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FLOWERS
OF THE
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Meadow-saffron, *Primula vulgaris*, Purple Sandwort

FLOWERS

OF

THE MATIN AND EVEN SONG;

OR,

THOUGHTS FOR THOSE WHO RISE EARLY.

BY

MARY ROBERTS.

AUTHOR OF

“RUINS AND OLD TREES, ASSOCIATED WITH MEMORABLE EVENTS IN
ENGLISH HISTORY,” “PROGRESS OF CREATION,”

“CONCHOLOGIST’S COMPANION,” ETC.

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BY SPECIAL PERMISSION
OF
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY.
Queen Victoria,
THIS WORK
IS
DEDICATED TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
The Princess Royal,
BY HER ROYAL HIGHNESS'S
DEVOTED AND HUMBLE SERVANT.
MARY ROBERTS.

968539



P R E F A C E.

EVERY flower telleth its own tale to the ear of reason; yet men pass by unheeding. Women too, and young children, who love flowers, and ask questions concerning them, seem alike regardless of the small voices which speak from out the brakes and hedge-rows, the gaily decked meadows, and daisied commons.

I have listened to those voices, heightening the delight of every country walk, and I have desired that others should profit likewise. Amid those mingled voices, there-

fore, I have sought to embody a few of the most interesting, and to describe especially, such flowers as observe a fixed time of opening or shutting, and from which Linnæus constituted his celebrated horologe, or Watch of Flora.

Nothing more remains to be observed concerning this small volume, except as regards its title. To those who appreciate the Book of Common Prayer I need scarcely mention, that the terms *Matin* and *Even Song* are used in reference to the time appropriated for reading such lessons as are appointed for the daily services. When considering the regular opening and closing of those flowers which Linnæus termed *solar*, because rejoicing as it were, when the sun arises, throwing wide their petals to his beams, and closing them at even tide, as if

to guard their tiny households from the dangers of the night, I have thought what a theme for meditation to the passer-by! And, thus thinking, I have given to such flowers a more appropriate designation, as it seems to me, than that assigned by Linnæus, by calling them, Flowers of the *Matin* and *Even Song*.



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FLOWERS

OF

The Morn and Even Song.

MEADOW SAFFRON.

'Tis a lovely thought to mark the hours
As they float in the light away,
By the opening and the folding flowers,
That laugh to the summer's day.

Thus has each moment its own rich hue,
And its graceful cup or bell :
In whose colour'd vase may sleep the dew,
Like the pearl in an ocean shell.

HEMANS.

Colchicum autumnale. Meadow Saffron.

From Colchis, on the Euxine Sea, where this plant grows abundantly.

Opening

At 10 or 11 o'clock.

Closing

At 3 or 4 o'clock.

MEADOW SAFFRON.

THE country in which my young days passed was beautifully varied with wooded glens, with quiet valleys, and commons open to the sun, where the cistus and the wild thyme mingled their beauty and their fragrance. But in all and each, you might see a streamlet flashing and eddying in the sunbeams, or hear the pleasant sound of falling waters: some flowed silently adown the meadow banks, and either wasted themselves among the grass, or went on their noiseless way; others leaped and danced over a pebbly bed, clear, rapid, and transparent; others again rushed forth from out some stony bank and formed small cascades, beside which the bulrush grew, with long tufts of pendant ferns, and the adders-

tongue, that drooped its glossy leaves upon the waters. Among these streamlets, there was one in which I especially delighted. It gushed from out two hollow spouts, that projected from a walled bank, grey with lichens, and dotted over with such plants as love both shade and moisture. A cross once stood there, and beneath it an iron cup was chained to a cramp in the old wall, that thirsty men might drink and be refreshed; while, beneath the cross and cup, a huge stone cistern had been hollowed out to receive the confluent waters of the fountain, and thus an ample supply was always ready, even in the hottest summer months, for the sheep and cattle that resorted thither. This fountain was called Holy-well by the country people, because a monastery had been contiguous. Few resorted thither, for the place was not very easy of access, but he who liked to scramble down the stony bank

was well rewarded for his pains, so clear, so cool, and sparkling, looked the bright waters of the bason, as the gushing stream flowed into them, and they in their abundance overflowed the stony brink, and hurried among sedges and tangled briars, wild flowers, and bending hazels. But though no longer seen, the rippling of the current told of its onward course, till joining another streamlet, they flowed silently and deeply through meadows, such as poetic fancy might delight to feign, for never has poet's eye rested on a fairer scene.

Among these meadows, and crowding to the streamlet's brink, grow the meadow saffrons, or tube-roots. Lovely flowers that open their lilac-coloured or pale purple cone-shaped petals in September; greeting the sun when he arises, like the garden crocus; and folding up again about four in the afternoon, when his beams slant

athwart the meadows, and tall trees cast their lengthened shadows on the grass. Orphan flowers, for such they may be called, rising above the ground, without a sheath, a fence, a calyx, or even a leaf to protect them; and this not in the spring, nor yet to be visited by summer suns, but when the nights are cold, and deciduous trees begin to shed their leaves. You would pity that little plant—you would be ready to exclaim, “Surely it is forgotten amid the immensity of creation.” No, my friend. He who sustains the firmament, and causes the day-spring to know its place, who spreads abroad the heavens as a tent to dwell in, and kindles the suns of other systems, cares for that little flower, preserves and cherishes it. The seed-vessel, which in other plants is open to the influence of light and air, is buried, in the meadow saffron, at least ten inches underground, within the bulbous root. The

blossom-tube extends even to the root; the styles, too, are so elongated as to reach the seed-vessel. Why is this? Because the plant blossoms late, and has not time to perfect its seeds before the setting in of winter. The Creator has, therefore, so constructed it, that this important office is carried on at a depth below the usual effects of frost. But then a difficulty occurs. Seeds, we know, may be perfected, but they will not vegetate at such a depth. How is this provided for? Those who visit, in the spring, the meadow beside the streamlet that flows from Holy-well, may see, among the grass, numerous egg-shaped capsules, with three blunt angles and several spear-like leaves rising round them. These are the seed-vessels of the colchicum. The seeds that were buried during winter within the root, have now the benefit of light and air; they ripen about the time of hay-

harvest, when the capsules open longitudinally, and the seeds are scattered by the wind.

Why so much contrivance for a simple plant? Why not allow that plant to flower and to perfect its seeds with others of the vegetable tribes? It seems the will of Him who called this fair world into existence, and replenished it with innumerable instances of his wisdom and beneficence, that, in no place, and at no season, should manifest signs of that beneficence be wanting, to fill our hearts with gratitude.

When the beautiful flowers of the spring and summer are withdrawn, when neither a primrose, nor a cowslip, nor yet a wild brier, or a honeysuckle may be seen among the grass or in the hedgerows, new flowers appear at intervals, less beautiful, indeed, and blended with much of sadness, for they are the harbingers of shortening days, and

coming storms. The meadow saffron is one of these. And who, that has a heart to feel, can contemplate this orphan flower, thus rising amid cold winds, and beneath cloudy skies, to clothe our meads with beauty, without a feeling of commiseration for the apparently defenceless flower?

Methinks a voice thus answers low,
By Hollwell's deep and silent flow,
For not another sound is heard,
From wandering bee or joyous bird.
And far and wide, o'er dale and hill,
Deep Silence holds her vigils still.
O list my words, vain erring man !
For thus the gentle voice began,
Who thinks, because the sun is low,
And deep and dark the torrents flow,
And summer's last lov'd rose is gone,
And warbling birds from dale or burn,
That I, a lone and orphan flower,
Child of this drear, and joyless hour,

Upspringing in the wild mead lone,
From whence all other flowers are gone,
Must sink before the chastening blast,
When murky clouds are gathering fast.
Ah, no ! nor stern winds piping loud,
Nor sleet, nor rain, from driving cloud,
Can harm the little orphan flower,
Which God hath set in this lone hour.
That mighty Hand which placed on high
The glittering stars that stud the sky ;
And those—the seven fair isles of light,
So purely, spiritually, bright,
Which shine, as if nor care nor sin
Could find a place their realms within.
That mighty Hand has placed me here,
Child of the pale descending year,
Witness, that neither sleet nor rain,
Nor stern winds eddying o'er the plain,
Can harm the little orphan flower,
Sustain'd in weakness by His power.



THE DAISY.

“ SHE lifts up her dewy eye of white,
To welcome the rising orb of light ;
And when the Spring comes with her host
Of flowers, that flower belov'd the most,
Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse
Her heavenly beauty and virgin hues,
The morning star of all the flowers,
The pledge of daylight's lengthen'd hours :
A simple flower of lowly birth,
Yet lingering still to deck the earth,
On waste or woodland, rock or plain,
When swift has pass'd the floreal train.”

Bellis perennis. Common Daisy.

From bellus, pretty : Daisy, the eye of day.

Opening

With the sun.

Closing

When the sun sets.

THE DAISY.

WEE modest crimson-tipped flower,
 “ art thou too,” one of “ Flora’s
 watches ”* noting upon earth
 her progress in the heavens? The name of
 Robin is given to that fond bird, which, as
 legends tell, covered the innocent children
 with green leaves, when sleeping their last
 sleep in the lonely forest; and to thee, a
 name is given, which tells of the sports of
 childhood, and of the love which has been
 shed upon thee from one generation to
 another. The daisy, then, is called bain-
 wort, from the delight with which the young
 are seen to gather it; the eye-of-day, be-

* Linnæus gave the name of Flora’s watches to all such flowers as close and open at certain hours of the day.

cause, while other flowers are still sleeping, no sooner does the sun appear on the horizon, than the daisy is awake. Who is there that does not love the daisy, *la belle Marguerite* of the French, the meadow-pearl, so called from its pearly look among the grass; the bonnie gem of the Ayrshire ploughman, that "wee modest crimson-tipped flower," which is associated with all the sports of childhood, and all the delights of home? A thousand indefinable emotions are blended with this simple flower; it recalls to mind not only the race in the green meadow, or beside the wood walk; the stringing of its emerald-tinted stars, when the petals had fallen off, and the butter-cups and primroses, which often lured our steps into the damp grass, or beside the streamlet's brink; but the home, the home, in which our young days passed. It might have been a mansion or a cottage, but there our father

watched over us, and there our mother smiled upon us ; and over its blessed threshold, our brothers and our sisters went and came, and we too passed in and out, when roses blossomed beside the open door, or the snow lay cold and white upon the ground. The daisy is the flower which of all others, calls up such wayward fancies : it is among flowers, what the cuckoo is among birds, and he who hears the one, or sees the other in a distant land, might break his heart in longing for all the hopes and joys, the comforts and the virtues which are comprised in that one word — home. The daisy, too, is the meekest looking of flowers ; it grows in mead or glade, on commons, or broken ground rough with stones and pebbles, on which few other plants will vegetate. Where the wind has deposited a scanty supply of earth, blown up from the dusty road, or swept from out the quarry, there the daisy will

take root, and clothe the arid soil with beauty. There, too, the little hawkweed, concerning which I shall speak elsewhere, will sit beside her; the one to tell when the sun is about to rise, the other to remind the weary labourer, that he may rest from his work at noon. The daisy has also another simple task assigned her, and this she faithfully performs. She not only watches for the sun, when the day begins to dawn, but she tells of coming showers. She folds up her snowy or pink-tinted leaves around the golden disk which they encircle, when journeying clouds obscure the rays of the warm sun. And thus it often happens, that acres of waving grass, which have looked as if covered with a white sheet, are, by the effect of a coming shower, suddenly restored to their pristine verdure. Poets, in all ages, have loved to speak concerning it. Milton, in his musings by dimpled brook or foun-

tain-brim, saw in poet's vision, wood-nymphs, decked with the simple daisy, keeping their merry wakes and pastimes beside the gushing waters. And he who likes to visit the green meadows that stretch away from the ruined towers of Ludlow Castle, may see the daisy on the river brink, where grew her congener, when Milton walked there, and when the spacious halls of the old castle resounded with cheerful voices. At that time the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord President of Wales, presided, with regal dignity; but the halls of Ludlow Castle are roofless now, and those who ruled, or served within them, have long since laid them down, for a far-off waking. Cowper, the melancholy Cowper, who sought to soothe the sadness that consumed him, with seeking out the beauties and the wonders of creation, noticed the simple daisy, the emblem of innocence, gathered by young

hands in the spring and playtime of the year, when the villager went forth, with all her train of little ones to seek for king cups in the meadow, and to "prink their hair with daisies." Shakspeare too, and Burns, have spoken of it. Who has not read the lament of Scotland's gifted son, when his ploughshare turned up the modest crimson flower, and laid its beauties in the dust? Chaucer, the father of English poetry, he who wrote of nature in those stormy times when Henry the Fourth and Richard battled for the crown of England, loved to look upon this lowly flower, to watch its unfoldings in the early morning, and its closings up when night drew on.

“Of all the floures in the mede,
Than love I most these floures of white and rede :
Such that men called Daisies in our town ;
To them I have so great affection,

That I get up, and walking in the mede
To seen this floure agenst the sunne sprede,
When it upriseth early by the morrow,
That blissful sight softeneth my sorrow.
And when that eve come on, I renne blithe,
As soone as ever the sunne ginneth west,
To seen this floure, how it woll go to reste.”

Thus, then, is the first darling of the year immortalised. But there are higher thoughts than those of poetic joys or sorrows, of childhood's sports, or old men's communings, that rise within us, when we look upon the daisy. The daisy, in common with all other plants, contains within her that unchanging substance, called carbon, which has never been obtained in a separate state, of which the taste, the smell, and colour are unknown. Infusible, and indestructible by the action of caloric; it can, therefore, neither be laid hold of, nor detained, when the vegetable in which it

dwells, has fallen to decay; although existing, completely formed, in the tenderest blade of grass, or the smallest flower that opens to the sunbeams.

Who, in looking at the simple daisy, could discern the unalterable carbon that dwells within her? who might conjecture that when her flowers are seen no longer, and her leaves have lost their greenness, withering from off the parent stem, and seeming to be lost for ever, there would arise from out the decaying leaves, as a spirit from its earthly tenement, a gas, a vapour, which the eye may not behold, and which, either hovering around the place from whence it rose, or floating through the air, waits only for the emerging of the daisy, or of some herb or flower, from the parent earth, at the return of spring? Into these it becomes absorbed, and then again its active ministry is seen in the developing of leaves and blos-

soms, which are destined as the months roll on, to undergo a similar decay and renovation.

Thus are we instructed by the daisy, in common with her kindred of wood or field, to remember that one of the constituent parts of both animal and vegetable bodies remains unaltered, amid the changes and decompositions which continually take place. It follows, therefore, that though the pins of the mortal tabernacle have been pulled up, and the dust has returned to its kindred earth, from one generation to another, yet that the component parts are still unchanged, ready to enter into a new and glorious combination, whenever the fiat of Omnipotence shall call them forth. Man may query in his folly. How can the dead be raised up, with what body do they come, when not a trace of them remains? To this there is an answer, for the whole creation is filled

with emblems. Invisible things, that relate especially to our present state of being, are made known by the things that are; even the shrubs and flowers which grow beside our path-way, are faithful monitors, and, either in their decay or renovation, suggest to us thoughts of hope or consolation. Most of them, when months have done their work, grow weak in their decrepitude, and yielding no longer flowers, nor yet leaves, with which to gladden the place where they have grown, die down into the earth. Still they are not lost, for again upspringing from the root or seed, the same plant apparently, though not the same, is seen, as if rejoicing in the consciousness of its new existence. The young herb or flower, that thus opens to the sun, sparkling with the dews of morning, and fresh from out its earthly bed, bids the passer-by not to sorrow for those who are departed, as one who has no hope, but rather

to see in its beauty, and its freshness, the emblem of their rising up.

