richard Henry Stoddard.

WHITE ORCHIDS.





IN THE PASS.

ACROSS my road a mountain rose of rock—
Fierce, naked rock. Its shadow, black and chill,
Shut out the sun. Gray clouds, which seemed to mock
With cruel challenges my helpless will,
Sprang up and scaled the steepest crags. The shrill
Winds, two and two, went breathless out and in,
Filling the darkened air with evil din.

I turned away my weary steps, and said :
“This must be confine of some fearful place ;
Here is no path for mortal man to tread.
Who enters here will tremble, face to face
With powers of darkness, whose unearthly race
In cloud and wind and storm delights to dwell,
Ruling them all by an uncanny spell.”

The guide but smiled, and, holding fast my hand,
Compelled me up a path I had not seen.
It wound round ledges where I scarce could stand ;
It plunged to sudden sunless depths between
Immeasurable cliffs, which seemed to lean
Together, closing, as we passed, like door
Of dungeon which would open nevermore.

WHITE ORCHIDS.

I said again : " I will not go. This way
Is not for mortal feet." Again the guide
But smiled, and I again could but obey.
The path grew narrow ; thundering by its side,
As loud as ocean at its highest tide,
A river rushed, all black, and green, and white,
A boiling stream of molten malachite.

Sudden I heard a joyous cry, " Behold, behold !"
And, smiling still on me, the good guide turned,
And pointed where broad, sunny fields unrolled
And spread like banners, green, so green it burned,
And lit the air like red ; and blue which yearned
From all the lofty dome of sky, and bent
And folded low and circling like a tent ;

And forests ranged like armies, round and round,
At feet of mountains of eternal snow ;
And valleys all alive with happy sound ;
The song of birds ; swift brook, delicious flow ;
The mystic hum of million things that grow ;
The stir of men ; and gladdening every way,
Voices of little children at their play.

WHITE ORCHIDS.

And shining banks of flowers which words refuse
To paint ; such colors as in summer light
The rarest, fleetest summer rainbows use,
But set in gold of sun, and silver white
Of dew, as thick as gems which blind the sight
On altar fronts, inlaid with priceless things,
The jewelled gifts of centuries of kings.

Then, sitting half in dream, and half in fear
Of how such wondrous miracle were wrought,
Thy name, dear friend, I sudden seemed to hear
Through all the charméd air.

My loving thought
Through patient years had vainly groped and sought,
And found no hidden thing so rare, so good,
That it might furnish thy similitude.

O noble soul, whose strengths like mountains stand,
Whose purposes, like adamantine stone,
Bar roads to feeble feet, and wrap the land
In seeming shadow, thou, too, hast thine own
Sweet valleys full of flowers, for me alone,
Unseen, unknown, undreamed of by the mass,
Who do not know the secret of the Pass.

AMPEZZO PASS, June 22, 1869.

H. H.

THE HOLLY-TREE.

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see
 The Holly-tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
 Its glossy leaves,
Ordered by an Intelligence so wise
As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
 Wrinkled and keen ;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
 Can reach to wound ;
But, as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
 And moralize ;
And in this wisdom of the Holly-tree
 Can emblem see
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
One which may profit in the after-time.

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear
 Harsh and austere,

THE HOLLY-TREE.

To those who on my leisure would intrude
 Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the Holly-tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt, I know,
 Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
 Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly-tree.

And as, when all the summer trees are seen
 So bright and green,
The Holly-leaves a sober hue display
 Less bright than they ;
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly-tree ?

So serious should my youth appear among
 The thoughtless throng ;
So would I seem amid the young and gay
 More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly-tree.

Robert Southey.

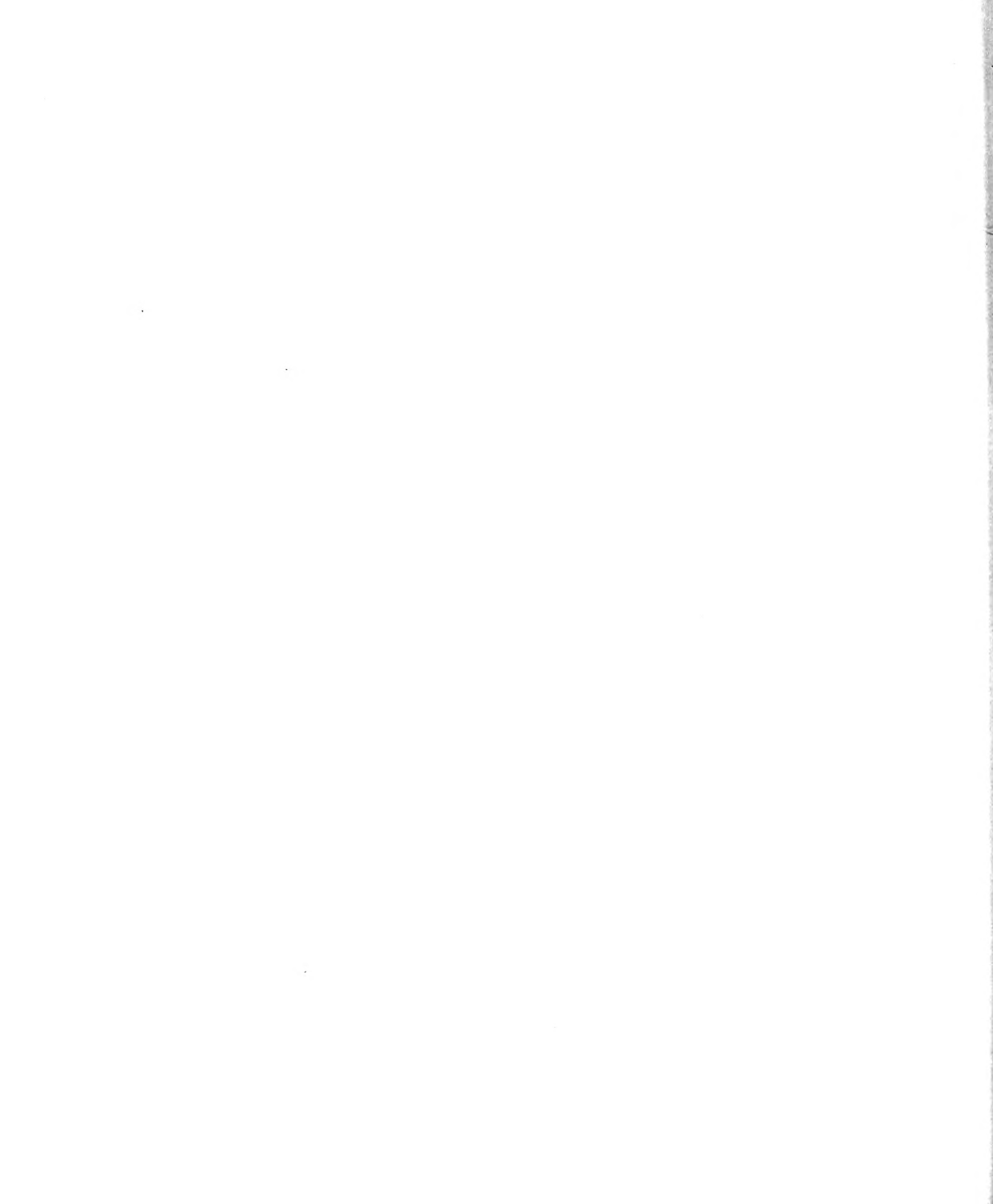
From THE TASK.

