GERANIUM.
Poets in the Garden

by

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author of

"Queenie," "In the West Countrie," "Brown Eyes," etc.

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POETS IN THE FIELD.
## List of Illustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flower</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geranium</td>
<td>Frontispiece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convolvulus. Pink May</td>
<td>Opposite Page 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisy. Corn Flower</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollyhock</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine. Dahlia</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily. Larkspur</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet-William</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction.

"We are the sweet flowers
Born of sunny showers,
Think where'er you see us what our beauty saith;
Utterance mute and bright
Of some unknown delight,
We fill the air with pleasure by our simple breath."

These delightful lines by Leigh Hunt form a fitting preface to this little anthology—Flowers and what poets wrote of them! It may be owned at once that poetry, being the highest expression of emotion, the best thoughts of our sweet singers will here be missed. But from the days when Chaucer knelt on the "swote grasse" to reverence the Daisy, till Wordsworth found in flowers "thoughts too deep for tears," poets have loved to tell and we to read of "violet-broidered glens" and fair Perdita's flower-knots.
Poets in the Garden.

The following pages will show which among our masters of song have described flowers the most truthfully and therefore the best. The truly English love of flowers and gardens may be traced from the days of the troubadours, who have told us of the constant delight fair dames and damsels took in making garlands and adorning their houses with fresh greenery and flowers.

"Mery is in the tyme of May
Whenne foules singe in her lay;
Floures on appyl trees and perye,
Smale foules singe merye.
Ladyes strewe here boures
With red Roses and Lilye floures."

Romance of Richard Caur de Lion.

Later, in Elizabethan days, our ancestors had no small knowledge of flowers, if we may judge from the writings of old Gerard the herbalist; while of Bacon's essays few are more pleasantly read than that beginning: "God Almighty first planted a garden; and indeed it is the purest of all human pleasures." Shakespeare himself is, as ever, first both in his knowledge and love of flowers. One feels how he has strayed himself by Warwickshire streams that wind through meadows rich in flowers then as now, where—

"Daisies pied, and Violets blue,
And Lady-smocks all silver-white,
And Cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight."

Milton again loves stately gardens; but, perhaps because of his blindness, his thoughts turn rather to the classic Acanthus and Amaranth, and scenes—

"Where west-winds with musky wing
About the cedar'd alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells."
Poets in the Garden.

Herrick loves to crack his jests on flowers, as, for example, when he tells how Violets first became blue. We have all heard of Linnaeus’ dial of flowers, which noted the opening and closing of the petals so carefully that the time of day might be known thereby. Yet this idea had been anticipated long before, as we may learn from Marvell’s lines—

"How well the skilful gardener drew,
Of herbs and flowers this dial new!
Where from above the milder sun
Does through the fragrant zodiac run,
And, as it works, th’ industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we."

In the next age when the stiff Dutch style became fashionable in gardens, and hedges and trees were clipped into barbarous shapes, the allusions to flowers made by the poets of those days are few and formal. But nearer our own century we have Burns kneeling by his plough to admire a’ Daisy, not knowing that the Father of English poets once did the same; while Keats writes in his last illness, “I muse with the greatest affection on every flower I have known from my infancy.” Some poets seem to have taken a certain flower as their special favourite, reminding us of the days when the Golden Violet was the prize of the conquering minstrel. The guilds of the Low Countries adopted the names of flowers; while the Broom of the “proud Plantagenets” and the Red and White Roses of later English story, the Lilies of earlier France with the Violet of the Napoleons, the bonnie Heather of Scotland and the Shamrock of Ireland, are but a few examples of the part that flowers have played in the history of nations. Then if we leave the garden to ramble afield, with what loving words our poets have described the “wildings of nature,” as Campbell called them! Keats writes of “April’s tender younglings,” Shelley of
Poets in the Garden.

"The children of the hours;" Emerson has a laughing expression of his own, "The flowers—tiny sect of Shakers;" and Campbell, once more, after describing what memories of former sunny summers the field-flowers recalled, goes on to exclaim—

"Even now what affections the Violet awakes
What loved little islands, twice seen in the lakes,
Can the wild Water-lily restore!
What landscapes I read in the Primrose’s looks!
What pictures of pebbles and minnowy brooks
In the Vetches that tangle the shore!"

Before concluding, I must express my grateful thanks to the living poets herein quoted, who have all given me their kind permission to make use of their works; as also to the Messrs. Macmillan as publishers for Lord Tennyson; and to the Rev. H. Ellacombe, whose "Plant-lore of Shakespeare" has been of infinite help.

May Crommelin.
Poets in the Garden.

ACACIA.
The Acacia waves her yellow hair
Lonely and sweet, nor loved the less
For flowering in a wilderness.

MOORE.
The slender Acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree:
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the Pimpernel dozed on the lea.

Tennyson.
Rose-mouthed Acacias that laugh as they climb,
Like plumes for a queen's hand fashioned to fan her
With wind more soft than a wild dove's wing.

Swinburne.

CANTHUS.
To watch the emerald coloured water falling
Thro' many a woven Acanthus wreath divine.

Tennyson.
Poets in the Garden.

ALMOND.
Like to an Almond-tree y-mounted hye
On top of green Selinis all alone,
With blossoms brave bedecked daintily.

Fleeting and falling
Where is the bloom
Of yon fair Almond-tree?
It is sunk in the tomb.

* * *
Yesterday on the boughs
They hung scented and fair,
To-day they are scattered
The breeze best knows where.

When all about your palace walls
The sunlit Almond-blossom shakes.

MISS LANDON.

LOE.
But high in amphitheatre above,
His arms the everlasting Aloe threw.

An Indian plant with leaves like horn,
And, all along its stubborn spine
Were humps, with angry spike and thorn
Armed, like the porcupine.

In midst of which one sullen bud
Surveyed the world with head aslant,
High-throned, and looking like the god
Of this strange Indian plant.

At last, one summer night, when all
The garden flowers were dreaming still,
And still the old Baronial hall,
The oak-trees on the hill,
Poets in the Garden.

A loud and sudden sound there stirred,
As when a thunder-cloud is torn;
Such thunderclaps are only heard
When little gods are born.

The peacocks screamed, and every rook
Upon the elms at roost did caw;
Each inmate straight the house forsook:
They searched—and, last,—they saw

That sullen bud to flower had burst
Upon the sharp-leaved Aloe there—
A wondrous flower; whose breath disperseth
Rich odours in the air.

A flower, colossal, dazzling white,
And fair as is the Sphinx's face,
Turned broadly to the moon by night
From some vast temple's base.

Owen Meredith.

MARANTH or LOVE-LIES-BLEEDING.

The Amaranth remains so long without fading, that its leaves were much used for adorning altars during festivals, hence it was chosen by the poets as an emblem of immortality.

Immortal Amaranth, a flower which once
In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life,
Began to bloom; but soon, for man's offence,
To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows
And flowers aloft,* * * *
With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks.

Milton.

Bid Amarantus all his beauty shed.

Milton.
Poets in the Garden.

But, propt on beds of Amaranth and Moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us blowing lowly)
   With half-dropt eyelids still
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
   His waters from the purple hill.

TENNYSON.

MARANTHUS CANDATUS.

The drooping Amaranth was formerly called Flower-gentle (see Ben Jonson's line under HYACINTH)—also Florinor, purple velvet flower, or discipline de religieuse. Campbell has given Love-lies-bleeding a place and name in his poem on O'Connor’s ill-fated child. Her bridegroom, Moran, was slain by her brother; thenceforth she chooses to dwell on the spot where he died and was buried by her.

A hero's bride, this desert bower
   It ill befits thy gentle breeding;
And wherefore dost thou love the flower
   They call—my Love-lies-bleeding?

This purple flower my tears have nurst,
   A hero's blood supplied its bloom;
I love it, for it was the first
   That grew on Connacht Moran's tomb.

Nor would I change my buried love
   For any heart of living mould;
No, for I am a hero's child;
   I'll hunt my quarry in the wild,

And still my home this mansion make,
   Of all unheeded and unheeding,
And cherish, for my warrior's sake,
   The flower of Love-lies-bleeding.

CAMPBELL.
Poets in the Garden.

The following exquisite little roundel has only lately been "fashioned, round as a pearl or a tear."

Love-lies-bleeding,
Love-lies-bleeding in the bed whereover
Roses lean with smiling mouths or pleading:
Earth lies laughing where the sun's dart clove her;
Love-lies-bleeding.

Stately shine his purple plumes, exceeding
Pride of princes: nor shall maid or lover
Find on earth a fairer sign worth heeding.

Yet may love, sore wounded, scarce recover
Strength and spirit again, with life receding;
Hope and joy, wind-winged, about him hover:
Love-lies-bleeding.

SWINBURNE.

ANEMONE or WINDFLOWER (also PASQUE FLOWER).

Most of these quotations belong, of course, to the frail Wood Anemone. But the red one sung by Tennyson shares, with the Pheasant's Eye, the reputation of being that flower which sprang from the blood of Adonis.

The silence and the sound,
In the lone places, breathe alike of Thee;
The temple twilight of the gloom profound,
The dew-cup of the frail Anemone.

MRS. HEMANS.

Flower of starry clearness bright,
Quivering urn of coloured light.

MRS. HEMANS.

Anemones—weeping flowers,
Dyed in winter's snow and rain.

CLARE.

One frail and fair Anemone.

SHELDON.
Poets in the Garden.

There grew pied Windflowers.

SHELLEY.

There was a little lawny islet
By Anemone and Violet,
Like mosaic paven.

SHELLEY.

And at the root through lush green grasses burned
The red Anemone.

TENNYSON.

The large-eyed Windflowers forlorn too
Blow among it, unbeholden:
Some white, some crimson, others
Purple blackening to the heart.
From the deep Wheat sea, which smothers
Their bright globes up, how they start!

OWEN MEREDITH.

The Windflower and the Violet, they perished long ago,
And the Wild Rose and the Orchis died amid the summer glow;
But on the hill the Golden Rod, and the Aster in the wood,
And the Yellow Sunflower by the brook in autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague
on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone from upland,
glade, and glen.

BYRANT.

Soon we shall pass
Together to our home, while round our feet
The Crocus flames like gold, the Windflowers white
Wave their soft petals on the breeze, and all
The choir of heaven lift up their silent song
To the unclouded heavens.

L. MORRIS.

'Tis the White Anemone, fashioned so
Like to the stars of the winter snow,
First thinks, "If I come too soon, no doubt
Poets in the Garden.

I shall seem but the snow that has staid too long,
So 'tis I that will be Spring's unguessed scout;"
And wide she wanders the woods among.

LORD LYTTON.

APPLE-TREE.

An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly Apple rotten at the heart.

SHAKESPEARE.

When roasted Crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl.

SHAKESPEARE.

How like Eve's Apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show!

SHAKESPEARE.

Summer snow of Apple blossoms running up from glade
to glade.

E. B. BROWNING.

And cottage gardens smelling everywhere
Confused with smell of orchards.

E. B. BROWNING.

Under deep Apple boughs
My lady hath her house;
She wears upon her brows
    The flower thereof;
All saying, but what God saith,
To her is as vain breath:
She is more strong than death,
    Being strong as love.

SWINBURNE.
Poets in the Garden.

APRICOT.

Go, bind thou up those dangling Apricocks,
Which, like unruly children, make their sire
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight.

SHAKESPEARE.

RUM OR CUCKOOPINT.

This flower is also known by the name of the Wake Robin; and in some parts of England children call it Lords and Ladies—with special reference to the crimson fruit-spike that stands so boldly up within its protecting green sheath.

As if she coveted the fair
White lining of the Silver-weed,
And Cuckoopint that shaded their
Empurpled seed.

JEAN INGELOW.

O, Cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper,
That hangs in your clear green bell.

JEAN INGELOW.

ASPHODEL.

By those happy souls who dwell,
In yellow fields of Asphodel.

POPE.

An weel befa' the bonny May,
That wins in yonder glen!
Wha loes the modest truth sae weel,
Wha's aye sae kind, an aye sae leal,
An pure as blooming Asphodel
Amang sae mony men!

HOGG.
Poets in the Garden.

With her ankles sunken in Asphodel,
She wept for the Roses of earth which fell
From her lap when the wild car dravd to hell.
Heart wilt thou go?
"No, no!
Wise hearts are warmer so!"

E. B. BROWNING.

Fair as the fabulous Asphodels.

SHELLEY.

Aster.

Chide me not, laborious band,
For the idle flowers I brought;
Every Aster in my hand
Goes home loaded with a thought.

EMERSON.

Azalea.

Azaleas flush the island floors,
And the tints of heaven reply.

EMERSON.

The fair Azalea bows,
Beneath its snowy crest.

S. WHITMAN.
The Sweet Balsam was much prized by our ancestresses for its supposed medicinal virtues. But, perhaps, as with many more of their healing plants, faith was the chief ingredient that worked the cure. The Yellow Balsam is also called *Noli me tangere*, or, Touch-me-not, because when its pods are ripe "the slightest agitation causes them to curl suddenly and hurl the seeds to some distance." *See Sweet Herbs also for "Baum."*

The several chairs of order, look you, scour
With juice of Balm and every precious flower.

*Shakespeare.*

As sweet as Balm, as soft as air, as gentle.

*Shakespeare.*

*Embattled Balme.*

*Spenser.*

In that you sent me Balm,
I judge you meant thereby,
That clean extinct was all my flame,
From whence no sparks did fly.

*Turberville.*

And Balm, that yields a finer juice,
Than all that China can produce.

*C. Smart.*

Keats's pathetic tale of the fair Italian maiden cannot be quoted at greater length here. Poor Isabel's lover had been secretly murdered by her three cruel brothers. In a dream he tells his mourning love where he lies buried in the greenwood. Followed by her old nurse, forth she goes to the grave, now grassy...
green, and digs till she finds the moulding corpse. Then wrapping his dear head in her mantle, she hies home slowly weeping, and buries it in her pot of Basil which thenceforth bloomed marvellously. At last her devotion to the plant arouses her brethren's suspicions, who, stealing it, find the sign of their guilt—a skull.

She had no knowledge when the day was done,  
And the new morn she saw not; but in peace  
Hung over her Sweet Basil evermore,  
And moistened it with tears until the core  
* * * * * * *

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,  
Imploring for her Basil to the last.

No heart was there in Florence but did mourn,  
In pity of her love, so overcast.  
And a sad ditty of this story, borne  
From mouth to mouth, through all the country passed;  
Still is the burthen sung—"O cruelty,  
To steal my Basil-pot away from me!"

KEATS.

AY.

In the following passage Shakespeare embodies an idea similar to that found in the words of Ophelia, whose Violets "withered all when her father died." But to symbolize a king's death we have a nobler plant chosen. For students of English literature the Bay has still sadder associations, recalling to memory the wasted life and miserable end of our English Villon, Robert Greene. "Upon the poor dishonoured head of this strange genius, the wretched woman who was with him when he died set a garland of Bay-leaves."

'Tis thought the King is dead. We will not stay.  
The Bay-trees in our country are all withered.

SHAKESPEARE.

Marry, come up, my dish of chastity with Rosemary and Bays!

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

The Bay, quoth she, is of the victours born,
Yielded them by the vanquisht as theyr meeds,
And they therewith do Poetes heads adorne,
To sing the glory of their famous deeds.

SPENSER.

What therefore if I crown myself to-day?

Not the Bay! I choose no Bay,
(The fates deny us if we are overbold).

E. B. BROWNING.

The Bay-leaf that wants chafing to be sweet,
Before they wind it in a singer's hair.

SWINBURNE.

BEAN-FLOWER.

A boy and a girl
Making love, say—
The happier they!

Draw yourself up from the light of the moon,
And let them pass, as they will too soon,
With the Bean-flowers' boon,
And the blackbird’s tune,
And May and June.

BROWNING.

A cast of bees, a slowly moving wain,
The scent of Bean-flowers wafted up a dell,
would please her well.

JEAN INGELOW.

O June, O June, that we desired so,
Wilt thou not make us happy on this day?
Across the river thy soft breezes blow,
Sweet with the scent of Bean-fields far away.

W. MORRIS.
Poets in the Garden.

BELLA-DONNA LILY.

If the following fable requires explanation of the large portion not quoted, it is the old story of the belle dame sans merci. Just after the rapture of admiration with which the flower is first hailed, a dead man is found lying not far off.

Beautiful flower, that from the lone hillside,
Hangest thy fair head in the languid light
Of evening winds that wave thy young green tresses!
Hail happy innocence!
Ah, had he seen thee ere that frenzied hour!
Ah, had he known thee whoso'er he be.
"Whom dost thou speak of?" smiling said the flower;
"The dead man yonder? He was known to me."

* * * Go to. Need Beauty die
Because men curse her? blush because they bless?
* * * Fools are they all,
And fools they will be, all of them the same,
So long as Bella Donna is my name.

LORD LYTTON.

BLACKTHORN OR SLOE.

There is an old proverb known among farmers—

When the Sloe-tree is white as a sheet,
Sow your Barley whether dry or wet.

ANON.

Full crooked was that foule sticke,
And knottie here and there also,
And blacke as berrie or any Slo.

CHAUCER.

Before thy leaves thou com'st once more,
White blossoms of the Sloe!
Thy leaves will come as heretofore;
But this poor heart, its troubles o'er,
Will then lie low.

E. ELLIOTT.
Poets in the Garden.

* * * the faint blue sky above
The Blackthorn blossoms made meet roof for love.
W. Morris.

Now blooms the Lily by the bank,
The Primrose down the brae;
The Hawthorn's budding in the glen,
And milk-white is the Slae.
Burns.

BLUEBELL, see HYACINTH.

BLUEBOTTLE or CORNFLOWER.

An early English name for these blue stars in the gold Corn was Hurt-sickle; because, says old Gerard, it hindered the reapers by dulling the edge of their sickles. A still older classic myth tells how a fair youth, Cyanus, used to spend long summer days in the cornfields weaving garlands of these flowers, the gloriously dark-blue Centaurea. There he was found dead one noontide, lying half-covered by the blue blossoms he had gathered; on which Flora, touched by his devotion to her worship, changed his body into the Cornflower, hence called Centaurea Cyanus, "Whom the gods love die young." The gentle youth has many followers among those who have not even heard of him. Many a lass and lad still wend their way, as Victor Hugo sings—

Allez, allez, O jeunes filles,
Cueillir des bluets dans les blés.

It is strange that there is so little mention of the beautiful blue Cornflowers in our poetry, either early or late. Walter de Biblesworth, writing towards the close of the thirteenth century, mentions the ladies dancing the carole, their heads crowned with garlands of the Bluebottle—

Mener karole
Desouz chapeau de blaverole.

Some blue flower from the Corn,
That in her fingers erewhile she had borne,
Now dropped from them, still clung unto her gown.
W. Morris.
Poets in the Garden.

Bog-Myrtle.

And from the hollows is wafted the scent of Bog-Myrtle or Birch, Fragrant after the rain.

Author of "Olrig Grange."

Borage.

Sovereign plant to purge the veins of melancholy.

Burton.

And the Borage, blue-eyed with a thrill of pride, For warm is her welcome on every side.

Lord Lytton.

Bramble.

If reasons were as plenty as Blackberries, I would give no man a reason on compulsion.

Shakespeare.

There is a man... hangs odes on Hawthorns, and Elegies on Brambles.

Shakespeare.

Caught among the Blackberry vines, Feeding on the Ethiops sweet, Pleasant fancies overtook me; I said, "What influence we preferred Elect to dreams thus beautiful?"

* * * * *

The Vines replied, "And didst thou deem No influence from our berries went?"

Emerson.

Pale she was as the Bramble-blooms That fill the long fields with their faint perfumes, When the May-wind flits finely through sun-showers, Breathing low to himself in his dim meadow bowers.

Owen Meredith.
Poets in the Garden.

Thy fruit full well the schoolboy knows,
Wild Bramble of the Brake!
So, put thou forth thy small White Rose;
I love it for his sake.

* * * * *
Scorned Bramble of the Brake! once more
Thou bidd'st me be a boy,
To gad with thee the woodlands o'er,
In freedom and in joy.

ELLIOTT.

Broom.

Broom, the _Planta genista_, was well known in the Middle Ages as the badge of the proud Plantagenets. But its graces have been more sung by our later poets; it was strangely neglected by the earliest. Burns treats it tenderly, as he does all flowers, with grace of verse and loving pride besides in this plant of his native land; and yet he calls it the "humble Broom." Chaucer notices it twice:

Amid the Broom he baskèd in the sun.

* * * * * * * * *
There lacked no flower to my dome (judgment),
Ne not so much as flowre of Brome.

CHAUCER.

Broomed groves,
Whose shadow the dismissed bachelor loves.

SHAKESPEARE.

Sweet is the Broome-flowre, but yet sowe re enough.

SPENSER.

The Broom,
Yellow and bright, as bullion unalloyed,
Her blossoms.

COWPER.

The Broom,
Full-flowered and visible on every steep,
Along the copses runs in veins of gold.

WORDSWORTH.
Their groves o' sweet Myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green Breckan,
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow Broom.

Far dearer to me are yon humble Broom bowers,
Where the Blue-bell and Gowan lurk lowly unseen;
For there, lightly tripping amang the wild flowers,
A-list'ning the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

BURNS.

The Broom's betrothed to the bee.

HOOD.

O what anear but golden Brooms,
And a waste of reedy rills!
O what afar but the fine glooms
On the rare blue hills!

JEAN INGELOW.

Ay! we were fools, we Maries twain, and thought
To be into the summer back again,
And see the Broom glow in the golden world,
The gentle Broom on hill.

SWINBURNE.

As an upland bare and sear
In the waning of the year,
When the golden drops are withered off the Broom;
As a picture when the pride
Of its colouring hath died,
And faded like a phantom into gloom.

WHYTE MELVILLE.
Poets in the Garden.

BUTTERCUP or CROWFOOT (also KINGCUP).

When Daisies pied, and Violets blue,
And Lady-smocks all silver white,
And Cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight.

SHAKESPEARE.

There is some doubt as to whether Shakespeare meant Primroses or Buttercups in this passage. But there seems most reason to think it was the latter that did paint the meadows with delight. Jean Ingelow's "Million million drops of gold" describe more vividly than the words of any other poet the dazzling glory of Buttercups in the green of low-lying meadows, where the eye can look down on a brilliance of colour almost paining the eyes. The Wood Crowfoot is often sung by poets as "Goldilocks." Buttercups were also called by early writers Gold-cups, and Leopard's-foot.

Oh! I could wail my Kingcup-deckèd leas,
My spreading flocks of sheep alaye lily-white.

CHATTERTON.

When Daisies and Buttercups gladdened my sight,
Like treasures of silver and gold.

CAMPBELL.

Buttercups that will be seen,
Whether we will or no.

WORDSWORTH.

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The Buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy Melon-flower.

BROWNING.

The gold-eyed Kingcups fine.

TENNYSON.

And brooks with the Crowfoot flowers to strew
The sky-tinted water, white on blue.

BARNES.
Poets in the Garden.

And O the Buttercups! that field
O' the cloth of gold, where pennons swam—
Where France set up his lilies shield
His oriflam, is
And Henry's lion standard rolled;
What was it to their matchless sheen,
Their million million drops of gold
Among the green!

JEAN INGELOW.

I pluck the flowers I plucked of old;
The Cowslips claim their early friend;
About my feet, yet fresh and cold
The Buttercups do bend.

The selfsame Buttercups they seem,
Thick in the bright-eyed green, and such
As when to me their blissful gleam
Was all earth's gold—how much!

OWEN MEREDITH.
CACTUS.

And Cactuses a queen might don,
If weary of a golden crown,
And still appear as royal.

E. B. BROWNING.

CAMOMILE.

The more you tread it; the more you spread it.

OLD PROVERB.

Though the Camomile the more it is trodden on the faster it grows, yet youth the more it is wasted the sooner it wears.

SHAKESPEARE.

Medicinal, though bitter, and prepared
for salutary ends.

MALLEY.

CARNATION OR CLOVE-PINK (ALSO GILLYFLOWER).

The Carnation is dedicated to Zeus by its generic name Dianthus, the Flower of Jove. Its second name, Caryophyllus or nut-leaved, refers to the Indian Clove-tree, which it resembles in scent. This is also the origin of its name of Gillyflower, which in the Middle Ages was spelt in seventeen different ways and applied to many different flowers, Carnation, Pink, Sweetwilliam,
Marsh-lychnis, and several more. Carnation, originally "Coronation," was thus named from its being a favourite flower for the gay chaplets with which the ancients were wont to crown their heads at classic feasts: when, too, they—

As lyres were struck, and wine was poured,  
Set the white Death's-head on the board.  
Memento Mori.

It was also called Sops-in-Wine, or often simply "Sops," from being used like Rosemary to flavour wine at feasts. So, in "The Taming of the Shrew," we read how Petruchio, after his mad marriage, calls for wine. "A health," quoth he—

Quaffed off the muscadel,  
And threw the Sops all in the sexton's face.  
SHAKESPEARE.

Lastly, it was called July-flower.

The fairest flowers of the season  
Are our Carnations and streaked Gillyflowers,  
Which some call Nature's bastards.  
SHAKESPEARE.

I am the very Pink of courtesy.  
SHAKESPEARE.

Bring Coronations and Sops-in-Wine,  
Worn of Paramours.  
SPENSER.

Some of the quotations below relate to the popular idea, alluded to by Sir Walter Scott, that Gilliflowers would be found in heaven. Dr. Prior says the name Pink comes from Pinksten (Pfingsten?) the German for Pentecost—this being the Gilliflower for Whitsuntide. He adds, it is strange this word should be successively the name of a festival of the Church, of a flower, of an ornament in muslin called pinking, of a colour, and of a sword-stab. To these meanings Mr. Ellacombe, in his "Plant-lore of Shakespeare," adds yet another, viz., that of a small country vessel. As, for example, in "The Merry Wives of Windsor":

This Pink is one of Cupid's carriers;  
Clap on more sail—pursue!  
SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

Her lovely eyes like Pinks but newly spred.

\textit{Spenser.}

Carnations, purple, azure, or specked with gold.

\textit{Milton.}

Maiden-Pinks, of odour faint.

\textit{F. Beaumont.}

A morn
Of bright Carnations did o'erspread her face.

\textit{Drummond.}

Stay while ye will or goe
And leave no scent behind ye,
Yet, trust me, I shall know
The place where I may find ye.
Within my Lucia's cheek
Whose livery ye wear,
Play ye at hide or seek,
I'm sure to find ye there.

\textit{Herrick.}

You are a lovely July-flower,
Yet one rude wind or ruffling shower
Will force you hence, and in an hour.

You are the queen all flowers among,
But die you must, fair maid, ere long,
As he, the maker of this song.

\textit{Herrick.}

The fields about this city faire
Were all with roses set;
Gillyflowers and Carnations faire
Which canker could not fret.

\textit{Dead Men's Song.}

Their beds are made in the heavens high,
Down at the foot of our good Lord's knee,
Weel set about wi' Gillyflowers.

\textit{Clerk Sanders.}
Poets in the Garden.

Drayton apparently mistakes the origin of July-flower which was a corruption of Gillofer in his day.