Mourn not then, child of sorrow,
As one who has no hope ;
But from each fair flower borrow
Thoughts, with thy grief to cope.

When stormy winds were sweeping
O'er paths by mortals trod ;
These little flowers were sleeping
In peace beneath the sod.

A voice thou hearest never,
But by its strong might known :
On mountains brown with heather,
In valleys reft and lone.

Call'd forth each fair flower sleeping,
Where crushing rains have been ;
Or fierce tornadoes sweeping,
Have marr'd the sylvan scene.

Now list ! the wood-lark singing,
 The murmur of the rill ;
And lo ! sweet flowers are springing
 Beside thy pathway still.

And thus, for Christ's dear sake,
 The lost, the lov'd shall come ;
When speaking thunders wake
 The death clods of the tomb.



PURPLE SANDWORT.

Among the loose and arid sands,
The humble *Arenaria* creeps ;
Slowly the purple star expands,
But soon within its calyx sleeps.

And those small bells so lightly ray'd
With young Aurora's rosy hue,
Are to the noontide sun display'd,
But close their folds against the dew.

SMITH.

Arenaria rubra. Purple Sandwort.

From the arid, sandy places, in which the *Arenaria* grows.

Opening
In fine weather,
Early.

Closing
When the sun declines
From 4 to 6.

PURPLE SANDWORT.



HE lark and the purple sandwort are inseparably connected in the herdsman's calendar. When the modest little flower opens her petals in the sunny morning, the lark springs from his nest in the wild heath, and pours forth his full tide of song, to meet the rising sun. She, too, seems to look after him, as if she rejoiced in the opening day, though she has no voice with which to join the universal chorus that bursts forth from every creature in wood or field. Abroad at such an hour in the stillness and the loveliness of the early dawn, when not even the wakeful labourer is moving, when no curling smoke ascends from the cottage chimney, nor are there any sounds of busy life to break upon

the quiet of the scene, how solemn, how exhilarating are the feelings of the mind! All then is still, as regards the busy, bustling concerns of men. But the hum of insects is abroad, early birds start forth from their coverts in woods and hedges, the gush of the rill, which, although it never ceases, is scarcely audible at a later hour, is now heard, as it goes sounding on its pebbly bed, bordered with ferns and flowers, while the night breeze is still lingering among the bushes with a pleasant rustle.

Sandworts, whether stationed as the one which Linnæus added to the horologe of Flora, on sandy plains or arid corn-fields, whether growing on mountain-tops or by the wood side, uniformly illustrate the beautiful arrangement that prevails throughout the vegetable kingdom. The sea-sandwort, as its name indicates, is restrained to sandy places on the coast, or to salt-water meadows,

among which the sweet-scented southern-wood and the ladies'-cushion are conspicuous. The plantain-leaved prefers the shelter of moist woods, in company with the lesser stitchwort, and blue forget-me-not, among moss and ferns, on those green and shady banks, which are rendered continually damp by the little streamlets that flow adown them. The thyme-leaved sandwort affects, on the contrary, high and windy places. It delights to open its small white solitary flowers to the full glare of day, and may be seen on cottage roofs or garden walls, or in sandy and dry places, where almost every other plant, except the stonecrop and the nailwort, or perchance the little chickweed, refuses to vegetate. The botanist seeks in vain to find the media, or the vernal, growing on cottage roofs or walls. The one thrives only in pastures at a short distance from the sea, while the vernal sandwort is

found in open places, where the reindeer lichen, the wild thyme, or the stonecrop covers the scanty soil. It may be gathered in the neighbourhood of Llanberis and Craig Lochart, beside the gushing waters of Holywell, and generally in the northern counties. It is seen likewise on the rubbish of old lead mines, for the Creator of the vernal sandwort has imparted to it the peculiar property of resisting the deleterious effect of metallic oxides.* Seeds blown at random on those refuse heaps, perish in the course of a short time; vegetable life cannot exist in the baneful atmosphere that pervades them; but those of the vernal sandwort have scarcely rested there before they spring forth, and hence it happens not unfrequently that small patches of vegeta-

* This curious fact was communicated by the Rev. S. Pike Jones, author of "Botanical Tour," noticed in "Withering's Arrangement," vol. ii. p. 552.

tion are seen on the scorched and arid blocks.

Very dissimilar is the habitat of the fine-leaved sandwort. This plant, unlike its relative, the vernal, seems unable to endure the slightest atmospheric impurity. It grows in sandy meadows and pasture-grounds, and no where more profusely than in the corn-fields that border Triplow Heath, where the purest air of heaven blows fresh and free. Malvern Chase is another of its favourite haunts: there its delicate white flowers are so numerous as to resemble a panicle; it is seen also among the stones and rubbish of old quarries, and on rocks open to the sun, where it frequently attains to the altitude of eight or nine inches. The mountains of Fifeshire shelter, likewise, another member of this unassuming family—the level-topped sandwort. Beauties of no ordinary kind are obvious in this little plant.

The root is zigzag, the better to entwine itself in the interstices of the rocks or stones among which it grows, and to draw from thence all the moisture which heavy night-dews or passing showers impart to the thirsty soil. The delicate and slender leaves are smooth, erect, and permanent, while the taper-pointed calyx-leaves are remarkable for the great breadth of their ivory-like lateral ribs. The seeds when ripe are beautifully toothed; they look like wheels supported on a slender stalk. And as the level-topped sandwort grows on the mountains of North Wales, so does the fringed sandwort affect those of Ireland. It has been gathered from the limestone cliffs of a high mountain adjoining Ben Bulbin, in the county of Sligo, where its white and spreading petals often vary the sterile aspect of those high regions. This plant is likewise admirably constructed for its elevated solitude. The

flowers are large and of the purest white; they are elevated on short stalks, and varied with recurved and hoary excrescences, by means of which, every particle of moisture is absorbed for the nourishment of the upland plant: with the same obvious design the calyx-leaves are oval and somewhat concave.

The sea spurry has a different office to perform from that of the fringed sandwort, which thus vividly adorns the most rocky and sterile regions; it points out the existence of salt-springs, however concealed, for it seems unable to vegetate in soils that are not full of saline particles, and hence its purple flowers grow profusely in salt marshes, and along the coast, where they seem to shed a purple light in beautiful contrast to the bright sparkle of the wild waves' play. The small arctic sandwort is seen, on the contrary, in sterile places, far above the surging of the

ocean. It inhabits the highest northern regions, and throws a drapery of verdure over the brink of terrific precipices. Enterprising botanists who ascended the lofty range of the Bredalbane sweep of mountains, discovered it in places where the foot of man has rarely trod. Professor Hooker, and Mr. Murray, gathered it from off the rugged flank of Ben Lawers. Dr. Greville, in his lonely visit to Craigalleach, found it growing there, and Mr. Carle discovered a profusion of the same plant upon the sunny slope of Maelgreadha, among huge masses of broken stones. To such animals as frequent the loftiest range of those high mountains, the sandwort may perhaps afford a grateful repast; or perchance some alpine bird may stop in its upward flight to gather the fresh seeds.

Thus in this small tribe consisting only of twelve families, how obvious is the dissimi-

larity which prevails in the places of their growth, and in the offices for which they are designed!

One species, as before mentioned, has the peculiar power of resisting the deleterious effects of the metallic oxides which usually pervade the refuse heaps that are thrown out of old lead mines, and is found in situations usually destructive to vegetable life, where no other plant may grow, and which every winged or creeping thing would otherwise instinctively avoid.* There it may be seen, occasionally, in solitary patches, though less luxuriant than on the lofty heights of Snowdon or Craig Lochart, and, by means of its peculiar properties, some small insects are sustained, and joyous creatures find a store-house and a home beneath the shelter

* Mr. Winch remarked this plant on the Weerdale and Teesdale Moors, at an elevation of one thousand to two thousand feet, and particularly on the rubbish of old lead mines.

of its tufted branches ; and there also, they can sip a pure nectarious liquor from out the fountain of its star-like flowers, for the fountain, although its secret stream rises from off a deleterious surface, is offered pure to them. Another of the tribe points out the vicinity of salt streams, and thrives only in an atmosphere filled with saline particles ; where seeds in general cannot vegetate, and where even forest trees are unable to establish themselves : there also it affords, no doubt, both food and shelter to a variety of insects, either winged or creeping, and which, like the plant on which they feed, can live only in places where salt abounds. The plantain-leaved is placed by its Creator in woods and wet hedges ; the thyme-leaved grows only on the roofs of houses, on walls, and in sandy and dry places ; the media is seen neither at a distance from the sea, nor yet in places where the dashing of the waves is

never heard ; it affects pastures on the coast, and grows in company with the sea sandwort, on the Shell-coast in the Isle of Sheppy.

How beautiful ! how beautiful ! to climb the towering height

Of Hymalaya's awful brow, begirt with purest light !

If mortal eye might dare to range a field so fair and wide,

From zones that skirt the mountain's base, to Sinde's* flowing tide.

How beautiful ! how beautiful ! the landscape wide and fair,

The high palmetto's graceful shade, the citrons rich and rare ;

The noble trees that girt the line, and reaching further still,

Proud Europe's stately forest trees, that sweep o'er dale and hill.

* Indian name for the Indus.

How beautiful! how beautiful! the landscape
spreading wide,
The glorious dome of Heaven on high; beneath,
the azure tide,
Whose waves roll on to other realms, where stran-
ger trees are seen,
And daisy'd meads, with cowslips dight, or vales
of living green.

But not less beautiful than these, the sights and
sounds of spring;
The coming back of summer birds, the joyous
songs they sing.
The flowers beloved, from year to year, that haunt
the self-same spot,
The breezy common, wild wood glade, the lonely
glen or grot.

Each have their place, and those which bloom, in
silent glade or glen,
Seek not to deck the cottage roof, nor yet the
paths of men;

And such as climb the mountain brow, or meet
the wild waves' spray,
Are never seen to grace the mead, where inland
breezes play.

Those breezes may, perchance, the seeds, as ran-
dom sowers bring,
To distant spots, where soothly meet, the gales
and showers of spring.
They may not thrive, when far away, from each
her bank or rill,
Where God has set the little flower to work her
Maker's will.

And thus, the simplest flower that drinks the
pearly dew of Heaven,
A gift to some wayfaring bird, or insect tribe, is
given.
A home, a store-house in the wild, or fountain
flowing ever,*
Where grateful creatures share refresh'd, the
love that faileth never.

* Water plant.





Helianthus scaberrimus

THE DANDELION.

“ DANDELION, with globe of down,
The school-boy's clock in every town ;
While the truant puffs amain
To conjure lost hours back again.”

Leontodon taraxacum. Common Dandelion.

From two Greek words, signifying a lion, and a tooth ; its jagged leaves resembling such.


Opening

About 7 in the morning.

Closing

Early in the afternoon.

THE DANDELION.

EEK we now, in the crannies of old ruins, and among the crevices of untrodden pavements, for the dandelion, that cheerful-looking flower, which none except young children care to gather, because it is so common; and yet it covers, as with a carpet of the richest verdure those deserted spaces, where once thronged the great, the noble, and the gay, in days when the now roofless walls rung with the minstrel's strain. It thrives too, before the door-ways of the humblest dwellings, and seems to welcome the miserable to enter; and there, also, it may be seen in tufts, among the interstices of the lichen-dotted walls, or bending occasionally from off the

thatch, as if it loved to embellish the dwellings of the poor with its golden-coloured flowers. Growing in dry or elevated places, the leaves are admirably constructed, both as regards their size and thickness, for imbibing moisture from the atmosphere. They are likewise curiously hollowed out, like the teeth of a large timber saw, and this for a two-fold purpose, the one that grasses, and such flowers, as the wild sorrel or the common wormwood, may spring up between the openings: the other that the recurved form of the wing-cleft leaves, may serve as spouts for the retention of every rain-drop from passing showers, and conveying it to the root.

While looking at wild or garden flowers, I have often thought that they, like men, have each an individual character; for who is there that may not be considered as the nucleus of a circle, whether occupying a

high station, with power emanating from him; or whether welcomed to his solitary home by the one or two domestic animals, which he has taught to serve him? Thus have the violet, the primrose, the forget-me-not, histories and associations peculiar to themselves, and applicable to no other of their kind. The primrose recalls to mind the Sicilian maiden, St. Agatha, who suffered martyrdom by order of Quintianus on the 5th of February 251, in the month when that modest little flower peeps forth from her hiding-place among the moss and fern. The forget-me-not tells of the days of chivalry, when she was recognized throughout civilized Europe, as an emblem of lasting friendship or affection; and who does not associate with the

Violet blue, "that on the moss bank grows,"

those Floral games at which a golden

violet was awarded annually on May-day to the fortunate competitor in poetry? Each flower, however humble, is likewise a little world to such winged creatures as nestle among the flowers, or pasture on the leaves. Such as frequent the violet or the primrose would turn away from the golden disk and jagged leaves of the cheerful-looking, yet homely dandelion; and the winged creatures that find provision and a home among her tufts of verdure would not desert them for the scented petals of more favoured flowers. Those flowers nestle mostly on sunny banks, or beside the streamlet's dash, and are oft-times transplanted to the garden border; but the dandelion sheds the beauty of her golden light in places which all others seem instinctively to avoid. No other plant is found so constantly springing from the crevices of untrodden pavements, or suspended like stars of verdure from out the crannies of old

ruins—such as I used to visit in my childhood, on the verge of a wild common, begirt with beech woods. The walls were covered with a luxuriant drapery of ivy, and the broken pavement with a profusion of dandelions, which seemed as if they strove to give a character of cheerfulness to the lonely spot, for they sprang among huge docks and tufts of rank grass, where immense elder-bushes intercepted the cheerful sunbeams, when they sought to find an entrance. The history of the decayed, but once stately fabric, seemed unknown: no one could tell even concerning its inhabitants. Its large gable ends, and oriel windows, were constructed according to the improved style of architecture, which generally prevailed in country mansions during the reign of Elizabeth; and yet there was a character of strength and of security about the building, which indi-

cated that its foundations had been laid in troublous times. There grew the dandelion, the friend of fallen greatness, and thither the children from the hamlet in the valley would come up to gather its bright flowers. Some plucked them because of their golden hue ; others carefully filled their little baskets with the leaves, because their mothers liked them for an evening salad : and when the village fête drew on, the youngsters aided the music of the merry dancers with a humble imitation of Pandean pipes, made from the hollow flower-stalks, fitted one into the other. But the sphere, the globe-like sphere, that is the glory of the dandelion ! How light ! how elegant ! formed of small arrows, and every seed with its own shaft and plume ! A tempest is required to disperse the winged seeds of the stately cedar to any considerable distance, but the breath of the zephyr resows

those of the dandelion. I have often seen, in autumn, the air filled with them, now sailing away into the woods, whither the zephyrs carried them, or towards the hamlet, where groups of merry children awaited their arrival.

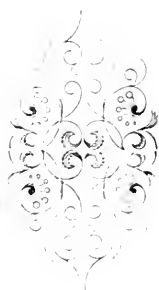
Or down the vale, beneath the mountain brow
Where giant beeches rear their ample pride,
And peaceful streamlets, scarcely heard to flow,
Refresh the glens, their murmuring streams
divide.

When dashing, sparkling down the wild hill's side,
They bid the vale with deepening verdure glow ;
Now, mid those ruin'd halls, the shades among,
With eddying play, as sport the zephyrs by ;
Those ruin'd halls, that braved in ages gone,
The storm or battle, woke the smile or sigh.