Who loves a garden loves a greenhouse too.
Unconscious of a less propitious clime,
There blooms exotic beauty, warm and snug,
While the winds whistle and the snows descend.
The spiry myrtle, with unwithering leaf,
Shines there, and flourishes. The golden boast
Of Portugal and Western India there,
The ruddier orange, and the paler lime,
Peep through their polish'd foliage at the storm,
And seem to smile at what they need not fear.
The amomum there with intermingling flowers
And cherries hangs her twigs. Geranium boasts
Her crimson honours, and the spangled bean,
Ficoides, glitters bright the winter long.
All plants, of every leaf, that can endure
The winter's frown, if screen'd from his shrewd bite,
Live there and prosper.

Cowper.

WILD RASPBERRY.





GOWNS OF GOSSAMER.

THEY'RE hastening up across the fields; I see them on
their way!

They will not wait for cloudless skies, nor even a pleas-
ant day,

For Mother Earth will weave and spread a carpet for
their feet;

Already voices in the air announce their coming sweet.

One sturdy little violet peeped out alone, in March,
While cobwebs of the snow yet hung about the sky's
gray arch;

But merry winds to sweep them down in earnest had
begun;

The violet, though she shook with cold, stayed on to
watch the fun.

And now the other violets are crowding up to see
What welcome in this blustering world may chance for
them to be;

They lift themselves on slender stems in every shaded
place,

Heads over heads, all turned one way, wonder in every
face.

WILD RASPBERRY.

There shiver, in rose-tinted white, the pale anemones ;
There pink, perfumed arbutus trails from underneath
bare trees ;
Hepatica shows opal gleams beneath her silk-lined
cloak,
Then slips it off, and hides amid the gnarled roots of
the oak.

They like the clear cool weather well when they are
fairly out,
And they are happy as the flowers of summer climes, no
doubt.
When little star-shaped innocence makes every field
snow-white
With her four-cornered neckerchiefs, there is no lovelier
sight.

And when the wild geranium comes, in gauzy purple
sheen,
Forerunner of the woodland rose, June's darling, Sum-
mer's queen,
With small herb-robert like a page close following her
feet,
Jack-in-the-pulpit will stand up in his green curtained
seat :

WILD RASPBERRY.

Marsh-marigold and adder's-tongue will wade the brook
across,
Where cornel-flowers are grouped, in crowds, on strips
of turf and moss ;
And wood-stars white, from lucent green, will glimmer
and unfold,
And scarlet columbines will lift their trumpets, mouthed
with gold.

Then will the birds sing anthems ; for the earth and sky
and air
Will seem a great cathedral, filled with beings dear and
fair ;
And long processions, from the time that bluebird-notes
begin
Till gentians fade, through forest-aisles will still move
out and in.

Unnumbered multitudes of flowers it were in vain to
name
Along the roads and in the woods will old acquaintance
claim ;
And scarcely shall we know which one for beauty we
prefer,
Of all the wayside fairies clad in gowns of gossamer

Lucy Larcom.

GREETING FROM FAR AWAY.

So many stars as shine in the sky,
So many little winds murmuring by,
 So many blessings attend thee;
So many leaves as dance on the trees,
So many flowers as wave on the breeze,
Brighter than those, love, and sweeter than these,
 The loving thoughts that I send thee.

Were I the golden sun to shine,
Every ray a glad thought of mine,
 Loving and true and tender,
I would crown with my beams thy dearest head,
From morning golden to evening red ;
Deep in my heart lies the thought unsaid,
 The love that no speech can render.

Might I but guard thee forevermore !
A sheltering roof, a fast-shut door,
 In my deep heart to hold thee ;

In a still, safe room thou dost dwell apart,
Thy spirit pure in my loving heart,
So fair, so dear, so true, thou art ;—
 So doth my love enfold thee.

When I faint with thirst on a dusty way,
A pure spring flows for me every day,—
 I drink thy love forever ;
I wander alone at dead of night,
But ever before me I see a light,
In darkest hours more clear, more bright ;
 And the hope that I bear fails never.