The curious choice clove July-flower,
Whose kinds hight the Carnation.

DRAYTON.

And—

The brave Carnation, with sweet and sovereign power
(So of his colour called, although a July-flower)
With th' other of his kind, the speckled and the pale.

DRAYTON.

The speckled Carnation is no doubt the small kind called Sops-in-Wine.

There grows the Gilliflower—
The scarlet-dyed Carnation bleeding yet—
The rose and speckled flower called Sops-in-Wine.

BARNFIELD.

Like that sweet flower that yields great Jove delight;
He was Jove's flower when Jove was but a child.

COWLEY.

The pink of perfection.

GOLDSMITH.

And many a Rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air.

TENNYSON.

EDAR.

Or, thrown at gayer ease on some fair brow,
Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cooled,
Broad o'er my head the verdant Cedar wave,
And high Palmetos lift their graceful shade.

THOMSON.
Poets in the Garden.

Cover me, ye Pines!
Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs,
Hide me.

The garden stretches southward. In the midst
A Cedar spread his dark green layers of shade.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious East,
Sighing for Lebanon,

Dark Cedar, though thy limbs have here increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honeyed rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head

Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limbed Eve from whom she came.

TENNYSON.

ELANDINE (LESSER).

In Lyte's Herbal, "first set foorth in the Almaigne tongue in 1578," the author tells us that the Larger Celandine was called Swallow Herbe. "Bycause, as Plinie writeth, it was first found out by swallowes, and hath healed the eyes and restored sight to their young ones." The Lesser Celandine is no real relation of its tall namesake. Yet it also, says Lyte, was hence named, "bycause" that it sprung and flowered when the swallows came, and withered when they left. Ficary is another name sometimes given to it; Pilewort is its common one. If few others admire so greatly its bright little yellow face, Wordsworth has three times sung its charms. Furthermore he adds—

Build who will a pyramid,
Praise it is enough for me,
Poets in the Garden.

If there be but three or four
Who will love my little flower.
Pansies, Lilies, Kingcups, Daisies.
Let them live upon their praises;
* * * *
There's a flower that shall be mine,
'Tis the little Celandine.
* * * *
Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly, unassuming spirit.
Careless of thy neighbourhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane—there's not a place,
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Wordsworth.

There is a flower, the Lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain,
And the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again.

Wordsworth.

Our garden-fence, I see it plain,
With Ficaries, like a golden rain,
Showered on the earth below.

Mrs. Howitt.

Herry.

The Cherry seems to have been a most popular fruit in England in the Middle Ages. In "Homes of Other Days," by T. Wright, F.S.A., Cherry feasts and fairs are said to have been held in the great Cherry districts from early times under Henry IV., about 1411. Occleve says, looking on them as brief times of great gaiety—

Thy lyfe, my sone, is but a Cherry fayre.
Poets in the Garden.

And Gower wrote earlier, towards the end of the fourteenth century—

And so cometh hope in at last
When I none other foode knowe
And that endureth but a throwe,
Ryght as it were a Chery feste.

Cherise, of which many one fain is.

CHAUCER.

So we grew together,
Like to a double Cherry, seeming parted,
But yet a union in partition.

SHAKESPEARE.

O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing Cherries, tempting show.

SHAKESPEARE.

There is a garden in her face,
Where Roses and White Lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do grow;
There Cherries grow that none may buy,
Till Cherry-ripe themselves do cry.

RICHARD ALLISON.

Cherry-ripe, ripe, ripe! I cry,
Full and fair ones, come and buy!
If so be you ask me where
They do grow? I answer There,
Where my Julia’s lips do smile;
There’s the land, or Cherry-isle.

HERRICK.

Blow winds! and waft through all the rooms,
The snowflakes of the Cherry-blooms.

LONGFELLOW.
Poets in the Garden.

Wild Cherry boughs above us spread
The whitest shade was ever seen,
And flicker, flicker, came and fled
Sun-spots between.

JEAN INGELOW.

LEMATIS OR VIRGIN'S BOWER.

The Clematis is also called Traveller's Joy in some parts of England, and Old Man's Beard. It is almost prettiest in autumn, and Tennyson's description is, as always, the most accurate that could be imagined. Its hoary, downy seed-tufts do "o'erflourish" not only trees, but all thickets in its favourite haunts, as its tendrils creep and twine and trail in and out of stronger boughs.

The Traveller's Joy,
Most beauuteous when its flowers assume
Their autumn form of feathery plume.

BISHOP MANT.

Virgin's Bower trailing airily;
With others of the sisterhood.

KEATS.

And like an oaken stick in winter
O'erflourished with the hoary Clematis.

TENNISON.

LOVER OR TREFOIL.

What time the sun has from the west withdrawn
* * * * * the recent leaf
Of Clover 'gins to sleep, and white with dew,
Closes its tender triple-fingered palm,
Till morning dawn afresh.

HURDIS.

Mourn clam'ring craiks at close o' day,
'Mang fields o' flowering Clover gay.

BURNS.
Poets in the Garden.

While Clover blooms white o'er the lea,
And Roses blaw in ilka field.

BURNS.

Where white Clover, blooming fresh and wild,
Breathes like the kisses of a little child.

MRS. NORTON.

There came, from heaven, a flying turtle-dove,
And brought a leaf of Clover from above.
He dropped it, and, oh, happy they that find,
The triple flower is Faith and Hope and Love.

RÜCKERT.

Secret fires which glow
In Columbine and Clover-blow.

EMERSON.

The frail Bluebell peereth over
Rare broidry of the purple Clover.

TENNYSON.

---

COLUMBINE.

The Columbine is one of the flowers given away by Ophelia in her madness. And as all her nosegay seems to be symbolical, the question arises what our flower signifies to her. Fennel, which immediately precedes it, denotes flattery or double-dealing. The following quotation from Browne may help us to solve the question—

The Columbine in tawny often taken
Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken:
Flora's choice buttons of a russet dye
Is hope even in the depths of misery.

It is doubtful if "Flora's russet buttons" still refer to the Columbine.
Poets in the Garden.

Come forth now with thine eyen, Columbine.

CHAUCE.

She is the Violet,
The Daisy delectable,
The Columbine commendable,
The Jelofer amiable,
This most goodly flowre.

SKELE.

There's Fennel for you and Columbines.

SHAKESP.

What's that—a Columbine?
No! that thankless flower grows not in my garden.

CHAP.

Bringe hither the Pincke and purple Cullambine.

SPES.

No more, at yearly festivals,
We, Cowslip balls,
Or chains of Columbines, shall make
For this or that occasion's sake.

HERR.

And the large-leaved Columbine,
Arch of door and window-mullion did right sylvanly entwine.

EBR.

Columbine with horn of honey.

EMER.

O, Columbine, open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-doves dwell.

JEAN.

*
Poets in the Garden.

ORN-COCKLES.

In the first passage quoted below, Drayton doubtless refers to the richly purple Corn-cockle (*Agrostemma githago*). Of which, says Gerard: "What hurte it doth among corne! the spoyle unto bread, as well in colour, taste, and unwholesomeness, is better known than desired."

The crimson Darnel flower, the Blue-bottle, and gold,
Which though esteemed but weeds, yet for their dainty hues
And for their scent not ill, they for their purpose choose.

DRAYTON.

Allons! allons! sowed Cockle reaps no corn.

SHAKESPEARE.

And thus of all my harvest-hope I have
Nought reaped but a weedie crop of care,
Which when I thought have thresht in swelling sheave,
Cockle for corn and chaff for barley bare.

SPENSER.

CORN-FLOWER, see BLUE-BOTTLE.

OTTON-GRASS.

The Cotton-grass low in the marshes tosses its small white plume.

AUTHOR OF "OLRIG GRANGE."

ONVOLVULUS OR BINDWEED (ALSO MORNING GLORIES).

Pliny says, Nature in learning to form a Lily turned out a Convolvulus.
So, the blue Bindweed doth itself enfold
With Honeysuckle; and both these entwine
Themselves with Briony and Jessamine,
To cast a kind and odoriferous shade.

BEN JONSON.

Here seems a difficulty. Does "rare Ben Jonson" mean perhaps the sky-blue Periwinkle, which, as Hurdis writes, climbs "E'en to the cottage eaves and
CONVOLVULUS. PINK MAY.
Poets in the Garden.

hides the wall "? This supposition has found favour with some; but another explanation seems the likeliest, viz., that it was the Convolvulus purpureus, since Parkinson has ("Parad." p. 358, ed. 1629): "Convolvulus caeruleus major rotundifolius; which in English wee call eyther Great blue Bell-flowers, or more usually Great blue Bindweedes." Anne Pratt notices the habit of the large White Bindweed to twine itself contrary to the sun, or from right to left (withershins, as the Scotch say), whilst the common Black Bryony as invariably climbs in the opposite way, that is, with the sun. If forced into any other direction the plants, she avers, will die. A common country name for the White Convolvulus is Old Man's Nightcap.

White cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day.
SHELLEY.

Convolvulus in streaked vases flush.
KEATS.

The lustre of the long Convolvuluses
That coiled around the stately stems and ran
Even to the limits of the land.
TENNYSON.

OWSLIP or PAIGLE.

This favourite "wilding" of all poets has been noticed with especial love by Shakespeare. In these etymological days it is hardly necessary to discuss seriously Ben Jonson's naïve derivation of the word Cowslip as equivalent to the "lippes of cowes." A similar fallacy is probably involved in the name of the Oxlip. The Cowslip is also called Drelip; in some parts of Kent country people still call it Fairy-cup. In reference to Shakespeare's line—"The Cowslips tall her pensioners be," quoted below, Mr. Leo Grindon, in his charming "Shakspere Flora," says—that Queen Elizabeth's pensioners were fifty of the noblest and handsomest youths in the kingdom. Their dress was of extraordinary splendour, a mass of gold embroidery; "jewels, Shakspere's 'rubies,' adding sparkle."

At midnight, the appointed howre;
And for the queene a fitting bower
(Quoth he), is that tall Cowslip flower,
On Hipent hill that groweth.

DRAYTON.
Poets in the Garden.

The even mead that erst brought sweetly forth
The freckled Cowslip, Burnet, and sweet Clover.
SHAKESPEARE.

On her left breast
A mole, cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' the bottom of a Cowslip.
SHAKESPEARE.

Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
In a Cowslip's bell I lie.
SHAKESPEARE.

Over hill, over dale,
    Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
    Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green;
The Cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies—fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every Cowslip's ear.
SHAKESPEARE.

Strew, strew the smiling ground
With every flower.

Bright Day's Eyes, and the Lips of Cows.
BEN JONSON.

I call, I call! Who do ye call?
The maids to catch this Cowslip ball;
But since these Cowslips fading be,
Troth leave the flowers, and maids take me.
HERRICK.
Poets in the Garden.

Now the bright morning-star, day's harbinger
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow Cowslip and the pale Primrose.
Hail, bounteous May! that dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire.

MILTON.

Whilst from off the waters fleet,
Then I set my printless feet,
O'er the Cowslip's velvet head
That bends not as I tread.

MILTON.

With Cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears.

MILTON.

Hark to yonder milkmaid singing
Clearly o'er the brimming pail,
Cowslips all around her springing
Sweetly paint the golden vale.

SHENSTONE.

Yellow Cowslips paint the smiling field.

GAY.

This is one of the best descriptions given. It was no doubt this drooping habit that made the Cowslip a funeral flower to many poets' imaginations.

The nesh young Cowslip bendeth with the dew.

CHATTERTON.

A boyish group—we laughed away the hours,
Plucking the yellow blooms for future wine,
While o'er us played a mother's smile divine.

W. HOWITT.

Mourn Spring, thou darling of the year!
Ilk Cowslip cup shall keep a tear.

BURNS.

Languid Cowslip, lady of the mead.

CAROLINE BOWLES.
Poets in the Garden.

The rich crimson spots that dwell
'Midst the gold of the Cowslip's perfumed cell.

Cowslips, abundant birth
O'er meadow and hill-side, vineyard too,
—Like a schoolboy's scrawlings in and out
Distasteful lesson-book.

Where thoughts have rightlier birth.

R. BROWNING.

CROCUS.

In Hollinsbed's "Chronicles," the following delightfully quaint extract tells how the Crocus-flower got its name. "A certaine young gentleman, called Crocus, went to plaie at coits in the field with Mercurie, and being heedlesse of himselfe, Mercurie's coit happened, by mishap, to hit him on the head, whereby he received a wound that yet long killed him altogether to the great discomfort of his friends. Finallie, in the place where he bled, Saffron was after found to grow, whereupon the people ... (although I doubt not but it grew there long before) adjudged it to come of the blood of Crocus, and therefore they gave it his name." This of course applies to the Meadow Saffron, heroes' flowers being always sanguine or purple in colour. In Shakespeare's day it appears that all the varieties of Crocus were called Saffron and that even Colchicums were called Meadow Saffrons. This common use of the name denotes the great use of Saffron as a medicine then (Saffron Walden, in Cambridgeshire, derived its name from the Saffron culture established there so early us the reign of Edward III.); now it is almost entirely used as a dye and in confectionery. "It hath flowres," says Gerard, "of a most perfect shining yellow colour, seeming afar off to be a hot glowing coal of fire." Since the old herbalist lived and thus wrote, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, it is curious to see how many poets have also described the "burning" Crocus. Though not truly a British wild flower, the Crocus has been so naturalized as to grow freely in the neighbourhood of Nottingham, and in some other spots of English meadow-land; to which Mrs. Howitt alludes in a few simple lines that are in themselves a pastoral idyll.

Like lilac-flame its colour glows,
Tender and yet so clearly bright,
That all for miles and miles about
The splendid meadow shineth out,
And far-off village children shout
To see the welcome sight.

HOWITT.
Sir Henry Wotton's poem on spring is always delightfully fresh, though with an old-fashioned flavour about it. Surely his old friend Izaak Walton, who writes so pleasantly of the great man, must be the patient angler here alluded to.

And now all Nature seemed in love,
The lusty sap began to move;

* * * * * *

The jealous trout that low did lie,
Rose at a well-dissembled fly;
There stood my friend with patient skill
Attending of his trembling quill.

* * * * * *

The fields and gardens were beset
With Tulips, Crocus, Violet.

WOTTON.

I must have Saffron to colour the Warden pies.

SHAKESPEARE.

Saffron sought for in Cilician soyle.

SPENSER.

Underfoot the Violet,
Crocus and Hyacinth, with rich inlay,
Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

MILTON.

The Crocus with his triple tongue of flame.

STANLEY.

Her golden head the Crocus rears.

THOMSON.

The Crocus glistening with the morn's first tears.

MASON.
Poets in the Garden.

Sing then, and Damon shall attend the strain,
While yon slow oxen turn the furrowed plain,
Here the bright Crocus and blue Vi'let glow,
Here western winds on breathing Roses blow,
I'll stake yon lamb that near the fountain plays,
And from the brink his dancing shade surveys.

The rich earth, black and bare,
Was starred with Snowdrops everywhere,
And the Crocus upturned its flame, and burned
Here and there.

"The summer," she said, "cometh blithe and bold;
And the Crocus is lit for her welcoming;
And the days will have garments of green and gold;
But I would be left by the pale green spring,
With the Snowdrops somewhere under the mould;
For I dare not think what the summer may bring.

Round our feet
The Crocus flames like gold.

"SONGS OF TWO WORLDS."

The golden-chaliced Crocus burns.

O. W. HOLMES.

Spring's delicious trouble in the ground,
Tormented by the quickened blood of roots,
And softly pricked by golden Crocus sheaves,
In token of the harvest-time of flowers.

E. B. BROWNING.

Were not the Crocuses that grew
Under that Ilex-tree,
As beautiful in scent and hue
As ever fed the bee?

SHELLEY.

And at their feet the Crocus brake like fire.

TENNYSON.
POETS IN THE GARDEN.

CROWN IMPERIAL.

This noble Fritillary, says Gerard, "for its stately beautifulnesse deserveth the first place in this our Garden of delight;" and he further describes it thus: "In the bottome of each of the bells there is placed six drops of most cleere shining water, in taste like sugar, resembling in shew fair Orient pearles, the which drops if you take away, there do immediately appear the like; notwithstanding if they may be suffered to stand still in the floure according to his owne nature, they will never fall away, no, not if you strike the plant untill it be broken."

Fair Crown Imperial, Emperor of Flowers.

CHAPMAN.

Bold Oxlips, and the Crown Imperial.

SHAKESPEARE.

UCKOO-FLOWER OR LADY-SMOCKS.

The Lady-smock is supposed to refer not so much to our Lady, like so many other flowers, as to a low meadow white with this flower, seemingly laid out with linen for bleaching. Gerard says of its other name, "it flowres when the cuckoo doth begin to sing her pleasant notes without stammering."

When Daisies pied, and Violets blue,
And Lady-smocks all silver-white,
And Cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight.

SHAKESPEARE.

Some, to grace the show,
Of Lady-smocks most white do rob each neighbouring mead,
Wherewith their loose locks most curiously they braid.

DRAYTON.

Melancholy, sweet and frail
As perfume of the Cuckoo-flower.

TENNYSON.

And by the meadow-trenches blow
The faint sweet Cuckoo-flowers.

TENNYSON.

The Lady-smocks are blowing bold, the Primroses high over.

R. BUCHANAN.
Poets in the Garden.

YPRESS.
When the glad Cypress shakes her graceful tresses.
FROM "THE ROSE-GARDEN OF PERSIA."
Sweet is the Cypress, but his rind is tough.
SPENSER.

Their sweetest shade, a grove of Cypress trees!
SHAKESPEARE.
The pleasing wife, the house, the ground
Must all be left, no one plant found
To follow thee,
Save only the Curst-Cipresse tree.
HERRICK.

Cypress and Yew, sorrowful trees,
Years are your dews, sighs are your breeze.
CAYLEY.

Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is fled,
The only constant mourner o'er the dead.
BYRON.
The sad but living Cypress glooms,
And withers not, though branch and leaf
Are stamped with an eternal grief
Like early unrequited love.
BYRON.

And the wild Cypress waves in tender gloom.
BYRON.
The Cypress stood up like a church
That night we felt our love would hold,
And saintly moonlight seemed to search
And wash the whole world clean as gold.
E. B. BROWNING.

Green terraces and arched fountains cold
Where lies the Cypress shade so still and deep.
KEBLE.
DAISY.  CORN FLOWER.
AHLIA.

The garden glows with Dahlias large and new.

E. ELLIOTT.

Among the Dahlias in the garden-walk
He left his guests.

LONGFELLOW.

DAFFODIL, see NARCISSUS.

DAISY.

Humble as it is, the Daisy has been a favourite flower of English poets. Chaucer, Burns, Wordsworth, and Tennyson have all sung of it at large. To the latter, whether in our own island or abroad, it spoke of home or happy days in other lands.

It told of England then to me
As now it tells of Italy.

And I forget the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,
The bitter East, the misty summer,
And gray metropolis of the North.

But its true laureate is he whom Dryden called the Father of English poetry. Chaucer the courtier, the friend of John of Gaunt, kneels down on both his knees in the dewy grass on a spring morning to watch its little white petals
Poets in the Garden.

open. His whole prologue to the "Legend of Good Women" is such a hymn of praise to this his "maistress," that we can hardly believe in such exceeding admiration but for the poet's own words, in which he tells us he will ever love it till his heart die—and although he sweareth not, "of this I will not lie." Hear him thus:

My busie ghost, that thursteth always new,
To seen this flower, so young, so fresh of hew,
Constrained me, with so greedy desire,
That in my harte I fele yet the fire
That made me rise ere it were day,
And this was now the first morow of Maie,
With dreadfull haste, and glad devocion,
For to been at the resurrection
Of this floure, when it should unclose
Again the Sunne, that rose as red as Rose.

And down on knees anon right I me sette,
And as I could this fresh flower I grette,
Kneeling alway, till it unclosed was,
Upon the smalle, softe, swete gras.

The long day I shape me for to abide,
For nothing else, and I shall not lie,
But for to look upon the Daisie,
That well by reason men it call may
The Daisie, or els the Eye of the Day,
The empress and flowre of flowres all.

Upon this, not satisfied yet of watching the Daisies all day, Chaucer prepares to sleep in a little arbour he has "benched on fresh turves," and all to see his meadow favourites open in the freshness of the next dewy dawn.

And in a little herber that I have,
That benched was on turves fresh i-grave.
I bade men shoulde me my couche make,
For deintie of the newe Sommer's sake,
I bade hem strawen flowers on my bedde.
Poets in the Garden.

He then falls asleep, and dreams that the god of love comes walking towards him across the meadow, leading by the hand a queen, who is attired "for all the world like as a Daisie." The god shows Chaucer how that this is good Alcestis, who was turned into a Daisy, and bids him write her story among his "Legends of Good Women." Many more times Chaucer praises his "mother of nurture, best beloved of all, and freshe flower." But the prettiest remaining lines are in a ballad among those imputed to him.

The Daisee, a flowre white and rede,
And in French called La belle Margarite;
O commendable flowre and most in mind,
O flowre so gracious of excellence,
O amiable Margarite!

Skelton calls it—

"The Daisy delectable" (see COLUMBINE.)

And—

Star of the morrow gray.

The Daisies kiss our feet.

NASH.

Daysis of delyte.

SIR D. LINDESAY.

The grassy ground with dainty Daisies dight.

SPENSER.

The little Dazie that at evening closes.

SPENSER.

Daisies pied, and Violets blue.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Daisy scattered on each mead and down,
A golden tuft within a silver crown.
Fair fall that dainty flower!

W. BROWNE.

To Daisies: not to Shut so Soon.
Shut not so soon; the dull-eyed night
Has not as yet begun
To make a seizure on the light,
Or to seal up the sun.

HERRICK.
Poets in the Garden.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No Daisy makes comparison.
Who sees them is undone.

SIR J. SUCKLING.

Meadows trim with Daisies pied.

MILTON.

To a Mountain Daisy: on turning one down with the Plough.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou'st met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush among the stour
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! 'tis no thy neebour sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' speckled breast,
When upward springing blithe to greet
The purplin' east.

Cold blew the bitter, biting north
Upon thy early humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth,
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histy stubble field,
Unseen, alane.
Poets in the Garden.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snowy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
  In humble guise;
But now the 'share uptears thy bed
  And low thou lies!

BURNS.

Daisies, those pearled arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets.

SHELLEY.

To the Daisy.

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Sweet Daisy! oft I talk to thee,
  For thou art worthy.
Thou unassuming, commonplace
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace
  Which love makes for thee!

A nun demure, of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden of love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
  Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies dressed.
A starveling in a scanty vest,
Are all, as seem to suit thee best,
  Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy—
The thought comes next—and instantly
  The freak is over.
Poets in the Garden.

The shape will vanish, and behold!
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself some fairy bold
In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar,
And then thou art a pretty star,
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!

Sweet flower! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast.
Sweet, silent creature!
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature.

Wordsworth.

Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough!

Is it that man is soon depressed

And thou wouldst teach him how to find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind,
And every season?

Wordsworth.

Small service is true service while it lasts,
Of friends, however humble, scorn not one;
The Daisy by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dewdrops from the sun.

Wordsworth.
Poets in the Garden.

There is a flower, a little flower,
With silver crest and golden eye,
That welcomes every changing hour
And weathers every sky:
The Rose has but a summer's reign,
The Daisy never dies.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

DANDELION.

Dandelion is a mere corruption of dent de Lion, the flower being so jagged as to have suggested lions' teeth to some fanciful minds. The Dandelion, besides being country-children's clock, is a weather-glass. Coles says, "If the down flyeth off Coltsfoot, Dandelion, or Thistle when there is no winde, it is a sure sign of rain."

I'm a bold fellow.
AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENT."

Beds of Dandelion ply
Their stems with yellow-fringed buds.

BARNES.

Dear, common flower, that growst beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and full of pride behold.

High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An El Dorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth! Thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer blooms may be.

LOWELL.
Poets in the Garden.

DAPHNE or SPURGE LAUREL.

Daphne hath broke her bark, and that swift foot, Which th' angry gods had fastened with a root To the fixed earth, does now unfettered run To meet the embraces of the youthful Sun; She hangs upon him like his Delphic lyre, Her kisses blow the old and breathe new fire, Full of her god she sings inspired lays, Sweet odes of love, such as deserve the bays, Which she herself was.

CAREW.

Nay, lady, sit; if I but wave this wand, Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster, And you a statue, or, as Daphne was, Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

MILTON.

There in bright drops the crystal fountains play; By Laurels shaded from the piercing day; Where Daphne, now a tree as once a maid, Still from Apollo vindicates her shade.

POPE.

Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant.

BYRON.

DATE-TREE.

Lovely Date-trees bending Languidly their leaf-crowned heads.

MOORE.

Their rich Dates yellowed over with gold-dust divine.

R. BROWNING.
Poets in the Garden.

**Datura.**

The broad Datura bares her breast
Of fragrant scent, a virgin white,
A pearl around the locks of night.

BISHOP HEBER.

**Dog-Rose or Briar.**

Also called the Canker-rose; perhaps, as Mr. Grindon has suggested, because the name of the grub which infests this flower has been passed on to the flower itself. This plant makes its appearance in the old ballad of the Douglas tragedy, which is an European *volk's lied*, and has many versions besides the Scottish one quoted below.

He was chaste * * *
And sweet as is the Bramble flower,
That beareth the red hepe.

CHAUCER.

In Chaucer's day, Bramble was applied carelessly to all plants with thorns; but "the red hepe," or hip, cannot be mistaken. Next comes the fairy in "Midsummer Night's Dream," telling Puck whither he must hie—

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough Briar.

And here is the well known little White Briar-rose—

From off this Briar pluck a white Rose with me.

SHAKESPEARE.

O! how full of Briars is this working-day world!

SHAKESPEARE.

The canker blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the Roses, but they
Die to themselves. Sweet Roses do not so:
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

And again—

I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a Rose in his grace.

SHAKESPEARE.

Lord William was buried in St. Mary's Kirk,
Lady Margaret in Mary's quire;
Out o' the lady's grave grew a bonny red Rose,
And out o' the knight's a Briar.

And they twa met, and they twa plat,
And fain they wad be near;
And a' the world might ken right weil
They were twa lovers dear.

OLD BALLAD.

In Spenser's fable of the bragging Briar asserting itself against the aged Oak ("Shepherd's Calendar"), he makes it thus describe itself—

Seest how fresh my flowers bene spreadde,
Dyed in Lilly white and Crimsin redde,
With leaves engrained in lusty greene;
Colours fit to clothe a mayden Queene?

Then it complains to the good man of the lea—

Thou placer of plants both humble and tall,
Was not I planted of thine own hand
To be the Primrose of all thy land,
With flowering blossoms to furnish the prime,
And scarlet berries in sommer-time?

Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
Of Sweet Briar hedges I pursue my walk.

THOMSON.

Burns seems always reminded of love by a Rose, even the Dog-rose.

Oh, bonnie was yon rosy Brier
That blooms sae far frae haunt o' man:
And bonnie she, and ah! how dear!
It shaded frae the e'enin' sun.
Poets in the Garden.