Where erst in youth, with flowing vestments dight,
The merry dancers led the joyous round,
When gilded by the pale moon's trembling light,
Each massive turret cast a gloom profound.

And ay, I ween, no happier wights were found
Than those who shared the hours of brief delight.
But now the ivy's mantling arms extend,
And twine luxuriant through the broken halls ;
O'er the drear scene the waving bulrush bends,
And more than echoes moan along the walls ;
When some huge mass in ponderous ruin falls,
And prone to earth with thundering crash
descends.

If once a garden smiled those walls beside,
No garden flower now marks the drear domain.
If willing steps once cross'd the threshold wide,
No waiting friends invite those steps again.
All, all have past from life's uncertain day,
Unmark'd the sunbeam's gleam on dale or hill ;
But that wild flower, which loves the ruin grey,
Waits in her beauty, by the lone hearth still.
And still she seeks, with kind unceasing aid,
To hide the fearful wreck which ruthless time
has made.



YELLOW GOAT'S-BEARD.

BROAD o'er its imbricated cup,
The Goat's-beard spreads its golden rays ;
But shuts its cautious petals up,
Retreating from the noontide blaze.

SMITH.

Tragopogon pratensis. Yellow Goat's-beard.

Name derived from two Greek words, signifying a goat and beard, which the down of the seed somewhat resembles.

Opening

At 5 or 6 o'clock.

Closing

At noon.

YELLOW GOAT'S-BEARD.



PREEMINENT among such flowers as open at certain hours of the day is the yellow goat's-beard, which spreads abroad its gaudy petals early in the morning when the first rays of the bright warm sun are reflected on the drops of dew. There it stands in company with others of its kind: a very common flower, a weed. And yet within the root, and stem, and leaves, what a beautiful and elaborate machinery, is everywhere discoverable! Look at the firm and rigid stem rising like a column, slightly tinged with purple, up the shaft of which run a number of longitudinal tubes for the conveyance of sap, by means of which, the whole plant is nourished.

Acted on by light and moisture, the sap deposits in its progress not only various secretions of different qualities and tastes, but serves also to perfect and to embellish the plant through which it flows. Heat, too, is a powerful agent in propelling its ascent, acting as a stimulant, and essential in the production of the smallest leaf or flower. Mechanical causes also operate, such as the frequent screw-like forms of the spiral vessels: the motion that wind imparts even to such plants as creep upon the ground, and the passage of air through the conducting vessels. All this is obvious, but why is it that among the crowding flowers that skirt the border of every corn-field, so great a dissimilarity is perceptible? They are all rooted in the same soil: the same warm sun shines upon them; the same showers descend to fertilize them: yet one is yellow, another red, a third is lightly tinted

with purple, the petals of a fourth are varied with stripes of white and lilac. The common yarrow is extremely fragrant, the scent of the henbane is, on the contrary, most unpleasant. The sweet and nutritious roots of the goat's-beard have the flavour of asparagus, while those of the strong-scented lettuce, yield an acrid and bitter juice that resembles opium, and possesses its narcotic qualities. These effects can be alone referred to the agency of the vital principle, though this cannot to our understanding explain them: they are evidently the result of chemical depositions and combinations, but we know not what these depositions and combinations are, nor the agents, nor the laws by which they are produced and regulated. The root, too, of the goat's-beard, how curious it is! Formed on the principle of a wedge, it penetrates readily into the earth, while

near it grows the elegant wood-sorrel, with a jointed or granulated root, that answers the purpose of a reservoir for retaining the vital powers of the plant, during the season when those powers are in a torpid state. Each have an especial reference to the habits of the plants, and each have within them a set of vessels by means of which they draw moisture from the parent earth.

The leaves and flowers have likewise their own elaborate machinery, their own beautiful arrangement: the one contributes to the health and verdure of the plant: the other is not only delightful to the eye, but contains a variety of peculiar and elaborate secretions, such as an elastic pollen, honey, and an exquisitely volatile perfume.

The remarkable property, which is inherent in the yellow goat's-beard, and in other meteoric flowers, of unfolding their petals at certain hours, and of closing them again,

and that often before the sun declines from the meridian, may be ascribed to the agency of the spiral fibres. They appear like fine cork-screw threads of a firmer texture than the adjacent parts, and are readily distinguished when the stems or leaf-stalks, in which they are enclosed, are carefully drawn asunder. In some minute specimens, they are, however, scarcely separable, and they generally become firm and rigid, when their ministry is no longer needed. By means of these, all the indications of vegetable life are invariably produced; flowers open in the morning and close at night; leaves turn to the air and light, and creeping plants wind in their respective order; such too, as the yellow goat's-beard which expand or close their petals at fixed periods, owe this remarkable deviation from the general habits of their kind, to the same beautiful arrangement: heat and a strong

light produce a contraction of the spiral wires; the slightest diminution in either, according to the fineness of the wires, effects a dilatation of them. Their position also is important with regard to the movements of such flowers, whether by their agency the petals shall be shut or opened, as, in mechanics, the same spring may be made to turn to the right or left, to open or close a box.

The purple goat's-beard, or salsify, *T. posifolius*, in like manner, unfolds her petals at a stated hour, and closes them at noon. She affects meadows and pasture-lands, not such as are varied with the pimpernel and corn-flower, children of dry land, but where the soil is boggy, and streamlets abound. Dillenius noticed the flower, and her congener, as growing around Carlisle and Rose Castle, in Cumberland. Old Gerard gathered them on the banks of the Calder,

near Whalley in Lancashire, when he visited that neighbourhood.

Both the species are among the most regular indices of the horologe of Flora, and so invariably do they close their purple and yellow petals at noon-day, that they are best known by the familiar appellation of "go to bed at noon." It is very pleasant to rest awhile upon the bank where they are growing, to hear the rustling of the wind among the aged trees that shade the sparkling waters of Holy-well;

To lay one down

Upon the thymy bank where wild flowers grow,
And the tall corn is rustling in the breeze,
Till Flora's clock, the goat's-beard, tells the hour,
And closing, says,—“Arise! the noon is come.”

Others which rank amongst Flora's watches also grow there; the corn sow-thistle, so dear to weary labourers, because it follows

the sun's course and folds up its large golden petals at noon-day ; the mouse-ear hawkweed, that announces their breakfast-hour ; and the scarlet pimpernel, which tells them when their work is done. The ploughman often leaves his horses to look on these time-pieces of Nature's making, and harvestmen love to sit by them when they rest from their work at noon.

O ! there are symbols which the world heeds not ;
Symbols of things unseen, which, in high heaven,
Are made much count of, though by man forgot ;
And yet to weary man in mercy given,
That he who toils beside the sedgy brink
Of some lone stream, 'mid flowers, or grass, or
ferns,
Plying his daily task, may soothly think
Of heavenly things, until his bosom burns
With holiest thoughts, pure as the gushing rill,
Or heaven's own whisp'ring wind, o'er dale and
hill.

Ay, glorious symbols, by pure hearts deserved,
Where plains extend, and vales of living green ;
Where flowers are opening on the lone hill's side,
Or, on the far-off moors, clear waters gleam ;
Reflecting those swift clouds by winds upheld,
Heaven's water urns, to gladden the parch'd
earth,
Showering their freshness ; with glad hearts be-
held
By grateful men ; for they the beauteous birth
Of flowers and fruits call forth, as year by year
Moves on, through boundless space, the bur-
den'd sphere.

Long years have past since first the herbless ball,
Was clothed with grass and trees, with shrub or
flower ;
Yet still the life then given, pervading all
That spring from root, or smallest seed, hath
power,
From leafless branches waving in the wind
To call forth leaves, and oft from out the ground

Flowers of gay hues, that yield, to cheer the mind,
Beauty, and fragrance breathing all around,
Such as blest Eden own'd in happier days,
When burst from sinless lips the great Creator's
praise.

Praise Him, all grass and herbs, the prophet said ;
All fruitful trees, sweet flowers, and cedars tall,
Such as from out the rents which time has made
On storm-beat cliffs ; or by the rushing fall
Of headlong waters in lone beauty smile,
Making each solitary place seem glad,
That sorrowing ones, perchance, who rest awhile
Having small hope, when all things seem most sad,
May cheer their hearts, as one* in days of yore,
On Afric's sands, and learn to doubt no more.

Ah why ! amid the countless hosts that bear
The name of Christ, baptized and honour'd men,
Lords of the vast creation, vast as fair,
Though powerless, as seem to mortal ken,

* Mungo Park.

While sin and death, unhallow'd guests, assail

All hearts, all homes, the thrones of mightiest
kings ;

Nestling amid the flowers, in hawthorn dale,

By murmuring streams, where sweet the wild
bird sings,

Marring all earthly joys, and seeking ever

To mar e'en Christ's own peace, which faileth
never ?

Ah why ! mid such as bear the hallow'd name,

The name of Christ who won them for His own,
Bursts there no glorious chant of glad acclaim,

No cloud of incense rising to His throne ?

Scant flowers and fruits crown now the Christian
year ;

Rank weeds spring up where roses ought to
blow ;

The prostrate vine, deplored with many a tear,

Its clusters bruised, its boughs defaced and low ;
Its fence broke down, the wild boar's ruthless power
Crushing with heavy tread each bud and flower.

And yet a nobler life than that which clothes
The meads with beauty, bids green leaves un-
fold

From leafless branches, through the wide world
flows ;

The world of baptized men, one mighty fold,
Which the Great Shepherd guards ; though reck-
less most

Of His surpassing love, who bade them live
E'en to his glory, as the heavenly host

His bidding wait, and do Him homage give :
That homage which the ransom'd earth shall yield,
When hateful Sin no more her power doth wield.

That nobler life hath from the Lord, the Giver

Of life, flow'd down, though oft in weakness seen,
From that blest moment, when beside the river,
Old Jordan's flowing river, one whose mien
Betoken'd much of sorrow, converse held

With a lone man, whose steps the desert trod ;
Holding high communings, yet oft beheld

Speaking to crowds of Him the incarnate God ;

Though seen as man by men, whose birth foretold
Prophets and gifted seers, in days of old.

The Lord of Life, descending as a dove,

On that meek head, wet with baptismal dew ;

In mystic guise, the gift of joy and love,

Patience and meekness, bodied to the few,

The few at most ; and next on chosen men,

In cloven tongues of fire, the Spirit's might

And power to speak, were seen by numbers then,

Who throng'd, and wonder'd at the glorious
sight,

Sign of the Spirit's presence, He who came

With cloven tongues of fire, and words of
flame.

Then holiest flowers and fruits in that choice
field

Of living trees, water'd and nurtured duly ;

Abundant increase to the Lord did yield,

Giving him homage due, and service truly.

Good deeds were done, and as a mighty stream,

Fresh, ever flowing, love went forth to all.

Or as the dayspring's bright and gladsome beam,
Chasing the darkness that doth man appal ;
When those who walk'd in doubt, beheld the ray
Of heavenly truth, flash on their wilder'd way.

Where now those channels for the Spirit's might,
Whose living waters erst were seen to flow ;
Those piercing beams of pure celestial light,
Now choked with weeds—now dim and burning
low ?

The early rain hath ceased, and scant dew
Falls on the grass ; all herbs and pleasant flowers
Yield faint perfume ; yet soon shall bloom anew
This faded world ; for the swift-footed hours
Are whirling on a shatter'd world to meet
That glorious king, whose coming is at hand.
Who soon again shall tread with willing feet
The heights of Zion, with His waiting band
Of ransom'd ones ; first-fruits of those who sleep,
Waking to highest life, while thousands wake
to weep.



SCARLET PIMPERNEL.

“ In every copse and shelter'd dell,
Unveil'd to the observant eye,
Are faithful monitors, who tell
How pass the hours and seasons by.

“ The green robed children of the spring
Denote the periods as they pass :
Mingle with leaves, Time's rapid wing,
And bind with flowers his silent glass.”

Anagallis arvensis. Scarlet Pimpernel.

Opening

About 8 in the morning.

Closing

Towards 4 o'clock.

SCARLET PIMPERNEL.

THREE species form the whole of this small tribe. The scarlet is found in corn-fields, and in sandy places, in company with the gorgeous poppy. They alone, amid the infinite variety of blue or white, or yellow, pink, or lilac flowers, or blending each in their party-coloured petals, are robed in scarlet. They alone exhibit that vivid tint which, more than any other, attracts the passer by; the one lifting up its gorgeous head amid the tall stems of the rustling corn; the other unfolding its beautiful corolla on the bosom of the light green leaves that cover the dry soil beneath. The scarlet pimpernel is, with every one, a favourite flower: it is so small

and delicate, and yet so brilliant; and then, as if aware of the admiration which it excites, it closes before rain in order the longer to preserve its beauty from the injury of the weather. Hence it has been called the shepherd's weather-glass.

That pimpernel, whose brilliant flower
Closes against the approaching shower,
Warning the swain to sheltering bower,
From humid air secure.

This lovely little flower enlivens the southern banks even in September, when its petals continue open in fine weather from about eight in the morning till four in the afternoon, after which the blossom-leaves gradually fold together, and the wandering bee can no longer gain access to the sweet nectarious cup within.

Every part of the scarlet pimpernel is, in a microscope, singularly beautiful, and

will amply repay the trouble of minute investigation; the seed-vessel is a globe, divisible into two hemispheres; the corolla appears as if covered with spangles, the stamens with gold and purple, and the leaves are elegantly spotted underneath. Nothing can be more exquisite than the symmetry of all its parts, nor more brilliant than the colours with which it is invested and adorned.

The blue pimpernel, *A. cerulea*, is likewise seen in corn-fields, though less conspicuous than the scarlet. It affects also the banks of running streams, as if it loved to see its beautiful image reflected on the mirror-like waters. Those who visit the banks of the Tay, near Delvine, may gather a profusion of its flowers from amid tufts of moss and fern that fringe their rugged margin.

The bog pimpernel, on the contrary, is never seen beside the streamlet's dash. It

rather cheers the traveller in his dreary course over the lone heath. The tribe extends like a pink carpet in many parts of the Leas at Willesborough, in Kent, and are not unfrequent on wet heaths, in watered meadows and turfy bogs. Delighting in the purest air of heaven, they are seen, likewise, on the open spaces of forest-land, where streams steal silently and waste themselves among the grass; and he who climbs the summit of high rocks may find them there, for such plants as affect damp places will grow occasionally far up the rugged sides of lofty mountains, at the base of which lakes abound, and gathering mists keep moist the places of their growth. And yet, though thus delighting in free air and moisture, the bog pimpernel approaches nearer than any other kind of alpine plant to the vicinity of London, and is seen in places where the brilliant gentianella would refuse to ve-

getate. The bogs of Hampstead Heath and Ken-wood are among its chosen haunts ; it grows also at Soho, near Birmingham, and the botanist, who in searching would look only for such well-known plants as the little eye-bright or sun-flower cistus, the wild thyme or small cardamine, rejoices to recognize the modest bog pimpernel lifting up its pale pink flowers amid the heath. He, too, who has left his far-off mountains for the din and stir of the great city, where no familiar face is seen amid the moving myriads that crowd her streets ; he whose fondest affections are associated with distant scenes, feels in looking at it, as many felt, when in India a little daisy, of which the seeds or roots had been accidentally conveyed from England, sprung up in that stranger soil. Weary men walked thither to look upon the flower which they had loved in childhood ; splendid carriages drove thither, that the riders in

them might behold once more the daisy of their father-land ; and bitter tears were shed in looking at it ; for who can be indifferent to the recollections of home and kindred, when the heart, tired of its wanderings, longs to be at rest ; and the distant and the departed vividly arise before the mental view. Thus feels the man, who has left his far-off mountains, when, jaded with every-day endurance of hard toil, he bends his way to the only spot within his reach, of which the name may recall somewhat concerning early days and forsaken scenes, where the bog pimpernel loves to linger amid tufts of fern, and the yielding moss. And thus, perchance, in some wild or beautiful solitude, for such there are even in the neighbourhood of great cities, may thoughts arise within his heart.