Though I have journeyed across the sea,
Still before me thy face I see,
 Thy form still goes before me ;
And I whisper thy name to the woods and caves,
And I sing it aloud to the rushing waves ;
And I have all that my spirit craves,
 When the thought of thee comes o'er me.

When thou dost not know what the little brooks say,
Think they go sadly upon their way,
 Because we two are parted ;

WILD RASPBERRY.

When the dim forest droops its leaves,
Think that the soul within it grieves,
Because its shadow no more receives
Two lovers faithful-hearted.

When the sweet flowers droop and die,
Think that my hopes all withered lie ;
Think how my heart is broken !
When, in April, with sun and rain,
Violets blossom on hill and plain,
Think thou couldst call me to life again,
By the sweet word still unspoken.

When I send thee a red, red rose,—
The sweetest flower on earth that grows!
Think, dear heart, how I love thee !
Listen to what the sweet rose saith
With her crimson leaf and her fragrant breath,—
Love, I am thine, in life and death !
O my love, dost thou love me ?

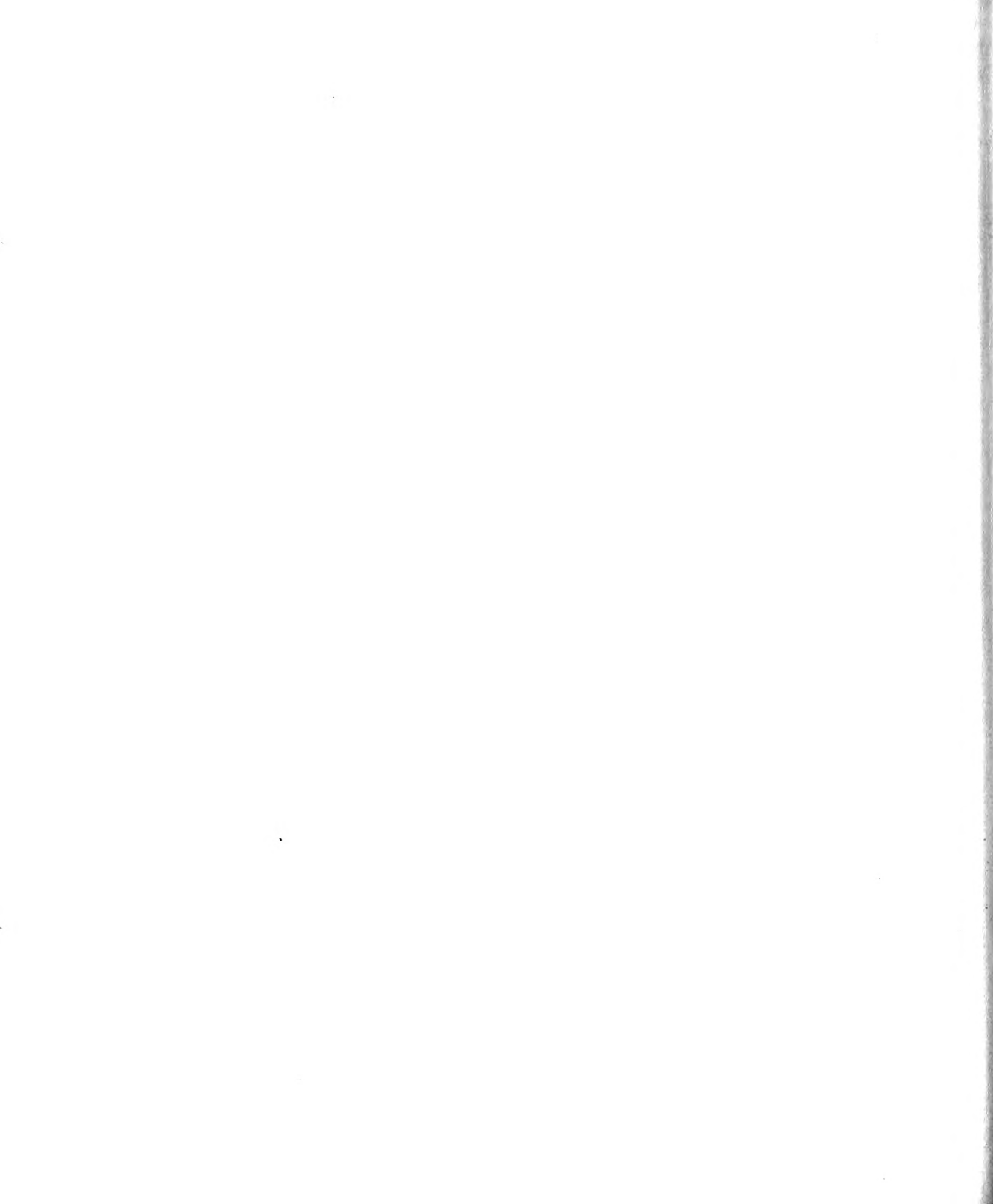
From "EXOTICS." Translated by L. C.

NATURE.

THE bubbling brook doth leap when I come by,
Because my feet find measure with its call ;
The birds know when the friend they love is nigh,
For I am known to them both great and small ;
The flowers that on the lovely hillside grow
Expect me there when Spring their bloom has given ;
And many a tree and bush my wanderings know,
And e'en the clouds and silent stars of heaven :
For he who with his Maker walks aright
Shall be their lord, as Adam was before ;
His ear shall catch each sound with new delight,
Each object wear the dress which then it wore ;
And he, as when erect in soul he stood,
Hear from his Father's lips that all is good.

Jones Very

MAPLE LEAVES.





BEFORE THE LEAVES FALL.

I WONDER if oak and maple,
Willow and elm and all,
Are stirred at heart by the coming
Of the day their leaves must fall.
Do they think of the yellow whirlwind,
Or know of the crimson spray,
That shall be when chill November
Bears all their leaves away?