In his song upon the most ill-fated of the Queen's Maries, Whyte Melville has given a fresh association to the wild white Scottish Rose. Poor Mary Hamilton! a lamb lost at the "head of the glen." As the old song says—

Last night the queen had four Maries,
To-night she'll hae but three!
There was Mary Beaton, and Mary Seaton,
And Mary Carmichael and me!

For on the morrow Mary Hamilton, Darnley's love, was to be beheaded by order of the queen.

There's a bonnie wild Rose on the mountain side,
Mary Hamilton.

In the glare of noon she hath drooped and died,
Mary Hamilton.

Soft and still is the evening shower,
Pattering kindly on brake and bower,
But it falls too late for the perished flower—
Mary Hamilton.

WHYTE MELVILLE.

Round thee blow, self-pleached, deep
Bramble roses, faint and pale.

TENNYSON.
EGLANTINE OR SWEET BRIAR.

The Eglantine and Sweet Briar were considered identical by most of the early poets. Chaucer seems to have held it so, and also Shakespeare and Spenser.

All the grene herbere
With Sycamour was set and Eglatere.

CHAUCER.

Suddenly I felt so sweet an air
Of the Eglentere, that certainly
There is no heart I deem in such despair
but it should soon have bote
If it had once felt this savour swote.

CHAUCER.

Shakespeare writes of the bank "whereon the Wild Thyme blows," as being o'er-canopied among other flowers with Eglantine. For this see Thyme ("Midsummer Night's Dream"). And again in "Cymbeline"—

Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale Primrose; nor
The azured Harebell, like thy veins; no, nor
The leaf of Eglantine, whom not to slander,
Out-sweetened not thy breath.

SHAKESPEARE.

Sweet is the Eglantine, but pricketh nere.

SPENSER.
Poets in the Garden.

Is not thilke the merry moneth of May,  
When love-lads masken in fresh aray?  
* * * * * *  

Yongthes folke now flocken in everywhere  
To gather May buskets and smelling Brere:  
And home they hasten the postes to dight,  
And all the kirk-pillours eare day-light,  
With Hawthorne buds, and sweet Eglantine,  
And girondes of Roses and Sopps-in-Wine.  

SPENSER.

About the same time Marlowe writes thus, in "England's Parnassus," of a stream, limpid as "diamonds resolved."

Upon this brim the Eglantine and Rose,  
The Tamarisk, Olive, and th' Almond tree.  
* * * * * *  

Folding their twining arms, as oft we see  
Turtle-taught lovers either other close,  
* * * * * *  

And as a costly valance o'er a bed,  
So did their garland-tops the brook o'erspread.  

MARLOWE.

In the note on Convolvulus, I have alluded to Milton's "twisted Eglantine."

From this bleeding hand of mine  
Take this sprig of Eglantine,  
Which, though sweet unto your smell,  
Yet the fretful Briar will tell,  
He who plucks the sweets shall prove  
Many thorns to be in love.  

HERRICK.

Dew-sweet Eglantine.  
KEATS.

Rain-scented Eglantine  
Gave temperate sweets to that well-waning sun.  

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

As other garden-flowers became known, the Sweet Briar would seem to have lost favour. Few of the later poets have sung its praises compared with those of earlier days.

Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny showers,
Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,
Thou one fair shrub.

WORDS WORTH.

The Wild Rose, Eglantine, and Broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume;
The Birch-trees wept in fragrant balm,
The Aspens slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Played on the water's still expanse.

SIR W. SCOTT.

On the wild hill
Let the wild Heathbell flourish still;
Cherish the Tulip, prune the Vine,
But freely let the Woodbine twine,
And leave untrimmed the Eglantine.

SIR W. SCOTT.

EVENING PRIMROSE.

Fair flower, that shunn'st the glare of day,
Yet lov'st to open, meekly bold,
To evening hues of sober gray,
Thy cup of paly gold.

BARTON.
Poets in the Garden.

**EYEBRIGHT or EUPHRASY.**

This is the flower with which and Rue the Archangel Michael purged Adam's eyes, "for he had much to see." (See Rue.)

Blue Eyebright! loveliest flower of all that grow
In flower-loved England! Flower whose hedge-side gaze
Is like an infant's! What heart does not know
Thee, clustered smiler of the bank?

E. ELLIOTT.

In spite of Ebenezer Elliott's three exclamations, it is rather uncertain whether our hearts _do_ recognize his "clustered smiler of the bank." In one little book on British Botany, "Flowers of the Year," this very verse is quoted as meaning Germander Speedwell. We can but leave the pretty Eyebright to the affectionate remembrance of those who know the little flower: adding that its old virtues of strengthening weak eyes are still held efficacious. Hence its name.

Yet Euphrasy may not be left unsung,
That gives dim eyes to wander many a league.

SHENSTONE.

The trembling Eyebright
Showed her sapphire blue.

WORDSWORTH.
ENNEL.

The unknown Chaucerian translator of the "Romaunt of the Rose" gives Fennel a place in the fair garden he describes (see Mint). In those days, it was evidently not left to waste its strong scent in some corner of a kitchen garden kept only for herbs. It has now, however, been stripped of its old honours and dignity; it is no longer to be found set in the garden-close for its perfume, nor does any one believe that it is a cure for lost sight. Poor Fennel! gone its place in the garden for sweetness: gone the belief in its virtue for healing blindness. And it had more honour, too—to know which read Longfellow.

There's Fennel for you, and Columbines.

SHAKESPEARE.

Tuberville's couplet may explain this, since most likely these were meant for the King (see COLUMBINE).

When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel.

MILTON.

Among the old allegorical meanings of flowers, as Rosemary—"that's for remembrance," and Rue for sorrow, the Fennel seems to have signified flattery, or double-mindedness. Tuberville has a poem "Of Certain Flowers sent him by his Love upon suspicion of Change."

Your flowers for their hue
Were fresh and fair to see,
Yet was their meaning not so true
As you it thought to be.
Your Fennel did declare
(As simple men can show),
That flattery in my breast I bear,
Where friendship ought to grow.

TUBERVILLE.
Poets in the Garden.

Above the lowly plants it towers,
The Fennel with its yellow flowers,
And in an earlier age than ours
Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
Lost vision to restore.

It gave men strength and fearless mood,
And gladiators fierce and rude
Mingled it with their daily food:
And he who battled and subdued—
A wreath of Fennel won.

Longfellow.

For me, I touched a thought, I know
Has tantalized me many times.

* * * * * *
Help me to hold it! First it left
The yellowing Fennel run to seed
There, branching from the brickwork’s cleft,
Some old tomb’s ruin.

R. Browning.

Ferns.

We have the receipt of Fern-seed—we walk invisible.
Now, by my faith, I think you are more beholden to the night than to Fern-seed for your walking invisible.

Shakespeare.

None of our ancestors had a good word for Ferns. This is how Butler describes the Fern—

That vile, useless weed,
That grows equivocably without seed.

This old idea that Ferns were uncanny, flowerless plants, bearing no seed, and propagating themselves no one knew how, unlike all other herbs of the field,
Poets in the Garden.

and good for neither man nor beast, was of course noticed by the old herbalists and simple gatherers. Many an one, culling worts by the light of the moon, must have searched occasionally to see if they could find any seed on those mysterious Ferns, which if found would give them the power of going where they liked unseen. It was not known for a long time that the round dark spots at the back of the fronds was truly seed.

See, with Moonfern I have crowned me!
Arab spells shall now defend me.
Weave a wizard circle round me,
And burn amber—lest Love rend me!
   O rapture, O fear, love!
   O stoop not to hear, love,
Lest I die of thy touch, I who conjured thee here, love!

OWEN MEREDITH.

And we shall have him in the sweet spring days,
With whitening hedges and uncrumpling Fern.

M. ARNOLD.

Amang the Brackens on the brac,
Between her and the moon.

BURNS.

Far dearer to me yon lone glen o’ green Bracken (see Broom).

BURNS.

The heath this night must be my bed,
The Bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder’s tread,
   Far, far from love and thee, Mary.

SIR. W. SCOTT.

The Bracken,
Under the sun’s deft fingers, is slowly uncoiling its fronds.

AUTHOR OF “OLRIG GRANGE.”
Poets in the Garden.

Fig.

Here, as I steal along the sunny wall
Where autumn basks, with fruit-empurpled deep,
My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought.

Presents the downy Peach, the shining Plum,
The ruddy, fragrant Nectarine, and, dark
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious Fig.

THOMSON.

Or lead me through the maze,
Embowering endless, of the Indian Fig.

THOMSON.

O thou, to whom
Broad-leaved Fig-trees even now fore-doom
Their ripened fruitage.

KEATS.

The green Fig,
With leathern leaves, and horny twig,
And gluey globes.

OWEN MEREDITH.

Lead me out
To see in that south angle of the house,
The Figs grow black as if by a Tuscan rock.

E. B. BROWNING.

All the Fig-trees had grown heavy
With the young Figs, white and woolly:
And the fireflies, berry on berry
Of soft sparkles, pouring fully
Their warm life through trance on trances
Of thick Citron shades behind,
Rose, like swarms of living fancies
Through some rich and pensive mind.

OWEN MEREDITH.
We all know the legend which is supposed to have given its name to the Forget-me-not. The two lovers, whether knight and lady, swain and damsel, for versions differ, were strolling by the banks of the Danube, and saw these blue sprays floating up and down in the water. Next her idle wish to possess them—the lover's leap into the stream. Then a struggle with the current!—a handful of flowers flung in a last chivalrous act on the bank; and the sinking cry of—"Forget-me-not!"

But Miss Strickland, in her "Queens of England," claims another origin of the name. She says that Henry of Lancaster was, perhaps, indebted to the agency of this mystic blossom for the crown of England. "This royal adventurer... appears to have been the person who gave to the Myosotis Arvensis, or Forget-me-not, its emblematical and poetical meaning by uniting it at the period of his exile on his collar of S. S. with the initial letter of his mot or watchword, Souvigne vous de moy; thus rendering it the symbol of remembrance. It was with his hostess, at that time wife of the Duke of Bretagne, that Henry exchanged this token of good-will."

Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not.

Coleridge.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by Hazel covers;
I move the sweet Forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

Tennyson.

Silently one by one in the infinite meadows of Heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the Forget-me-nots of the angels.

Longfellow.

When to the flowers so beautiful,
The Father gave a name,
Back came a little blue-eyed one,
All timidly it came.
And standing at its Father's feet,
And gazing in His face,
It said in low and trembling tones,
"Dear God, the name Thou gavest me,
Alas! I have forgot."
Kindly the Father looked Him down,
And said, "Forget-me-not."
An old English name for Foxgloves was Lady's Fingers. Also Parkinson, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, says, "Wee call them generally, in English, Foxglove; but some (as thinking it to be too foolish a name) doe call them Finger-flowers, because they are like unto the fingers of a glove, the ends cut off."

To keep her slender fingers from the sun,
Pan through the pastures oftentimes hath run,
To pluck the speckled Foxgloves from their stem,
And on those fingers neatly placed them.

W. BROWN.

The Foxglove on fair Flora's hand is worn,
Lest while she gathers flowers she meet a Thorn.

COWLEY.

From the rock above each ivied seat,
The spotted Foxgloves hang the purple head.

MICKLE.

With the Foxglove o'er the water's glass, borne downwards by the bee.

MRS. HEMANS.

Sequestered leafy glades,
That through the dimness of their twilight show
Large Dock-leaves, spiral Foxgloves, or the glow
Of the wild Cat's Eyes,¹ or the silvery stems
Of delicate Birch-trees, or long grass which hems
A little brook.

KEATS.

Upon the sunny bank
The Foxglove rears its pyramid of bells,
Gloriously freckled, purpled and white, the flower
That cheers Devonia's fields.

CARRINGTON.

¹ Cat's Eyes, in some places a name for Herb Robert.
Poets in the Garden.

The Foxglove tall
Shed its loose purple bells, or in the gust,
Or when it bends beneath the upspringing lark,
Or mountain finch alighting.

COLERIDGE.

Foxglove and Nightshade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride.

SIR W. SCOTT.

The rain has crawled from yonder mountain-side,
And passing left its footprints far and wide.

* * * * * * *

The Foxglove droops, the Crocus lifts its star,
And Bluebells brighten in the dewy grass.

R. BUCHANAN.

The Foxglove shoots out of the green matted Heather,
Preparing her hoods of snow;
She was idle, and slept till the sunshiny weather:
O, children take long to grow.

JEAN INGELOW.

The Foxglove cluster dappled bells.

TENNYSON.

Bring Orchis, bring the Foxglove spire.

TENNYSON.

Fritillary or Snake's-Head Lily.

The Fritillary is so called from Fritillus (chess-board), in reference to its chequered petals. Old Gerard called it the Ginnie-hen flower, for the same reason; an excellent name, too. Parkinson says it was called "Fritilliaria, which divers do take for the chesse-borde;" but, he adds, it was also "in errore," called the checkered Daffodil. This explains Ben Jonson's line which also refers to the Narcissus—

The chequed and purple-ringled Daffodil.
Poets in the Garden.

I know what white, what purple Fritillaries
The grassy harvest of the river-fields
Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields,
And what sedged brooks are Thames's tributaries.

M. ARNOLD.

FUCHSIA.

The Chestnuts shine through the cloven rind,
And the woodland leaves are red, my dear;
The scarlet Fuchsias burn in the wind—
Funeral plumes for the year!
The year which has brought me so much woe,
That if it were not for you, my dear,
I could wish the Fuchsia's fire might glow
For me as well as the year.

J. BAILEY ALDRICH.

FURZE OR GORSE (ALSO WHIN).

It is a thrice-told tale, but always freshly beautiful, that when Linnaeus first saw an English common one wide golden glory of blossom, he fell on his knees to thank God his eyes were blessed by beholding such loveliness. If he saw the common at its best, then a crisp wind would have been blowing the faint but peculiarly clean-scented smell of the Gorse towards him, and a blue sky with white, racing cloudlets was, doubtless, bright overhead, gladdening his eyes by contrast with the yellow-flowered expanse below; while his ears, as old Dunbar sang so long ago, would have "rung with ychanting of the larkis." Old Tusser recalls to us those miserable days for poor villeins in merry England when Furze was both firewood and stuffing for the wooden frame of their cabins—

With Whins or with Furzes thy hovel renew,
For turf and for sedge for to bake and to brew.

The following Lyke-wake (i.e., Dead Watch) Dirge is said to have been sung in Yorkshire over corpses down to about the year 1624 (Brand's "Pop. Antiq.", ii. 155). Scott's "Border Minstrelsy" gives this, adding that in a Cottonian MS. this is referred to as chanted in Queen Elizabeth's reign.
Poets in the Garden.

"When any dieth certayn women sing a song . . . recyting the jorney that the party deceased must go. They are of belief (such is their fondnesse) that once in their lives it is good to give a pair of new shoes to a poor man," as after death they must "pass barefoot through a great launde full of thornes and frozen, except by the meryte of the almes they have redeemed the forfeyte; for at the edge of the launde, an oulde man shall meet them with the same shoes that were given by the partye when he was lyving; and, after he hath shodde them, dismisseth them to go through thick and thin, without scratch or scath."

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
_Everie nighte and alle,_
Fire and salte and candle-lighte,
_And Christe receive thy saule._

When thou from hence away art past,
_Everie nighte and alle,_
To Whinny-muir thou comest at last,
_And Christe receive thy saule._

* * * * *

If hosen and shoon thou gavest nane,
_Everie nighte and alle,_
The Whinnes shall pricke thee to the bare bane,
_And Christe receive thy saule._

ANON.

No Furzy tuft, thicke wood, nor breake of thornes
Shall harbour wolfe.

BROWN.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed Furze unprofitably gay,
Here in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.

GOLDSMITH.

Or from your swelling downs,
* *
Where prickly Furze
Buds lavish gold.

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

The yellow furze like fields of gold
That gladdens some fairy regions old.

MARY HOWITT.

And, lastly, whoever knows the gladness of a high moorland on a breezy, sunny morning, such as Charles Kingsley called "one of God's own days," will recognize the truth and beauty of this next—a gem of its kind.

The larks are loud above our leagues of Whin,
Now the sun's perfume fills their glorious gold
With odour like the colour; all the wold
Is only light and song and wind wherein
These twain are blent in one with shining din.

SWINBURNE.

The Furzy prickle fire the dells.

TENNYSON.

From bush to bush the cuckoo flies,
The Orchis red gleams everywhere;
Gold Furze with Broom in blossom vies,
The Bluebells perfume all the air.

M. ARNOLD.

The Gorse has got its coat of gold, and smells as sweet as Clover.

R. BUCHANAN.
ALE (sweet) or DUTCH MYRTLE.

My craft aground, and heard with beating heart
The Sweet Gale rustle round the shelving keel.

TENNYSOM.

GENTIAN.

Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest hue, spread garments at your feet?
God! Let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!

COlERIDGE.

These flowers, living among the snows and ice, would seem to be Gentians.

Blue thou art, intensely blue!
Flower, whence came thy dazzling hue?
When I opened first mine eye,
Upward glancing to the sky,
Straightway from the firmament,
Was the sapphire brilliance sent;
Brighter glory wouldst thou share?
Look to heaven, and seek it there.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.
Poets in the Garden.

In matchless beauty, tender and serene,
The Gentian reigned an undisputed queen.

E. GOODALL.

On the wild purple mountains, all alone with no other,
The strong, terrible mountains, he longed, he longed to be,

JEAN INGELOW.

And the paradise of purple and the golden slopes between them,
And fields where grow God's Gentian bells and His Crocus stars.

To the Gentian in the fall,
Blue-eyed pet of blue-eyed lover.

EMERSON.

ERANIUM.

Behold us now
Beneath the bamboo's arched bough,
Where gemming oft that sacred gloom
Glows the Geranium's scarlet bloom.

BISHOP HEBER.

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her bookshelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of Geranium flower
Beginning to die, too, in the glass.

R. BROWNING.

And wild Geranium blossoms drank
Red sunsets that enriched their hue.

AUTHOR OF "OLRIG GRANGE."
Poets in the Garden.

GLADIOLUS.

And the small wild Pinks from tender
Feather-grasses peep at us;
While above them burns on slender
Stems the red Gladiolus.

LORD LYTON.

GRASSES.

Grass with green flag half-mast high.

EMERSON.

I may well raise Emerson's tiny flag in honour of the Flower of the Grass. But why have poets not honoured it more? They hear its musical murmur small and fine, and Tennyson notices the "Oat-grass and the Sword-grass," yet the beauty of a waving June meadow full of different Grasses in delicate flower is still unsung. Still, for all our neglect, the sweetest things in life are often close—about our very feet. Those who profess to see no beauty in Grasses may say with Shakespeare's clown—

I am no great Nebuchadnezzar, sir, I have not much skill in Grass.

Chaucer begins our list of poets. He has gone into the meadow to see the Daisy—

Kneeling alway till it unclosed was
Upon the softe, swote, smalle Gras.

Shakespeare follows with many more allusions to the "lush, green Grass."

These are the prettiest, however.

He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a Grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

SHAKESPEARE.

I should be still
Plucking the Grass to know where sits the wind.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

Grew like the summer Grass, fastest by night,
Unseen, yet crescive in its faculty.

SHAKESPEARE.

Much is found where nothing was,
Herds on every mountain go,
In the meadows flowery Grass
 Makes both milk and honey flow.

G. WITHER.

The plumed insects, swift and free,
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,
Laden with light and odour, which pass
Over the gleam of the living Grass.

SHELLEY.

The murmur that springs from the growing of Grass.

E. A. POË.

The stream with softest sound is flowing,
The Grass—you almost hear it growing,
You hear it now, if ere you can.

WORDSWORTH.

The green Grass is bowing,
The morning wind is in it;
"'Tis a tune worth thy knowing,
Though it change every minute.

EMERSON.

When from the dry, dark wold the summer airs blow cool
On the Oat-grass and the Sword-grass, and the Bulrush in the pool.

TENNYSON.

Bloomy June when all the land
Was deep in crested Grass.

MORRIS.
Poets in the Garden.

How Browning has noted the beauty of Grass flowers!
The champaign with its endless fleece
Of feathery Grasses everywhere!
Silence and passion, joy and peace,
An everlasting wash of air—
Rome's ghost since her decease.

R. BROWNING.

I saw the busy crowd depart,
Which from the earliest morn to latest eve
Had reaped with priestly steel the sacrifice
The liberal earth had offered to the sky.
With even step the mowers silently
Pacing had strewn the innocent flowers and Grass
In fragrant ranks upon the altar field.

AUGUSTUS TAYLOR.

Quaking-grass, or Trembling-grass, was known by a more curious name
in olden days. Gerard says it used to be called "Quakers and Shakers" in Cheshire.

Where the pale tufts of the windle-staeh grass
Hang like locks of dry dead hair.

MRS. NORTON.

Confide ye aye in Providence, for Providence is kind,
And bear ye a' life's changes wi' a calm and tranquil mind;
Tho' pressed and hemmed on every side, hae faith and ye'll
win thro';
For ilka blade o' Grass keeps its ain drap o' dew.

JAMES BALLANTINE.

GUELDER-ROSE OR WAYFARING TREE.

Snowball is another name sometimes given to the Guelder-rose.
This Guelder-rose, at far too slight a beck
Of the wind, will toss about her flower-apples.

E. B. BROWNING.
HAREBELL OR CAMPANULA.

Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale Primrose, nor
The azured Harebell, like thy veins.

SHAKESPEARE.

Although quoting these lines, I believe that Shakespeare here refers to the Wild Hyacinth, which flowers before the Primrose stars have quite died away from woods and banks. The Campanula flowers in later summer. It is a little puzzling to find that Harebell and Bluebell are names often interchanged between the Campanula and Hyacinth; but, at least in Scotland, Harebell is always the former, and Bluebell the latter. In England the reverse often holds good, but perhaps not in all parts.

Fountains all bordered with moss
Where the Harebells and Violets grow.

SHENSTONE.

Her apron, dyed in grain, as blue, I trowe,
As is the Harebell that adorns the field.

SHENSTONE.

The Harebell, for the stainless azured hue,
Claims to be worn of none but those are true.

W. BROWNE.

When corn-riggs waved yellow, and blue Heather-bells
Bloomed bonny on muirland and sweet rising fells.

ALLAN RAMSAY.

On Desmond's mouldering turrets slowly shake
The trembling Rye-grass and the Harebell blue.

MICKLE.
Poets in the Garden.

Most of the singers of nature who follow her unconsciously bring the Harebell's birthplace always forward. For this reason each allusion is a little picture—a poem in a poem. For the Harebell is a shy child of the upland, of the solitary moor, and the mountain-side. As such we think of it always and only. Burns calls so often on nature to mourn or rejoice with the varying strong emotions of himself, her true child, no wonder he bids the flowers join in this elegy, one of his purest and finest poems—"after ilka grove thy Cushat kens"—

Mourn, little Harebells, o'er the lea;
Ye stately Foxgloves, fair to see;
Ye Woodbines, hanging bonnilee
In scented bowers.

BURNS.

Swelling downs, where sweet air stirs
Blue Harebells lightly, and where prickly Furze Buds lavish gold.

KEATS.

E'en the slight Harebell raised its head
Elastic from her airy tread.

SIR W. SCOTT.

" For me," she stooped, and looking round, Plucked a blue Harebell from the ground; " For me, whose memory scarce conveys An image of more splendid days, This little flower that loves the lea, May well my simple emblem be; It drinks heaven's dew, blithe as the rose That in the king's own garden grows.

SIR W. SCOTT.

Love, like an Alpine Harebell hung with tears By some cold morning glacier.

TENNYSON.
Poets in the Garden.

HAWTHORN, WHITE THORN, OR MAY.

A curious old English name for Hawthorn-buds just burgeoning was Ladies' Meat. Can this have reference to a bygone custom, still lingering among country children as a trick, of picking and eating the fresh green White Thorn sprouts? When thinking of this flower, we cannot help remembering Orlando wandering with his odes in the Forest of Arden, and carving on every tree, "The fair, the chaste, the inexpressive she." Well may Rosalind pretend to complain—

There's a man hangs odes upon Hawthorns, and elegies on Brambles.

There is an old saying, "Cleave to the crown, though it hang on a bush." The origin of this is supposed to be that, when Richard III. was slain, a soldier hid his crown, as booty, in a Hawthorn bush. It was found, and placed on the head of the new king, Henry VII., by Lord Stanley. Henceforth the Tudors took as their device a crown in a bush of Hawthorn (Miss Strickland).

It fel oonës, in a morwe of May,
That Emelie, that fairer was to see, 
Than is the Lilie on hir stalkë grene,
And fresscher than the May with flowerës newe,
For with the rosë-colour strof hire hawe.

CHAUCER.

The fresh Hawthorne
In white motley that so swete doth smell.

CHAUCER.

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When Wheat is green, when Hawthorn-buds appear.

SHAKESPEARE.

Gives not the Hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,
Than doth a rich embroidered canopy
To kings that fear their subjects' treachery?
O yes, it doth; a thousand-fold it doth.

SHAKESPEARE.

Among the many buds proclaiming May,

Mark the faire blooming of the Hawthorn tree,
Poets in the Garden.

Who, finely cloathed in a robe of white,
Fills full the wanton eye with May's delight.
Yet for the braverie that she is in
Doth neither handle card nor wheel to spin,
Nor changeth robes but twice; is never seen
In other colours than in white and green.

BROWNE.

Spenser describes in the Maying, how all the "Kirk-pilloures" are wreathed with Hawthorn-buds and other flowers (see Eglantine).

We all know the old May-day customs. How all the "golden lads and girls," young men and maidens, were off by sunrise to the fields to wash their faces in dew, and gather the May. Their May-day, old style, is our twelfth of the month, so that farm-servants in those days had more chance of earning their due fee then by bringing home a branch of blossom.

Come, my Corinna, come; and comming marke
How each field turns a street; each street a parke
   Made green, and trimmed with trees; see how
Devotion gives each house a bough,
Or branch: each porch, each doore, ere this,
   An arke, a tabernacle, is
Made up of White Thorn neatly enterwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
   Can such delights be in the street,
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation made for May:
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's goe a Maying.

HERRICK.

Not higher than a two-years' child
   It stands erect, this aged Thorn.
No leaves it has, no prickly points,
It is a mass of knotted joints,
   A wretched thing forlorn:
It stands erect, and, like a stone,
With Lichens it is overgrown.

WORDSWORTH.
Poets in the Garden.

Burns has a quaint comparison of the Hawthorn to an old man—

The Hawthorn I will pu' wi' its locks o' siller gray;
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day.
The scented Birk and Hawthorn white,
Across the pool their arms unite,
Alike to screen the birdies' nest
And little fishes caller rest.

BURNS.

Burns often makes passing allusion to Hawthorn blossoms, as if their sight and scent were too loved and familiar to need more words. Thus, in his farewell to Highland Mary, he exclaims, "How rich the Hawthorn's blossom!" It was beneath that trysting-tree he last clasped her to his bosom. Again, in one of his moments of purest feeling, when the fervour of poetic fire was almost pleasurably, perhaps, tinged with a shade of melancholy remembrance, he sings—

If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white Thorn that scents the evening gale.

BURNS.

Who in Indian bowers has stood,
But thought on England's good greenwood;
And blessed beneath the palmy glade
Her Hazel and her Hawthorn shade.