The torrent is foaming,
Its waters are roaming,
Adown the deep glade by the side of the hill ;
Where the wild bird is singing,
And blue bells are springing,
And the cowslip and primrose are lingering still.

Ah ! linger ye yet,
With pearly dew wet,
No step o'er the green sod is speeding ;
And a few stars on high,
Still look down from the sky,
While the pomp of the night is receding.

Ye innocent flowers,
Beloved in bright hours,
Ere the young heart had yielded its gladness ;
I would gaze on ye still,
By the gush of the rill,
In the depth of my spirit's lone sadness.

It is full sad to think,
As I gaze on the brink,
Of the stream, in its deep and fresh flowing ;
Of the primrose and blue-bell,
In my own native dell,
And of hours that with rapture were glowing.

O ! the glee of those hours,
Young hands fill'd with flowers,
True words in their freshness then spoken !
But the bright eyes that shone,
Are by tears dimm'd, or gone,
And the buoyant young spirits are broken.

They were broken too soon.
Few of those reach'd their noon,
Whose young steps on the green sod were springing ;
But I still am left,
Of those loved ones bereft,
To list to the birds' blithsome singing.

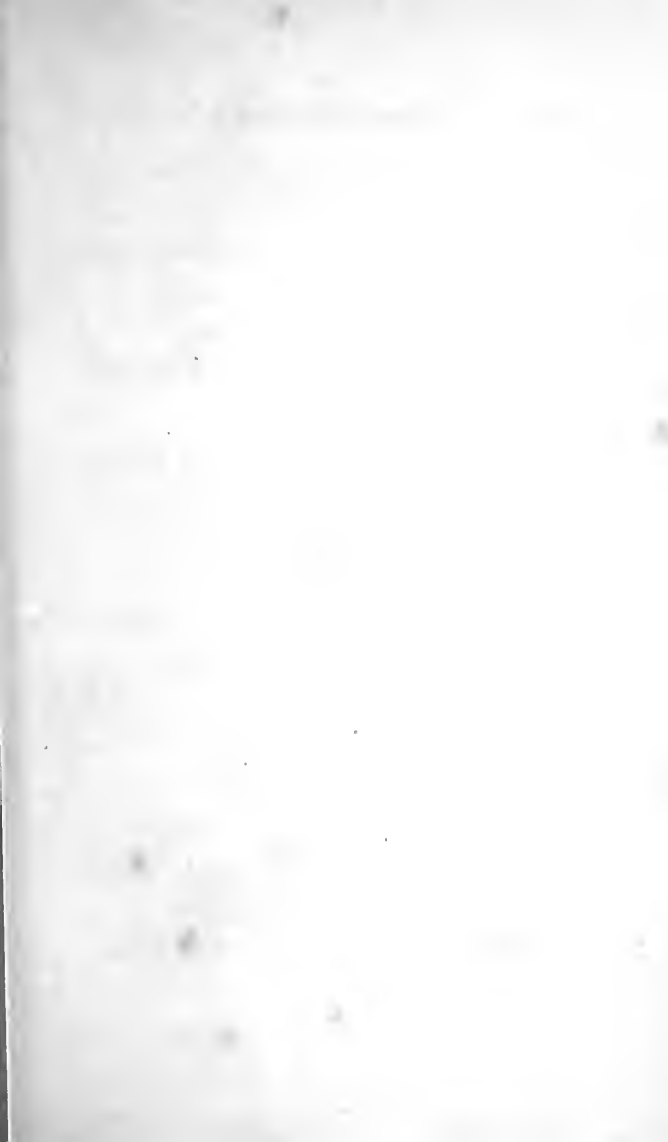
She poureth her trill,
By the gush of the rill,
Mid the bloom of the blossoming May ;
The primrose and blue-bell,
Open still in the dell,
But the friends of my youth !— where are they ?

Where, where are they ?
By our old church grey,
Some hearts have ceased their aching ;
Others were scatter'd wide,
Or whelm'd beneath the tide,
Sunk deep for a far-off waking.

Yet weep not, child of sorrow,
There cometh a bright morrow,
Gaze eastward, for its light is on the hills.
When the earth in glorious beauty,
Shall yield her solemn duty,
To Him, whose might the whole creation fills.

Now the heart is weary,
And the wide world looketh dreary,
But there shall be no sorrow then.
Yea rather, heavenly gladness,
Chasing all forms of sadness,
From the hearts and the homes of men.







WOOD SORREL.

The leanings
Of the elose trees o'er the brim
Of a sunshine haunted stream,
Have a sound beneath their leaves.

ELIZABETH B. BARRETT.

Oxalis asctosella. Wood Sorrel.

The generic name is derived from a Greek word signifying sharp, in allusion to the acidity of its leaves.

Opening
At sunrise.

Closing
At sunset.

WOOD SORREL.

HOSE who delight to moralise beside clear streamlets, leaping and sparkling from among the sheltering embrace of woods, may visit the vale of Dudcombe, contiguous to the old road from Stroud to Cheltenham, beside the ancient moss-grown fence of Panslodge Wood. I have seen many lovely spots; with their glens, and familiar walks; but none more deserving of remembrance than the vale of Dudcombe, embosomed amid hills and shady coverts, among which an ample streamlet, goes sounding on its way. Dudcombe was a battle-place in years that are gone. There, tradition says, the fierce Danes and Saxons had many deadly conflicts, when struggling to possess or to retain the ample hunting-

grounds and thickly-wooded valleys that enriched the country of the Dobuni. In still remoter ages, the Romans entrenched at a short distance, and when their sons had gained a settlement in Britain, spacious villas arose upon the site of those rude villages in which our ancestors had dwelt. But my thoughts are not with scenes of rapine. I would rather speak concerning the well-head of that clear stream, whose mellow voice is heard far down the valley, even when its course is concealed by the drooping branches of such trees as border its rapid course. Mosses, damp with glistening spray, throng and crowd around the old stone trough, into which the waters leap from out the rocky bank. Tufts of ferns and hart's-tongue bend into the stream, when, flowing over the old trough, they form a small lake, which often reflects the summer moon, and the quivering branches

of young beeches which cast their shadows on the pathway leading to the depth of the rarely-trodden valley. On either side the streamlet's course, grow the golden saxifrage, and wild white sorrel, earliest children of the year; companions often of the primrose and the snowdrop, the cowslip and wild hyacinth. Glimpses, however distant and often vanishing, of scenes and objects endeared by remembrances associated with the kindest feelings of our nature, will ever rise upon the mind more vividly, perchance, when the every-day occurrences of life are no longer blended with the harmonies or sublimities of nature. In proportion as sweet and soothing pictures of green and pastoral valleys, bright flowers, and gushing waters are no longer present to the view, does that "inward eye which is the bliss of solitude,"* open on the unseen beauties of

* Wordsworth.

that world which is absent from the outward. Memory still haunts that green and wooded valley, with its sounding streamlet, and song of birds answering one the other; and while thinking of the mossy well-head, with its ferns and flowers, I would take up the language of the muse of Keble, and point out to those who love lone places, cheered with mosses and wild flowers,

“Lessons sweet of spring returning,”

with which the beautiful solitudes of Nature are blended. For there ever breathes a softening and consoling influence from amid such scenes, ministering, however feebly, to our mental sorrows, and imparting, it may be, a sacred calm and resignation to the burdened and oppressed among life's pilgrims, while it tends to exalt or to refine the rejoicing spirit.

Keble, perchance, has visited that spot.

His brother is, or was, the pastor of a near village; and I have pleased myself with thinking, that from beside the gushing streamlet, where it flows from the rocky bank into the old stone trough, Nature's poet has gazed upon the lone and wooded valley with its precipitous and sunny dingles. Poetry is one of heaven's choicest gifts; and thrice happy is the poet, who, led by his Christian feeling, and the disposition of his mind, considers Nature in all her beautiful changes, and associates with her productions, thoughts of peace and purity. To him the gushing rivulet speaks in language inaudible to the dull ear of common observation; the rich hues of evening have a voice which the mind of the Christian poet only heareth, and in the dewy freshness of the misty dawn, and the "rich morning and silent evening lights," are joys to him with which a stranger intermeddleth not.

And those little flowers which grow there, beside the waters, have they no language in which to body forth the wonders of their creation: speaking to the mind concerning the tale which each one telleth of things hidden from the eye of him who cares not for them? Assuredly they have. And the botanist, as well as poet, has his own peculiar sources of delight. Wherever his wanderings may conduct him, amid the loneliness and greenness of a secluded valley, over moorlands, or through cultivated fields, he is equally at home. In all the changes of the seasons, and in every vicissitude of climate, he meets with friends, whom successive years have brought to his acquaintance, and who, though silent to the casual observer, are ever eloquent to him.

The wild sorrel is a favourite among mountain flowers, because its place of growth is ever amid scenes to which the mind recurs

with unwearied delight. Two only of the tribe are known to botanists. One, our own wild sorrel, expanding its large white petals, beautifully veined with purple, along the borders of ancient woods, by streams, and on heaths. The other, with small yellow blossoms, preferring waste and stony places, and the sides of mountains.

Unwilling to speak again concerning the beautiful conformation of roots and leaves, flowers and their calices, which are conspicuous in different plants; of their air-vessels, and sap-vessels, and the colours and the fragrance by which they are distinguished; I shall revert solely to the curious fact, that as white is peculiarly calculated for reflecting heat, such flowers as open early in the spring, or are assigned to damp and shady places, are uniformly invested in this pure and simple colour. The common snow-drop, white archangel, wood ane-

mone, lily of the valley, and wood sorrel, offer familiar instances. Light shades of rose and azure, and various tints of yellow, are also common to the spring. Summer flowers, on the contrary, are generally of bright hues. He who passes through a corn-field often observes with pleasure the purplish red flowers of the corn-cockle, to which is given the elegant name of *Agrostemma*, from two Greek words, signifying a field and coronet, as if the garland of the field. Among the standing corn also, uprises the red poppy, from which the drapery bee cuts the hangings of her cell. Nor less obvious are the large yellow flowers of the corn-marigold, giving a brilliancy to the fields, and following the sun's course with unwearied assiduity; the charlock, too, or wild mustard, with its bright yellow petals, cheering the traveller when hasting to shelter himself from a coming shower, with

the thought of sunbeams breaking from among the driving clouds. So sun-like is the effect produced by the glow of that bright flower. Among the standing corn, and contrasted with the rich brown ears, the cyanus, or corn-flower, has its own peculiar beauty, a coronet of sky-blue florets, every floret a fairy vase, in the depth of which is secreted a sweet nectar for bees and butterflies. This flower is named Cyanus, after a young devotee of Flora, who delighted to linger in the fields, and to weave garlands of richly tinted flowers. And those flowers common to the summer months uniformly absorb the sunbeams without reflecting them in any considerable degree. Its own pure tint, therefore, may be associated with the wild wood sorrel, as affording a sure indication of the season of its flowering, and place of growth; an indication which never fails, wherever the eye

of the botanist is able to observe the natural growth of plants in wild and uncultivated regions, as affording, also, one of those interesting facts which has an especial reference to the often repeated thought that every plant has some truth to enforce, which the wise would do well to learn.

Eloquently, and yet most truly, has some talented writer, when referring to the lectures of that poet, whose sacred melodies are associated in my mind with Dudcombe's streamlet, and matin flower, spoken of the frequent reference made by the Redeemer to his works, while instructing his disciples; of the soothing influence, too, which they seemed to impart to his own feelings. Our Lord, said he, uniformly availed himself of natural objects in his teaching,—the lily that neither toiled nor spun; the field white to harvest; the seed sown by the husbandman; the sun reddening the western clouds;

the fig-tree and the mustard-tree, the herbs of the field and the birds of the air, all ministered to the holy lessons which he taught. Our Lord loved rural scenes and rural life. The house of Bethany overlooked a delicious landscape; He wandered among corn-fields; He sat down by the wells; He fed multitudes in places where there was much grass; He meditated in a garden during his life; He was buried in one after his death. What do we learn from this practice of our Master? We learn that the retirements of nature are calculated to cherish or to restore that sweet composure of the thoughts, which is the charm, as it ought to be, the distinction, of the religious character. Even after His resurrection, a hallowed withdrawal of Himself from the tumult and stir of active life, became conspicuous. It was along the still path of the village of Emmaus, that the declining sunset reflected the

footsteps of the Holy Traveller, with the sorrowing disciples. Nature seemed to be thus presented to compose and soothe the heart, though not to engage it.*

* Observations on the Lectures of Professor Keble considered, with a particular reference to some of the Latin poets. "Frazer's Magazine," August, 1844.



EVENING PRIMROSE.

FAIR flower, that shun'st the glare of day,
Yet lov'st to open, meekly bold,
To evening's hues of sober grey,
Thy cup of paly gold.

I love at such an hour to mark
Thy beauty greet the night-breeze chill,
And shine, 'mid shadows gathering dark,
The garden's glory still.

For such 'tis sweet to think the while,
When cares and grief the breast invade,
Is friendship's animating smile
In sorrow's darkening shade.

BARTON.

Ænothera biennis. Evening Primrose.

From two Greek words, one signifying wine, the other imbued with it: the root having a vinous scent when dried.

Opening
At sunset.

Closing
At 5 or 6
in the morning.

EVENING PRIMROSE.