Perhaps—beside the water
The willow bends, serene
As when her young leaves glistened
In a mist of golden green;
But the brave old oak is flushing
To a wine-red, dark and deep,
And maple and elm are blushing
The blush of a child asleep.

MAPLE LEAVES.

“ If die we must,” the leaflets
 Seem one by one to say,
“ We will wear the colors of gladness
 Until we pass away.
No eyes shall see us falter ;
 And, before we lay it down,
We’ll wear, in the sight of all the earth,
 The year’s most kingly crown.”

So, trees of the stately forest,
 And trees by the trodden way,
You are kindling into glory
 This soft autumnal day.
And we who gaze remember
 That more than all they lost,
To hearts and trees together,
 May come through the ripening frost.

Margaret E. Sangster.

THE FLOWER PAINTER.

SHE learned the dearest haunts in vale and wild
Of summer's fairy nurslings. In her eyes
The opening buds beheld with glad surprise
Such loving recognition, that they smiled
Ecstatic welcome. Nature, pleased and mild,
Guided her hand to seek the precious dyes
Kept hidden since the loss of Paradise,
And with pure sense and spirit undefiled
She shared the secret with each flower that grew.
Beneath her touch the treasures manifold
Of fading summers lived in beauty new.
The rose with glowing blush its story told,
Violet and heart's-ease breathed in blue and gold,
And spotless lilies sparkled with the dew.

And then her hand grew weary ; full and deep
The cup of life and love, and beauty's ray
Crowned her young brow, as on her bridal day.
Not hers the doom to linger and to weep,

Nor feel the winds of stormy anguish sweep.

 Within her eyes strange, wistful shadows lay ;

 The pencil from her light grasp dropped away,
And while the flowers slept, she too fell asleep.

“ But summer days are come ; will she return

 Whose step a thousand blossoms yearn to greet ?

O questioning flowers ! she has gone hence to learn

 If in that land your own life is complete ;

 If heavenward borne on wings of odor sweet

Ye, too, in hues of deathless beauty burn.

Frances L. Mace.

THE THIRD OF NOVEMBER, 1861.

SOFTLY breathes the west-wind beside the ruddy forest,
Taking leaf by leaf from the branches where he flies.
Sweetly streams the sunshine, this third day of November
Through the golden haze of the quiet autumn skies.

Tenderly the season has spared the grassy meadows,
Spared the petted flowers that the old world gave the
new,
Spared the autumn-rose and the garden's group of pansies,
Late-blown dandelionss and periwinkles blue.

On my cornice linger the ripe black grapes ungathered ;
Children fill the groves with the echoes of their glee,
Gathering tawny chestnuts, and shouting when beside
them
Drops the heavy fruit of the tall black-walnut tree.

Glorious are the woods in their latest gold and crimson,
Yet our full-leaved willows are in their freshest green.
Such a kindly autumn, so mercifully dealing
With the growths of summer, I never yet have seen.

Like this kindly season may life's decline come o'er me ;
Past is manhood's summer, the frosty months are here ;
Yet be genial airs and a pleasant sunshine left me,
Leaf, and fruit, and blossom, to mark the closing year !

Dreary is the time when the flowers of earth are withered ;
Dreary is the time when the woodland leaves are cast—
When upon the hillside, all hardened into iron,
Howling like a wolf, flies the famished northern blast.

Dreary are the years when the eye can look no longer
With delight on Nature, or hope on human kind :
Oh, may those that whiten my temples, as they pass me,
Leave the heart unfrozen, and spare the cheerful mind !

William Cullen Bryant.

WHITE ROSES.





A Picture

[after bitter]

Sweet-child, I prithee stand
While I try my novel hand
At a portrait of thy face
With its simple childish grace.

Cheeks as soft and finely tued
As the fleecy cloud imbued
With the roseate tint of morn
Ere the golden sun is born :-
Dips that like a rose-hedge curl,
Guarding well the gates of pearl,
- What care I for peachy gate?
By the rose-hedge well I wait :-
Chin that rounds with outline fine
Melting off in hazy line:

As in misty summer noon,
Or beneath the harvest moon,
Curves the smooth and sandy shore.
Flowing off in dimmer hoar:-
Eyes that roam like timid deer
Sheltered by a thicket near
Peeping out between the boughs
Or that trusting, safely browse:-
Arched o'er all the forehead pine,
Giving us the prescience sure
Of an even growing light;
As in deepening summer night,
Over fields to ripen soon
Hangs the silver crescent moon.

Horace E. Scudder.

MIGNONETTE.

I PASSED before her garden-gate :
 She stood among her roses,
And stooped a little from the state
 In which her pride reposes,
To make her flowers a graceful plea
For luring and delaying me.

“ When summer blossoms fade so soon,”
 She said with winning sweetness,
“ Who does not wear the badge of June
 Lacks something of completeness.
My garden welcomes you to-day,
Come in and gather while you may.”

I entered in : she led me through
 A maze of leafy arches,
Where velvet-purple pansies grew
 Beneath the sighing larches,—
A shadowy, still, and cool retreat
That gave excuse for lingering feet.

She paused ; pulled down a trailing vine,
And twisted round her finger
Its starry sprays of jessamine,
As one who seeks to linger.
But I smiled lightly in her face,
And passed on to the open space.

Passed many a flower-bed fitly set
In trim and blooming order,
And plucked at last some mignonette
That grew along the border ;
A simple thing that had no bloom,
And but a faint and far perfume.

She wondered why I would not choose
That dreamy amaryllis,—
And could I really then refuse
Those heavenly white lilies !
And leave ungathered on the slope
That passion-breathing heliotrope ?