HEBER.

There stands the flowering May-thorn tree!
From through the veiling mist you see
The black and shadowy stem;
Smit by the sun, the mist in glee
Dissolves to lightsome jewel'ry,
Each blossom hath its gem.

COLO RIDGE.

The moonlight coloured May.

SHELLEY.
Poets in the Garden.

The Hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made.

GOLDSMITH.

The tangled hedgerows where the cows push out
Impatient horns and tolerant churning mouths,
'Twixt dripping Ash-boughs—hedgerows all alive
With birds and gnats and large white butterflies,
Which looks as if the May-flower had caught life,
And palpitated forth upon the wind.

E. B. BROWNING.

So I straightway began to pluck a posy
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft, and rosy,
A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them.

KEATS.

All about the Thorn will blow
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow.

TENNYSON.

From bush to bush did youths and maidens pass
In raiments meet for May apparelled,
Gathering the milk-white blossoms and the red.

W. MORRIS.

So, some tempestuous morn in early June
* * * * * * *
When garden walks and all the grassy floor,
With blossoms red and white of fallen May,
And Chestnut flowers are strewn—
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry.

M. ARNOLD.

HEATH AND HEATHER.

In spite of the difference between the Heath or Erica and Heather or Ling, it may be best here not to divide them. Heath makes too poor a show with only Miss Howitt's sprig to represent it. Besides, it seems as if the other poets often mean Heath when they sing of Heather, while the word Heath they
frequently use as signifying a moorland waste or common. Burns looks upon
the Heather with love, but also, we may guess, with the sly feelings of the
poacher he hints at having been.

We'll sing auld Coila's plains and fells,
Her moors red-brown wi' heather-bells.

BURNS.

And this to Tam Samson, his "honest" social friend—

When August winds the Heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
Three volleys let his memory crave
O' pouther and lead,
Till Echo answer from her cave,
Tam Samson's dead!

BURNS.

Dead! "Heaven rest his soul where'er he be," says his poet-mourner.
Amen, say we.

O, well the bonny Heath may smile,
The lark sing clear above;
For we will love a little while
Though all in vain we love.

And green the leaves should be o'erhead,
The Bracken brown beneath;
For O, that thou and I lay dead
Upon the bonny heath!

SEBASTIAN EVANS.

See beneath
The wastes of the blossoming purple Heath.

MARY HOWITT.

An empty sky, a world of Heather,
Purple of Foxglove, yellow of Broom,
We two among them wading together,
Shaking out honey, treading perfume.

JEAN INGELOW.
Poets in the Garden.

Where the Moss bears print of the wild-deer’s tread,
And the Heath like a royal robe is spread?

MRS. HEMANS.

HERBS (sweet).

From the earliest days of our English gardens Herbs were carefully cultivated. A fifteenth-century MS., in the British Museum, gives a long list of Herbs for various uses. Some of these seem strange enough. Among many other Herbs for pottage are numbered Violets, Daisies, Marigolds, Dandelion, and Red Nettle, Violets and Hearts-tongue also for sauce. And for salad all the poor pottage-flowers above named, besides "Primerose buddus, and Chykynwede" (Chickweed). Whilst with herbs named for savour and beauty, besides such naturally chosen flowers as Gilliflower and Marjoram, are also the dull little Vervain and "Garlek."

Spenser gives a long list of sweet Herbs, none of which can be well rooted up from among its neighbours in verse.

The wholesome Sages and Lavender still gray,
Rank-smelling Rue, and Cummin good for eyes,
Sharp Isope, good for green wounds' remedies,
     Fair Marigolds and bees-alluring Thime,
     Sweet Majoram and Daysies decking prime.

Coole Violets, and Orpine, growing still,
Embattled Balme and cheerful Galingale,
Fresh Costmarie and breathfull Camomile,
Dull Poppy and drink-quickning Setuall,
Veine-healing Verven, and headpurging Dill,
Sound Savorie and Bazil hartie-hale,
     Fat Colworst and comforting Perseline,
Cold Lettuce and refreshing Rosemarine.

SPENSER.

Shenstone, much later, has also chronicled many of the Herbs Spenser knew. The difference here shown is, that in Spenser's day these grew in the gardens of the great; already in Shenstone's they had receded to the humbler flower-plot of the village school dame.

Herbs, too, she knew, and well of each could speak,
That in her garden sipped the silvery dew,
Where no vain flower disclosed a gaudy streak,
Poets in the Garden.

But herbs for use, and physic, not a few,
Of grey renown, within those borders grew;
The tufted Basil, pun-provoking Thyme,
Fresh Baum, and Marygold of cheerful hue,
The lowly Gill, that never dares to climb,
And more I fain would sing, disdaining here to rhyme.

Yet Euphrasy may not be left unsung,
That gives dim eyes to wander leagues around,
And pungent Radish, biting infant's tongue,
And Plantain ribbed, that heals the reaper's wound,
And Marjoram Sweet, in shepherd's posie found,
And Lavender, whose spikes of azure bloom
Shall be, erewhile, in arid bundles bound,
To lurk amidst the labours of her loom,
And crown her kerchief clean with mickle rare perfume.

SHENSTONE.

Besides their uses for the pot and gallipot, in cooking and in leech-craft,
Herbs were used to make many "a sweet strewing" as a delightful addition to
the luxury of having fresh Rushes spread underfoot in hall and lady's bower, or
in the churches. Drayton mentions those used at the marriage of Thame and
Isis in his fanciful "Polyolbion."

Some Lavender—with Rosemary and Bays,
Sweet Marjoram, with her like, Sweet Basil rare for smell,
The heathful Balm and Mint—
The scentful Camomile, the vertuous Costmarie,
Clear Hyssop, and therewith the comfortable Thyme,
Germander with the rest, each thing then in her prime,
Amongst these strewing kinds some wild that grow,
As Burnet, all abroad, and Meadowwort they throw.

DRAYTON.

The meaning of Herbs and flowers, as emblems, seems to have been much
dwelt on in older and simpler days; so, for instance, we read how poor
Ophelia gives her Rue with a difference, and Perdita her Rosemary also; and
Tuberville receives Fennel from his love to chide his supposed flattering false-
ness. So also love-lorn shepherds with Drayton—

He to his lass his Lavender hath sent,
Showing her love and doth requital crave;
Poets in the Garden.

Him, Rosemary, his sweetheart, whose intent
Is, that he her should in remembrance have,
Roses his youth and strong desire express;
Her Sage doth show his sovereignty in all;
Thyme, truth.

DRAYTON.

For dressing out houses, too, each season had its fit bravery of green. None could sing better than Herrick how they should be used.

Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve.

Down with the Rosemary and Bayes,
    Down with the Mistletoe;
Instead of Holly now upraise
    The greener Box, for show.

The Holly hitherto did sway;
    Let Box now domineer,
Until the dancing Easter-day,
    Or Easter's eve appear.

Then youthful Box, which now hath grace
    Your houses to renew,
Grown old, surrender must his place
    Unto the crispèd Yew.

When Yew is out, then Birch comes in,
    And many flowers beside,
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin,
    To honour Whitsuntide.

Green Rushes then and sweetest Bents,
    With cooler Oaken boughs,
Come in for comely ornaments
    To re-adorn the house.

Thus times do shift; each thing his turn does hold;
New things succeed, as former things grow old.

HERRICK.
POETS IN THE GARDEN.

HOLLY.

Shakespeare's Winter Song, half sad, half glad, sung by Amiens to the exiles under a summer sky in the green glades of Arden, well begins all other verses on the Holly, this tree of good cheer under a bitter sky.

Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green Holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the Holly!
This life is most jolly.

SHAKESPEARE.

The following carol, supposed to date from the reign of Henry VI., may be found in Mr. Ellacombe's "Plant-lore of Shakespeare," from which work I gratefully borrow it—

Holly he hath berries as red as any Rose,
The foresters, the hunters, keep them from the does;
Ivy she hath berries as black as any Sloe,
There come the owls and eat them as the go;
Holly he hath birds, a full fair flock,
The nightingale, the popinjay, the gentle laverock;
Good Ivy, say to us, what birds hast thou?
None but the owlet that cries, "How, how!"

Another name for Holly, or rather perhaps its original one, was Holme.

And look how when a frantick storme doth tear
A stubborn Oake, or Holme (long growing there)
But lull'd to calmnesse, then succeeds a breeze
That scarcely stirs the nodding leaves of trees.

HERRICK.

Beneath an Holm, fast by a pathway-side,
Which did unto Saint Godwyn's convent lead.

CHATTERTON.

In one of his poems, Burns in fancy sees Scotland's Muse come to visit him in consolation. He was sitting in a smoky ingle-nook at night—

The thrasher's weary flingin' tree (flail)
The lee-lang day had tired me.
And so as he sat weary of his winter's day barn work, and coughing from peat-reek, dejection comes upon him, and he muses on the miserable climate and his wretched life—on a wasted prime when he had done nothing, but

Stringing blethers (nonsense) up in rhyme
For fools to sing.

Then the fair Vision enters, and puts his vain melancholy to flight up the chimney.

Green, slender, leaf-clad Holly boughs
Were twisted, graceful round her brows.

Let us hope, for his sake, the wreath was of the smooth-leaved Holly, for after having consoled him in words—

"And wear thou this," she solemn said,
And bound the Holly round my head:
The polished leaves and berries red
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.

Burns.

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

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

Southey.
They are the Stephens
On the white carpet,不变
His yellow face at dinner.

The brown eyes, shiny, green, and brass, and shaped.
With father and the yellow halfblood,
And Rutgers at his fingers.

by a child.

MONASTIC: (CONTR.)

The table, in one direction, where I, who remember it for a time
sleeping and waking, and standing still. When alone, nothing happens
in its wakefulness, going indifferent. But when alone, the silent
speech of the table, and the sound of the dish, and the plate
are joined to the world of lights, and the world of things, and
the world of darkness, and the world of silence.
Poets in the Garden.

HOLLYHOCK.

Outlandish Rose was an old name for Hollyhock. This sounds like the French Rose d'Outremer, translated.

Heavily hangs the Hollyhock.

A brave old house! a garden full of bees,
Large dropping Poppies, and Queen Hollyhocks,
With butterflies for crowns.

JEAN INGELOW.

They see the Scythian
On the wide steppe, unharnessing
His wheeled house at noon.

* * * * *

The boundless, waving, grass-plains stretch, thick-starred
With Saffron and the yellow Hollyhock,
And flag-leaved Iris flowers.

M. ARNOLD.

HONESTY OR MOONWORT (LUNARIA).

The Lunaria, as our forefathers called it, was considered to be a cure for madness, and was also used for enchantments. It was called Honesty because of its transparent silvery seed-vessels; Moonwort from the half-moon seeds therein enclosed. Both names have an old-fashioned flavour truly delightful when contrasted with some of our latter-day flower-nomenclature.

Then sprinkles she the juice of Rue
With nine drops of the midnight dew
From Lunarie distilling.

DRAYTON.

HONEYSUCKLE OR WOODBINE.

The first mention I can find of Woodbine is in Chaucer—
And as about a tre, with many a twiste
Bytrent and writh the söte Wodébynde
(i.e., Twineth and wreatheth the sweet Woodbine).
Poets in the Garden.

But this he may not have meant for the Honeysuckle, since Woodbine was long applied indiscriminately to any creeper. The writer of "The Flower and the Leaf," now, from internal evidence, no longer supposed to have been Chaucer, makes it the emblem of constancy in love—

And those that weare chaplets on their hede
Of fresh Woodbine, be such as never were
To love untrue in word, thought, ne dede,
But aye stedfast.

Shakespeare, however, must have held both names synonymous, since Beatrice is bid—

Steal into the pleached bower
Where Honeysuckle, ripened by the sun,
Forbids the sun to enter.

(What a charming illustration of a petted favourite's presumption!)
And again—

So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
Is couched in the Woodbine coverture.

SHAKESPEARE.

A passage in "Midsummer Night's Dream" is puzzling—

Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms;
So doth the Woodbine, the sweet Honeysuckle
Gently entwist.

SHAKESPEARE.

But Mr. Ellacombe, in his "Plant-lore of Shakespeare," supposes Woodbine here to be applied to the plant, and Honeysuckle to the flower.

I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting Honeysuckle, and began.

MILTON.

Nor in the bower,
Where Woodbines flaunt, and roses shed a couch,
While evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft minutes with betraying man.

THOMSON.
Poets in the Garden.

What a fair face does Nature show!
A landscape wide salutes my sight,
Of shady vales and mountains bright,

And now into the fields I go,
Where thousand flaming flowers glow;
And every neighbouring hedge I greet,
With Honeysuckles smelling sweet!

DYER.

Convey the Woodbine's rich perfume.

SHENSTONE.

Ye Woodbines hanging bonnie
In scented bowers.

BURNS.

The Woodbine, pale and wan,
But well compensating her sickly looks
With never-cloying odours.

COWPER.

And Honeysuckles full of clear bee-wine.

KEATS.

Woodbine,
Of velvet leaves and bugle bloom divine.

KEATS.

Clumps of Woodbine taking the soft wind
Upon their summer thrones.

KEATS.

And as a spray of Honeysuckle flowers
 Brushes across a tired traveller's face,
Who shuffles through the deep dew-moistened dust,
On a May evening in the darkened lanes,
And starts him that he thinks a ghost went by.

M. ARNOLD.
Poets in the Garden.

The Woodbine spires are wafted abroad,
And the Musk of their Roses blown.

Tennyson.

The Woodbine and Eglatere
Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.

Tennyson.

Yet seemed the pressure thrice as sweet
As Woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried Briony fold.

Tennyson.

I had a little chamber in the house,
As green as any Privet-hedge a bird
Might choose to build in.

* * *

And the folds
Hung green about the window which let in
The out-door world with all its greenery.
You could not push your head out and escape
A dash of dawn-dew from the Honeysuckle;
But so you were baptized into the grace
And privilege of seeing.

E. B. Browning.

YACINTH OR BLUEBELL.

The old myth runs that Apollo, having, by mischance, killed his friend, young Hyacinth, changed him into this flower. In token of the god's sorrow, the Hyacinth thenceforth bore AI, AI! the Greek outcry of grief marked upon its petal. Virgil describes the flower as bright red, the marks being black. This cannot apply to the flower we call Hyacinth. Hence the Turk's Cap or Martagon Lily is now supposed to represent the Hyacinth of the ancients. In honour of Apollo, and in memory of his friend, the Greeks kept a yearly three-days' festival in Laconeia. Herodotus tells us that this Hyacinthia was held to be of such importance that matters of state were neglected to attend to it.

Hyacinths which grow with marks of grief.

Drummond.
Poets in the Garden.

O Hyacinths! for aye your Ai keep still,
Nay, with more marks of woe your leaves now fill.

DRUMMOND.

Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.

MILTON.

For so Apollo, with unweeeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurota's strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transformed him to a purple flower.

MILTON.

Hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering.

MILTON.

Youths, whose locks divinely spreading
Like vernal Hyacinths in sullen hue.

COLLINS.

And to this hour the mournful purple wears
Ai, ai, inscribed in funeral characters.

ADDISON.

Gerard, in 1593, seems to decide in favour of the Gold-red Lily as being the Hyacinth of ancient poets. For, he says, the red or saffron flowers are powdered with little black specks, like to imperfect draughts of certain letters. At what period our Wild Hyacinth first came to be so called in England seems a little uncertain. Bluebell or Harebell (these appellations being interchanged and disputed often) were the common names.

White-plumed Lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown Primrose that hath burst;
Shaded Hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid May.

KEATS.

A springhead of clear waters,
Prattling so wildly of its lovely daughters,
The spreading Bluebells.

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

Tender Bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved.

SHELLEY.

And the Hyacinth, purple and white and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense.

SHELLEY.

This is, of course, the garden Hyacinth. There could hardly be a more lovely description of it considered simply as a flower. But looking on it classically, Shelley makes confusion in many simple minds by saying—

The Bluebells
Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief.

'Mid some green plot of open ground;
Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,
The fostered Hyacinths spread their purple bloom.

WORDSWORTH.

The cone-beaked Hyacinth returns,
And lights her blue-flamed chandelier.

O. W. HOLMES.

The Bluebells perfume all the air (see Furze).

M. ARNOLD.

So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry—
* * * * * * * * *
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I!
* * * * 
Next year he will return,
And we shall have him in the sweet spring days,
With whitening hedges and uncrumpling Fern
And Bluebells trembling by the forest ways,
And scent of hay new mown.

M. ARNOLD.

Over sheets of Hyacinth [they rode]
That seemed the heavens upbreaking through the earth.

TENNYSON.
Poets in the Garden.

What time her foot
Startled with moonlike motion, milk-blue stalks,
Of Hyacinths in a dim forest glade.

R. BUCHANAN.

And underneath the fresh wild Hyacinth-bed
Wavers like water in the whispering wind.

R. BUCHANAN.

*HYPERICUM OR ST. JOHN'S WORT.*

Hypericum was called the “herb of war,” pierced through with wounds and “marked with many a scar.” This was on account of the perforated species seeming to be full of holes. In early days this was taken as Nature’s sign that here was a balm for all wounds, and its healing virtues were long believed in. Being sacred to St. John, witches dared not approach the plant; and on St. John’s eve, when fires were lighted through the country, all the houses were dressed with branches of his Wort.

Hypericum, all bloom, so thick a swarm
Of flowers, like flies clothing her slender rods,
That scarce a leaf appears.

COWPER.
IRIS OR FLAG-FLOWER, OR FLOWER-DE-LUCE.

Some of the elder poets seem to have meant by the Flower-de-luce a lily; others the Iris. As to what the Fleur-de-lys in the French arms meant, who can tell? Learnedly as it has been disputed, the question has never been settled. Dunbar commends the "Flour-de-luce" to the Thistle-king's care (see THISTLE). Shakespeare has it in Perdita's sweet invocation of Proserpina, and he often alludes to the "fair Flower-de-luce" of France. But these last all treat it as a cognizance in heraldry. The Iris reasserts itself in Spenser, and thenceforth as a living flower growing in still streams, not on shields incarnadined with gore. Longfellow has made the Flower-de-luce his own in the poem from which we quote a few stanzas below.

Her nekke was white as is the Flour de lys.

CHAUCER.

Strow mee the grounde with Daffadown-Dillies,
And Cowslips, and Kingcups, and lovèd Lillies;
The pretty Pawnce
And the Chevisaunce
Shall match with the fayre Flowre Delice.

SPENSER.

Iris all hues.

MILTON.

But on the verge
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like hope upon a deathbed.

BYRON.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad Flag-flowers, purple prankt with white.

SHELLEY.
Poets in the Garden.

The burnished dragon-fly is thine attendant,  
    And tilts against the field;  
And down the listed sunbeam rides resplendent,  
    With steel-blue mail and shield.

Thou art the Iris, fair among the fairest,  
    Who, armed with golden rod  
And winged with the celestial azure, bearest  
    The message of some god.

* * * * * *

O, Flower-de-luce, bloom on, and let the river  
    Linger to kiss thy feet!  
O flower of song, bloom on, and make for ever  
    The world more fair and sweet.

    LONGFELLOW.

And this Proclus too,  
In these dear, quaint, contracted Grecian types,  
    Fantastically crumpled like his thoughts.

* * * * * *

    Ah, I stained the middle leaf  
With pressing in't my Florence Iris-bell,  
Long stalk, and all; my father chided me  
    For that stain of blue blood.

    E. B. BROWNING.

The tall Flag-flowers when they sprung  
    Below the range of stepping stones.

    TENNYSON.

You came, and the sun came after,  
    And the green grew golden above;  
And the Flag-flowers lightened with laughter,  
    And the meadow-sweet shook with love.

    SWINBURNE.
Poets in the Garden.

**IVY.**

The female Ivy so
Enrings the baky fingers of the Elm.

**SHAKESPEARE.**

This brings to mind Hood's verse on the blossomed Pea, that wanton witch,
"who clasps her rings on every hand." But in the "Comedy of Errors"
Adriana says, scornfully—

If ought possess thee from me, it is dross,
Usurping Ivy, Brier, or idle Moss.

**SHAKESPEARE.**

So now is come our joyfulst feast;
Let every man be jolly,
Each room with Ivy leaves is drest,
And every post with Holly.
Though some churls at our mirth repine,
Round your foreheads garlands twine,
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
And let us all be merry.

**WITHER.**

An arbour green dispread,
Framed of wanton Ivie, flowering faire,
Through which the fragrant Eglantine did spread
His prickling arms.

**SPENSER.**

The Ivy mesh
Shading its Ethiop berries.

**KEATS.**

Aurora Leigh, a child poetess, who has just put out in secret her first little
song-buds to blossom one day thickly in noble poems, wanders in a garden.
Thinking to crown herself in sport "to learn the feel of it," she hesitates,
refusing Bay and Myrtle, then cries—

Ah—there's my choice—that Ivy on the wall,
That headling Ivy! not a leaf will grow
But thinking of a wreath. Large leaves, smooth leaves,
Serrated like my vines, and half as green.
Poets in the Garden.

I like such Ivy, bold to leap a height,
'Twas strong to climb; as good to grow on graves
As twist about a Thyrsus.

E. B. BROWNING.

Oh! a dainty plant is the Ivy green
That creepeth o'er ruins old,
Of right choice food are his meals, I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Whole ages have fled and their works decayed,
And nations have scattered been;
But the stout old Ivy shall never fade
From its hale and hearty green.

DICKENS.

Creeping on where time has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Ivy serpentine
With its dark buds and leaves wandering astray.

SHELLEY.
JASMINE OR JESSAMINE.

Young blossomed Jessamines;
Such fragrant flowers do give most odorous smell.

SPENSER.

Gerard speaks of the Jasmine, which was a foreigner to our English soil, by the names also of Gelsemine or Gessemises. It was fostered in gardens, says he, and used to cover arbours and banqueting-houses therein. "It groweth not wild in England that I can understand of." Milton alludes to it several times in "Paradise Lost" as "pale Jessamine," and—

Iris all hues, Roses, and Jessamine
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought Mosaic.

MILTON.

Prior has a statement which is only remarkable when contrasted with that of Moore. One says the Jasmine smells strongest in the morning; the other thinks it does so at night. This last may be the case in India, however, and Moore has later so applied it.

The twining Jasmine and the blushing Rose
With lavish grace their morning scent disclose;
The swelling Tuberos[e] and Jonquil declare
The stronger impulse of an evening air.

PRIOR.

Shenstone's lines on Jessamine seem to come this time truly from his heart. Not from the head only, nor—as so often, honest though he be—with a savour of affectation in his love of country pleasures, suggesting to the world, "Look at this bard, who chooses to dwell in rural elegance far from your gay haunts." They are from the ode, "After Sickness," when "at length from
Poets in the Garden.

Pain's abhorred couch " he rose, and wandered out. Every one who has done the same, will feel with him how soft the air and doubly sweet all scents did seem.

Come, gentle air! and while the thickets bloom,
Convey the Jasmine's breath divine,
Convey the Woodbine's rich perfume,
Nor spare the sweet-leafed Eglantine.

SHENSTONE.

The Jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
The deep, dark green of whose unvarnished leaf
Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more,
The bright profusion of her scattered stars.

COWPER.

Timid Jasmine buds that keep
Their odour to themselves all day;
But when the sunlight dies away,
Let the delicious secret out.

MOORE.

Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves.

HOOD.

The modest Jasmine is content,
She whispers, "Lovers, why lament?"

FROM "THE ROSE GARDEN OF PERSIA."

Like a bridal canopy overhead
The Jassines their slender wreathings spread,
One with stars as ivory white,
The other with clusters of amber light.

L. E. L. (MISS LANDON).

Jasmines—some like silver spray,
Some like gold in the morning gray;
Fragrant stars, and favourites they,
When Indian girls on a festival day
Braid their dark tresses.

L. E. L. (MISS LANDON).
Poets in the Garden.

White-flowered Jasmine, and the broad-leaved Myrtle,  
Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love!  

COLERIDGE.

Surely these flowers keep happy watch—their breath  
Is their fond memory of the loving light.  

GEORGE ELIOT.

Growths of Jasmine twined  
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,  
And at the root through lush green grasses burned  
The red Anemone.  

TENNYSON.

Oh, the faint, sweet smell of the Jasmine flower.  

LORD Lytton.

JUDAS-TREE.

The old legend connected with this tree declared that Judas hanged himself upon it. Gerard, however, asserts (what is perhaps a contrary superstition) that his living gallows was an Elder. In Adelaide Procter's poem, a Judas blossom is a touching link—the only one, and that soon withered—between the lives of a great lady and a man unknown and far below her in station. As a poor boy he breaks a purple branch first to please the whim of a rich child. Twice more he is fated to see her pass.

He plucked a blossom from the tree—  
The Judas-tree—and cast  
Its purple fragrance towards the Bride,  
A message from the Past.  
The signal came, the horses plunged—  
Once more she smiled around:  
The purple blossom in the dust  
Lay trampled on the ground.
Poets in the Garden.

The boyish silent homage
To child and bride unknown.
The pitying tender sorrow
Kept in his heart alone.
Now laid upon the coffin
With a purple flower, might be
Told to the cold dead sleeper;—
The rest could only see
A fragrant purple blossom
Plucked from a Judas-tree.

ADELAIDE PROCTER.
NOT-GRASS.

Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hindering Knot-grass made;
You bead, you Acorn.

SHAKESPEARE.

The curious hoary fable that a diet of Knot-grass could make children become dwarfs, and that the plant should be also troublesome in the way of spade or plough, leads to the subject of other magical virtues attributed to various worts since Anglo-Saxon days. The old superstitions as to the healing virtues of plants had a strange, common origin. This was the belief held by our ancestors that if a plant was shaped like any part of the human body, here was God's sign of a cure for disease therein. Thus the Hepatica because of its lobed, liver-shaped leaves, was trusted to cure liver complaint; and Spotted Lung-wort, consumption. Viper's Bugloss was a certain remedy for snake-bites, from its spotted stems; and Larkspur likewise sent scorpions and venomous beasts into a swoon if thrown in their path, according to Gerard. It was the idea of "Like cures like." By the same curious mind-process people came to the conclusion that, as no one could see any seed on Ferns (unless it were the curious brown dots on the back of the fronds, which it was ridiculous to suppose), whoever could find Fern-seed would be invisible. (See Ferns.) In the same way keeping a bunch of Quaking-grass, or "Quakers and Shakers," in a chimney-ornament was a certain cottage-cure for ague; while Plantain or Waybread, "mother of worts," had miraculous powers against a number of diseases, notably headache. With later poets the Knot-grass has lost its evil reputation; and hence it figures as one of the ornaments in Made-line's chamber "silken, husht, and chaste."

A casement high and triple-arched there was
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of flowers and fruits and bunches of Knot-grass.

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of Knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold.

Milton.

He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green.

Milton.

The Knot-grass fettered there the hand
Which once could burst an iron band.

Sir W. Scott.
ABURNUM.

Laburnum rich
In streaming gold, Syringa ivory pure.

COWPER.

'Mid the Laburnums dropping of gold.

MRS. HEMANS.

The Lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The Laburnum on his birthday—
The tree is living yet.