ABROAD when evening has closed in, and giant trees, shone on by the bright moon, cast their strange mysterious-looking shadows on the grass; when the bat is wheeling by, and the glow-worm with her tiny lamp is seen progressing through the grass: abroad at such an hour, who could recognise in the deep glen or quiet valley, in the still meadow or heathy moor, those bright scenes which delighted him but a short time before? How still, how solemn, and yet how peaceful is the witching hour of deep midnight, when the glorious stars are keeping their watch on high; and when the earth is covered as with a mantle of silence and of obscurity! I have often looked within the garden range for

flowers that grew there in all their fragrance and their beauty before the sun had set, but have not found them; and so it is in the green meadow, or beside the road. You may not see a daisy in the grass, nor yet a single hawkweed on the bank; the brilliant goat's-beard has folded up its petals, and the dandelion, that loves to cover the interstices of broken pavements with its ample disks, is no longer visible. Night with her broad shadows has not veiled them, for there are flowers which yet look the pale moon in her face, and some few there are, that open only when the day has closed in. They open, that such insects as love the night, warmly-coated moths, and ephemera, may drink and be refreshed, when all other vegetable fountains have ceased to flow, or when the guardian petals, by which they are surrounded, have folded up to keep them safe from all intruders. I

have seen the evening-primrose, or the evening-star, as the plant is sometimes called, gradually expand her primrose-tinted leaves, looking fairer, and becoming larger, and perfuming the vagrant breezes as they passed, while other flowers were closing; till at length when the moon had risen, or, perhaps, only stars looked down from their high stations in the heavens, this fragrant flower had thrown open all her stores, and busy creatures might be seen repairing thither as to a nightly banquet. Those who pass through one of the wildest portions of the vale of Clwyd, may see this favourite flower growing in great luxuriance, and attaining to the height of several feet, on the road-side between Denbigh and Ruthin. It was seen there, by a youthful botanist* who has ceased from among the living, during the summer solstice, when the nights are neither light

* Mr. W. Christy.

nor dark; and the spot wherein it grew was much to be remembered, for the moon was full, and the mists of night veiled, as with a light transparent vapour, all the loveliest features of the landscape. The river was heard to rush along, as with a congregated roar, the rocky banks and trees assumed a sterner character, and far away, for prominent objects could be dimly seen in the bright moonbeams, uprose, as from a sea of vapour, the deserted walls of old Ruthven's haunted tower; but no one could discern, in looking at them, that the halls were lonely now, or that the night-wind was free to find an entrance through the broken windows. They stood forth as if restored to their ancient state, for the friendly moonbeams showed not the rents of ruin. Here then, in one of the loveliest portions of the vale of Clwyd, grew the evening primrose, with its fragrant and large yellow flowers,

around which night-moths and ephemera were gathering. Dusky looking, yet beautiful and evanescent creatures, often the birth of the noon-day, attaining their full maturity at that still hour, when the evening primrose opens her yellow-tinted petals, as if to welcome back the twilight; a star of earth, shining alone for them, and guiding their insect steps or wings, when other flowers have folded up their petals, and are gone to rest. She awaits the moment when the sun withdraws his beams, for the sinking of his orb behind the hills, while yet a golden light is seen to linger on their heights, and gorgeous clouds are waiting in the place of his withdrawing; the sinking of that orb is a sure signal for the opening of her fragrant corolla. Unlike all others that watch for his arising, or seem to follow his goings in the heavens with devoted fondness, this nun-like flower opens not till he is

gone. She loves to keep her vigils by dim twilight, or beneath the beams of the cold moon, and then, as if like Charity, doing her good deeds in secret; when all other eyes, save those of Him who made her, are closed in sleep, she gives both food and a sweet nectareous juice to many weary ones, who would perish but for her timely aid. He who watches by the evening primrose, when the night is dark and sultry, when neither moon nor stars are visible, and wayfaring creatures could not find their way to her hospitable petals, may see a phosphoric light gleaming from this favourite flower. When not a tree nor rock can be discerned, nor yet the road, though known, might be safely travelled, she emits a pale light from all her hundred flowers, and looks as if illuminated for a holiday. You may then see, more clearly than even in the bright moonshine, how the stem, and leaves, and petals,

are covered with grateful creatures, some returning from the lighted petals, where they have fed, or been refreshed, at the vegetable fountains, to take their rest among the leaves; others hurrying up the stems; and others again assembled in the corollas.* All, and each, are either thickly coated, or else enwrapped in down or feathers, the better to resist the heavy dews of night.

The same extraordinary phenomenon has likewise been observed in other phosphoric plants, and in certain mosses that grow within the moist and cavernous recesses of Dartmoor; in places where Druid steps have trodden, and where our remotest ancestors found a home.† Did we know, con-

* Stated on the authority of Dr. Jenner and Mr. Pursh, the latter referred to in "Withering's Arrangement of British Plants," vol. ii. p. 473, edition of 1830.

† This curious fact is noticed by the Rev. R. Park Welland, and adverted to in "Withering's Arrangement," vol. ii. p. 473.

cerning those plants and mosses, the little which has yet transpired with regard to the evening primrose and its nightly visitors, we should, no doubt, discover that the phosphorescent light in each, is kindled with the same beneficent design; that it shines forth to answer the purpose of a lamp on the lone heath or in the cavern, to guide the steps of fainting insects to their nightly food. I have looked on those insects, either winged or footed, when, in the early morning, they have been found asleep among the grass and shrubs; and while looking at them I have thought, though man cares not for such feeble creatures, and might crush them as the moth, their Maker cares for them. He has made them perfect in all their parts, it may be to teach us, that He who thus provides for the wandering night ephemera, giving to them a fountain and a light when

the sun withdraws his rays, watches over even the minutest concerns of life.

Oh ! the spirit of Christ is grieved,
When man doth take no heed
Of the wild, yet wondrous things,
Which he giveth for an hour of need.

Let the lone and weary wanderer,
Who hath no dwelling nigh,
Gaze on this nightly flower,
While the stars keep watch on high.

Mark well each brimming fountain,
The light in each fairy hall ;
The joyous things that hasten
To the banquet spread out for all.

Let him ask, if indeed it can be,
That the Power whom none may scan,
Careth more for these feeble beings,
Than his trusting creature, Man ?

CHICKWEED.

Heaven wills, that simple things should give
Lessons to teach us how to live.

Stellaria media. Common Chickweed.

From Stella, a star: descriptive of the star-like, or radiated
appearance of the blossom.

Opening

At 9 in the morning.

Closing

At noon.

CHICKWEED.



WEARY man toiled up the rocky side of the Table Mountain at the Cape, resolved to ascend her loftiest elevation, and to look down on the strange landscape which lay extended at its base. Strange, no doubt to him, where date and palms, orange-tree and plantains, lifted their tall heads among fields of pulse or sugar-canes, who had seen only the corn-fields and pasture-lands of his own country. That weary man was Henry Martyn, and when he sat down to rest in the steep ascent, sad at heart, and ready to faint with thinking of the mighty undertaking in which he was engaged, a little flame-coloured flower of extraordinary beauty met his eye: it

grew in a small hollow among rough stones, sheltered from the sun's fierce rays, and played on by the fresh mountain breezes as they passed. "That little flower," wrote Henry, in a letter to a friend, "made me forget my sorrows: thoughts of hope and peace, of gladness and security, were awakened by it, and I went on my way refreshed."

The remembrance of this anecdote arose within me, when looking on the dismantled walls of a once spacious dwelling, I observed the wonderful construction of the common chickweed, which had rooted itself in the interstices. There its tiny blossoms unfolded among tufts of lichens and small ferns, and presented a continued repast to such wayfaring birds as passed that way in their flight to the spacious apple orchards that covered the slope of the green valley. There, too, its native character remained

unaltered, either by soil or climate, a modest little flower which few might care to look upon, if they had not learned somewhat concerning its beauty or its worth, and how the hand of Him who made it, has stamped upon its pale green leaves, characters which those who love to hear and speak of Him may read, and which in reading, will make their hearts to glow within them. What sees the stranger in passing by? A small and insignificant looking weed, covering the top of an old wall, or springing from interstices where the mortar has fallen out between the stones. What sees the botanist in this simple weed? An object of great interest; formed especially for the place which it is designed to fill; a memento of the care of its Creator, and not of the plant only, but of numerous winged creatures that depend upon the ripening of its seeds for their support. Winds may

shake it in passing by, and heavy storms may beat upon it, but there it grows, renewed from year to year, and covering the herbless stones with a pleasant verdure. Yet not as a single plant, opening at one season or period of the day, and failing at another ; each of its polished stems upholds a bud, in different stages of verdure or of decay. In some, the starry white corollas are fully exposed to the sun ; in others, which also stand upright, the white petals have fallen off, and the four-sided and light green capsules appear conspicuous ; in others, again, the stalk assumes a curved form, and the capsule bends towards the earth. Look at it when thus reversed, what a curious shape ! what a wonderful arrangement ! Growing frequently on the summit of high walls, or in places exposed to fierce winds and heavy showers, a peculiar provision is required for the protection of the seed.

Observe, therefore, a small penthouse formed by the capsule, for the capsule in this plant is permanent ; it may not wither and fall off like that of the poppy or corn-flower, which does not require its assistance. Thus protected, the seed-vessel continues reversed during a few days ; at the end of which the stem straightens, and uplifts the seed-vessel to the influence of the sun. Here, then, another process is discoverable : the capsule splits into six small divisions at the top ; through which both air and light are freely admitted to the enclosed seeds. When their active ministry is finished, and the seeds are fully ripe, the stem bends again, and empties, as from an urn, the innumerable seeds upon the earth. Thus does every single stem change its position at least four times, to suit the different stages of growth or of decay. Upright, when first the simple flower is unfolded to the light, with its

tiny mirror-like petals, so arranged as to catch and to reflect every wandering sunbeam. Bending, when the perfecting of the seeds seems to require a downward position; or, perhaps, if it be allowable to hazard a conjecture, which, as regards the vegetable economy in this respect, must be conjectural, the capsule is reversed because the plant grows on dry places, where little moisture can be imbibed by the roots, in order that its vessels may draw in more copiously the heavy night-dews which descend at the season of its flowering. But when the influence of the sun is especially required to ripen the fully-formed seeds, the stem gradually straightens, and the heavy laden seed-vessel is held up to catch its beams. Thus it remains till again gradually resuming its downward position the seeds are deposited in the earth.

Who, that looks upon one of these small seeds, brown, and rough, and thickly coated,

could imagine that a plant would emerge from out of it, perfect in every part, and having a most curious and elaborate machinery, adapted to all the purposes of vegetable life? one set of vessels constructed for drawing up moisture from the roots, or for imbibing it from the atmosphere, and for diffusing it in the character of sap, to every little leaf, and bud, and blossom: another set, by means of which greenness is given to the leaf, and whiteness to the flower, nourishment is imparted to the opening bud, and the mysterious process of its growth, and its perfection, is carried on; that there are also within the stalk and stem, a multitude of spiral wires, in order that the stem may bend when needed, or recover its rigidity, when the purpose of its bending is accomplished? Yet these, and very many more, are curiously enwrapped within the simple chickweed!

This little plant is another of Flora's watches; and here, also, the spiral wires come in aid. By means of them, the starry-white corolla opens early in the morning, and closes about four in the afternoon. The upper leaves too, which grow sitting in pairs on the stem, opposite one the other, and from the bosom of which issue the branches and flowering stalks, each of the latter bearing one bud, close over them, when the night draws in, and form a canopy impervious to the rain; insects are thus also effectually excluded, and the tender flower sleeps securely till the morning. Sleep, how wonderful it is! What a mighty change passes over this busy, bustling world, during those darksome hours when all the concerns of life are still! The heart of that man must be insensible to the finest emotions of our nature, who does not feel somewhat of awe steal over him when abroad at that still season: alone, a

conscious and a waking being, while every thing, whether animate or inanimate, is slumbering around;—men upon their beds, unconscious even of their names,—the cattle sleeping on the grass,—the birds among the branches,—all humming insects still;—no sound except the torrent's rush, or the murmur of the night wind in the trees; or, perchance, at intervals the startling whoop of the solitary owl. Plants, too, are sleeping. Flowers that shone forth in all their fragrance and their loveliness when the sun was high, fold up their petals, and are often so enwrapped by the leaves as to become invisible. The heads of others are inclined towards the earth; and not a few close their beautiful corollas, as if to protect them from the depredations of such insects as love the night.

“Averse from evening’s chilly breeze,
How many close their silken leaves,
 To save the embryo flowers !
As if, ambitious of a name,
They sought to spread around their fame,
And bade the infant buds proclaim
 The parent’s valued powers.”

All this is done by means of the spiral fibres ; and their agency is equally conspicuous in causing the flowers to shut up before the coming of a storm. He who passes by, and sees the numerous little white corollas of the chickweed fully expanded, may go on his way in safety : he need not fear the coming of a storm, for some hours at least. If, on the contrary, the flowers do not open freely ; if the guardian leaves, still seem unwilling to forego their watch, let him hasten home, for the rain will soon fall. The effect in both cases is produced by the extreme susceptibility of the spiral fibres,

and their liability to be affected by atmospheric changes.

There grows not, there blooms not, on mountain,
rock, or wall,

A choicer flower than this, which men the chick-
weed call.

A weed for chicken truly, for "little birdies," too,
Who trust their Maker's bounty, the dreary winter
through.

Look on that chickweed, mourner, and list the
grateful strain

Of her who sings to praise Him, 'mid driving wind
and rain.

That warbling creature hath not, nor fields, nor
hoarded corn ;

And yet she sweetly singeth, the leafless boughs
among.

Her clear voice is telling from out the lonely tree,
That He who feeds the lone one doth surely care
for thee.

Her plumes are rudely ruffled, the day is nearly
gone,
But she heeds not, she fears not, and still she
singeth on :
O weep not thus, poor mourner ! the storm shall
pass away ;
For me sweet spring is coming, for thee a brighter
day.



MOUSE-EAR HAWKWEED.

“ See Hieracium’s various tribe
Of plummy seed, and radiate flowers,
The course of time their blooms describe,
And wake or sleep appointed hours.”


Hieracium pilosella. Mouse-ear Hawkweed.

From a Greek word, signifying a hawk ; and suggested by the mixture of black and yellow in some species, resembling the colour of a hawk’s eye.

Opening
At 3 o’clock.

Closing
At 4 or 5 o’clock.

MOUSE-EAR HAWKWEED.

HE hawkweed. What a lovely little flower! This, too, is one of Flora's watches; it often grows on a dry bank, in company with the scarlet pimpernel, and the small blue forget-me-not, the wild thyme, and marjoram. Bees and butterflies, and "many-coloured things," close and open their bright wings on its golden disk; they fly away and visit other flowers; but they soon return, as if unwilling to quit the burnished resting-place on which they first reposed.

The hawkweed! what shall I say respecting it; or rather, where shall I begin? for it has much of beauty and utility, that ought not to be hastily passed by. Observe its golden-coloured petals. Those petals show

forth its joy, as Pliny elegantly observed with regard to the blossoms of large trees, in producing which, they seem to vie with one another, seeking apparently to attract the admiration of all who look upon them. In this simple plant the corolla has its own specific use, and is not less distinguished for the delicacy and the brilliancy of its tints, than for the functions which it is designed to fulfil with regard to air and light. Its office is likewise in a great degree analogous to wings, being composed of a variety of small yellow floral leaves, that waft the flower up and down in the air; it serves also to protect, occasionally, the interior from rain, or excessive heat, to indicate the vicinity of that sweet nectareous juice, from which honey is produced, and to accommodate the gatherers with a resting-place or shelter, while employed in their grateful labours. Observe, also, the admirable construction of

the little florets, seated upon one common receptacle, and inclosed in the same calyx. Each of these florets, is embellished with an ivory-looking shaft or pillar, passing through a cylinder, which appears as if supported by five recurved pillars, of which the heads or anthers, form the cylinder, and contain within them a fine and subtile powder. Yet though apparently a subtile powder, the pollen, for so the dust is called, presents, when magnified, an infinite variety of small cases inclosing a still more subtile powder; and not even the flakes of snow, that fall in winter, are more singularly varied. The pollen of the common red crane'sbill, is a perfect globe, that of the marsh-mallow resembles the wheel of a watch, in the pansy it is triangular, in the narcissus kidney-shaped. But, however, varied or dissimilar, they each remain entire till acted upon by heat or mois-

ture, when they suddenly expand, and discharge a fine and elastic powder. The powder, when thus disengaged from the anthers, is immediately absorbed into the pointal, and hence the seeds, by a process inconceivable to us, are rendered capable of ripening. Emblem of the pouring forth of mind to mind, the fulness of the one imparted to the other, causing the germ of reason to expand, and the mental faculties to attain perfection. Emblem, too, of the gliding in of wisdom from above, which descending like the dew, or imbibed like the subtile vapour that pervades alike the magnificent magnolia or the humble hawkweed, calls forth those fruits or blossoms which are peculiar to their tribe.