She did not know—what need to tell
So fair and fine a creature ?—
That there was one who loved me well
Of widely-different nature :

A little maid whose tender youth,
And innocence, and simple truth,

Had won my heart with qualities
That far surpassed her beauty,
And held me with unconscious ease
Enthralled of love and duty ;
Whose modest graces all were met
And symbolled in my mignonette.

I passed outside her garden-gate,
And left her proudly smiling ;
Her roses bloomed too late, too late,
She said, for my beguiling.
I wore instead—and wear it yet—
The single spray of mignonette.

Its fragrance greets me unaware,
A vision clear recalling
Of shy, sweet eyes, and drooping hair
In girlish tresses falling,
And little hands so white and fine
That timidly creep into mine ;

WHITE ROSES.

As she—all ignorant of the arts
That wiser maids are plying—
Has crept into my heart of hearts,
Past doubting or denying ;
Therein while suns shall rise and set
To bloom unchanged, my Mignonette !

Mary Bradley.

A PAINTED FAN.

Roses and butterflies snared on a fan,
All that is left of a summer gone by;
Of swift, bright wings that flashed in the sun,
And loveliest blossoms that bloomed to die !

By what subtle spell did you lure them here,
Fixing a beauty that will not change ;
Roses whose petals never will fall,
Bright, swift wings that never will range ?

Had you owned but the skill to snare as well
The swift-winged hours that came and went,
To prison the words that in music died,
And fix with a spell the heart's content,

Then had you been of magicians the chief ;
And loved and lovers should bless your art,
If you could but have painted the soul of the thing,—
Not the rose alone, but the rose's heart !

WHITE ROSES.

Flown are those days with their winged delights,
As the odor is gone from the summer rose;
Yet still, whenever I wave my fan,
The soft, south wind of memory blows.

Louise Chandler Moulton.

ORCHIDS.



THE ORCHID.

No mortal blossom this, which feeds on air,
Transcending in its lowliest estate
All laws which other flowers obey await ;
All tints of jewels, lines of gravers rare,
All hues of plumage lavished on its wear,
At home in palace of rich and great,
In unknown peasants' meadows never late ;
What is the spell this wondrous life doth bear ?
Is it a prisoned soul, that helpless, mute,
For some wrong deed which bore a bitter fruit
Doth thus its seal of expiation win ?
I think such royal prison house had been
Reward, not punishment. Fate ! Hear my suit !
Give me a thousand years for every sin !

H. H.

SONNET.

WHEN the woodlands are covered with leaves and
flowers,
In the loveliest time of the year ;
When the sky is now clear, and now checkered with
showers,
And life rambles on through the warm sunny hours,
Undimmed with a shade or a tear ;
O, sweet are the feelings that kindle and burn
As we gaze on the flowers and the sky ;
But to higher and purer devotion they turn,
As water takes tint from the hue of its urn,
When they burn in the light of thine eye.

And when, in the calm of a moonshiny night,
A serenade steals o'er the bay,
As it curls in the smile of her mellowest light,
Or lies in its beauty, as silent and bright
As it slept in the sunshine of day,—
O, sweet is the clear and silvery tone,

ORCHIDS.

As it softly comes over my ear ;
But sweet as it breathes when I hear it alone,
It breathes like a flute by a wind-spirit blown,
When I know thou art listening near.

O, the music and beauty of life lose their worth
When one heart only joys in their smile ;
But the union of hearts gives that pleasure its birth,
Which beams on the darkest and coldest of earth,
Like the sun on its own chosen isle ;
It gives to the fireside of winter its light,
The glow, and the glitter of spring.
O, sweet are the hours when two fond hearts unite,
And softly they glide, in their innocent flight,
Away on a motionless wing.

James G. Percival.

SONG OF THE SUMMER WINDS.

UP the dale and down the bourne,
O'er the meadow swift we fly;
Now we sing, and now we mourn,
Now we whistle, now we sigh.

By the grassy-fringed river,
Through the murmuring reeds we sweep;
'Mid the lily-leaves we quiver,
To their very hearts we creep.

Now the maiden rose is blushing
At the frolic things we say,
While aside her cheek we're rushing,
Like some truant bees at play.

Through the blooming groves we rustle,
Kissing every bud we pass,—
As we did it in the bustle,
Scarcely knowing how it was.

Down the glen, across the mountain,
O'er the yellow heath we roam,
Whirling round about the fountain,
Till its little breakers foam.

Bending down the weeping willows,
While our vesper hymn we sigh ;
Then unto our rosy pillows
On our weary wings we hie.

There of idlenesses dreaming,
Scarce from waking we refrain,
Moments long as ages deeming
Till we're at our play again.

George Darley.

FLOWERS.

SHE brought rich flowers to our cottage home—
Rare blossoms, grown upon no common stem ;
Our little ones into the parlor come,
Stealing to gaze at them.

They last all through the sweeten'd week, and raise
The benediction of their breathing psalm.
From them, and from the living flowers that gaze,
We drink renewing balm.

Children and flowers lie very near to God,
And Heaven with them is but a short remove :
They yield us glimpses of the blest abode,
And win us with its love.

If thou would'st charm me with the wine of thought,
And give sweet inspiration to my hours,
And wake the melodies of Heaven taught—
Oh, bring the chaliced flowers !

Robert Leighton.

BUTTERCUPS AND FERNS.



BUTTERCUPS AND DAISIES.

I NEVER see a young hand hold
The starry bunch of white and gold,
But something warm and fresh will start
About the region of my heart.
My smile expires into a sigh,
I feel a struggling in the eye,
'Twixt humid drop and sparkling ray,
Till rolling tears have won their way ;
For soul and brain will travel back
 Through memory's chequered mazes
To days when I but trod life's track
 For buttercups and daisies.

Tell me, ye men of wisdom rare,
Of sober speech and silver hair,
Who carry counsel, wise and sage,
With all the gravity of age—
Oh, say, do ye not like to hear
The accents ringing in your ear,

BUTTERCUPS AND FERNS.