HOOD.

Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

TENNYSON.

LADY-SMOCKS, see CUCKOO-FLOWERS.

ARKSPUR.

Lark-heels trim.

F. BEAUMONT.

The Larkspur listens, I hear, I hear.

TENNYSON.
Poets in the Garden.

Flung from her eyes of purest blue,
A lasso with its leaping chain,
Light as a loop of Larkspurs, flew
O'er sense and spirit, heart and brain.

O. W. HOLMES.

LAUREL.

Fresh grene Laurer tree,

That gave so passing a delicious smelle,
According to the Eglantere ful welle.

CHAUCER.

The Laurel meed of mightie conquerors,
And poet's sage.

SPENSER.

To whom the heavens, in thy nativity,
Adjudged an Olive branch and Laurel crown,
As likely to be blest in peace and war.

SHAKESPEARE.

A Funerall stone,
Or Verse, I covet none;
But onely crave
Of you, that I may have
A sacred Laurel springing from my grave:

Which being seen,
Blest with perpetuall greene,
May grow to be
Not so much called a tree,
As the eternall monument of me.

HERRICK.
Poets in the Garden.

Laurel is the sign of labour crowned,
Which bears the bitter blast nor shaken falls to ground;
From winter winds it suffers no decay,
For ever fresh and fair, and every month is May.

DRYDEN.

Speaking by the tongues of flowers,
By the ten-tongued Laurel speaking,
Singing by the oriole songs.

EMERSON.

Then farewell, hopes o' Laurel-boughs,
To garland my poetic brows!
Henceforth I'll rove where busy ploughs
Are whistling thrang,
And teach the lanely heights and howes
My rustic sang.

BURNS.

World's fame with a Laurel crown,
Which rustles most as the leaves turn brown.

E. B. BROWNING.

Just now, the dry-tongued Laurels' pattering talk,
Seemed her light foot along the garden walk.

TENNYSON.

The twinkling Laurel scattereth silver lights.

TENNYSON.

Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day.

SWINBURNE.

LAURUSTINUS.

This flower that smells of honey and the sea,
White Laurustine, seems in my hand to be,
A white star made of memory long ago,
Lit in the heaven of dear times dead to me.
Poets in the Garden.

A star out of the skies love used to know,
Here held in hand, a stray left yet to show
    What flowers my heart was full of in those days,
That are long since gone down dead memory's flow.

Flower, once I knew thy star-white brethren bred,
Nigh where the last of all the land made head
    Against the sea, a keen-faced promontory,
Flowers on salt wind and sprinkled sea-dews fed.

* * * * *

Like things born of the sea and the bright day,
They laughed out at the years that could not slay,
    Live sons and joyous of unquiet hours,
And stronger than all storms that range for prey.

Swinburne.

Lavender.

Lavender still gray.

Here's flowers for you;
Hot Lavender, sweet Mints, Savory, Marjoram.

Shakespeare.

He to his lass his Lavender has sent,
Showing her love, and doth requital crave.

Drayton.

And Lavender, whose spikes of azure bloom,
Shall be, erewhile, in arid bundles bound,
    To lurk amid the labours of her loom,
And crown her kerchiefs clean with mickle rare perfume.

Shenstone.
"Lilac-tide!" What a delightful old name for the season of white and purple Lilacs, of down-dropping yellow Laburnums; suggesting warmth of sunshine, birds in full song, the bursting and growing of green leaves everywhere, the blossoming of flower-buds—all the freshness and gladness of the young year.

O how sudden the Jessamine strove
With the Lilac to render it gay!
Already it calls for my love
To prune the wild branches away.

SHENSTONE.

The Lilac, various in array, now white,
Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
With purple spikes pyramidal, as if
Studious of ornament, yet unresolved
Which hue she most approved, she chose them all.

COWPER.

O were my love yon Lilac fair,
Wi' purple blossoms to the spring,
And I a bird to shelter there,
When wearied on my little wing.

BURNS.

One green wicket in a Privet hedge;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk,
Through crowded Lilac-ambush trimly pruned;
And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew
Beyond us, as we entered in the cool.

TENNYSON.

Upon his crest he bare a tower
And therein stucked a Lily-flower.

CHAUCER.
LILY. LARKSPUR.
Poets in the Garden.

The Lily is the emblem of the Blessed Virgin, and dedicated to her honour. To this day the tall white ones are called our Lady's Lilies, and carried in processions on her feast-days. In Chaucer's time it was the same, for his Prioress, beginning her tale to the Canterbury pilgrims, piously exclaims, "O Lord, our Lord . . . in laud . . . of thee and of the white Lily flower, which that thee bare, and is a maid alway." But words of preface are hardly needed for the Lily. Do we not all know that—

To gild refined gold, to paint the Lily,

* * * * *

Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

SHAKESPEARE.

Then, again, the world-lasting rivalry between Lily and Rose, which shall be Queen of Flowers, must surely be as old as the first poet, and may still be sung by the last. And every rhyming lover, who has strung his mistress's charms into verses that are his rosary, has told of—

The silent war of Lilies and of Roses
Which Tarquin viewed in her fair face's field.

SHAKESPEARE.

O sweetest, fairest Lily!
My brother wears thee not the one half so well
As when thou grew'st thyself.

SHAKESPEARE.

Now by my maiden honour, yet as pure
As the unsullied Lily.

SHAKESPEARE.

Like the Lily
That once was mistress of the field and flourished,
I'll lay my head, and perish.

SHAKESPEARE.

Look you, she is as white as a Lily, and as small as a wand.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Lily, lady of the flowering field.

SPENSER.
Poets in the Garden.

And Alexander Montgomery—
I love the Lily as the first of flowers
Whose stately stalk so straight up is and stay;
To whom th' lave ay lowly louts and cowers
As bound so brave a beauty to obey.
A. Montgomery.

Have you seen but a bright Lily grow
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have you marked but the fall o' the snow
Before the soil hath smutched it?
* * * * * *
Or have tasted the bag o' the bee?
O so white—O so soft—O so sweet is she!
B. Jonson.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make men better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald and sear;
A Lily of a day
Is fairer far, in May,
Altho' it fall and die that night;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures, life may perfect be.
B. Jonson.

Roses and Lilies were considered emblems of the two sexes. Therefore as an epithalamium he says—

See how with Roses, and with Lilies shine,
Lilies and Roses, flowers of either sex,
The bright bride's path.
B. Jonson.

With full-leaved Lilies I will stick
Thy braided hair all o'er so thick,
That from it a light shall throw,
Like the sun's upon the snow.
Drayton.
Poets in the Garden.

The spotless Lily, by whose pure leaves be
Noted the chaste thoughts of virginity.

BROWNE.

Spotless purity is always the character of the Lily; as Chaucer showed in
expounding the name of St. Cecilia, as derived from Cæli Lilium—

It is to say in English, heaven’s Lily
For pure chastness of virginity.

This next is from Cowley’s “Hymn to Light,” the argument of the verse
I quote being, that “All the world’s bravery that delights our eyes, is but”
light’s “several liveries.”

A crimson garment in the Rose thou wear’st
A crown of studded gold thou bear’st,
The virgin Lilies in their white,
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.

COWLEY.

Sweet Hermon’s fragrant air,
Sweet is the Lily’s silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful taper’s smell
That watch for early prayer.

CHRISTOPHER SMART.

You have been wretched; yet
The silver shower, whose reckless burden weighs
Too heavily upon the Lily’s head,
Oft leaves a saving moisture at the root.

WORDSWORTH.

Shelley has a new image here—
And the wand-like Lily which lifted up,
As a Maenad, its moonlight-coloured cup,
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,
Gazed through clear dew on the tender sky.

SHELLEY.

The Lily is all in white, like a saint.

HOOD.
Poets in the Garden.

The Lilies say, Behold, how we
Preach, without words, of purity.

C. ROSSETTI.

On the whole, however, the Lily seems to have been less a favourite with poets than the Rose.

LILY OF THE VALLEY.

This had also formerly the pretty name of May-lily: Mai-blume still in German. These old names are often unconscious poetry.

The Lily, silver mistress of the vale.

CHURCHILL.

Sweet May-lilies richest odours shed.

J. SCOTT.

Seek the bank where flowering Elders crowd.
Where scattered wild the Lily of the Vale
Its balmy essence breathes.

THOMSON.

The nice-leaved lesser Lilies
Shading like detected light
Their little green-tipt lamps of white.

LEIGH HUNT.

This is a pretty conceit enough of Hunt's—though as nought compared with the lines of Keats and Shelley. But Wordsworth surely is not fair to the delicate scent of these little fairy-bells—

The Lily of the Vale
That loves the ground and from the sun withholds
Her pensive beauty, from the breeze her sweets.

WORDSWORTH.

Wild Thyme, and Valley-Lilies whiter still
Then Leda's love, and cresses from the rill.

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

No flower amid the garden fairer grows
Than the sweet Lily of the lowly vale,
The queen of flowers.

KEATS.

And the naiad-like Lily of the Vale,
Whom youth makes so fair, and passions so pale,
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green.

SHELLEY.

And stooping Lilies of the Valley,
That love with shades and dews to dally,
And bending droop on slender threads
With broad hood-leaves above their heads,
Like white-robed maids in summer hours,
Beneath umbrellas shunning showers.

CLARE.

Fair flower that, lapt in lowly glade,
Dost hide beneath the greenwood shade.
Than whom the vernal gale
None fairer wakes, on bank or spray,
Our England's Lily of the May,
Our Lily of the Vale.

BISHOP MANT.

Little white Lily,
Dressed like a bride,
Shining with whiteness,
And crowned beside.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

Pretty bud!
Lily of the Vale! half-opened bell of the woods!

TENNYSON.
Poets in the Garden.

**INNÆA.**

Linnaeus is the godfather of this flower, and its rosy, twin-blossomed children. He found it growing in Pine-woods where no other flower will live.

He saw beneath dim aisles, in odorous beds
The slight Linnaea hang its twin-born heads,
And blessed the monument of the man of flowers,
Which breathes his sweet fame through the northern bowers.

_EMERSON._

'Tis a child of the old green woodlands,
Where the song of the free wild bird
And swaying boughs of the summer breeze
Are the only voices heard.
In the richest moss of the lonely dells
Are its rosy petals found,
With the clear blue skies above it spread,
And the lordly trees around.

_E. ELLIOTT._

**LONDON PRIDE or NONE-SO-PRETTY (SAXIFRAGE).**

Another pleasant old name for this, because suggesting that the flower resembles delicate embroidery, is "Queen Anne's Needlework."

I see the garden-thickets shade,
Where all the summer long we played,
And gardens set and houses made,
   Our early work and late;
Our little gardens, side by side,
Each bordered round with London Pride,
Some six feet long and three feet wide,
   To us a large estate.

_MRS. HOWITT._
Poets in the Garden.

LONG PURPLES.

Long Purples are by many supposed to be the common Purple Orchis. I only find three allusions to them in our poetry. One is where the queen tells how poor Ophelia used to make garlands of—

Crowflowers, Nettles, Daisies, and Long Purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do Dead Men’s Fingers call them.

SHAKESPEARE.

Then round the meddowes did she walke,
Catching each flower by the stalke,
Such as within the meddowes grew,
As Dead Man’s Thumb and Harebell blew;
And as she pluckt them, still cried she,
“Alas! there’s none e’er loved like me.”

ROXBURGH BALLAD.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
Bramble Roses, faint and pale,
And Long Purples of the dale.

TENNYSON.

LOVE-LIES-BLEEDING, see AMARANTH.

LOTUS.

Lotus-flowers, just opened, there
Look with bright eyes towards heaven in prayer.

TOGRAY.

And, resplendent in beauty, the Lotus
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.

LONGFELLOW.
Poets in the Garden.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone,
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.

TENNYSON.

Oh nevermore, never,
Shall she stand with her feet in the dry warm grasses,
Where the faint balm-heaping breeze keenly passes,
And the white Lotus-flower leans lone on the river.

LORD Lytton.

LOVE IN A MIST.

This is also sometimes called by an uglier name—The Devil in a Bush.
The flower is so pretty, with its pale-blue nimbus of filmy petals that seem to hang lazily over it, it is curious no other poets have praised it, or even spoken of it. It is like a light wreath of morning mist caught fast and blossoming in a flower. If the Century of Roundels had not lately been given to the world, there would not have been a verse for it, though so many songs for others:

Light Love in a Mist, by the midsummer morn misguided,
Scarce seen in the twilight garden if gloom insist,
Seems vainly to seek for a star whose gleam has divided
Light Love in a Mist.
All day in the sun, when the breezes do all they list,
His soft-blue raiment of cloud-like blossom abided
Unrent and unwithered of winds and of rays that kissed,
Blithe-hearted or sad, as the cloud on the sun subsided.
Love smiled in the flower with a meaning whereof none wist,
Save two that beheld as a gleam that before them glided,
Light love in a mist.

Swinburne.
MAGNOLIA.

The Magnolia spread
High as a cloud, high overhead.

Wordsworth.

Hills with high Magnolia overgrown.

Campbell.

Faint was the air with the odorous breath of Magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon.

Longfellow.

And of pure white
Embedded 'mid its glossy leaves on high,
There the superb Magnolia lures the eye.

Pickering.

Where the musk of Magnolia hangs thick in the air,
And the Lilies' phylacteries broaden in prayer;
There is peace in the swamp, though the quiet is Death,
Though the mist is miasm, the Upas tree's breath.

Bret Harte.

MALLOW.

Shards and Mallows for the pot.

Dryden.
Poets in the Garden.

Hardy and high above the slender sheaf
The shining Mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the Charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade.

CRABBE.

Here Crabbe is lamentably describing the starved cornfields near the sea, and looking at the sorrowful side of things. Why not describe the great salt mother in her own domain, or buxom Ceres in the valleys rather than of this debateable borderland?

The sitting down when school was o'er,
Upon the threshold of the door;
Picking from Mallows, sport to please,
The crumpled seed we call a cheese.

CLARE.

Cheeses is everywhere in England the children's name for the Mallow seeds. In France, too, children call them "les petits fromageons."

MANDRAKE or MANDRAGORA.

The legends relating to this strangely supposed anthropomorphous plant are as old as the days of Josephus, and their origin lost to us in the darkness of distance of remote ages. The Mandrake belongs to the natural order of plants Solanaceae. "The ancients were well acquainted with its narcotic and stupefying properties, and it was a common saying of a sleepy or indolent man, that he had eaten Mandrake. The root often divides into two, and presents a rude resemblance to a human figure... to which many magical virtues were ascribed."

Not Poppy, nor Mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ownedst yesterday.

SHAKESPEARE.

Give me to drink Mandragora,
That I may sleep out this great gap of time
My Antony is away.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

World-wide fame from ancient days has been given to the fable of the Mandrake's shrieks when uprooted; sounds so dreadful that Juliet says—

Shrieks like Mandrakes torn out of the earth,  
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad.

SHAKESPEARE.

Would curses kill as doth the Mandrake's groan.  
SHAKESPEARE.

MARIGOLD.

And winking Mary-buds begin  
To ope their golden eyes,  
With everything that pretty is—  
My lady sweet, arise! Arise! arise!

SHAKESPEARE.

The Marigold was called the "Spouse of the Sunne," says Lupton, because it sleeps and is awakened with him. The Marigold's fair claim to be the true Sunflower of our forefathers seems further borne out by Perdita.

The Marigold that goes to bed with the sun,  
And with him rises weeping.

SHAKESPEARE.

Rises weeping! All of us who have ever looked out on our garden early must have noticed the thick dew-drops impearling the Marigold even when other flowers are comparatively dry after their morning ablution.

Her eyes, like Marigolds, had sheathed their light,  
And canopied in darkness sweetly lay,  
Till they might open to adorn the day.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Marigold is often called by elder poets "goolds" or "golds," as Chaucer says—

Jealousy  
That seared of yellow goldes a garland.
Poets in the Garden.

And Gower also, who plainly held it to be the true Sunflower, describes how the nymph Clytie was changed—

Into a floure, was named Golde,
Which stant governed of the sun.

But the name Golde seems applied sometimes to other yellow flowers, perhaps the Amaranth. Drayton in his "Polyolbion" describes both Goldes and Marigolds as adorning Isis. A possible alternative is, that the poet, however, may have only heard of Golds and Marigolds, and therefore supposed them two flowers, with that fine carelessness of these little matters called poet's license. Gawin Douglass (1475), the only one of his race, as Scott sings, who "e'er could pen a line," has a delightful, but almost childish description of how on a May morning he saw—

The Daisy and the Marigold unhappe\, Which all the night lay with their leaves lappit,\nThem to preserve frae rheums pungitive.

The idea of the flowers being happed up at night, as in bed-clothes, to keep them from catching cold, sounds fit for a nursery rhyme. A posset ought to have been added by the young bishop. Sir David Lyndesay (1490) also has a sly hit at the flower for its nightly habits.

The Mariguldis, that all day were rejoysit\nOf Phoebus' heat, now craftily are closit.

And Cleveland—

The Marigold whose courtier face,\nEchoes the sun * * *
At his full stop,
Packs and shuts up her gaudy shop.

Gerard says Marigolds, as herbes, were "great comforters of the heart."

My flower Saint Mary glinting with the light.

CHATTERTON.

In describing the Sunflower, I have supposed with all modesty that the Marigold is the true Heliotrope or Tournesol of our ancestors. So do many better judges than myself, for I only gather flowers out of the poets' garden; and bards are not always the best of botanists. But still the Sunflower question seems a shuttle-cock tossed to and fro in wordy battle. The constancy of the flower in looking always to heaven first had a charm for Pagan poets, and was
naturally adopted by later pious writers for the equal edifying of Christians. How strange is the transition. First the ancient Sunflower (by permission if such the Marigold be) blows in honour, and for love of bright Apollo. Next, George Wither can write of it in the following "serious musing" vein—

The grateful and obsequious Marigold,
How duly every morning she displays
Her open breast when Phoebus spreads his rays.

Methinks the flowers
Give no fair examples to despise
The servile fawnings and idolatries
Wherewith we court these earthly things below.

On the other hand, Herrick, from his Devonshire vicarage, writes very differently how the Marigold came yellow.

Jealous girls these sometimes were,
While they lived or lasted here;
Turned to flowers, still they be
Yellow, marked for jealousy.

Carew (1589) strikes out a new path and bids the fearful lover—

Hark how the bashful mornin' rain
Courts the amorous Marigold
With sighing blasts and weeping rain;
Yet she refuses to unfold.

So shalt thou thrive in love, fond boy;
If thy tears and sighs discover
Thy grief, thou shalt never enjoy
The just reward of a bold lover.

This is just what we expect from the amorous Royalist, the gay and gallant cavalier, who loved wine, women, and song. Browne, whose "Britannia's Pastorals" are written with such contrasting careful earnestness, mentions the electric light which the Marigold, like other yellow flowers, is supposed to show at night.

The orange-tawny Marigold; the night
Hides not her colours from a searching sight.
Poets in the Garden.

Orange-tawny is a good expression. If Browne be tedious he is at least true, and can describe colours and country sights so well one wishes one could love him better. As every dog has its day, so flowers come and go in favour. The poor "gold" was after this forgotten or unnoticed for nearly two centuries, till Keats, who loved flowers so well and all themes of classic grace, calls to them thus once more—

Open afresh your round of starry folds,
Ye ardent Marigolds!
Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,
For great Apollo bids
That in these days your praises should be sung
On merry harps which he has lately strung;
And when again your dewiness he kisses,
Tell him I have you in my world of blisses.

The Marigold's tears may be supposed to have silvered its petals afresh on the death of its last troubadour.

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MARJORAM.

To Maistress Margery Wentworth.

With Marjerain gentle,
The flower of goodly head,
Embroider'd the mantle
Is of your maidenhead.

Plainly I can not glose
Ye be, as I divine,
The pretty Primerose,
The goodly Columbine,
With Marjerain gentle.

SKELTON.

Indeed, sir, she was the Sweet Marjoram of the Salad; or rather the Herb-of-grace.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

And Marjoram buds so doubly sweet,
And Penny-royals creeping twine.

CLARE.

MARSH-MARIGOLD.

The wild Marsh-Marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray.

O, brave Marsh Marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

JEAN INGELOW.

MEADOW-SWEET OR DROPWORT.

Queen of the Meadows is another and a right royal title for this pride of summer streams. It is strange that so few poets even mention it, except perhaps Drayton, for a “sweet strewing.” Had so few wandered afield to see and to smell it in August nights as it lines the edges of the meadow-brooks?

Where is the girl, who by the boatman’s door,
Above the locks, above the boating throng,
Unmoored our skiff when through the Wytham flats,
Red Loosestrife and blond Meadow-sweet among,
And darting swallows, and light water-gnats,
We tracked the shy Thames shore?

M. ARNOLD.

Simplest growth of Meadow-sweet or Sorrel,
Such as the summer-sleepy Dryads weave.

SWINBURNE.

Bright as the birds of Indian bowers,
Whose crimson plumage blent with green,
Their emerald leaves and vermeil flowers
Resemble; Willow herbs are seen
Poets in the Garden.

To nod from banks, from whence depend
Rich cymes of fragrant Meadow-sweet;
Alas! those creamy clusters lend
A charm, where death and ardour meet.

CALDER CAMPBELL.

The last lines refer to the belief that Meadow-sweet was of deadly scent when brought into a house. This is far-fetched, though it has too strong an odour to be enjoyed between four walls. Nature, "prodigal of her sweets," did not mean this for a mere chamber-flower, but to shed fragrance far and wide over her low moist water-meadows.

MEDLAR.

I was ware of the fairest Medlar-tree
That ever yet in all my life I saw,
As full of blossomes as it might be;
Therein a goldfinch, leaping pretiée
Fro bough to bough; and as him list, gan ete
Of buddés here and there and flowrës swete.

CHAUCER.

I'll graff it with you, and then I shall graff it with a Medlar; then it will be the earliest fruit in the country, for you'll be rotten ere you be half ripe, and that's the right virtue of the Medlar.

SHAKESPEARE.

MEZEREUM (MEZEREON) or SPURGE-OLIVE.

Mezereon, too,
Though leafless, well-attired, and thick beset,
With blushing wreaths, investing every spray.

COWPER.
Poets in the Garden.

MIGNONETTE.

Hood's comical lover carries his woe to a difficult pitch when he wishes to be buried in his mistress's mignonette-box. Although the wooer of the Miller's daughter expresses no such longing, it will be remembered how his passion began for fair Alice. He first sees her, and loves, as she looks out of the window where that morning she had set—

A long green box of mignonette.

TENNYSON.

Alas! the flames of an unhappy lover
About my heart and on my vitals prey;
I caught a fever that I can't get
Over— Over the way!

I'm weary of my life; without regret
I could resign this miserable clay,
To lie within that box of Mignonette,
Over the way!

HOOD.

They say that she died of a broken heart
(I tell the tale as 'twas told to me);
But her spirit lives, and her soul is part
Of this sad old house by the sea.

But she kept the posies of Mignonette
That he gave; and ever as their bloom failed
And faded (though with her tears still wet),
Her youth with their own exhaled.

And ever since then, when the clock strikes two,
She walks unbidden from room to room,
And the air is filled that she passes through
With a subtle, sad perfume.

The delicate odour of Mignonette,
The ghost of a dead and gone bouquet,
Is all that tells of her story; yet
Could she think of a sweeter way?

BRET HARTE.
Poets in the Garden.

Madonna, wherefore hast thou sent to me
Sweet Basil and Mignonette?
Embleming love and health.

SHELLEY.

INT.

Tho I went forth on my right hand,
Downe by a litel path I fond
Of Mintes full and Fennell Greene.

AUTHOR OF "ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE."

Sae glad, sae free,
Smelling for all cordials,
The green Mint and Marjorie.

JEAN INGELOW.

See also Herbs (sweet).

MISTLETOE.

This first quotation gives a strange character to the "Mystic Mistletoe and the Merry Mistletoe." But from Druid days it was remembered as having been a sacred plant in their dark rites, and so superstition gathered round it. They called it "All Heal," too, believing it had wondrous virtue.

The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
O'ercome with Moss and baleful Mistletoe.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Mistletoe hung in the castle hall,
The Holly branch shone on the old oak wall,
And the Baron's retainers were blithe and gay,
And keeping their Christmas holiday.
Oh! the Mistletoe bough!

THOMAS H. BAILEY.
Poets in the Garden.

Oaks, from whose branches
Garlands of Spanish Moss, and of mystic Mistletoe flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-tide.

LONGFELLOW.

MONK'S-HOOD OR WOLF'S-BANE (ACONITUM).
The Monk's-hood shows twin doves on removing its folded wrapper.
An ancient fancy was that these drew Venus's chariot. But it was also supposed to resemble a man's head in a hood or a helmet, whence its name. It was regarded with awe on account of its powerfully poisonous qualities, to which Virgil bore testimony.

Though it do work as strong
As Aconitum or rash gunpowder.

SHAKESPEARE.

No poisonous Aconite is here produced.

DRYDEN.

No, no; go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine.

KEATS.

The clear waning hillside,
Unspotted by snow.

There its dusky-blue clusters
The Aconite spreads;
There the pines slope, the cloud-strips
Hung soft in their heads.

M. ARNOLD.

The Wolf's-bane I should dread.

HOOD.

125
**Poets in the Garden.**

**MOSS AND LICHEN.**

Usurping Ivy, Brier, or idle Moss.

SHAKESPEARE.

The ruddock would,
With charitable bill,
Bring thee all this;
Yea, and furred Moss besides, when flowers are none
To winter-ground thy corse.

SHAKESPEARE.

"Furred Moss." Does this show that Shakespeare knew the protecting warmth Moss and Lichen give to trees?

Live, live with me, and thou shalt see
The pleasures I'll prepare for thee:
What sweets the country can afford
Shall bless thy bed and bless thy board.
The soft sweet Moss shall be thy bed,
With crawling Woodbine overspread.

HERRICK.

That is the grave to Lucy shown,
The soil a pure and silver sand,
The green cold Moss above it grown,
Unplucked of all but maiden hand.

CRABBE.

Where bright green Moss heaves in sepulchral forms
Speckled with sunshine.

COLO RIDGE.

A beauteous heap, a hill of Moss
Just half a foot in height.

Ah me! what lovely tints are there!
Of olive green and scarlet bright,
In spikes in branches and in stars,
Green, red, and pearly white.

WORDSWORTH.
Poets in the Garden.

Voices and lights of the lonely place!
By the freshest fern your path we trace;
By the brightest cups on the emerald Moss,
Whose fairy goblets the turf emboss.

MRS. HEMANS.

The Moss upon the forest bark
Was pole-star when the night was dark.

EMERSON.

Ye dainty Mosses, Lichens grey,
Pressed each to each in tender fold,
And peacefully thus day by day,
Returning to your mould.

THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX."

Down rocky steps, rough-hewed,
Where Cup-Mosses flowered,
And under the trees, all twisted and rude,
Wherewith the dell was dowered.

JEAN INGELOW.