Those who care not for the wonders of creation may think that flowers which grow on rocks or in desert places, are of little worth. But it is not so. Even the lone-

liest flower, the flower, perchance, on which the eye of man may never rest, sown by the wind on the ledge of some bold precipice or in the far off wilderness, has myriads of active beings swarming round it. Beautiful creatures, likewise, which no human eye may look upon, yet perfect in their kind, are attracted by the shelter which the lone flower yields them, and are nourished by its beauty, rendering in return those treasures beneficial to the plant itself, which would otherwise continue as unprofitable as hoarded gold to the miser.

The months in which the common hawkweed expands its yellow-tinted petals to the sun are those of beauty and luxuriance. Almost every other flower is then open, and all kinds of insects are abroad. Bees are seen in quest of honey or farina, with which to construct their waxen cells; you may hear their pleasant hum as they hasten

from one blossom to another, loaded with yellow dust; gay-coated insects seem dancing on the sunbeams, as if in quest of a perpetual spring; and butterflies emulate the colours of those splendid flowers, on which they shut and open their gorgeously tinted wings. And yet, though seemingly intent on merely varying their sources of delight, they have all and each, a duty to perform in the magnificent museum which they are designed either to embellish or to benefit. Functions are carried on by them, which, although presented to the senses in their effects, the mind is unable to comprehend. And not more truly does one part of an exquisite piece of machinery fit into the other, than the structure of even the smallest flower is adapted to the winged creatures that frequent it; and those winged creatures to the simple flower, their fit dwelling-place,

“The little insect’s world of joys or cares.”

The common hawkweed has many kindred. Some grow on mountain tops; others in quiet valleys at their base; some hide themselves among long grass: others, again, love the margin of clear streams. The Alpine hawkweed will only thrive in moist ground on the sides of mountains, where streamlets gush forth, and fall with a pleasant murmur into the vale below; or else where springs abound, and spread themselves among the herbage, where the foot of the passer by is made wet when he sets it down: although from the dense growth of the short grass, and upland plants, he may not discern the boggy nature of the soil. This species of hawkweed grows, therefore, on the mountain of Ben-na-Caillich, in the Isle of Skye, and on Rhiwr Glyder, about one hundred yards above the Lake of Llyn y Cwm; those cloud-capt mountains, down the sides of which streamlets ooze forth continually. The

creeping hawkweed, a less aspiring plant, although it shrinks from the heights of lofty mountains on which tempests beat, and loud winds make their mournful music, often aspires to somewhat of an elevated station. It has been seen equally on the sides of Fairfield Mountain, near Rydall, in Westmoreland; as in watery places, beside Coxbench Wood, in Derbyshire. The narrow-leaved, the orange, and the shrubby, the rough-bordered, and the wood, the shaggy, and the glaucous, with all their numerous relatives of heath and field, have each their assigned locality. They are rarely seen in the same place; or if they grow contiguous, they do not blossom at the same season of the year; so beautiful and unbroken is the order that everywhere prevails. The narrow-leaved, that lovely mountain plant which tourists delight to gather on the sunny flanks of Dalehead, not far from the

waters of Grasmere, flowers in July; the orange, which unfolds its golden-coloured petals in the same month, enlivens the depth of solitary woods; the shrubby is seen on wood-sides and hedge-banks. The rough-bordered, of which the glaucous under-green of the dark leaves sufficiently distinguishes it, beautifully varies the deep woods of southern Scotland, and those of Perthshire and Durham. The shrubby, which grows generally in the woods of Britain, opens its numerous flowers at seven in the morning, and warns the weary herdsman or woodcutter to rest from his labour, when its petals begin to close at one or two. The wood-hawkweed seems to linger where the footsteps of men, great it may be in their day, and renowned in past ages, have once trodden. Fine specimens have been gathered on the old Roman camp, near Newberry, and from off the walls of Dud-

ley Castle, while the Lawsoni, or glaucous hairy hawkweed, with its fringed leaves and large and handsome lemon-coloured flowers, still grows upon the rocks beside the rivulet between Shap, and Anna-well, in Westmoreland. They grew there, at least one hundred years since, when my ancestor gathered their bright flowers from off the margin's brink, and heard the pleasant murmur of the streamlet, which flows, as then it flowed, reflecting and partaking the loveliness of all around. Thomas Lawson has long passed from among the living, but tufts of the small flower that bears his name are growing still in the same sequestered spot. It may be that on such a spot, so lone and rarely visited, some wanderer might thus apostrophise the simple hawkweed :

What dost thou here in this wild wild spot,
Where no curling smoke is seen
Wreathing at eve from the turf-cutter's cot,
Nor children's steps have been ?

The cry of the curlew alone is heard,
With the splash of the lonely rill ;
But the cheerful song of the wayfaring bird,
Soundeth not from the wood-crown'd hill.

For no wood-crown'd hill with its waving trees,
Hath a place on the wide wide plain ;
Nor the whispering voice of the evening breeze,
Murmurs low 'mid the ripening grain.

But the gusty wind is careering now,
And the storm-clouds are driving fast ;
And responds the creak of an old oak bough,
To the roar of the angry blast.

Methought as I stood in this moody eve,
While the storm-clouds were riding high,
That words from the lone flower seem'd to breathe
As the breath of the summer wind's sigh.

Ask me not, why alone in this wild wild spot,
Where no blossoming roses smile,
My days glide on, and my lonely lot
Seems strange in the sea-girt isle !
Rather seek to know, why a simple flower
Mid the stones of the heath must remain ;
Where the winds are loud, and the pitiless shower
Beateth oft on the wide, wide plain.
My lot is low, but the stones of the moor,
Were my cradle when life was young ;
The dew bathed me oft in its fountain pure,
And the soft wind my lullaby sung.
I am part of a whole, a link in the chain
That bindeth creation together ;
The same dew, the same air, the same light must
sustain
Man's life, as the brown mountain hether.
No flower of the meadow, no herb of the field,
No tree from the wood might replace me ;
My duty is small, yet the service I yield,
Is too great, for thy hand to displace me.

My haunt is not where the roses bloom,
And the nightingale warbles her tale.
To cheer the lone depth of the forest gloom,
Is mine, or the stone-clad vale.

There are dwellers thine eye rarely heedeth,
That the blasts of the heath must endure ;
They have fears all, or wants all, which needeth
A shelter or home on the moor.

Then think not the heath-loving flower,
Has been placed by her Maker in vain.
The weak creatures called forth by His power
It is mine, through His will, to sustain.



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GLOBE-FLOWER.

PRAISED be the mosses soft,
In earth's pathway very oft ;
And the thorns which make us think,
Of the thornless river brink,
 Where the heavenly tread !
Praised be thy sunny gleams,
And the storm that worketh dreams
 Of calm unfinished.

ELIZABETH B. BARRETT.

Trollius Europæus. Globe-flower, or Gowlans.

The name given by Gesner, who thus Latinized the German word *trol*, spherical ; descriptive of the globular form of the flower.

In its wild state

Opening
At sunrise.

Closing
When the sun
withdraws his beams.

no heavy-laden waggons creek along the road: but, instead of these, are the song of the soaring lark, and the merry descant of early birds, answering one the other, the grasshopper's shrill note, the gush of waters, and soft whisperings of winds among the masses of huge stones covered with wild thyme and heath. And when the sun arises higher, the sound of distant sheep-bells, and the bleating of flocks are heard among the hills.

A meadow with its flowers, to which bees come humming, ever presents a pleasing object to the eye; green lanes, with ferns and mosses, have their own peculiar beauty; downs on which cattle graze impart an hilarity to the mind; but nowhere does the eye rest with such a fulness of delight as on broken ground skirting a rapid streamlet, while beside it and among the masses of stone, upspring such flowers as

delight in the purest air of heaven, or such as open to the sun while their roots are bathed in the stream. The globe-flower, as just noticed, was one of these, mingled with marsh-marigolds, bog pimpernels, large flowered willow herbs and lilies of the valley, luxuriant as those which grow on the bank, and among the eddies of a rivulet that flows beside the rocky pathway, leading from Harlech's ruined tower. Other flowers were likewise seen in the same wild spot. Here and there bright blossoms of the gorse still lingered ; heaths grew in all their beauty and luxuriance, the bright yellow stone-crop covered large masses of broken stones ; the eye-bright and heart's-ease, those delicate little flowers which, like true happiness, seem to rejoice in being concealed, were half hidden among tufts of grass ; the lesser bind-weed entwined the scarlet stalks of the red sorrel, like a thyrsus of living

green, while the shepherd's needle, with its small white flowers, the cowslip, and blue bell, bladder scorpion, and St. John's wort, varied the sterile soil.

The charm of association is familiar to every cultivated mind. Whether remote or near, it is ever a chief source of pleasure or emotion, and when the objects which awaken our remembrances are united with the beautiful or picturesque in nature, the effect is proportionably increased. How unspeakably important then, is the blending of religious thoughts and feelings with all that is verdurous and lovely in this beautiful creation, with those noble trees that shade us from the noonday heat, with such bright flowers as spring beside our pathway, that when the mind begins to weary, and the cares of life press heavily, our inmost being may be refreshed with thoughts of peace and love! Ancient heathens well

knew the effect produced by such associations. Apollo, with his quiver and golden bow, was brought to the remembrance of his worshipers, when the beams of the rising sun irradiated the blue and misty scenery of the horizon. Naiades were fabled to hold their courts in the clear depths of crystal waters, or to haunt beside forest wells. Cornfields were peopled with imaginary deities, that presided over the corn in every stage of growth and preparation. Forest-trees were fabled to be indwelt by dryads and hamadryads, and fawns were everywhere believed to tread "the sunny soil with resounding feet." The young child, born of pagan parents, whose heart had not as yet been corrupted by that unhallowed system which substituted imaginary, and too often evil beings in the place of Him, who alone is the one object of all true worship, knew nought of the

under-current of corruption which flowed beneath the flowers of old imagination. And I can readily believe that many a young mind rejoiced, while gathering bright garlands for idol worship, in the fond hope of performing a sacred duty. Those days have passed by, and the shadowy forms of pagan superstition haunt no longer the green and flowery banks of streamlets, England's fields of corn, or forest walks: the flowers which grow beside our paths are no longer consecrated to unhallowed rites, beneath the blaze of golden temple-lamps. But while forgetting these, and rejoicing in the light of better days; why are not sweet odours from the flowers of thought, blended with the beauty and the fragrance of natural objects? Why are not those glimpses of the wonders of creation, which seem to shed a light and gladness in beholding them, brought before the minds of youth? As-

sociated, too, with love and reverence for Him who has created and upholds them, that man may find pure symbols of His beneficence ever present to the mind, in unison with all that is most lovely in the fair creation, with clear streams and breezy uplands, with green hills smiling in the distance, resounding woods, and rustling trees, with the opening morn, and the dews of evening, that the heart may gladden in beholding them! Works of art, however rare and splendid, cannot yield for any length of time the delight which is continually excited by the emerging of flowers from out their winter dwellings, as the year advances in its course. Coming up, it may be, with the smiling faces of returning friends, and seeming to look cheerfully on all around. Pure as the young child's spirit, they are the first objects of infantine delight. Children, too,

love to gather and to bear them in their hands to those whom most they love. The old man who walks abroad in a fine spring morning, when the air is balmy with the sweet scent of honeysuckles and wild roses, feels his heart expand with joy. The flowers that meet his view may perhaps remind him of the gladsome days in which he looked upon them with friends who have long since departed. Melancholy is blended with such thoughts, but it is a melancholy that bids fair to render the heart better. The flowers of spring and autumn have faded and reappeared, during many successive seasons since he gathered them with bounding steps on the sunny grass, and they may seem as emblems of his own mortality. He may sigh to think that all flesh is but as grass; the goodness thereof as a flower of the field; yet they still remind him, that as the loveliness of nature is restored, according to the

promise of spring-tide and of harvest, so shall the dead awake from the darkness of the grave to light and immortality. Such are the reflections that may arise within the minds of those who are verging to the close of life; standing, as it were, on the confines of two worlds; looking back to the mistiness and gloom, the temptations and mercies of their past existence; forward to the blazing thrones and the golden harps of heaven's choirs, at the glorious morning of the resurrection. Such are the hopes which belong to declining age, breathing as sweet odours from the shore to weary voyagers. But youth is the season for active and decided virtue—trials too; for the young combatant in life's arena has ever to contend with constant and unwearied enemies; unseen, yet near him; powerful, yet seeming powerless; ever watching to hint unholy thoughts; to lure him from straight paths

into those which lead astray. He has need, therefore, to derive incentives for encouragement from every object which his Heavenly Father has given as sources of innocent enjoyment, or as prompting to active duty.

True it is that the Holy Scriptures reveal only one unfailing source of strength, but the garden of creation teaches much; and there is a small still voice which speaks throughout all nature, which tells that God is ever present, and which invites to hallowed and divine communion. When the sweet spring is ushered in with fleecy clouds and warm sunbeams, bright rainbows and glittering showers; when the song of birds is heard, and unfrozen streams leap sparkling adown the banks, what joyous feelings elevate the mind! Delightful is it, then, to walk abroad when sights and sounds of gladness are around us. The saddest heart foregoes its sadness for a small moment, and the grateful

spirit bounds upwards to the Source of all good. Nature then is beauty to the eye, and music to the ear; fragrance, too, for the air is perfumed with the scents of primroses and hawthorns. Yet all this beauty, and melody, and fragrance, are but as voices in the mighty anthem, which is begun by those who are invisible, and which continually celebrates the greatness and the benevolence of God. "All thy works praise thee," said the Psalmist, when, in a strain of unequalled eloquence, he calls upon the hosts of heaven, the stars of light, the great waters, and stormy winds, mountains, and all fruitful trees, cattle, and flying fowl, to join with him in praises to the Great Jehovah, whose glory is above the heavens and the earth. The mind of him who has not been taught to acknowledge the Creator in things created, is unequal to comprehend the beauty and magnificence of the material system; the

loveliness, too, of lesser things, and the pure lessons which are taught by every opening leaf or flower. The spacious vault of heaven is not to him as the temple of the Living God, nor from earth's great altar does the incense of thanksgiving continually ascend. Far otherwise are the thoughts and aspirations of the Christian. He feels, indeed, that the curse still presses heavily on nature; that his mind is often bowed down and weary, that he cannot praise his Maker as he ought to praise Him; but he rejoices in the hope that the hour is hastening on, when the curse shall pass away; when the whole creation, freed from the oppression which now enthralls it, shall rejoice in the consciousness of deliverance.

*

WATER LILY.

“ MARK where transparent waters glide,
Soft flowing o'er their tranquil bed ;
There, cradled on the dimpling tide,
Nymphæa rests her lovely head.

“ But conscious of the earliest ray,
Though night mists veil the lake or land,
She hastes to greet the orient day,
And bids her peerless sweets expand.

“ Till the bright day star to the west
Declines, in ocean's surge to lave ;
Then folded in her modest vest,
She slumbers on the rocking wave.”

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

Nymphæa alba. White Water Lily, or Water Can.

A name derived from being found in the fabled haunts of water nymphs.

Flowers
Rise and open as
the sun arises.

Flowers
Close as the sun
declines.

WATER LILY.



HOSE who love to walk beside the little bays and inlets of alpine lakes, at that glorious hour when the rising sun lights up a purple glow on the mountains' tops, may see the elegant water-lily gradually unfolding her splendid white or pinkish flowers :

“ The water lily to the light
Her chalice rears of silver bright.”