When sportive urchins laugh and shout,
Tossing those precious flowers about,
Springing with bold and gleesome bound,
 Proclaiming joy that crazes,
And chorussing the magic sound
 Of buttercups and daisies?

Are there, I ask, beneath the sky
Blossoms that knit so strong a tie
With childhood's love? Can any please
Or light the infant eye like these?
No, no! there's not a bud on earth,
Of richest tint or warmest birth,
Can ever fling such zeal and zest
Into the tiny hand and breast.
Who does not recollect the hours
 When burning words and praises
Were lavished on those shining flowers,
 Buttercups and daisies?

There seems a bright and fairy spell
About their very names to dwell;
And though old Time has marked my brow
With care and thought, I love them now.

Smile if ye will, but some heart-strings
Are closest linked to simplest things;
And these wild flowers will hold mine fast,
Till love, and life, and all be past.
And then the only wish I have
Is, that the one who raises
The turf-sod o'er me plant my grave
With buttercups and daisies.

Eliza Cook.

BLUE-EYED GRASS.

IN the blind meadow, overflowing
With sweet, new life in every place,
Where ferns and lightest grasses growing
Mingle in one harmonious grace;
O deeper than all conscious being
Still throbs the quickened pulse of Air,
For something lies beyond the seeing,
Divinely fair !

Low down among the daisies lying,
Near to the great warm heart of Earth,
My secret clue eludes the trying,
Merged in a new and larger birth ;
I lose myself in holy union,
I cannot stand and gaze apart,
In that unbroken, close communion
Heart learns of heart.

BUTTERCUPS AND FERNS.

What impulse stirs the feathery grasses,
And dips along their wavering line?
While, as the sudden tremor passes,
Two strange, sweet eyes look up to mine!
Eyes with a more than human pleading,
So poet-deep, so maiden-shy;
Till all my soul is drowned in gazing,—
O rare blue eye!

My spirit-flower, my heaven-sent blossom,
I held your secret in my hand,
I caught and clasped you to my bosom,
I thought to see and understand:
O fatal haste! thou hast undone me,
Yet, yet unsolved the mystery lies;
They closed, and shut the wonder from me,
Those deep, dark eyes!

Elaine Goodale.

O SOFT SPRING AIRS!

COME up, come up, O soft spring airs,
Come from your silver shining seas,
Where all day long you toss the wave
About the low and palm-plumed keys!

Forsake the spicy lemon groves,
The balms and blisses of the South,
And blow across the longing land
The breath of your delicious mouth.

Come from the almond bough you stir,
The myrtle thicket where you sigh;
Oh, leave the nightingale, for here
The robin whistles far and nigh!

For here the violet in the wood
Thrills with the fulness you shall take,
And wrapped away from life and love
The wild rose dreams, and fain would wake.

BUTTERCUPS AND FERNS.

For here is reed and rush and grass,
And tiptoe in the dusk and dew,
Each sod of the brown earth aspires
To meet the sun—the sun and you.

Then come, O fresh spring airs, once more
Create the old delightful things,
And woo the frozen world again,
With hints of heaven upon your wings!

Harriet Prescott Spofford.

SONG.

O SPIRIT of the Summer-time !

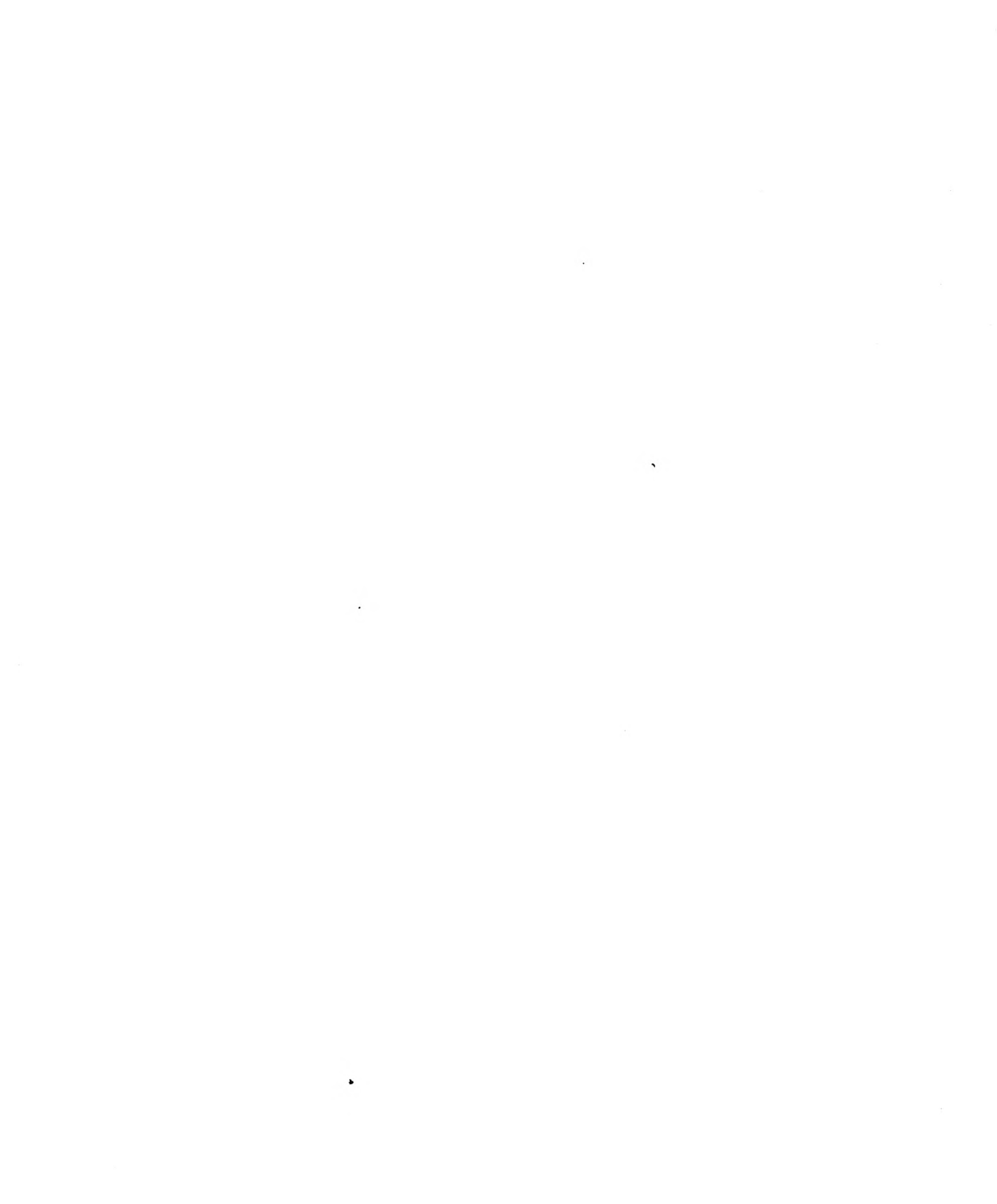
Bring back the roses to the dells ;
The swallow from her distant clime,
The honey-bee from drowsy cells.