How many a picture this conjures up of Devonshire moors and glens with the crimson Cup-Moss raising its many tiny red heads on silvered-grey stalklets that look quite ancient with time! And all about are wide moors, mountain-streams, heather, rowan-trees heavy with glossy red clusters, like berried flame against the blue sky. Then, perhaps, midmost in the dark-brown peat-stream a vast tolmen of ancient charm—a grey boulder with a large hole washed through it in numberless ages by floods and running water. That is where I found my first Cup-Moss, on Dartmoor. Browning calls up another mood with a few words, like a magician’s spell. What is earth’s fame? He makes us muse thereon—

See, as the prettiest graves will do in time,
Our poet’s wants the freshness of its prime:

* * * * * *

How the minute grey lichens, plate o’er plate,
Have softened down the crisp-cut name and date.

BROWNING.
Poets in the Garden.

But best of all, is the search among the roots of the heather for Stag-Moss' antlers green, Branching over the earth, far-spreading, and rarely seen.

AUTHOR OF "OLRIG GRANGE."

MULBERRY.

Thisbe, tarrying in Mulberry shade.

SHAKESPEARE.

Thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest Mulberry
That will not bear the handling.

SHAKESPEARE.

With love-juice stained the Mulberie
The fruit that dewes the poet's brain.

SPENSER.

The Mulberry tree was hung with blooming wreaths;
The Mulberry tree stood centre of the dance;
The Mulberry tree was hymned with dulcet airs;
And from his touchwood trunk the Mulberry tree
Supplied such relics as devotion holds
Still sacred, and preserves with pious care.

COWPER.

'Neath Mulberries white and red,
And green leaves, lay fair Thisbe dead
By her dead love.

W. MORRIS.

O, the Mulberry tree is of trees the queen:
* * a tree of steadfast mind.

MISS MULOCH.
Poets in the Garden.

MUSK ROSE.

Thyrsis, whose artful strains have oft delayed
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweetened every Musk Rose of the dale.

MILTON.

What was the Musk Rose of some of the poets: notably Milton's "Musk Rose of the dale" and that of Keats, which he says loved the "mid-forest"? The Musk Rose of prose writers, that which Lord Bacon describes as so sweet of perfume, is now said to be dying out rapidly in England. It was no Wild Rose, but a garden inhabitant, beloved by all the Elizabethan writers. Milton may no more have meant his Musk Rose to be literally supposed a denizen of the dale than he did Sabrina of the Severn. But Keats is in sober earnest. As to Tennyson's "musk of the Rose," this may be taken only to mean scent, as the musk of summer winds has been used.

Haymakers, rakers, reapers, mowers,
Wait on your Summer Queen!
Dress up with Musk Rose her Eglantine bowers,
Daffodils strew the green.

DEKKER.

Musk Roses mixed with Eglantine! a confusion of sweets! Here we recognize the town-bred poet; besides that he surely means bowers covered with Honeysuckle-creepers, not with Sweet Briar bushes in a prickly fence around them. Old Dekker loved the country—from a distance; but he sings better of "Sweet Content" than of Daffodils in mid-summer.

Awake!—within the Musk-Rose bower
I watch, pale flower of love, for thee.

BARRY CORNWALL.

The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild,
White Hawthorn and the pastoral Eglantine;
Fast-fading Violets covered up in leaves;
And mid May's eldest child
The coming Musk Rose full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

The mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair Musk-Rose blooms.

KEATS.

Keats had a most especial love for what he called the Musk Rose. This was no garden flower, for he always puzzles us by speaking of it as growing in the "mid-forest brake." If he did not mean Sweet Briar (and he alludes to Eglantine as well in one instance), I have seen a suggestion that it may have been the white trailing Dog-rose. It is another instance of poets troubling prosaic minds by a too literal interpretation of Shakespeare's query: "What's in a name? That which we call a Rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

I saw the sweetest flower that Nature yields,
A fresh-blown Musk Rose; 'twas the first that threw
Its sweets upon the summer; graceful it grew
As is the wand that Queen Titania wields;
And as I feasted on its fragrancy,
I thought the garden Rose it far excelled.

KEATS.

And the Woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the Rose is blown.

TENNYSON.

MYRTLE.

It may have been because the Myrtle was well known to love growing by the sea whence Venus rose, that the Greeks dedicated it to this goddess. Virgil speaks of the "Myrtle blooming on the sea-beat shore." Pliny calls its blossoms "the joy of plants." Its wood was so valued for toughness that Virgil writes, "The war from stubborn Myrtle shafts revives." It is amusing to compare this with Shakespeare's "soft Myrtle;" but he cannot have been on the same easy terms of personal good-fellowship with it as with the trees and flowers of Warwickshire. It is unlikely he ever saw one; but he had heard of the tree of love, and his second passage is exquisite—it is a picture in miniature. From a passage of Drayton it would appear that Myrtle was used by our ancestors in the making of marriage wreaths, unless the poet in the passage alluded to is merely reviving a classic memory. But in older English days it would seem that only the rich had Myrtles in their gardens. Lord
Poets in the Garden.

Bacon says that they must be stored in a greenhouse during winter. In Germany the Myrtle wreath is always worn by brides.

Merciful Heaven,
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled Oak
Than the soft Myrtle.

SHAKESPEARE.

I was of late as petty to his ends
As is the morn-dew on the Myrtle-leaf
To his grand sea.

SHAKESPEARE.

Or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with Myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply.

MILTON.

Yet once more, O ye Laurels, and once more,
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.

MILTON.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
    She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
    With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

MILTON.
Poets in the Garden.

Again Eve stands alone—
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the Roses blushing round
About her glowed, oft stooping to support
Each flower of tender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays
Gently with Myrtle band.

Milton.

The lover with the Myrtle sprays
Adorns his crispèd tresses.

Drayton.

Still green, along our sunny shore
The flowering Myrtle waves,
As when its fragrant boughs of yore
Were offered on the graves;
The graves, wherein our mighty men
Had rest, unviolated then.

Mrs. Hemans.

We reached the place by night;
* * * * * *
A Myrtle, trained on the gate, was white
With tufted flowers down shaking.

With head beneath her wing
A little wren was sleeping—
So near I had found it an easy thing
To steal her for my keeping
From the Myrtle bough that with easy swing
Across the path was sweeping.

Jean Ingelow.

And milk-budded Myrtle with Venus
And Vine-leaves with Bacchus we trod.

Swinburne.
Poets in the Garden.

Nor Myrtle—which means chiefly love; and love
Is something awful which one dares not touch
So early o' mornings.

E. B. BROWNING.

Some girl, who here from castle bower,
With furtive step and cheek of flame,
'Twixt Myrtle hedges all in flower
By moonlight came
To meet her pirate-lover's ship.

M. ARNOLD.
NARCISSUS AND DAFFODIL.

It is uncertain whence the Daffodil has its name; but it is most probable that the word is an altered form of the Greek Asphodel, the old Homeric flower, that with which Greek legend has beautified the twilight Elysian fields.

Ah! fateful flower beside the rill,
The Daffodil, the Daffodil.

But our Daffodil was not known in Greece, although two other varieties of Narcissus are said to be indigenous there. The older English form of the word Daffodil was Affodille from the French "affrodille." It has been suggested that the initial "d" of our English form represents the preposition "de" in the French phrase, "Fleur d'affrodille." The Daffodil also goes by the names of Lent Lily and Chalice Flower. The wild Daffodils of Devonshire are always called Lent Lilies. Ben Jonson and Milton, in the passages quoted below, both refer to the beautiful myth of fair Narcissus, who was beloved by Echo, but, having seen his own face reflected in the mirror of a clear spring-head, pined, and so died for longing love of an unattainable ideal. Now, this name is always applied to our sweet white *Narcissus poeticus* with its red-lipped heart's-cup.

The purple-ringed Daffodil.

**BEN JONSON.**

Spenser may also have been alluding to this flower, for he has—

Pale Narcissus, that in a well
Seeing his beauty, in love with it fell.

But Ben Jonson in beginning his invocation to Echo speaks of the memory of her lost love "shrined in this yellow flower" (the Daffodil). The Greek tale had still a foreign charm, not yet naturally appropriated by the English flower, which cannot, however, have been the Narcissus of Virgil and Pliny, as they call it a purple flower. It has been appropriately remarked, that all the classic
flowers fabled to have sprung from the ground watered by heroes' blood were red or purple, as the Adonis and Hyacinth and Meadow Saffron. Several other poets after Milton wrote of the Narcissus, but all with only one idea—that of the foolish or unhappy boy. As to the Daffodils we are told again and again of their being used in chaplets and anadems, till every water-nymph and country lass seems wreathed with them. Now, once again the myth is revived with a clearer perception of its hidden beauty and meaning. Later English singers carry on the old English love of the hardy Daffodil; among whom Keats for once forgets his Greek second nature, and is not the belated child of the classics, but the English youth who could spend hours and days lying happy among grass and flowers.

The fair Narcissus, humble still
Reflecting on her lowly birth,
And feeling Nature, prone to ill,
Inclines her soft eyes to the earth.

FROM "THE ROSE-GARDEN OF PERSIA."

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

SHAKESPEARE.

When Daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh! the doxy over the dale,
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

SHAKESPEARE.

To Daffodils.
Faire Daffadills, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noone.

Stay, stay,
Untill the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will goe with you along.
Poets in the Garden.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours doe, and drie
Away,
Like to the Summer’s raine;
Or as the pearles of morning’s dew
Ne’er to be found againe.

Herrick.

And, as we sing thy dirge, we will
The Daffodil,
And other flowers, lay upon
The altar of our love—thy stone.

Herrick.

Strow we the ground with Daffadowndillies,
And Cowslips, and King-cups, and loved Lilies.

Spenser.

She played
Among her watery sisters by a pond,
Gathering sweet Daffodillies to have made
Gay garlands from the sun their foreheads fair to shade.
Eftsoons both flowers and garlands far away she flung,
And her fair dewy locks yrent.

Spenser.

Echo’s Lament of Narcissus.

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears;
Yet slower, yet; O faintly, gentle springs:
List to the heavy part the music bears,
Woe weeps out her division, when she sings.
Poets in the Garden.

Droop herbs and flowers,
Fall grief in showers,
Our beauties are not ours:
O, I could still,
Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,
Drop, drop, drop, drop,
Since Nature's pride is now a withered Daffodil.

BEN JONSON.

Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!

MILTON.

A meek and forlorn flower with nought of pride,
Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness
To woo its own sad image into nearness.

And again—
Yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits.

And such are Daffodils
With the green world they live in.

KEATS.

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

SHELLEY.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills;
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden Daffodils;
Beside the lake, beside the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Poets in the Garden.

Continuous as the stars that shine,
And twinkle in the milky way;
They stretched in never-ending line,
Along the margin of a bay.
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

WORDSWORTH.

She stepped upon Sicilian grass,
Demeter’s daughter fresh and fair;
A child of light, a radiant lass,
And gamesome as the morning air.
The Daffodils were fair to see,
They nodded lightly on the lea;
Persephone—Persephone!
Lo! one she marked of rarer growth
Than Orchis or Anemone!
Drawn nigh she deemed it fairer still,
And stooped to gather by the rill
The Daffodil, the Daffodil.

“O light, light, light!” she cries, “farewell;
The coal-black horses wait for me.
O shade of shades, where I must dwell,
Demeter, mother, far from thee!”

JEAN INGELOW.

For all the storm saith, still
Stout stands the Daffodil.

Erect, a fighting flower,
It breasts the breeziest hour
That ever blew.

SWINBURNE.

And now indeed,
I know not if it was myself I sought,
As some tell, or another. For I hold
Poets in the Garden.

That what we seek is but our other self—
Other and higher, neither wholly like
Nor wholly different, the half-life the gods
Retained when half was given.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Nettle.

Camden, the antiquary, tells an amusing old legend in his "Britannia," concerning our worst Sting-nettle, the Roman one. Julius Cæsar's soldiers brought over the seed, he says, and sowed it for use. They had been told the climate of Britain would be unendurably cold without some such friction to warm their blood.

Herrick seems to have been well aware, probably thanks to his Maid Prew's cookery, that the tender shoots of young Nettles make a fair if not an excellent substitute for Spinach. We certainly know that he declares—

Though ne'er so mean the viands be,
They well content my Prew and me.

Accordingly, here are some of their Devonshire vicarage "delicates."

Canst, and unurged, forsake that larded fare,
Which Art, not Nature, makes so rare;
To taste boyled Nettles, Colworts, Beets, and eate
These, and sowe re herbs, as dainty meat?
While soft opinion makes thy Genius say,
Content makes all Ambrosia.

HERRICK.

I tell you, my lord fool, out of the Nettle, danger,
we pluck this flower, safety.

SHAKESPEARE.

We call a Nettle but a Nettle, and
The fault of fools but folly.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

Tender-handed stroke a Nettle
And it stings you for your pains,
Grasp it like a man of mettle
And it soft as silk remains.
'Tis the same with common natures,
Use 'em kindly, they rebel,
But be rough as nutmeg-graters,
And the roughs obey you well.

AARON HILL.

Don't Nettles make a broth
Wholesome for blood, grown lazy and thick?

* * * * * *

A magnum for friends who are sound! the sick—
I'll posset and cosset them, nothing loth,
Henceforward with Nettle-broth.

R. BROWNING.

Lastly, Mrs. Browning make poor Marian Erle, the daughter of neglect and misery, in "Aurora Leigh," liken herself thus—

We're Nettles, some of us,
And give offence by the act of springing up;
And if we leave the damp side of the wall,
The hoes, of course, are on us.

E. B. BROWNING.

NIGHTSHADE.

Forgive, forgive me; since I did not know
Whether thy bones had here their rest or no.
But now 'tis known, behold, behold, I bring
Unto thy ghost th' effused offering:
And look, what Smallage, Nightshade, Cypresse, Yew,
Unto the shades have been, or now are due,
Here I devote.

HERRICK.
Poets in the Garden.

The Nightshade has also the pretty names of Dulcamara or Bittersweet.

Foxglove and Nightshade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.

SIR W. SCOTT.

Trample not on a virgin flower!
I am the maid of the midnight hour;
    I bear sweet sleep
To those who weep,
And lie on their eyelids dark and deep.

Pity me! I am she whom man
Hath hated since ever the world began;
    I soothe his brain
In the night of pain,
But at morn he waketh—and all is vain.

BARRY CORNWALL.

No, no! go not to Lethe

Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By Nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine.

KEATS.
LIVE.

The Olive was called the Ale-beam or Oil-tree by our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, which seems as though they knew it as chiefly useful for making oil (see "Homes of Other Days").

Where the glad Olive ne'er belies its promise.

HORACE (LORD LYTTON'S TRANSLATION).

I hold the Olive in my hand; my words are as full of peace as matter.

SHAKESPEARE.

There is not now a rebel's sword unsheathed,
But peace puts forth her Olive everywhere.

SHAKESPEARE.

And peace proclaims Olives of endless age.

SHAKESPEARE.

Let the green Olive glad Hesperian shores;
Her tawny Citron, and her Orange groves,
These let Iberia boast; but if in vain
To win the stranger plant's diffusive smile
The Briton labours, yet our native minds,
Our constant bosoms, these the dazzled world
May view with envy.

SHENSTONE.

It is a pity that the poet of the Leasowes could not know and here apply
Burns's lines—

"O, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ither see us."
Poets in the Garden.

Ere the holy buds and hoar on Olive-branches bloom.

SWINBURNE.

Here is an Italian sketch. To describe the Olive our poets must be drawn towards the south, to Italy, as almost each of them was and will be, from Chaucer down; feeling its classic charm long days before they ever visibly beheld its scenes.

From the outer wall
Of the garden, drops the mystic floating gray
Of Olive-trees (with interruptions green
From Maize and Vine), until 'tis caught and torn
Upon the abrupt black line of Cypresses
Which signs the way to Florence.

E. B. BROWNING.

And here is a little story told in "Cloudy Weather"—

They two are walking together,

Merry, and I know why.

* * * * *

The Olives were shedding fast
About me to left and right,
In the lap of the scornful blast
Blackberries and leaflets white.
I thought, "Of the seed I have cast,
Not a fruit will be spared by the blight."
And the ghost of my hopes swept past
By a cold word put to flight.

LORD LYTTON.

ORANGE.

This "busy plant" has been much noticed by prose writers as bearing both fruit and blossom at the same time. We all remember Jack Absolute's compliment, that few, "like Mrs. Malaprop and the Orange-tree, are rich in both at once."

The count is neither sad nor sick, nor merry nor well; but civil, count: civil as an Orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

He hangs in shades the Orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night.

Marvell.

O that I were an Orange-tree,
That busy plant!
Then should I ever laden be,
And never want
Some fruit for him that dresseth me.

G. Herbert.

And wit in northern climates will not blow,
Except, like Orange-trees, 'tis housed from snow.

Dryden.

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The Orange-flower perfumes the bower
The breeze is on the sea.

* * * * * * * * *

Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

Sir W. Scott.

Odours of Orange-flower and spice
Reached them from time to time,
Like airs that breathe from Paradise,
Upon a world of crime.

Longfellow.

Could we forget the widowed hour
And look of spirits breathed away,
As on a maiden in the day
When first she wears her Orange flower!

Tennyson.

A fruit of pure Hesperian gold
That smelleth ambrosially.

Tennyson.
Poets in the Garden.

The girl who twines in her soft hair
The Orange-flower, with love’s devotion,
By the mere act of being fair
Sets countless laws of life in motion.

LORD Lytton.

Do you know
Sometimes when we sit silent, and the air
Breathes gently on us from the Orange-trees,
It seems that with the whisper of a word
Our souls must shrink, get poorer, more apart.

GEORGE ELIOT.

ORCHIS.

The Orchis roots were formerly used for making Salep as a drink. “The warm basin of Salep and the old Saloop-house, once as well known as the cup of Mocha and the modern coffee-house” (Anne Pratt).

By and by, they *will hide
The flower of the slender Orchis purpling close by their side.

AUTHOR OF “OLRIG GRANGE.”

First of his lipt and horned class
The early-flowering Orchis showed
His smooth and spotted leaves, and glowed
With spikey stalk elate, and head
Of spiral blossoms purple-red.

BISHOP MANT.

Freckled Orchids everywhere
’Mid the snow of Daisies.

R. BUCHANAN.

The Orchis filled her purple hoods
For dainty bees.

JEAN INGELOW.

The Orchis red gleams everywhere.

M. ARNOLD.
Poets in the Garden.

OX-EYE or MOON DAISY.
An old name for the Ox-eye was Maudelyne Worte.

Ox-eye still green, O bitter patience.

SPENSER.

Bring Corn-flag, Tulip, and Adonis-flower,
Fair Ox-eye, Goldylocks, and Columbine,
Pinks, Goulans, King-cups, and sweet Sops-in-Wine.

BEN JONSON.

XLIP.

Bold Oxlip,
And the Crown Imperial.

SHAKESPEARE.

I know a bank whereon the wild Thyme blows,
Where Oxlips and the nodding Violet grows.

SHAKESPEARE.

As Cowslip unto Oxlip is
So seemed she to the boy.

TENNYSN.
PANSY OR HEART'S-EASE.

If a pet name is a sign of fondness, there never was a flower treated with such affection as the Pansy. Fondness used to mean foolishness—as, by a curious reverse process the word "silly" is derived from selig, blessed. So Parkinson says our flower had many fond or foolish names, as "Love-in-Idleness, Cull-me-to-you, and Three-Faces-under-a-Hood." Besides these it was called Herb Trinity, Flame-flower, Kiss-me-at-the-Garden-gate, Forget-me-not, Pink-of-my-John, and many more "of the same amatory character." The name of Kit-run-about was also perhaps given from its power of throwing its seed far, and so spreading over a garden. Heart's-ease was an old name. Bunyan knew it too; for his guide says to Christiana and her children of a shepherd lad singing, "Do you hear him? I will dare to say this boy leads a merrier life, and wears more of that herb called Heart's-ease in his bosom, than he that is clothed in silk and purple."

Let poor Ophelia begin, however, with its name of Pansy, which Shakespeare himself, by implication, shows us had a French origin, meaning pensée, thought.

There is Pansies—that's for thoughts.

SHAKESPEARE.

Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell;
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it Love-in-Idleness.

The juice of it, on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make a man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

The first spelling of Pansy was evidently a matter of taste—

Sweet Rosemaries
And fragrant Violets and Pances trim.

SPENSER.

The pretie Pawnce
And the Chevisaunce
Shall match with the fayre Flowre Delice.

SPENSER.

Now the shining meads
Do boast the Pawnse, Lily, and the Rose,
And every flower doth laugh as zephyr blows.

BEN JONSON.

I pray, what flowers are these?
The Panzie this;
O, that's for lovers' thoughts.

BEN JONSON.

The Pansy and the Violet here,
As seeming to descend
Both from one root, a very pair
For sweetness do contend.

DRAYTON.

The Pansie and the Marigold
Are Phœbus' paramours.

DRAYTON.

Frolic virgins once these were,
Over-loving, living here;
Being here their ends denied,
Ran for sweethearts mad and died;
Love in pity of their tears,
And their loss in blooming years,
For their restless here-spent hours,
Gave them Heart's-ease turned to flowers.

HERRICK.
Poets in the Garden.

The Pansy freaked with jet.

MILTON.

Flowers were the couch,
Pansies, and Violets, and Asphodel,
And Hyacinths; earth's freshest, softest lap.

MILTON.

Pansies let my flowers be:
On the living grave I bear,
Scatter them without a tear.

SHELLEY.

The garden's gem,
Heart's-ease, like a gallant bold
In his coat of purple and gold.

LEIGH HUNT.

Next Edgar Allen Poë, who seems to think of flowers so little, but who "sings so wildly well" on higher themes, like his own angel Israfel, "whose heartstrings are a lute." He has still a word for—

The beautiful Puritan Pansies.

PASSION-FLOWER.

And the faint Passion-flower, the sad and holy,
Tells of diviner hopes.

MRS. HEMANS.

The Spaniards, in their conquest of Southern America, first saw and named this flower the Passion-flower. Anne Pratt says, "To their enthusiastic imaginations the different parts of the blossoms figured the number of the Apostles, the rays of glory, the nails, the hammer—those sad signs of the Saviour's Passion! and the sight of this wondrous symbol in the far-off wilderness, was to them an assurance of conquests which were to be effected under the name of religion."

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the Passion-flower at the gate.

TENNYSON.
Poets in the Garden.

Art thou a type of beauty or of power,
Of sweet enjoyment, or disastrous sin?
For each thy name denoteth—
Passion-flower.
O, no! thy pure corolla's depth within
We trace a holier symbol; yea, a sign
'Twixt God and man; a record of that hour
When the expiatory act Divine
Cancelled that curse which was our mortal dower.
It is the Cross!

AUBREY DE VERE.

The thatch was all bespread
With climbing Passion-flowers;
They were wet, and glistened with raindrops, shed
That day in genial showers.
"Was never a sweeter nest," we said,
"Than this little nest of ours."

JEAN INGELOW.

Peach.

Blow winds! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the Peach.

LONGFELLOW.

A woman's always younger than a man
At equal years, because she is disallowed
Maturing by the outdoor sun and air.

* * * * * * * *
Ah, well, I know you men judge otherwise!
You think a woman ripens like a Peach,
In the cheeks, chiefly.

E. B. BROWNING.
Poets in the Garden.

Lightly-vested
Amorous-breasted,
Blossom of Almond, blossom of Peach:
Impatient children, with hearts unsteady,
So young and yet more precocious each
Than the leaves of the summer, and blushing already!

LORD LYTTON.

PEAR.

I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits till I were as crest-fallen as a dried Pear.

SHAKESPEARE.

And after April when May follows,
And the white-throat builds and all the swallows!
Hark! where my blossomed Pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field, and scatters on the Clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray’s edge—
That’s the wise thrush.

BROWNING.

PEONY OR PIONY.

It is odd that so few of the earlier poets even mention the Peony, and then without comment; for it was apparently well known in early times. Alexander Neckam, in the twelfth century, names it among necessary garden-flowers. I owe the following quotation from Shakespeare to the kindness of Mr. Matthew Arnold, though, as he says, it is open to some doubt; the word pionied having an affinity with pioneer, i.e., digger. The Peony itself is entered under the heading of Piony in Withering’s Botany so late as 1833.

Thy banks with Pionied and Lilied brims,
Which spongy April at thy hest betrimns
To make cold nymphs chaste crowns.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

So did the maidens with their various flowers
Deck up their windows and make neat their bowers;
Using such cunning as they did dispose
The ruddy Piony with the lighter Rose.

BROWNE.

Methinks with mixture less we see
Of kind goodwill the Peony
Undaunted to the sunbeams spread
Her flamelike rays and mantle red.

BISHOP MANT.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud.

Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on a rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed Peonies.

KEATS.

PERIWINKLE.

There sprang the Violet all new,
With freshe Pervinke, bright of hew,
And flowres yellow, white, rede,
Such plenty grew there never in mede.

"ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE."

See where the sky-blue Periwinkle climbs,
E'en to the cottage-eaves, and hides the wall
And dairy lattice, with a thousand eyes
Pentagonally formed, to mock the skill
Of proud geometer.

HURDIS.
Poets in the Garden.

In that sweet bower,
The Periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

Wordsworth.

Heasant's Eye or Adonis-Flower.

Bring Corn-flag, Tulip, and Adonis-flower.

Ben Jonson.

By this the boy that by her side lay killed
Was melted like a vapour from her sight:
And in his blood that on the ground lay spilled,
A purple flower sprang up checkered with white.

Shakespeare.

Some writers suppose that the Anemone was the true classical flower of Adonis, both of the ancients and of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. Our Flos Adonis has, however, the same name with "a difference" in French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Dutch (see Anne Pratt). Gerard says herb-women called it the Rose-a-Rubie, and that this "red flower of Adonis growthe wilde in the West parts of Englande, among their corne, as Maie-weed does." It was also sold later in London as Red Morocco. For once I will quote the following lines by an anonymous writer, as they are appropriate to the argument, and few better-known poets have celebrated the beautiful little red drop of a blossom, which the French call Goutte de sang:

Look! in the garden blooms the Flos Adonis,
And memory keeps of him who rashly died,
Thereafter changed by Venus, weeping, to this flower.

Anon.

One recalls Keats's lovely lines on Adonis—

A sleeping youth
Of fondest beauty; fonder, in fair sooth,
Than sighs could fathom or contentment reach.
Poets in the Garden.

Pomegranate.

The ruddy glow of sunset lies
Within thy rich Pomegranate eyes.

"The Rose Garden of Persia."

There were, and that I wote full wele,
Of Pomgranettes a full great dele,
That is a fruit full well to like,
Namely, to folk when they ben sike.

"Romaut of the Rose."

It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon Pomegranate tree.

Shakespeare.

He takes the cleft Pomegranate seeds:

"Love, eat with me this parting day;"

Then bids them fetch the coal-black steeds—

"Demeter's daughter, wouldst away?"

The gates of Hades set her free;

"She will return full soon," saith he—

"My wife, my wife, Persephone."

Jean Ingelow.

Pomegranates full
Of melting sweetness.

Moore.

Some Pomegranate, which if cut deep down the middle,
Shows a heart within blood-tinctured, of a veined humanity.

E. B. Browning.

The Pomegranate, flowering flame,
Burneth lone in cool retreats.

Lord Lytton.
Poets in the Garden.