Emulating her sister lily, the sacred Lotus of the Nile, she arises from off the water, and throws back her petals as the sun gains an ascendancy ; till at length she is seen floating on the bosom of the lake, and beautifully reflecting the warm beams of the meridian sun. Thus calmly floating, whe-

ther on the bosom of a native lake, or whether on the waters of the Nile, whether bearing the familiar appellation of the water-can, or that of the sacred Lotus, the white lily and her congener are everywhere distinguished for their surpassing beauty; now gently heaving, as the waters heave beneath them, now shaken by the breezes that sweep freshly across the stream, and now stationary, when the sun is at its height, and the mirror-like surface of the lake reflects the grandeur of the mountains by which it is encircled. Water insects find a shelter among their ample leaves, a place of refuge when sudden storms disturb the waters, and rain-drops begin to fall, that might crush them by their weight. There is much in each of these lovely flowers to excite the admiration of the most incurious; their snowy whiteness, their watery home, the sparkling bubbles of pure oxygen gas that are copi-

ously evolved from the leaves, and which shine like diamonds in the sunbeams; the bright insects that sport around, and the reflection of their flowers in the tranquil mirror on which they frequently repose! But there are other things than these to speak of, and to admire; less obvious, indeed, but not less curious or less expressive of His goodness who called the water-lily into being. Those pure and ample petals, which delight us by their beauty, are arranged like concave mirrors, white, and highly burnished for the purpose of reflecting the full power of the sunbeams on the yellow stamens, and of counteracting the effects that might otherwise result from the humid atmosphere in which the lily grows. The leaves too, how curious they are! Unlike those of land plants, the under surface is more thickly coated than the upper, in order to prevent their exquisite machinery

from being injured by constantly remaining on the water. The reverse of this is seen in all such trees, or plants, or flowers, as grow on land. In each, the upper surface is thickly or slightly varnished, according to the places of their growth, or their exposure to wind and rain. The delicate green leaves of such plants as open in warm weather; for example, the vine, the rose, or honeysuckle, look as if a brush lightly dipped in varnish had passed over their upper surfaces, while those of the laurel or the bay, the holly or the common ivy, are richly varnished on both sides, because they are liable to be shaken up and down by eddying winds, and are consequently exposed to the action of heavy rains.

The lily is open at noon day, with her brilliant petals and bright yellow anthers; but gradually as the sun declines from his meridian height, so gradually shuts up the

flower. Raised from out her watery bed, expanded and kept open by the stimulus of light, no sooner does that exciting cause begin to lessen, than the lily closes; and when the last faint rays of the setting sun have faded from off the lake, the flower has folded up her petals. Then, having lost her buoyancy, she sinks by her own weight into the stream, which closes around her like a curtain, and the lily is no longer seen. He who delights in the solitude of nature, to walk beside a mountain lake when the moon is up, and every glen and mountain is veiled with slight wreathing mists, would seek in vain for his favourite flower. He might have thought to see her looking full towards the glorious moon, pale, yet lovely, and reflecting her cold beams, as the moon herself reflects the beams of the sun, his witness in the heavens, that though unseen by man, he is shining still. The bright sun will call

that lily forth again to clothe the waters with fresh beauty; but when the seeds are ripe the purpose of her growth is finished. Where the petals and the leaves have floated, the heavy seed-vessel may be upborne no longer; the leaf-stalks which arose from out the bottom of the lake, presenting a canopy of leaves and flowers to the action of the sun and wind, with all their exquisite mechanism, for the purposes of life and nutriment have done their work. Pressed down by the terminating weight, they sink gradually, and in sinking bring down with them the ponderous and many-celled globes containing seed. The globes then decompose into a gelatinous mass, and the disengaged seeds become deposited therein. If the bed of the mountain lake, or river, be rich in soil, the vegetable decomposition serves to enrich it still more: if pebbly, the gelatinous mass forms a nucleus around the

seeds, in which they may quickly germinate. When this is done, a bulbous root, descending from each little seed, fixes itself in the soil or among the pebbles, and forth from each, springs up a leaf-stalk, which often rises to a considerable height from out the bosom of deep waters. And thus, from year to year, the lakes and rivers of this, and other countries are beautifully varied with the floating globules of the water-lily.

That peerless lily to the light
"Her chalice rears" of purest white ;
And bees, and many coloured things,
With dappled coats and glittering wings,
Unceasing hum the leaves among,
As if to swell the matin song
That rises now from vale and glen,
From warbling birds and grateful men.
Each little insect's world of care,
Perchance of visions, fond as fair,

Of cherish'd homes and infant race,
And all that charms their natal place.
But who, in truth, may guess or tell
What thoughts those tiny bosoms swell ?
Oh ! I could sit beside the brink
Of that bright lake, and soothly think
Of Him who made the mountain high,
Yet bends on earth a watchful eye ;
Who bade the flower of peerless white
Uplift her petals to the light,
That stand like burnish'd pillars round
To guard from harm her fairy ground,
Where summer creatures love to dwell,
And sip from out the brimming well ;*
The well, though full and brimming ever,
Yet leaping o'er its margin—never.
Fair flower ! thou art not made in vain !
Nor yet to grace that watery plain ;
Nor yet, that living things may dwell
Within thy bounds, beside thy well.

* Nectary, or honey cup, in which many flowers secrete a sweet juice.

But aye, that erring man may look
And read, as from an open book,
Of Him who, when on earth he trod,
Drew oft from flowery brake, or sod,
Or warbling bird, in glade or glen,
Lessons of truth for anxious men.

GREAT BINDWEED.

THE lark sings loud, and the throstle's song
Is heard from the depth of the hawthorn's dale ;
And the rush of the streamlet the vales among,
Doth blend with the sighs of the whispering gale.
But this little flower, the road beside,
Speaks low to the mind of the passer-by ;
While the whispering wind in his airy ride,
Says, look, to that flower, the hedge-row's pride,
She doeth her day's task lovingly.

Convolvulus sepium. Great Bindweed.

The specific name is derived from *convolvo*, to twine around :
such being the habit of these plants.

Opening
At sunrise.

Closing
In the evening.

GREAT BINDWEED.



ACH flower telleth its own tale, always good, often beautiful, and never failing to give the passer-by some useful hint at least, and such as may help him onward in life's journey. Hear, among others, the thoughts which the wild convolvulus may suggest, when, speaking to the mind, she discourses concerning quiet duties and daily actings, which have nought of this world's glory to commend them.

Set often as a light upon a hill, as a symbol by the dusty road; now gracefully twining round the stalks of corn, now climbing the tall bushes, and holding forth her white trumpet-shaped flowers, in their own singleness and beauty. None of her sisters

in mead or hedge-bank are more widely scattered ; she may be seen on heaps of rubbish, in company with those simple grasses which Linnæus knelt beside, when looking at them, and praised the Lord for having made. And often, when twining beside the cottage window, she seems, while shaken by the fresh morning air, to motion the sleeping inmates to arise. Come forth, ye sleeping ones, for thus the Muse interprets her soft voice ; a glorious light is spreading on the hills, and the stars are blinking, and already the lark is seen upspringing from among the gorses on the moor ; those mountain gorses, which teach men to be strong, however pricked and encompassed with sharp trials, like their own bright thorn-encompassed blossoms, which look cheerful when the snow and hail beat heavily upon their sterile growing-places ; which teach gladness, when no outward sources of glad-

ness are apparent; tokens upon the bleak hill's-side, even in chill winter, that beauty is ready to burst forth; Mountain gorses teaching as from an academic chair, canopied with the blue heavens,* that, although placed high, they shun not to live low upon the ground to shelter many a sweet songster that soars from amid their thorny citadels to bear his song towards the rising sun; or, perchance, the timid leveret or the conies, feeble folks, which have no other hiding-places; mountain gorses resembling those holy men who sit in heavenly places as beacons to the world, being seen from far, yet disdain not to mingle with the lowly, and give shelter to many a weak and feeble one, who have no song with which to thank them.

But the convolvulus has a different sta-

* Vide Miss Barrett's beautiful lines to the Mountain Gorse, "Poems," vol. ii. p. 281.

tion in the vegetable world. Her place is lowly, and she has not to bear the sternness of winter storms ; therefore she is not enwrapped in strong fibres, and roughly coated, nor is she fenced and guarded with sharp thorns. But her leaves are green and spreading, and her petals pearly white, and he who passes by her often lingers to observe her symmetry and beauty. Lovely indeed she is, and the botanist may recount concerning her, that she has an assigned duty which no other flower could fulfil. One day comprises her short life, but in that one day no work which she has to do is left undone ; and wonderfully is she constructed for the doing of that work. Her trumpet-shaped corollas are designed to reflect the rays of the sun, and, like highly polished mirrors directed to one focus, convey as much heat as possible to the interior. Those who are interested in the

beautiful economy of the vegetable world, may discern by this simple token, that the convolvulus is designed for places open to the wind or to grow beneath the shade of trees. She is endowed, too, with an instinctive motion, by which she is enabled to obviate many local inconveniences; to rise from out her lowly or thickly tangled place of growth, by twining round the stems of neighbouring shrubs or trees. This faculty she possesses in common with the red-berried bryony, which often wanders over stony banks, and forms a beautiful drapery of lively green, with the hop, and lady's-scal, and others equally aspiring; but while in several species the voluble stems twine around their neighbour plants, from east to west, the spiral stems of the convolvulus turn from west to south-west. Such compasses of Nature's making, have proved unerring guides to travellers when journeying

in pathless solitudes. An hospitable flower is she. The *Phalæna Elpenor* and *Sphinx Convulvi*, or Unicorn Moth, are her frequent guests. The former is provided with a long and pliant proboscis, rolled up in concentric circles under the chin, and capable of being extended above three inches in length. The trunk consists of joints and muscles, divided at the termination into two capillary tubes, and by means of this the Unicorn Moth readily obtains the sweet juice which exudes from the nectary of the corolla. A matin-flower, too, is she, unfolding when the sun arises, and closing when the shadows of the trees begin to lengthen on the grass; hinting it may be, in unison with other opening and closing flowers, with the matin and even-songs of grateful birds, concerning duties which few remember, or, perhaps, carelessly fulfil.

Matins and even songs, why are ye forgotten?
Ringing throughout all time. On earth, in air,
O'er waters murmuring, or through glen or valley,
Some notes are heard, swelling at morn or eve
With louder descant when all else is still ;
Save such calm sounds as silence loves to hear :
Be they of whispering winds or tuneful birds,
Heard loudest when the young day looketh forth
Above the hills, and stars begin to blink ;
And twilight and her mists slowly withdraw
From off the grey hills, and the groves and streams :
Or when she cometh back, with all her train
Of dews and wreathing mists, and kindling stars
Studding the heavens — though pale and dimly
seen.

Oh ! then the vespers that glad birds may sing
Are heard in all their fulness, warbling thanks
To Him who made them ; whose sustaining hand
Upholds their little lives, and bids them range
'Mid groves, o'er plains, by streamlets, making glad
The solitary places, where all sounds
Are hush'd as midnight, saving winds and streams.

And then their matin songs are surely sung,
When day comes back and stilly night is gone ;
Past to eternity, e'en with the days
Of countless ages from the birth of time.
O ! I have heard those birds, when all was still ;
When dews lay heavy, and the deep lone vale
Look'd as an inland lake enwrapt in mist ;
From which the neighbouring hills and waving
woods
Rose as high banks, and the more distant hills,
Gleam'd with a golden light, while from the
groves
Came warbling voices, pouring forth a strain,
The muse interprets, of warm grateful thanks
To Him who kept them through the live-long
night,
When prowlers walk'd the earth, or climb'd the
trees—
The trees, their homes, on whose high waving
boughs
They slept in peace, unhar'm'd, then sallying
forth

With earliest dawn to hymn their Maker's praise.
Hark to the sound of whispering winds at eve,
Rustling among the branches ; or at morn,
When scarce the wakeful lark his matin sings,
Soaring and warbling from amid the heath,
Till lost in mid air ! Stirring winds are then
Heard in the woods, e'en like the solemn sound
Of weltering waves that idly onward roll
Over smooth sands, unchafed by barrier rocks,
Making a soothing murmur. He who roves
Through shady lanes, where overhead the rose
Droops in its beauty, and the tiny lamps
Of glow-worms kindle in the mossy banks,
May hear those vesper sounds among the trees.
And oft in autumn, when the sun is set,
And twilight lingers still o'er dale and plain,
As loth to let the night usurp her place,
May hear soft winds, sporting the woods among,
Or 'mid the corn, causing those rustling sounds
Which seem as if the ears themselves had life,
And would form words expressive of that praise
The Psalmist calls on all inanimate things

To body forth ; — the sun, the moon, the stars,
Fire, and all hail, snow, vapours, stormy winds,
Mountains, and fruitful trees, to praise the Lord ;
Those rustling sounds do seem to bid the heart
Forego its sadness, and all haunting cares
To keep their distance ; murmuring at still eve,
Breathing of peace and hope, most solemn they ;
And he who hears them longs to hear again
Those sounds unearthly, which advancing morn
Nor noon may share in ; for all matin sounds
Cease when the air grows warm, and frequent steps
Are on the green turf ; or along the road
The ponderous waggon creaks upon its way.
But those who list such matins, vespers too,
Nature's pure chant, must rise while drowsy men
Rest on their beds, while yet no curling smoke
Wreathes from the cottage, while the watch dog's
 bay
Is silent, and a few dim stars on high
Still linger in the blue expanse. And then
His walk at eve must be when bustling sounds

Of life have ceased, and the soft fresh gale
Is fragrant with sweet scents of balmy flowers.
And aye, amid the sounds of morn, at eve
Of winds and streams, and warbling voices heard
'Mid glens and glades, making a grateful chorus,
There is a noiseless vesper, and a matin,
That ceaseth never in those pleasant months,
When he who walks abroad may see around him
Symbols of heavenly things recurring ever ;
The dews, the silent dews, at morn or eve,
That gem the green sod, cheering all on earth.
Be they, or flowers or buds, green blades or corn,
All are refresh'd. That same pure heavenly dew
Is silent, changeless, stealthy ; yet without it
All life must fail, all gladsome things be silent,
All flowers must wither, and the hot parch'd
earth
Become e'en as a desert. Why, O man,
Why dost thou fail to render that pure worship
All nature yields ? Why on thy drowsy bed
Dost thou still sleep, when matin birds are singing

And flowers are opening, and the pleasant wind
Is breathing round thee, and the doors are open
Of sacred fanes where holy men have knelt
On sabbath days, and oft, on week days too ?
Not mourning now the hours they loved to yield
To Him who saved them, who nor toil nor time
Spared for his brethren's sake, when on this earth
His weary steps were seen, and oft his tears
Fell fast for those who scorned his lowly guise.
Years have past since, and blessed ones have risen
From off this earth, and they are waiting now
The break of that glad morn, which soon shall rise
On sleeping, dreaming thousands ; ay, on those
Who dream no more, whose beds no kind hand
makes,
No friend sits by, the lone, the dark, the chill,
Where all are equal, most forgotten lie
By those who loved them ; for the gates of death
Are oft oblivious, and few care to think
Of those whose spirits wait, and fondly hope,
For that bright morn, when He who came to save

This woe-fraught world shall surely come again,
And take it for his own, and hurl from hence,
Those hated guests, twin brothers, death and sin.
And he, the foul one, who has reign'd long
Prince of the air, a murderer from the first,
But destined soon to quit the ransom'd earth,
And hear the shout that waits his hurling forth
To fire and chaos, and the pit that hath
No bottom where the foot may find a hold.
Oh then, loud songs shall burst from glade and
glen !