Bring back the friendship of the sun,
The gilded evenings, calm and late,
When merry children homeward run,
And peeping stars bid lovers wait.

Bring back the singing, and the scent
Of meadow-lands at dewy prime ;—
Oh, bring again my heart's content,
Thou Spirit of the Summer-time !

William Allingham.

WILD CLEMATIS.





OCTOBER.

SEPTEMBER days were green and fair,
But sharp winds pierced the shining air,
That froze the dimples of the river,
And made the wayside blossom shiver.

September's heart was winter-steeled ;
The frost lay white upon the field,
Day after day ; the northern blast
Withered the bracken as it passed.

"The time of snow!" we said. Not yet!
Flushed with suffusions of regret,
Out of the south October came,
Setting the forest's heart aflame.

Summer returned with her, and still
She lingers with us : stream and hill
And wide fields waver like a dream
Through warm, soft mists and tender gleam.

WILD CLEMATIS.

Again the gentian dares unfold
Blue fringes closed against the cold ;
Again, in mossy solitudes,
The glimmering aster lights the woods.

One mass of sunshine glows the beech ;
Great oaks, in scarlet drapery, reach
Across the crimson blackberry vine,
Toward purple ash and sombre pine.

The orange-tinted sassafras
With quaintest foliage strews the grass ;
Witch-hazel shakes her gold curls out,
'Mid the red maple's flying rout.

Our forests, that so lately stood
Like any green familiar wood,
Aladdin's fabulous tale repeat ;
The trees drop jewels at our feet.

With every day some splendor strange !
With every hour some subtle change !
Of our plain world how could we guess
Such miracles of loveliness ?

Ah, let the green Septembers go!
They promise more than they bestow;
But now the earth around us seems
Glad in the radiance of our dreams.

Omen of joy to thee and me,
Dear friend, may this rare season be!
Life has not had its perfect test;
Our latest years may be our best.

Heaven's inmost warmth may wait us still.
What if, beyond time's autumn chill,
There bless us, ere we hence depart,
A glad October of the heart!

Lucy Larcom

BY THE ROADSIDE.

DROPPED the warm rain from the brooding sky
Softly all the summer afternoon ;
Up the road I loitered carelessly,
Glad to be alive in blissful June.

Though so gray the sky, and though the mist
Swept the hills and half their beauty hid ;
Though the scattering drops the broad leaves kissed
And no ray betwixt the vapor slid,

Yet the daisies tossed their white and gold
In the quiet fields on either side,
And the green gloom deepened in the old
Walnut trees that flung their branches wide ;

And the placid river wound away
Westward to the hills through meadows fair,
Flower-fringed and starred, while blithe and gay
Called the blackbirds through the balmy air.

WILD CLEMATIS.

Right and left I scanned the landscape round,
Every shape, and scent, and wild bird's call,
Every color, curve, and gentle sound,
Deep into my heart I gathered all.

Up I looked, and down upon the sod
Sprinkled thick with violets blue and bright,
" Surely, ' Through His garden walketh God, ' "
Low I whispered, full of my delight.

Like a vision on the path before
Came a little rosy, sun-browned maid,
Straying toward me from her cottage door,
Paused, up-looking shyly, half afraid.

Never word she spake, but gazing so,
Slow a smile rose to her clear brown eyes,
Overflowed her face with such a glow
That I thrilled with sudden, sweet surprise.

Here was sunshine 'neath the cloudy skies !
Low I knelt, to bring her face to mine :
Sweeter, brighter grew her shining eyes,
Yet she gave me neither word nor sign.

WILD CLEMATIS.

But within her look a blessing beamed :
 Meek I grew before it : was it just ?
Was I worthy this pure light that streamed ?
 Such approval, and such love and trust ?

Half the flowers I carried in my hands,
 Lightly in her pretty arms I laid :
Silent, but as one who understands,
 Clasped them close the rosy little maid.

Fair behind the honeysuckle spray
 Shone her innocent, delightful face!
Then I rose and slowly went my way,
 Left her standing, lighting all the place.

While her golden look stole after me,
 Lovelier bloomed the violets where I trod :
More divine earth's beauty seemed to be,
 “ Through His garden visibly walked God.”