Where the remote Bermudas ride,
In the ocean's bosom unspied,
From a small boat that rowed along,
The listening winds received this song.

"What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own.

"He hangs in shades the Orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night;
And does in the Pomegranate close
Jewels more rich than Ormuz shows."

Thus sang they in the English boat,
A holy and a cheerful note;
And all their way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

A. MARVELL.

Poppies.

The poets who first notice Poppies all regard them only as a narcotic,
dangerous if not deadly. Shakespeare begins—

Not Poppy or Mandragora * *
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep.

And Spenser writes of—

Dead-sleeping Poppy, and black Hellebore.

In olden days the Poppy was called Cheese-bowls, Headache, Corn-rose;
and, "being of great beautie, although of evil smell, our gentlewomen doe
call it Jone Silverpin." For this, which elsewhere I find means the White Poppy
only, I am indebted to Mr. Ellacombe's "Plant-lore of Shakespeare," who
adds that Parkinson explains this as "faire without and foule within." It
seems to have been looked on even then as the "black-heart, amorous
Poets in the Garden.

Poppy." It may be added that after dark the Poppy shows, according to Sharon Turner, "an actual secretion of light" playing about its petals, as do the Marigold and Scarlet Geranium.

Poppies illustrate the ebb and flow of popular favour, as well as any other moral. The ancients dedicated them to Ceres, and brought to the goddess’s altar, under the blue southern sky, golden corn-ears and poppy seeds in gratitude. These last they also ate, either alone or on cakes, as is still done in the East. This was very different from the neglect or dread of the Elizabethans, who only seemed to think of them as of opium. But then the people’s voice is "odd"; as Pope says, "It is, and it is not, the voice of God."

Here Poppies, nodding, mock the hopes of toil—
Here the blue Bugloss paints the sterile soil.

CRABBE.

Corn Poppies that in crimson dwell
Called Head-aches for their sickly smell.

CLARE.

We are slumbering Poppies,
Born of Lethe hours,
Some awake, and some asleep,
Nodding in our bowers.

LEIGH HUNT.

Pleasures are like Poppies spread—
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or, like the snow-fall in the river,
A moment white, then lost for ever.

BURNS.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of Poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine.

SWINBURNE.

And watched the Poppies burn across the grass.

MORRIS.
Poets in the Garden.

Along the road the trembling Poppies shed
On the burnt grass their crumpled leaves and red.

MORRIS.

The black-heart, amorous Poppy, fain
Death from her passing knee to gain,
Bows to the Gilliflower there.

MORRIS.

The Poppies should be beloved by painters. What would all the green of our meadows and young corn be without their scarlet gleams, thicker in the waste places, fringing the fields? Tennyson describes poor Dora, sitting with Mary's child on her knee, on an unsown hillock thickly blown with poppies. In the cornfields below the farmer is watching his reapers. She sits patient there, hoping to soften his heart for the child of her rival.

And the spot is sly, and the spinnie high,
Where my luve and I mak seat;
And I tease her till she rins, and then
I catch her roun' the tree,
While the Poppies shak' their heids and blush:
Let 'em blush till they drap, for me!

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

On one side is a field of drooping oats,
Through which the Poppies show their scarlet coats,
So pert and useless that they bring to mind
The scarlet coats that pester humankind.

KEATS.

PRIMROSE.

The word Primrose may be traced back to the sweet Italian name given, not to itself, but to the Daisy and also the Cowslip, Fiore di prima vera (Flower of early Spring), as at a later day Fletcher sings—

Primrose, firstborn child of Ver,
Merry Spring-time's harbinger
With her bells dim.
Poets in the Garden.

Shortened by common use to Primaverola, it was still a singing-word in the Tuscan tongue, and so remains. Passing to France it was more crisply Gallicised into Primeverole. Thence, travelling still northward, it became our English Chaucer's Primerole. Flower-names in those early, unbotanical days were caps fitted to many pretty blossomed heads. Woodbine, for instance, was applied to creepers generally; and, in the same way, several flowers of Spring for awhile shared the honour of being the Primerole. In Elizabethan days with growing discrimination the name was at last confined to our Primrose, Lord Beaconsfield's favourite flower.

Hir schos were laced on hir legges hyghe
Sche was a Primerole, a piggesnye.

CHAUCER.

Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale Primrose.

SHAKESPEARE.

Pale Primroses that die unmarried ere they can behold bold Phoebus in his strength.

SHAKESPEARE.

Himself the Primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

SHAKESPEARE.

I had thought to let in some of all professions that go the Primrose way to everlasting fire.

SHAKESPEARE.

Shakespeare seems always to have thought of Primroses as pale. Milton found them melancholy. Shakespeare and Milton having given this classic hue, the host of lesser poets speak pityingly if prettily of the Primrose as if she had chronic green-sickness. Spenser and Ben Jonson chose their own ground, and said their own say. Spenser always calls the Primrose Prime-rose, thinking, like many later than himself, its name meant First Rose. By a play on words, such as was specially loved in Elizabethan days, he changes this to the prime of excellence.

Was I not planted of thine own hand
To be the Prime-rose of all the land? (See Briar.)

1 Piggesnye, pigsny, term of endearment for a pretty girl.
Poets in the Garden.

And again—

A fairer nymph yet never saw mine eie
She is the pride and Prim-rose of the rest.

SPENSER.

Bay leaves betweene
And Primroses greene.

SPENSER.

Ask me why I send you here
This firstling of the infant year?
Ask me why I send to you
This Primrose all be-pearled with dew?
I straight will whisper in your ears,
The sweets of love are washed with tears.

Ask me why this flower does show
So. yellow, green, and sickly too?
Ask me why the stalk is weak
And bending, yet it doth not break?
I must tell you, these discover
What doubts and fears are in a lover.

CAREW.

Virgins, timepast, known were these
Troubled with green sicknesses;
Turned to flowers, still the hue,
Sickly girls, they bear of you.

HERRICK.

Why doe ye weep, sweet babes? can tears
Speak griefe in you,
Who were but borne
Just as the modest morne
Teemed her refreshing dew?
Alas, you have not known that shower,
That marres a flower;
Poets in the Garden.

Nor felt th' unkind
Breath of a blasting wind;
Nor are ye wore with yeares;
Or warpt, as we,
Who think it strange to see,
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
To speak by tears, before ye have a tongue.

HERRICK.

Strew, strew the smiling ground
With every flower, yet not confound
The Primrose drop, the Spring's own spouse,
Bright Day's-eyes and the Lippes of Cowes,
The garden star, the queen of May,
The Rose, to crown the holiday.

BEN JONSON.

Dr. Donne (1573) has a long poem on the Primrose, the beginning of which recalls Izaak Walton pleasantly to our memories. The poet is searching for a six-petalled Primrose, which was considered to be as lucky as later a four-leaved Shamrock or Clover. It was called a true-love, and was, of course, an omen of a happy marriage.

Upon this Primrose hill
(Where, if Heaven would distil
A shower of rain each several drop might go
To his own Primrose, and grow manna so;
And where their form and their infinity
Make a terrestrial galaxy,
As the small stars do in the sky)
I walk to find a Truelove, and I see
That 'tis not a mere woman that is she,
But must or more or less than woman be.
Yet know I not which flower
I wish, a six or four;
For should my truelove less than woman be,
She were scarce anything; and then, should she
Be more than woman, she would get above
All thought of sex, and think to move
Poets in the Garden.

My heart to study her, and not to love:
Both these were monsters—
Live, Primrose, then, and thrive
With thy true number five;
And women whom this flower doth represent,
With this mysterious number be content.

DONNE.

Here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in Primrose season.

MILTON.

Bring the rathe Primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted Crow-toe, and pale Jessamine,
The white Pink, and the Pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing Violet,
The Musk Rose, and the well-attired Woodbine.
With Cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And Daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.

MILTON.

O fairest flower, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken Primrose fading timelessly.

MILTON.

Though storms may break the Primrose on its stalk,
Though frosts may blight the freshness of its bloom,
Yet Spring's awakening breath will woo the earth
To feed with kindliest dews its favourite flower,
That blooms in mossy banks and darksome glens,
Lighting the greenwood with its sunny smile,
Fear not then, Spirit, Death's disrobing hand.

SHELLEY.
Poets in the Garden.

White-plumed Lilies and the first
Primrose that its sheaf has burst.

KEATS.

The firstling o' the year.

BURNS.

In dewy glades
The peering Primrose, like sudden gladness,
Gleams on the soul—yet unregarded fades:
The joy is ours, but all its own the sadness.

H. COLERIDGE.

A Primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow Primrose was to him—
And it was nothing more.

WORDSWORTH.

I flattered all the beauteous country round,
As poets use, the skies, the clouds, the fields,
The happy Violets hiding from the roads
The Primroses run down to, carrying gold.

E. B. BROWNING.

PRIVET.

As clean and white as Privet when it flowers.

TENNYSON.

PUMPKIN-FLOWER.

Whittier's praise of the Pumpkin-flower reminds us how different poets have sung a certain flower best, perhaps because they loved them the most. Each might take his favourite for symbol, as in the Middle Ages the Guilds of Rhetoric of the Low Countries entitled themselves by the Lily or Violet, and Jesus with the Balsam-flower.

For each one flower, perchance,
Blooms in his cognizance,
Thus Chaucer is, without doubt, the true knight of his "empress" the Daisy, though Burns and Wordsworth were his followers in giving it honour. Perhaps Shakespeare's most perfect flower of all is the Cowslip, and Herrick's the Daffodil. No one can dispute with Shelley his Sensitive Plant, nor the Laurestinus with Swinburne. Neither would any one care to rob Wordsworth of sole right in his Lesser Celandine, to which he addressed himself three several times in rapturous praise. Longfellow, again, is the troubadour of the Iris. And, lastly, here (for many more might be named), Mrs. Browning's story of the Reed is always associated with thoughts of that well-loved "moon of poets," while her version of the ode of Theocritus to the Rose is a peerless gem set by her skill in the crown of English poetry.

If few other of the craft have known or honoured this honest flower, Whittier at least shows us rightly that useful things have their beauty.

Oh, greenly and fair in the lands of the sun,
The vines of the Gourd and the rich Melon run,
And the rock and the tree and the cottage enfold,
With broad leaves all greenness, and blossoms all gold.

WHITTIER.

O, fruit loved of boyhood! the old days recalling,
When wood-grapes were purpling and brown nuts were falling;
When wild ugly faces we carved in its skin,
Glaring out through the dark with a candle within!
When we laughed round the corn-heap, with hearts all in tune,
Our chair a broad Pumpkin, our lantern the moon,
Telling tales of the fairy who travelled like steam
In a Pumpkin-shell coach, with two rats for her team!

WHITTIER.

The mitigated influences of air
And light revived the plant, and from it grew
Strong leaves and tendrils, and its flowers fair,
Full as a cup with the vine's burning dew,
Overflowed with golden colours: an atmosphere
Of vital warmth infolded it anew,
And every impulse sent to every part
The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

SHELLEY.
**REED.**

Pan's Reed has always been a fair subject for poets' fancies, whether as the material out of which Pan fashioned the first pipe of mortal music, or as the plant into which his loved Syrinx was changed. But it serves its noblest poetic use in Mrs. Browning's verses, that tell how the highest expression of feeling is wrought out of the sorrow of the human heart, just as the god must perforce take the life of the river-reed ere through its hollow stem he could teach all nature the delights of his Divine music.

Most unhappy men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong;
They learn in suffering what they teach in song.

E. B. BROWNING.

Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the Reed is as the Oak;
The sceptre, learning, physick, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

SHAKESPEARE.

Pan's Syrinx was a girl indeed,
Though now she's turned into a reed.
From that dear Reed Pan's pipe doth come,
A pipe that strikes Apollo dumb;
Nor flute, nor lute, nor gittern can
So chant it, as the pipe of Pan.

His minstrelsy! O base! this quill,
Which at my mouth with wind I fill,
Puts me in mind, through her I miss,
That still my Syrinx' lips I kiss.

LYLY.
Poets in the Garden.

Up stood the corny Reed
Embattled in her field.

MILTON.

Reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

SHELLEY.

He tore out a Reed, the great god Pan,
   From the deep cool bed of the river;
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken Lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
   (How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew out the pith like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor, dry, empty thing
   In holes as he sat by the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—
For the Reed which grows nevermore again,
   As a Reed with the Reeds in the river.

E. B. BROWNING.
It is difficult to know what to choose among the bewildering number of poems and verses on Roses. Some, as Herrick's, Waller's, and Mrs. Browning's, are eternal favourites. But of minor poetical allusions there is a superfluity of sweets. I have tried to strike out most of those which only treat of the everlasting war between Roses and Lilies on the battle-field of a lady's cheeks. The opposition, however, between these and red or white Roses is so frequent a theme, that many specimens thereof must needs remain. But of all praise to the Rose, none surpasses Theocritus's ode, ascribed to Sappho in the first instance, and rendered by Mrs. Browning with such charm. Only from want of space the whole is not given here.

The Roses yong, new spreding of their knoppis,  
War powderit brycht with hevinly beriall droppis.  
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  
The skyes rang for schoutyng of the larkis.  
DUNBAR.

Nor hold none other flower in sic dainty  
As the fresh Rose of colour red and white;  
For if thou dost, hurt is thine honesty,  
Considering that no flower is so perfite,  
So full of virtue, pleasance, and delight.  
DUNBAR.

The saver of the Roses swote  
Me smote right to the heart rote.  
"ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE."

Here Spenser utters a thought which has struck several other poets—

Ah! see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly shee  
Doth first peepe foorth with bashfull modestie,  
That fairer seemes the lesse ye see her may.  
Lo! see soone after how more bold and free  
Her bared bosome she doth broad display;  
Lo! see soone after how she fades and falls away.  
So passeth, in the passing of a day,  
Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre.  
SPENSER.
ROSE.
Poets in the Garden.

And Shakespeare—

For women are as Roses, whose fair flower,
Being once displayed, doth fall that very hour.

SHAKESPEARE.

But earthlier happy is the Rose distilled
Than that which withering on the virgin Thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

SHAKESPEARE.

There will we make our bed of Roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies.

SHAKESPEARE.

I'll say she looks as clear
As morning Roses newly washed with dew.

SHAKESPEARE.

Then will I raise aloft the milk-white Rose,
With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfumed.

SHAKESPEARE.

When I have plucked the Rose,
I cannot give it vital growth again,
It needs must wither. I'll smell it on the tree.

SHAKESPEARE.

What's in a name? That which we call a Rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.

SHAKESPEARE.

There are also many instances in which the Rose is only used as a simile,
likened to lips or cheeks, or used in metaphor; and these, however charming,
do not describe the flower.

Their lips were four red Roses on a stalk,
Which in their summer beauty kissed each other.

SHAKESPEARE.

O Rose of May,
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia.

SHAKESPEARE.

167
Poets in the Garden.

The expectancy and Rose of this fair state.

SHAKESPEARE.

Such an act * * * takes off the Rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there.

SHAKESPEARE.

Tell him he wears the Rose of youth upon him.

SHAKESPEARE.

This Thorn
Doth to our Rose of youth rightly belong.

SHAKESPEARE.

He that sweetest Rose will find
Must find love's prick and Rosalind.

SHAKESPEARE.

Your colour, I warrant you, is red as any Rose.

SHAKESPEARE.

I have seen Roses damasked, red and white,
But no such Roses see I in her cheeks.

SHAKESPEARE.

Who, when he lived, his breath and beauty set
Gloss on the Rose, smell to the Violet.

SHAKESPEARE.

Next comes Herrick, with his frivolous gay note, like the chirp of a grasshopper; or one of the quire of crickets he is so fond of by his fire. He is full of quips and conceits, telling us how Roses first came red. They had believed themselves whiter than his Sappho's breast, but being vanquished quite, a blush their cheeks bespred—"Since which—the Roses first came red." But this that follows will be a favourite while Old Time flies.

Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.
Poets in the Garden.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting;
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

* * * * *

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, goe marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

HERRICK.

The Rose was sick, and smiling died;
And, being to be sanctified,
About the bed there sighing stood
The sweet and flowrie sisterhood.
Some hung the head, while some did bring
(To wash her) water from the spring.
Some laid her forth, while others wept,
But all a solemn fast there kept.

HERRICK.

The idea of the sanctified (sanctimonious!) Rose smiling and dying, and being laid out, is delicious. What a pity Herrick did not describe her being embalmed as pot-pourri.

A Rose besides his beauty is a cure.

G. HERBERT.

What is fairer than a Rose?
What is sweeter? yet it purgeth.

G. HERBERT.

Next for poet's conceits. Wars that desolated England are turned to a compliment on a lady's complexion!

Her cheeks
Where Roses mix; no civil war
Between her York and Lancaster.

CLEVELAND.
Poets in the Garden.

If this pale Rose offend your sight,
   Laid in thy bosom bare;
'Twill blush to find itself less white,
   And turn Lancastrian there.

But if thy ruby lip it spy,
   As kiss it thou mayst deign,
With envy pale 'twill lose its dye,
   And Yorkist turn again.

ANON.

Go, lovely Rose,
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
   And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
   In deserts where no man abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
   Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
   Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die, that she
   The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee,
   How small a part of time they share
Who are so wondrous sweet and fair.

EDMUND WALLER.

Die of a Rose in aromatic pain.

POPE.
Poets in the Garden.

'Tis the last Rose of summer,
    Left blooming alone;
All its lovely companions
    Are faded and gone.
Not a flower of its kindred
    Nor Rosebud is nigh,
To reflect back its blushes,
    Or give sigh for sigh.

MOORE.

You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the Roses will hang round it still.

MOORE.

We eye the Rose upon the Brier
    Unmindful that the Thorn is near.

BURNS.

Wi' lightsome heart I pulled a Rose,
    Full sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my false luver stole my Rose,
    But, ah! he left the Thorn wi' me.

BURNS.

What can be more charming than this triplet of verses?

A Rosebud by my early walk,
    Adown a corn-enclosèd bawk,
Sae gently bent its dewy stalk,
    All on a dewy morning.

BURNS.

O gin my love were yon red Rose,
    That grows upon the castle wall,
And I mysel' a drap o' dew,
    Into her bonnie breast to fall.

BURNS.
Poets in the Garden.

O my luve's like a red, red Rose
That's newly sprung in June:
O my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

BURNS.

Leigh Hunt, after saying—

See * * * *
how heaven loves colour;
How great Nature clearly joys in red and green;
Exclaims—
And what a red mouth has her Rose, the woman of the flowers.

LEIGH HUNT.

Pleasant as Roses in the thickets blown,
And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves.

WORDSWORTH.

Rose leaves, when the Rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

SHELLEY.

Like a Rose embowered
In its own green leaves;
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-winged thieves.

SHELLEY.

It was not in the winter
Our loving lot was cast;
It was the time of Roses—
We plucked them as we passed.

HOOD.
Poets in the Garden.

But long ere the brightness of summer was shaded,
My Moss Rose was drooping and withering away;
Her perfume had perished, her freshness had faded,
The very condition of life is decay.
And now more than ever I cherish and prize her,
For love shall not falter, though beauty depart,
And dearer to me that the others despise her,
My Moss Rose is lying crushed home to my heart.

WHYTE MELVILLE.

A Rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her, she.

TENNYSON.

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown Roses on the grass.

TENNYSON.

The red Rose cries, "She is near, she is near,"
And the white Rose weeps, "She is late;"
The Larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear,"
And the Lily whispers, "I wait."

TENNYSON.

You love the Roses—so do I. I wish
The sky would rain down Roses, as they rain
From off the shaken bush. Why will it not?
Then all the valley would be pink and white
And soft to tread on. They would fall as light
As feathers, smelling sweet; and it would be
Like sleeping and yet waking, all at once!

GEORGE ELIOT.

If Zeus chose us a king of the flowers in his mirth,
He would call to the Rose, and would royally crown it:
For the Rose, oh, the Rose! is the grace of the earth,
Is the light of the plants that are growing upon it.

E. B. BROWNING.
POSEMY.

Ros Marinus—literally, spray of the sea! The very name brings with it thoughts of the salt wind blowing fresh round some far-jutting cape, or grim iron-grey cliffs, the last of the land, where this hardy plant loves to dwell.

Rosemary and Rue: these keep
Seeming and savour all the winter long.

SHAKESPEARE.

With such a home, surely our plant deserved the epithet Spenser has given it of "Cheerful Rosemarie." Our ancestors loved it much. Rosemary garlands adorned their heads at weddings; Rosemary sprigs were put in their wine. As Herrick sings to the Rosemarie Branch—

Grow for two ends, it matters not at all,
Be't for my bridall or my buriall.

And in "The Bride's Good Morrow"—

The house is drest and garnisht for your sake
With flowers gallant and green;
A solemn feast your comely cooks do ready make,
Where all your friends will be seen:
Young men and maids do ready stand
With sweet Rosemary in their hand—
A perfect token of your virgin's life.
To wait upon you they intend
Unto the church to make an end:
And God make thee a joyfull wedded wife.

ROXBURGHE BALLAD.

At Christmas feasts the boar's head was decked with "Baies and Rosemarie," and with evergreens it wreathed the walls of the castle halls, making gay, no doubt, the old banners and suits of armour.

Down with the Rosemary, and so,
Down with the Baies and Mistletoe,
Down with the Holly, Ivie, all
Wherewith ye deck the Christmas hall;
Poets in the Garden.

No one least branch leave there behind,
For look how many leaves there be
Neglected there, maids, 'tend to me,
So many goblins ye shall see.

HERRICK.

In ancient days, according to a sweet classic custom, the dead were wreathed with myrtle. Later, in our colder northern lands, in France and Britain a branch of Rosemary was placed in the hands of the corpse, being the most lasting and sweet-scented of evergreens. Sprigs of Rosemary and Yew were scattered over the coffin, and also carried by the mourners. Wordsworth, too, in "The Childless Father," writes of the basin of box-wood sprigs, from which, in the north, each one going to the funeral took a few to throw into the grave.

"Rosemary slips were planted by the mourners on the grave. Popular superstition thought it a happy omen of the future state of the deceased if a shower of rain fell and refreshed the evergreens immediately after they were planted" (Anne Pratt)—hence the proverb—

Blessed is the bride whom the sun shines on,
And blessed is the corpse which the rain rains on.

It was a great favourite in Elizabethan gardens for ornament. Earlier still, Sir Thomas More wrote, he "lett Rosemarine run alle over his garden walle," not only because his bees loved it, but that also it was sacred to memory and therefore to friendship. It was supposed to have the hidden virtue of improving memory. Thus in the old Elizabethan Miscellany of Ballads which is called a "Handeful of Pleasant Delites"—

Rosemarie is for remembrance
Betweene us daie and night,
Wishing that I might alwaies have
You present in my sight.

And poor Ophelia says—

There's Rosemary for you—that's for remembrance;
I pray you, love, remember.

SHAKESPEARE.

Marry, come up, my dish of chastity with Rosemary and Bays.

SHAKESPEARE.

175
Poets in the Garden.

Reverend Sirs,
For you there's Rosemary and Rue: these keep
Seeming and savour all the winter long.

*SHAKESPEARE.*

Dry up your tears, and stick your Rosemary
On this fair corse.

*SHAKESPEARE.*

This herbe is callit Rosemaryn
Of vertu that is gode and fyne;
But alle the vertues tell I ne cane,
Ne I trawe no eerthely man.

*FOURTEENTH-CENTURY POEM.*

And here Shenstone well describes the fate of this once-vaulted plant, now degraded to the garden of that old school-dame, who knew the virtues of herbs so passing well.

And here trim rosemarine, that whilom crowned
The dauntiest garden of the proudest peer,
Ere driven from its envyed site it found
A sacred shelter for its branches here,
Where edged with gold its glittering skirts appear,
O wassel days! O customs meet and well!
Ere this was banished from its lofty spheres;
Simplicity then sought this humble cell,
Nor ever would she more with thane and lordling dwell.

*SHENSTONE.*

The Yule-tide dishes of Old England, the baron of beef and the boar's head, seem always to have been decked with Rosemary in the good times of old.

The bore's head in hande bring I,
With garlandes gay and Rosemary.

*OLD CAROL.*
Poets in the Garden.

Come, funeral flower! who lov'st to dwell
With the pale corse in lonely tomb,
And throw across the desert gloom
A sweet decaying smell;
Come, press my lips, and lie with me,
Beneath the lowly alder tree,
And we will sleep a pleasant sleep.

H. Kirke White.

RUE or HERB OF GRACE.

There's Rue for you; and here's some for me: we may call it Herb o' Grace o' Sundays: O, you must wear your Rue with a difference.

Shakespeare.

Rue, from a likeness of name, was taken by our ancestors as the emblem of ruth or sorrow. Thence, thought, never still, went on to change the sorrow without hope to that which bringeth forth worthy fruits, repentance. Next followed in natural consolation the idea of the balm of grace to wounded spirits. Thus by a curious example of a sequence of ideas in the human mind, Rue became Herb o' Grace, or simply Grace. Later, this pretty name being forgotten, it was vulgarized to Herby-grass, just as Asparagus is often called in good faith by common folk Sparrow-grass. Rue was a principal ingredient in the potion which Romish priests used to force the "possessed" to swallow when they exorcised them.

Rewe on my child, that of thyn gentilnesse
Rewest on every sinful in distresse.

Chaucer.

Sweet rose of virtue and of gentleness,
Delightsome Lily of every lustiness,
Richest in bounty, and in beauty clear,
And every virtue that is dear,
Except only that you are merciless.
Poets in the Garden.

Into your garden this day I did pursue,
There saw I flowers that fresh were of hue,
   Both white and red most lusty were to seen,
   And wholesome herbs upon stalkis green;
Yet leaf nor flower could I find none of Rue.

I doubt that March with his cold blastis keen
Has slain this gentle herb that I of mean;
   Whose piteous death does to my heart sic pain
   That I would make to plant his root again,
So comforting his levis unto me been.

DUNBAR.

Here she did fall a tear; here in this place
I'll set a bank of Rue, sour Herb o' Grace:
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping queen.

SHAKESPEARE.

Rank smelling Rue.

SPENSER.

To nobler sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed
*
* *
* *
* *
Then purged with Euphrasie and Rue
The visual nerve, for he had much to see.

MILTON.

USH.

Let wantons light of heart
Tickle the senseless Rushes with their heels.

SHAKESPEARE.

Man but a Rush against Othello's breast,
And he retires.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

Lean but on a Rush,
The cicatrice and capable impressure
Thy palm some moment keeps.

SHAKESPEARE.

This next refers to Rush-rings used for betrothal.

As fit as Tib's Rush for Tom's forefinger.

SHAKESPEARE.

And Spenser has—

O thou great shepherd, Lobbin, how great is thy grief!
Where be the nosegayes that she dight for thee?

The knotted Rush-ringes and gilt Rosemarie.

SPENSER.

Sabrina sings—

By the Rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the Willow and the Ozier dank,
    My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
    That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the Cowslip's velvet head,
    That bends not as I tread;
Gentle swain, at thy request,
I am here.

MILTON.

In this next, the brothers in "Comus" are invoking the moon's aid as they wander in the woods at night.

Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper
Though a Rush candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levelled rule of streaming light.