But not as now, matins and vesper songs,
Alone of birds, or whispering winds, or streams,
Heard loudest, when all sounds of life are still ;
Or, perhaps, a few lone voices chanting forth
His praise who made them, in few fanes at
best ;

But songs displacing groans, and gladsome chaunts
Taking the place of wailings, and bright smiles
Instead of sighs ; and children's happy voices,
Blended with harpings loud, and songs of birds,

Striving to sing as loud as men can chant.
And strange sounds from glad creatures, murmur-
ing, blissful ;
Expressive of the fulness which all hearts
Do share in ; one glad universal chorus
Of love, and holiest gratitude arising
From off the ransom'd earth, which gladly breaketh
Into most glorious songs, and is at rest.



PASQUE-FLOWER.

HAIL to thee, lovely flower
On the wide moor's lonely breast ;
Awake at the star-lit hour,
When the skylark leaves her nest !

Anemone pulsatilla. Pasque-flower.

Generic name derived from a Greek word, signifying the wind :
being readily agitated by the slightest breeze ; specific from
the season of flowering, about Pasque time, or Easter.

Opening

Very early in the morning.

Closing

At even-tide.

PASQUE-FLOWER.



PENING to the changing skies of
 April sits the wild anemone, or
 pasque-flower, in her upland so-
 litude, alone, in all her beauty: for no sister
 hath she on her long floral stalk. What
 doeth she there, a solitary flower, now with
 driving storms and the hollow moaning of
 wild winds; and now with the rainbow cir-
 cling over her, and rain drops on the grass
 around her, glittering and waving in the
 glorious sunbeams as they struggle through
 the clouds? Sitteth she not there as the
 harbinger of sunbeams and soft showers,
 noting that the nightingale, sweetest of Bri-
 tish songsters, is about to build her nest;
 that the cuckoo and the wryneck, with the
 numerous family of swallows, swifts, sand-

martins, and the “temple-haunting martlets” —welcome birds—are close at hand ; that the orange-tipped butterfly, frequenting the borders of woods and shady lanes, will soon be here in company with the small white and cabbage butterflies, younger sisters of the vernal butterfly, the earliest of the year, which braves the winds of March and flits among the yellow blossoms of the gorse? She heralds, too, the constellations rising in their turn ; and he who sees her thus watching the clouds and sunbeams as they come and go, may look when evening has closed in for the appearing of Serpentarius towards the east ; for Anser, Lacerta, Stellio, and Libra, with its beautiful collection of bright twinkling stars, on the ecliptic ; and when the nights are clear,

“That milky way

Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest

Powder'd with stars.”

The soaring lark finds her awake in the gray morning, when the flowers on the heath are sleeping around, and all is still as midnight. The lark sings to her, and she watches his upward progress, soaring and warbling, till he seems but as a speck in the firmament of heaven.

Fond bird, that swift on duteous wing,
Preced'st the shadowy paths of spring,
When first around our changeful skies,
Renew'd her soft'ning lustres rise.
That fondly fram'st the cradling sphere,*
As genial breathes the rolling year ;
Resign'd in gloom of wintry hours,
For Thebes, or Nilus' sultry towers.
Like thee, within this sorrowing breast,
Affection reigns a halcyon guest,
Leads the gay dance of sprightly joys,
That life's relenting gleam employs.
But ne'er from distant shores awhile
Inconstant woos a wayward smile,

* Alluding to the peculiar construction of a swallow's nest.

Ah no ! whate'er reverse may prove,
'Tis mine, unchanging, still to love.
To love—but O ! what mortal name
Can bind to earth the soaring flame ?
My Saviour, whom in Heaven, like Thee,
Or whom on earth, beloved may be ?
O ! grant, that as, on punctual wing,
This gentle bird precedes the spring ;
As buds unfold, and flowers appear,
And beauty crowns the grateful year ;
So, constant at thy temple gate,
My soul renew'd may soaring wait,
And bear with grateful heart to heaven,
Each gift thy gracious hand has given.

Smiling, smiling to the changing skies of
April, sits the wild anemone, pre-eminent
among her sisters of the heath, associated
with the birds and wandering butterflies of
spring, and her welcome constellations, look-
ing down from amid the clouds, when all
seems dark on earth. But the sunbeams

and the showers will soon perfect her matron beauty, and then he who passes by may see small feathery seeds, waiting only for a passing breeze to waft them from off the downy receptacle, round which the petals circled. And here it may, perhaps, be well to speak concerning the wonderful arrangement of the vegetable kingdom, by means of which, each seed has its own peculiar facilities for finding a lodgment in the earth. Every seed, then, consists of four different parts, the cotyledon or seed-lobe, the heart or corculum placed within the seed-lobe, the eye or hilum, a sort of external scar, and, lastly, the seed-coat or arillus. Each of these dissimilar parts has a separate function to perform, and is essential to the development of even the smallest seed. The cotyledons nourish the young plant when it expands within the earth; they furnish, likewise, the first leaves,

and frequently accompany the ascending stem, when it emerges to the light, changing from white to a light green tint; and, as if unwilling to forego the duties of their subterraneous life, they perform occasionally the office of leaves for a short time to the infant plant, and then decay. This peculiarity is very obvious in the garden bean. The heart, or corculum, is very elegant in its expansion, changing often from a feathery appearance to a tuft of leaves, which gradually rises upwards, and when the nature of the plant renders unnecessary the farther ministration of the seed-lobes, it accompanies the stem. The heart, too, contains within itself the rudiments of future leaves; equally in the minuter as the larger kinds, in the garden bean and acorn as in the chervil and the hemp, the tobacco, of which one hundred and twelve weigh only a single grain, and the white poppy,

which is computed to contain in its urn-shaped seed-vessel, thirty-two thousand seeds. Those of the currant afford familiar objects for the microscope; the ligneous parts of the future plant are readily discovered with the aid of a magnifier. In those of the white water-lily, or can, the *Nymphæa* of ancient botanists, from being found in the fabled haunts of water nymphs, the embryo leaves are so clearly developed, that it is even possible to discover to what kind of plant the seeds belong. In examining those of the trembling grass, a perfect plant became apparent, with its small branching root, and tiny blades of grass. Seeds of the strawberry, in like manner, present the appearance of strawberries in miniature.

“Lo! on each seed, within its slender rind,
Life's golden threads in endless circles wind.
Maze within maze the lucid webs are roll'd,
And, as they burst, the living flame unfold.

The pulpy acorn, as it swells, contains
The oak's vast branches in its milky veins ;
Each ravell'd bud, fine film, and fibre line
Traced with small pencil on the small design :
Grain within grain successive harvests swell,
And boundless forests slumber in a shell."

Three imperishable agents, pervading alike the majestic frame of man, as the smallest blade of grass ; ministering to the greenness of the hills, and the blue mistiness of the distant mountains, are essential to the development of seeds. Atmospheric air, heat, and moisture, are everywhere discoverable. Oxygen gas, likewise, an ingredient in our atmosphere, is absorbed by seeds in vegetating. Hence, to cite a familiar instance, it happens not unfrequently, that if lettuce-seed is sown in separate pots of earth, the one open to the air, the other in the exhausted receiver of an air-pump, the seeds contained in the former soon be-

gin to vegetate, and shoot to the height of at least two inches in about three weeks; but in the latter none appear. Still the vital power continues unimpaired; requiring only to be stimulated by the ministry of heat and moisture; and thus it would have remained dormant, yet existing, if ages, instead of days, had passed over it. If the under soil of old botanic gardens is thrown up, species reappear which have been unseen in the same spot within the memory of man; earth, likewise, taken from a considerable depth is often covered with young plants.

Very curious, too, is that dormant faculty within a seed, which urges the young root in a direction opposed to the stem: that, while the stem presses upward, the root goes downward, with its own elaborate and beautiful machinery, its sap-vessels and absorbing vessels, to draw moisture from the earth. The descent of one, and the up-

rising of the other, are doubtless occasioned by the agents already mentioned, acting equally on the root and leaf-bud, and causing an ascent and elongation: the one designed to fix a plant or tree firmly in its place of growth; the other, with its flowers, or leaves, or fruit, to minister to the delight, or to the wants of man, yielding seed after its kind, and embellishing the surface of the earth. The loss or preservation of that vital principle, concerning which I have just spoken, is equally curious and worthy of remark. The seeds of many garden flowers and culinary plants lose their vegetative power in the course of a short time. Others may be exposed to all seasons, and great vicissitudes of climate, and even continue buried for ages beneath the soil, till an exposure to the air and light enables them to bud forth.

In northern latitudes, two tempestuous

seasons, the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, materially assist in the dispersion of seeds. Summer breezes, or fierce winds, are to them as winged steeds, bearing them over moors and mountains to the destined place of their growth. Tornadoes are often required to drive forth from out the dark pine-forests of northern regions their firmly adhering cones. Spring gales disperse over the fields of Britain seeds from such dry stems as have remained in sheltered places during the winter months. Others which ripen in the summer, are upborne by breezes which scatter them in lanes and meadows. Hence it happens not unfrequently that the seeds of mosses, and those of different flowers, are conveyed to high places on which a thin and meagre soil has been deposited by the decay of crustaceous lichens, whence they spring forth, and clothe the arid soil with a luxuriant vegetation.

Beautiful is it to observe the infinite variety of means by which the same purpose is effected. The seeds of at least fifty genera are furnished with prickles, hooked at the end; these adhere to such animals as either frequent or graze the places of their growth, and are conveyed to distant parts. The chamois, bounding from rock to rock, on the mountains of Carniola, Greece, and Carpathia, conveys to the Alpine regions of Switzerland and Savoy, the flowers which cover his native soil. Antelopes, spread nearly over the whole of Africa, partially in Eastern Europe, and throughout the plains of Western, Middle, and Southern Asia, bear from one region to another the prickly seeds which have adhered to their fur. Seeds belonging to a hundred and thirty-eight species are either winged, or else provided with downy appendages, which render them both light

and buoyant, and cause them to float upon the air when scarcely any wind is stirring. In others, the capsules open when the seeds are ripe, and dislodge them with a sudden jerk. And how very beautiful are those winged or curiously constructed seeds which the winds rock in their green cradles before bearing them away! Those of the common dandelion seem like fairy shuttlecocks; others may be compared to feathers; others, again, rise on slender stalks, with one minute groove fitting into the other, or rest like small diadems on the maternal calyx, as if unwilling to forego their hold. Those of the carline thistle are tiny darts, headed with a plume. Ossian remarked the rapid dispersion of seeds, when, many ages since, he observed in his own mountain home, among rocks and cataracts, the singular construction and elegant appearance of this little seed floating over the wild heath, or

borne upwards by the wind. "Zephyrs," said he, "are sporting on the plain and pursuing the thistle's beard."

Flowers delight the eye with their construction or their beauty; but not less interesting are the capsules of different plants, treasuring up the future riches of the vegetable kingdom, and placed on footstalks, that they may be the more exposed to the action of the wind. And in these, what infinite variety! Some are barrel-shaped, others are like octagon boxes, a few are egg-shaped, some are round, and covered with lids; others, again, may be compared to a balloon with its boat attached. The seed-vessel of the common poppy resembles a Roman urn, and it is more than probable that the forms of many ancient vessels, such as pitchers and goblets, may have been suggested by differently shaped capsules. When the rich crimson petals begin to

fade, the seed-containing vessel is completely closed; by degrees the cover becomes gradually elevated, till it presents the appearance of a beautiful little dome, supported by a circular range of pillars, and affording as many separate openings for the escape of the imprisoned seeds. Nor less deserving of attention is that change of position in the calyx-supporting stems, for the more ready dispersion of the treasures which they contain. Of this the chickweed and the cyclamen offer familiar instances. In one the stalk gradually twists itself spirally downwards till it reaches the ground, and even penetrates the earth; cradling the seeds, and most probably yielding nourishment from the parent plant; as, when sown, they uniformly refuse to vegetate. The other, to which Linnæus gave the name of Dodecatheon, signifying twelve heathen deities, from the singular elegance of its construc-

tion, presents, on the contrary, a very different appearance. The bending flower-stalk becomes gradually erect, the pitcher-shaped capsules are upturned to the sun, and the seeds remain till fully ripe, when the capsules begin to open, and the seeds are scattered by the wind.

The pasque-flower which gave rise to these remarks, grew on a common amongst wild thyme and juniper, sheltered towards the east by an ancient wood, and watered by a streamlet which now hurried impetuously on, and now flowed calmly among corn fields and meadows, reflecting and partaking the beauty of all around, till whirling again in troublous eddies, its mellow voice was heard sounding through the vale. Common objects and familiar scenes ever awaken the deepest interest. He who stood on that wild common might remember it in far-off scenes; for the old wood had its

own deep beauty; the shadows of drooping branches, beech or hazel, played upon the stream that flowed beneath them; and in the distance, "the green pastoral farm came out into the light," and such sounds as awaken thoughts of rural life were borne upon the breeze. I have often stood there, in all the loveliness of a fine spring morning, when dew was on the grass, and the sky-lark up in air, and the bleating of sheep was heard upon the common. In autumn, too, it was my favourite resort; for then, far as the eye could reach, swept the resounding woodlands, with the solemn sound of waving branches and contending winds, and the richness of their glowing tints. Then, too, the air was filled with thistle-down, and the floating seeds of the dandelion and the purple goat's-beard; and on the dancing waves of the bright stream floated the seeds of different water plants, and such as fell

from the bordering trees. Those of the water-fennel which grew there, resembled small canoes, hollowed in the middle, and raised at both ends into a prow; those of the bull-rush were constructed like a lobster's egg; and what I have frequently observed on the ripples of that small stream, when autumn seeds fell from the bordering flowers, or were carried thither by the wind, occurs on a large scale throughout the vegetable kingdom.

In countries which have never been brought into cultivation, where native forests extend to the water side, and the cliffs are covered with overshadowing foliage of native growth, the seeds of such plants and trees as grow beside them are generally adapted for floating on the water. The kernels of the maritime pine are enclosed in capsules resembling small bony shoes, notched on the under side, and covered on the upper with a

cuticle not unlike a ship's hatch. Like the shoes of the fabled hero of fairy-land, they are those of speed and silence, passing over the surface of the billows, and journeying on by day and night, amidst storms and waves, where no human foot would dare to follow them. The fruit of the great gourd is contained in capsules resembling bottles; that of the cocoa and hazel in small casks which are capable of floating with the currents from one hemisphere to another. The berries of the royal pimento, common to the shores of Louisiana, are encrusted with wax, and are thus enabled to resist the effect of salt water.

“No star have they to guide their course
Or Tyrian cynosure,”

or pilot to guide them over the boundless ocean. Yet still they journey on, aided by

the winds and waves, till they arrive at the places of their destination.*

Thus have I essayed to blend with the unassuming pasque-flower, blooming on her native heath, thoughts that may, perchance, incline the heart to explore, still farther, the wonders of creation. An harbinger is she of flowers and green leaves; she heralds the coming back of birds and butterflies, and the rising of glittering constellations. But more than this, she is inseparably connected, not only by a bond of union with the earth and air, but is linked to that invisible chain of beings which holds the universe together in the bond of coeval existence.

What learn we from this? Ancient poets, beneath the quivering boughs of silver-barked birch-trees, surveying nature as a glorious temple, peopled with imaginary beings, erected altars to them on the sunny turf,

* "Wonders of the Vegetable Kingdom."

or beneath the shade of oracular trees. Had the light of natural history shone on them, as it shines on us, they would have seen only in the beautiful construction of a simple flower, fresh causes of belief in the ministry and presiding care of thoughtful genii. But the Christian poet, borrowing from all natural objects some fresh incentive to active duty, might look upon the flower of the heath, and remember, in the beautiful words of a gifted writer, that "any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness."

THE END.

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