Celia Thaxter

AZALEAS.



the deep, and it is in the world of day,
And the whole land is full of the light
Of music and sweet sounds; and all the day
The sun is gold, the evening is pearl and night,
And like a paradise the world is bright,
And like a young girl's hopes the world is young
And like a young girl's hopes the world is young
And like a young girl's hopes the world is young

W. D. Howells.

GARDEN FAIRIES.

KEEN was the air, the sky was very light,
Soft with shed snow my garden was, and white,
And walking there, I heard upon the night
 Sudden sounds of little voices,
 Just the prettiest of noises.

It was the strangest, subtlest, sweetest sound—
It seemed above me, seemed upon the ground ;
Then swiftly seemed to eddy round and round,
 Till I said, " To-night the air is
 Surely full of garden fairies."

And all at once it seemed I grew aware
That little shining presences were there,
White shapes and red shapes danced upon the air ;
 Then a peal of silver laughter,
 And such singing followed after

As none of you, I think, have ever heard.
More soft it was than note of any bird,
Note after note, most exquisitely deferred,
 Soft as dew-drops when they settle
 In a fair flower's open petal.

“What are these fairies?” to myself I said ;
For answer, then, as from a garden’s bed,
On the cold air, a sudden scent was shed—
 Scent of lilies, scent of roses,
 Scent of Summer’s sweetest posies.

And said a small sweet voice within my ear,
“We flowers that sleep through winter, once a year
Are by our flower queen let to visit here ;
 That this fact may duly flout us—
 Gardens can look fair without us.

“A very little time we have to play,
Then must we go, oh, very far away,
And sleep again for many a long, long day,
 Till the glad birds sing above us,
 And the warm sun comes to love us.

“Hark what the roses sing, now, as we go.”
Then very sweet and soft, and very low—
A dream of sound across the garden snow—
 Came the sound of roses singing
 To the lily-bell’s faint ringing.

ROSES' SONG.

“ Softly sinking through the snow,
To our winter rest we go,
Underneath the snow to house
Till the birds be in the boughs,
And the boughs with leaves be fair,
And the sun shine everywhere.
Softly through the snow we settle,
Little snow-drops press each petal.
Oh, the snow is kind and white—
Soft it is, and very light ;
Soon we shall be where no light is,
But where sleep is, and where night is—
Sleep of every wind unshaken,
Till our Summer bids us waken.”

Then toward some far-off goal that singing drew,
Then altogether ceased ; more steely blue
The blue stars shone, but in my spirit grew
 Hope of summer, love of roses,
 Certainty that sorrow closes.

Philip Bourke Marston.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

WHAT Nature, alas ! has denied
To the delicate growth of our isle,
Art has in a measure supplied,
And Winter is deck'd with a smile.
See, Mary, what beauties I bring
From the shelter of that sunny shed,
Where the flowers have the charms of the spring,
Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian sweets,
Where Flora is still in her prime ;
A fortress to which she retreats,
From the cruel assaults of the clime.
While earth wears a mantle of snow,
These pinks are as fresh and as gay
As the fairest and sweetest that blow
On the beautiful bosom of May.

AZALEAS.

See how they have safely survived
The frowns of a sky so severe !
Such Mary's true love, that has lived
Through many a turbulent year.
The charms of the late-blowing rose
Seem graced with a livelier hue,
And the winter of sorrow best shows
The truth of a friend such as you.

Cowper.

MEADOW-SWEET.



SPIREA.

A ROCKY path winds slowly down
Hard by the steep ravine below ;
The ferns are green beside the ledge,
And light along its broken edge
The scattered daisies grow.

And yet she follows every turn
With spires of closely clustered bloom,
And all the wildness of the place,
The narrow pass, the rugged ways,
But give her larger room.

And near the unfrequented road,
By waysides scorched with barren heat,
In clouded pink or softer white
She holds the Summer's generous light,—
Our native meadow-sweet !

Dora Read Goodale.

THE GARLAND.

No cultivated garden did he own,
But found his bent by wayside and in forest ;
He gather'd flowers where seed was never sown,
Unless by Nature's Florist.

He lacked the cultured mind so richly prized,
But in the wastes of soul found endless choosings,
And cull'd a garland, not to be despised,
Of transient thoughts and musings.

Robert Leighton.

IN THE LANE.

THE daisies star the summer grass ;
And with the dancing leaves at play,
Adown this lane the breezes pass,
In pleasant music, all the day.

I love the sweet, sequestered place,
The gracious roof of gold and green,
Where arching branches interlace,
With glimpses of the sky between.

I see the drooping roses trail
From tangled hedgerows to the ground ;
I hear the chanting swell and fall,
Of fond love-lyrics, all around.

And here, adown the shady walk,
In days divine now passed away,
Entranced, I listed to the talk,
That ever held my heart in sway.

MEADOW-SWEET.

In days when birds began to sing,
Because they found the earth was fair ;
In halcyon days of happy Spring,
None aught but us our joys to share.

But pleasure past is present pain ;
The petals of the rose are shed ;
The piercing thorns alone remain ;
I live to sorrow for the dead.

Anonymous.

AFTERMATH.

WHEN the Summer fields are mown,
When the birds are fledged and flown,
 And the dry leaves strew the path ;
With the falling of the snow,
With the cawing of the crow,
Once again the fields we mow
 And gather in the aftermath.

Not the sweet, new grass with flowers
Is this harvesting of ours ;
 Not the upland clover bloom ;
But the rowen mixed with weeds,
Tangled tufts from marsh and meads,
Where the poppy drops its seeds
 In the silence and the gloom.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

MEADOW-SWEET.

GEMS of the changing Autumn, how beautiful ye are !
Shining from your glossy stems like many a golden star ;
Peeping through the long grass, smiling on the down,
Lighting up the dusky bank, just where the sun goes
down ;

Yellow flowers of Autumn, how beautiful ye are !
Shining from your glossy stems like many a golden star.

Campbell.