MILTON.
Poets in the Garden.

Green Rushes then, and scented Bents,
With cooler Oaken boughs,
Come in for comely ornament
To re-adorn the house.
Thus times do shift; each thing his turn doth hold;
New things succeed, as former things grow old.

HERRICK.

Green grow the Rashes, O,
Green grow the Rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend
Are spent amang the lasses, O.

There's naught but care on every han',
In every hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man
An 'twere not for the lasses, O.

BURNS.

The green Rushes—O, so glossy green—
The Rushes, they would whisper, rustle, shake;
And forth on floating gauze, no jewelled queen
So rich, the green-eyed dragon-flies would break,
And hover on the flowers—aerial things,
With little rainbows flickering on their wings.

JEAN INGLELOW.

Pale beds of blowing Rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes.

SWINBURNE.
SENSITIVE PLANT.

A Sensitive Plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of night.
And the spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the spirit of love, felt everywhere!
And each flower and herb on earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and odour its neighbour shed,
Like young lovers, whom youth and love make dear,
Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.
But the Sensitive Plant, which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all, it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver.

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odour are not its dower;
It loves, even like Love; its deep heart is full;
It desires what it has not—the beautiful!

SHELLEY.
Poets in the Garden.

SHAMROCK.

Oh! the Shamrock, the green immortal Shamrock!
Chosen leaf
Of Bard and Chief,
Old Erin's native Shamrock!

MOORE.

For the wee bit leaf of Ireland
Alack and well-a-day!
For ilka hand is free to pu'
An' steal the gem away.

HOGG.

There are flowers on the earth, there are gems in the sea,
There's the pearl and the ruby, the Lily, the Rose,
But the emerald green is the jewel for me,
And the Shamrock's the dearest of posies that grows.

WHYTE MELVILLE.

SNAPDRAGON.

Soon will the high midsummer pomps come on,
Soon will the musk Carnations break and swell,
Soon shall we have gold-dusted Snapdragon,
Sweetwilliam with his homely cottage smell,
And Stocks in fragrant blow.

M. ARNOLD.

SNOWDROP.

The Snowdrop has had several names besides its Linnean, one of Galanthus or Helmet-flower, to which Wordsworth refers. One charming old name it owned was the "Fair Maid of February." It was called also a white violet in Elizabethan days, for Gerard (1592) says of it: "In English, we may call it the bulbous Violet, or after the Dutch, somer-sottekens, that is, sommer-fooles; some call them also Snow-drops... These plants doe grow wilde in Italy, and the
Poets in the Garden.

parts adjacent, notwithstanding our London gardens have taken possession of most of them many years past. This may explain why there are few earlier notices of Snowdrops in poetry than in Thomson's lines. In spite of Gerard, the Snowdrop has however declared by modern botanists to be a child of English soil.

The Snowdrop has always been regarded as the emblem of purity, and never under more beautiful associations than in the aspirations of Tennyson's white-robed nun, who on St. Agnes Eve stands watching, as she says—

The shadows of the convent towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord.

Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first Snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

TENNYSON.

Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace;
Throws out the Snowdrop and the Crocus first.

THOMSON.

The Snowdrop, who in habit white and plain,
Comes on the herald of fair Flora's train.

CHURCHILL.

The modest Snowdrop vernal silver bears.

MASON.

Soon shall kind Spring her flowery gifts bestow
On sunny banks where silver Snowdrops blow.

J. SCOTT.

Winter's gloomy night withdrawn,
So the young romantic hours—
Search the hills, the dale, the lawn,
To behold the Snowdrop white.
Poets in the Garden.

Start to light,
And shine in Flora's desert bowers;
Beneath the verdant dawn
The morning star of flowers.

MONTGOMERY.

Thou first-born of the year's delight,
Pride of the dewy glade,
In vernal green and virgin white,
Thy vestal robes arrayed!

Is there a heart that loves the Spring,
Their witness can refuse?
Yet mortals doubt, when angels bring
From heaven their Easter news.

KEBLE.

Frail Snowdrops that together cling,
And nod their helmets, smitten by the wing
Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.

WORDSWORTH.

Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of Spring,
And pensive monitor of fleeting years.

WORDS WORTH.

The frail Snowdrop
Born of the breath of Winter, and on his brow
Fixed like a pale and solitary star.

BARRY CORNWALL.

Pretty firstling of the year!
Herald of the host of flowers!
Hast thou left thy cavern drear,
In the hope of summer hours?

BARRY CORNWALL.
Poets in the Garden.

Pure as lines of green that streak the white
Of the first Snowdrop's inner leaves.

Tennyson.

Could you understand
One who was wild as if he found a mine
Of golden guineas, when he noticed first
The soft green streaks in a Snowdrop's inner leaves?

R. Buchanan.

And as I went
Across the lightening fields, upon a bank
I saw a single Snowdrop glance, and bring
Promise of Spring.

L. Morris.

The poor sad Snowdrop,—growing between drifts,
Mysterious medium 'twixt the plant and frost,
So faint with winter while so quick with spring,
And doubtful if to thaw itself away
With that snow near it.

E. B. Browning.

For Snowdrops are the harbingers of Spring,
A sort of link between dumb life and light,
Freshness preserved amid all withering,
Bloom in the midst of grey and frosty blight,
Pale Stars that gladden Nature's dreary night!

Hon. Mrs. Norton.

Southernwood.

Lad's Love was another name for Southernwood in olden days, when names
had always some quaint or amorous significance.

When Thrift, and Lavender, and Lad's Love bloom.

These with our seaweeds, rolling up and down,
Form the contracted flora of our town.

Crabbe.
Poets in the Garden.

SPEEDWELL.

Nor decline
The Speedwell's azure tints to mark,
And ivy-figured foliage dark,
Which our sequestered homestead field
And our loved garden walk would yield.

BISHOP MANT.

The little Speedwell's darling blue.

TENNYSON.

The Speedwell with its blue eye looks at you,
The yellow Primrose glimmers through the dew.

R. BUCHANAN.

STOCK.

And Stocks in fragrant blow.

M. ARNOLD.

Neat, sweet-smelling Stock.

LORD LYTTON.

STRAWBERRY.

The word Strawberry was supposed to have been derived from the custom of putting straw under the berries to raise them from the moist earth. The name, however, dates from old Anglo-Saxon days, when the berry grew wild in the woods. Perhaps it may have come from the wandering habit of the plant, straw being a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon stræ, from which we have the English verb stray" ("Chambers's Encyclopædia"); or, as Mr. Skeat surmises, "from the resemblance of its runners to straws." I cannot forbear to quote Izaak Walton's tribute to the Strawberry; it is so fresh and quaint like all the little descriptions of scenery scattered through his teachings to his scholar of the rod. Says he: "We may say of angling as Dr. Boteler said of Strawberries, 'Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did" ("The Compleat Angler").
Poets in the Garden.

The Strawberry grows underneath the Nettle,
And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
Neighoured by fruit of baser quality.

SHAKESPEARE.

Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,
Spotted with Strawberries, in your wife's hand?

SHAKESPEARE.

Her goodly bosom, like a Strawberry bed,
* * * * * * Such fragrant flowers do give most odorous smell.

SPENSER.

If frost do continue, take this for a law,
The Strawberries look to be covered with straw.

TUSSER.

Wife, into thy garden, and set me a plot
With Strawberry roots of the best to be got;
Such growing abroad, among Thorns in the wood,
Well chosen and picked, prove excellent food.

TUSSER.

With milkwhite flow'rs, whence soon shall swell
Red fruitage, to the taste and smell
Pleasant alike, the Strawberry weaves
Its coronets of threefold leaves
In mazes through the sloping wood.

BISHOP MANT.

O thou to whom
Broad-leaved Fig-trees even now foredoom
Their ripened fruitage * * *
* * low-creeping Strawberries,
Their summer coolness.

KEATS.
Poets in the Garden.

Strawberry blossoms, one and all,
We must spare them—here are many—
Look at it—the flower is small,
    Small and low, though fair as any;
Do not touch it!  *  *  *

When the months of spring are fled,
    Hither let us bend our walk;
Lurking berries, ripe and red,
    Then will hang on every stalk,
Each within its leafy bower;
And for that promise spare the flower.

WORDS WORTH.

And the lush banks were set
With Strawberries, and the hot noise of bees
Lulled the bright flowers.

L. MORRIS.

Succory or Chicory.

Succory to match the sky.

EMERSON.

Sundew.

The Sundew,
A little marsh plant, yellow-green,
And pricked at lip with tender red.
Tread close, and either way you tread
Some faint black water jets between
Lest you should bruise the curious head.
Poets in the Garden.

A live thing maybe; who shall know?
The summer knows and suffers it;
For the cool moss is thick and sweet
Each side, and saves the blossom so
That it lives out the long June heat.

The deep scent of the heather burns
About it; breathless though it be,
Bow down and worship;

My Sundew, grown of gentle days
In these green miles, the spring begun
Thy growth ere April had half done
With the soft secret of her ways,
Or June made ready for the sun.

SWINBURNE.

SUNFLOWER.

What was the old Sunflower of the ancients? The more one tries to know, the more puzzled one becomes. What it was not is our Sunflower—Helianthus, on its tall stem, looking impudently in at cottage windows with its huge yellow disc and dark heart. This is a comparatively modern American plant; and instead of always following the sun with its eyes, like poor love-lorn Clytie watching Phoebus, and unable to withdraw her gaze, it rather resembles Mr. Facing-both-ways, since its big flower-faces will each stare in opposite directions with perfect indifference to its classic name. The sad myth of the Sunflower is told by several classic writers, but chiefly by Ovid. Deserted by Phoebus Apollo, the nymph, Clytie, "still gazed on the face of the departing god and bent her looks on him...Held firmly by the root, she still turns to the sun she loves, and, changed herself, she keeps her love unchanged." As Moore sings—

The Sunflower turns on her god when he sets,
The same look which she turned when he rose.

If we only knew what this Sunflower of ancient writers really was, what a beautiful emblem it would still be of woman's faithful love. If—but here begin the difficulties. Pliny calls it the Heliotropium, and says that at night it closes its blue flowers as though in regret. Old Gerard says: "There be five sorts of Tornesole, but which may be the right Sunneflower" it is hard to tell. It is still more bewildering to pass from the classical to modern writers. The latter, without using their own eyes, persist in attributing the beautiful constancy and
Poets in the Garden.

affection of the ancient Sunflower to this graceless American Buxoma, who has somehow stolen the heritage of a famous old name. How the spirit of such a flower should laugh at the melancholy devotion of her late aesthetic admirers! And how much this large flower resembles the prints of the sun in an old Bible, a face surrounded by rays! Perhaps this first suggested her name.

She brought me a Sunflower—this, fair one's, your due,
For it once was a maiden, and love-sick like you—
O! give it me quick, to my shepherd I'll run,
As true to his flame as this flower to the sun.

CHRISTOPHER SMART.

Ah, Sunflower, weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun,
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the traveller's journey is done—

Where the youth pined away with desire,
And the pale virgin, shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
Where my Sunflower wishes to go!

WILLIAM BLAKE.

No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close!
As the Sunflower turns on her god when he sets,
The same look which she turned when he rose.

MOORE.

I will not have the mad Clytie
Whose head is turned by the sun.

HOOD.

Heavily hangs the broad Sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
Heavily hangs the Hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the Tiger Lily.

TENNYSON.
Poets in the Garden.

With golden eye following the golden sun,
From rose-coloured to purple-pillowed bed,
From birthplace to the flamelit place of death.

Swinburne.

This verse of Browning's has a gallant ring. One can see the wide scene,
the yellow-blossomed land where all golden flowers do grow, and the sky bends
down like a vast blue tent.

Fancy the Pampas' sheen!
Miles and miles of gold and green,
Where the Sunflowers blow
In a solid glow,
And to break now and then the screen—
Black neck and eyeballs keen,
Up a wild horse leaps between!

Browning.

Sweet Briar, see Eglantine.

Sweet Gale, see Gale.

Sweet Pea.

The Pea is but a wanton witch.

Hood.

Here are Sweet Peas, on tip-toe for a flight,
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,
And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.

Keats.

191
Another old name for SweetWilliam was "London-Tuftes."

Dear old-fashioned flowers!
Which filled with ecstasy my childhood’s hours,
Sweetwilliams in all quaint varieties,
Pinks and Carnations; surely such as these,
Ere all the beds with foreign blooms were gay,
Our great grand-parents on their wedding day
Exchanged with bows and slow civilities.

AUGUSTUS TAYLOR.
SWEET WILLIAM.
AMARIND.

Lay me reclined
Beneath the spreading Tamarind, that shakes,
Fanned by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit.

THOMSON.

The summer dream beneath the Tamarind tree.

E. A. POE.

HISTLE.

The first extract here is taken from Dunbar's allegory of the "Thistle and the Rose." The Scotch bard wrote this, in 1501, in honour of James the Fourth's marriage with the Princess Margaret of England. His patriotic pride in the Thistle is not therefore pure admiration of the flower—that state-liest of weeds. Still, it is so nobly described that this much-abused cumberer of the soil has in him found its laureate.

Dunbar sees, in a dream, "the lusty May (or spring-time) that muddir is of floures," calling all the flowers of the field that she may choose among them a King and Queen. What a happy thought that, seeing the Thistle so surrounded by spears, she deems him able for the wars, and bids him go forth and fend the lave (defend the rest)! There seems an allusion to the old friendship between France and Scotland in the goddess's command to the new-made Flower-King, to let "no Nettle vile, and full of vice, think herself the fellow of the goodly Flower-de-luce." Nevertheless he himself is bidden to give the fresh Rose the chiefest place of all—meaning the English Princess Margaret.

Upone the awfull Thrissil scho beheld
And saw him kepit with a busche of speiris;
Poets in the Garden.

Considering him so able for the weiris
A radius crown of rubeis scho him gaif,
And said, In field go furth and send the laif.

And sen thou art a King, thou be discreit;
Herb without vertew thow hald nocht of sic pryce
As herb of vertew and of odour sweit;
And lat no Nettill vyle, and full of vyce,
Hir fallow to the gudly Flour-de-lyce;
Nor latt no wyld weid, full of churlicheness,
Compair hir till the Lilleis nobilness.

DUNBAR.

Hereupon follows the verse in honour of the Rose, which will be found under that heading.

Good, Monsieur Cobweb,    kill me a good red-
hipped humble-bee on the top of a Thistle; and, good
monsieur, bring me the honey-bag.

SHAKESPEARE.

Tusser says—
If Thistles so growing prove lusty and long,
It signifieth land to be hearty and strong.

Browne refers to a superstition, now forgotten. But country children still blow the heads of Thistle and Dandelion seeds to ask "What's o'clock?" Each puff required, is held to signify an hour.

There is a weed upon whose head grows down,
Sow Thistle 'tis yclept whose downy wreath
If anyone can blow off at a breath
We deem her for a maid.

BROWNE.

The Flowers of Scotland.

What are the flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel?
The lovely flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel!

194
Poets in the Garden.

The Thistle’s purple bonnet,
   And bonny Heather-bell,
O, they’re the flowers of Scotland
   All others that excel!

Tho’ England eyes her Roses
   With pride she’ll ne’er forego,
The Rose has oft been trodden
   By foot of haughty foe;
But the Thistle in her bonnet blue
   Still nods out ow’re the fell,
And dares the proudest foeman
   To tread the Heather-bell.

For the wee bit leaf of Ireland,
   Alack, and well-a-day!
For ilka hand is free to pu’
   An’ steal the gem away;
But the Thistle in her bonnet blue
   Still bobs aboon them a’;
At her the bravest darena blink,
   Or gie his mou a throw.

Up wi’ the flowers o’ Scotland,
   The emblems of the free,
Their guardians for a thousand years,
   Their guardians still we’ll be.
A foe had better brave the deil
   Within his reeky cell
Than our Thistle’s purple bonnet
   Or bonny Heather-bell.

HOGG.

The rough bur-Thistle spreading wide
   Amang the bearded bear,
I turn’d my weeding hauk aside
   An’ spar’d the symbol dear.

BURNS.
Poets in the Garden.

The Thistle's rolling wheel of silken down.

LEYDEN.

The imperial Thistle, not unfurnished
With its appropriate grace, yet rather seeking
To be admired than coveted or loved.

WORDSWORTH.

Here Thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war.

CRABBE.

Must I go
Still like the Thistle-ball, no bar,
Onward, whenever light winds blow,
Fixed by no friendly star.

BROWNING.

To run down by the early train,
Whirl down with shriek and whistle,
And feel the bluff north blow again,
And mark the sprouting Thistle
Set upon waste patch of the lane
Its green and tender bristle.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

All mangled and bruised, the poor little Thistle
With his desperate roots to the soil clung fast.

And, "Oh, blessèd," he sighed, "is the blossom that blows!
Colours I know of, no eyes yet see.
But I dare not show them, and nobody knows,
Nobody guesses, what's hidden in me!
In all the world but one creature, alas,
For love's sake seeks me; and he is an ass."

LORD LYTON.
Poets in the Garden.

Or where, in fields that heat burns dry,
May show the Thistle's purple studs.

BARNES.

HRIFT or SEA PINK.

Another name for the hardy little Sea Pink was Lady's Cushion.

We have a bright little garden down on a sunny slope,
Bordered with Sea Pinks, and sweet with the songs and the blossoms of hope.

AUTHOR OF "OLRIG GRANGE."

We sat us on a Thymy bank
Where the Sea Pink and the Wild Rose grew.

AUTHOR OF "OLRIG GRANGE."

THYME.

I know a bank whereon the Wild Thyme blows.
Where Oxlips, and the nodding Violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with lush Woodbine,
With sweet Musk Roses and with Eglantine.

SHAKESPEARE.

Bees-alluring Thyme (see Herbs).

SPENSER.

The comfortable Thyme (see Herbs).

DRAYTON.

Thee, shepherd! thee the woods and desert caves,
With Wild Thyme and the gadding Vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.

MILTON.
Poets in the Garden.

Maiden Pinks, of odour faint,
Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint,
And sweet Thyme true.
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Pun-provoking Thyme (see Herbs).
SHENSTONE.

The Horehound tufts I love them well,
And Ploughman’s Spikenard’s spicy smell;
And Thyme, strong-scented, ’neath one’s feet.
CLARE.

And sweeter Thyme whose fragrant head
Bends to the climbing traveller’s tread.
BISHOP MANT.

What time the mighty moon was gathering light
Love paced the Thymy plots of Paradise.
TENNYSON.

Watch the mist
Move on the skirts of yonder mountain grey,
Until it bubbles into amethyst,
And softly melts away.
The Thyme-bells catch the load of silver dew,
And quake beneath the load;
The squadroned Pines that shade the splashing road
Are glimmering with a million jewels too.
R. BUCHANAN.
Poets in the Garden.

TIGER LILY.

Heavily hangs the Tiger Lily.

TENNYSON.

For as the flower
Of the Tiger Lily, bright with varied hues,
Is for a day, then fades and leaves behind
Fairness nor fruit, while the green tiny tuft
Swells to the purple of the clustering grape
Or golden waves of wheat; so lives of men
Which show most splendid, fade and are obscured,
And leave no trace.

L. MORRIS.

TRAVELLER'S JOY, see Clematis.

TUBEROSE.

The swelling Tuberose and Jonquil declare,
The stronger impulse of an evening air.

PRIOR.

The Tuberose with her silver light,
That in the gardens of Malay
Is called the Mistress of the Night.

MOORE.

The sweet Tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that blows.

SHELLEY.
Why were Tulips railed at by most poets? It seems as if only Browning and Tennyson have described them just as they saw them, writing naturally and therefore beautifully about these flowers. Southey's comparison to the streaks of sunset, and Miss Landon's (L. E. L.'s) phrase, "the wine-cups of the sun," are both striking, though the latter is somewhat artificial. As to other gentle-minded poets even, like Shenstone and Gay, "gross," "gaudy," are the only words that suggest themselves to them in describing poor tulips. Southey's simile raises this thought: If it were not for such flowers blowing on earth and sunset splendours flooding the skies, where should we poor mortals gain the knowledge of intense gorgeous colour? Though so maligned by poets the Tulip has revenged itself amply in prose. Was there ever such an example of wise men going mad for the sake of a flower, as the Tulip-mania? It is a matter of history, almost as much as the South Sea Bubble—of every history that is something else than mere wars and treaties of peace—how thousands of men, in their eagerness to rear a Tulip darker than any yet existing, lavished fabulous sums on bulbs instead of at the gambling-table or the race-course. From Holland this curious craze passed over to England, though in this country it does not seem to have ever developed itself to such an extent as among the Dutchmen. Still it ran its course here. A story is told of a London merchant who gave some bread to a hungry sailor in his counting-house. The latter ate what he supposed to be one or two onions that were lying on the counter. The merchant's horror, when he turned round, was great—the sailor had devoured some tulip-bulbs worth very large sums.

Meanwhile, whilst every verdant thing
Itself does at thy beauty charm,
Reform the errors of the spring:
Make that the Tulips may have share
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair;
And Roses of their thorns disarm;
But most procure
That Violets may a longer time endure.

A. MARVELL.

Here is an earlier fancy of Carew's, which is rarely artificial. After likening his mistress's eyes to "Two suns in a heaven of snow," and wondering the snow is not melted thereby, he goes on to describe her lips—

Leaves of crimson Tulips met
Guide the way
Where two pearly rows be set,
As white as day.

CAREW.
Poets in the Garden.

In hundred coloured silks the Tulip plays.

P. FLETCHER.

You are a Tulip seen to-day,
But, dearest, of so short a stay,
That where you grew, scarce man can say.

HERRICK.

The fairest Tulip's not the sweetest flower.

F. QUARLES.

Clothed in a gay and parti-coloured coat.

COWLEY.

The courtier Tulip gay in clothes.

FANSHAWE.

The Tulip idly glaring to the view,
Who, tho' no clown, his birth from Holland drew,
When well full-dressed, fears from his place to stir;
The top of flowers—the More of a parterre.

CHURCHILL.

And varied Tulips show so dazzling gay,
Blushing in bright diversities of day.

POPE.

Ladies, like variegated Tulips, show
'Tis to their changes half their charms we owe

POPE.

The gaudy Tulip's streaky red.

GAY.

But Florio's fame, the product of a shower,
Grows in his garden, an illustrious flower.
Why teems the earth? Why melt the vernal skies?
Why shines the sun?—to make Paul Diack rise.
Poets in the Garden.

From morn to night has Florio gazing stood,
And wondered how the gods could be so good:
What shape!—what hue! Was ever nymph so fair?
He doats! He dies!—he, too, is rooted there.
O solid bliss which nothing can destroy—
Except a cat, bird, snail, or idle boy.
In Fame's full bloom lies Florio down at night,
And wakes, next day, a most inglorious wight—
The Tulip's dead—

* * * * * * *

A friend of mine indulged this noble flame—
A Quaker served him, Adam was his name:
To one loved Tulip o'ft the master went,
Hung o'er it, and whole days in rapture spent;
But came and missed it one ill-fated hour:
He raged! he roared! "What demon cropt my flower?"
Serene quoth Adam, "Lo, 'twas crushed by me;
Fallen is the Baal to which thou bow'dst thy knee."

YOUNG.

In glaring Chloe's manlike taste and mien,
Are the gross splendours of the Tulip seen:
Distant they strike inelegantly gay,
To the near view no pleasing charms display.

SHENSTONE.

This is hard measure dealt to the poor Tulip. Luckily for it, the poets who follow take a different view.

Tulips like the ruddy evening streaked.

SOUTHEY.

Those rich tints which on the Tulips lie,
Telling their southern birth and sunny sky;
The wine-cups of the sun.

L. E. L. (MISS LANDON.)
Poets in the Garden.

'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen, three fingers well,
The wild Tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

BROWNING.

The Tulip is a courtly quean.

HOOD.

Deep Tulips dashed with fiery dew.

TENNYSON.
VALERIAN.

The old name for Valerian was Setewall or Cetewal (Chaucer and Spenser), also Setuale. Likewise its country names were Mercury's Moist Bloude, in reference to its red colour, and Pretty Patty. It is often mentioned, but seldom, if ever, expatiated on, e.g.—

Dull Poppy and drink-quick'ning Setuale.

SPENSER.

(See Herbs, sweet.)

VERBENA.

This Verbena strains
The point of passionate fragrance.

E. B. BROWNING.

ERVAIN.

Trefoil, Vervain, John's Wort, Dill,
Hinder witches of their will.

SIR W. SCOTT.

Here is the strange story of a plant. Our common ugly Vervain, growing near all English villages utterly disregarded, was so sacred to the Druids that they only gathered it for their divinations with awe when the great Dog-star rose
Poets in the Garden.

—so that neither sun nor moon should see the deed; moreover, they left honeycombs on the spot in atonement for the violence done to the earth in robbing it of so holy a herb. Nor was it a "holy herb" to the Druids alone; among the Greeks and Romans it crowned altars, decided fortunes, was sent by ambassadors on treaties of peace, was used in solemn incantations and more frivolous love-philtres.

Bring your garlands, and with reverence place
The Vervain on the altar.

BEN JONSON.

ETCH.

Adieu, the simple, the sincere delight—
Th' habitual scene of hill and dale,
The rural herds, the vernal gale,
The tangled Vetch's purple bloom,
The odour of the Bean's perfume,
Be theirs alone who cultivate the soil,
And drink the cup of thirst, and eat the bread of toil.

SHENSTONE.

A song of a nest:—
There was once a nest in a hollow:
Down in the Mosses and Knot-grass pressed,
Soft and warm and full to the brim—
Vetches leaned over it, purple and dim,
With Buttercup buds to follow.

JEAN INGELOW.

VINE.

The Anglo-Saxons had a pretty name for the Vine, vin-treow or wine-tree. There were vineyards in England in their days and later ones. Giraldus Cambrensis speaks of the vineyard at his father's home near Pembroke, and there are many more examples. The Vine, however, does not seem to have been ever praised or much mentioned.

For one sweet Grape who will the Vine destroy?

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

Thou art an Elm, my husband, I a Vine,
Whose weakness married to thy stronger state
Makes me with thy strength to communicate.

SHAKESPEARE.

Come, thou monarch of the Vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne,
In thy vats our cares be drowned,
With thy Grapes our hairs be crowned.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Vine is always supposed by our elder poets to be married to the Elm; as says Adriana in the foregoing passage. The idea may have been brought from Italy where Vines are trained from Elm to Elm, whence it probably became a classical idea. Thus Browne in his "Pastorals"—

She, whose inclination
Bent all her course to him-wards, let him know
He was the Elm, whereby her Vine did grow.

And—

An Elm embraced by a Vine,
Clipping so strictly that they seemed to be
One in their growth, one shade, one fruit, one tree.

BROWNE.

I saw them under a green mantling Vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots.

MILTON.

With angel's food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious Vines, the growth of heaven.

MILTON.

Here be Grapes whose lusty blood
Is the learned poet's good;
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus.

FLETCHER.
Poets in the Garden.

The Vine too here her curling tendrils shoots,
Hangs out her clusters, glowing to the south,
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.

THOMSON.

But this true love of mine
Clings fast as the clinging Vine,
And mingles pure as the grapes in wine.

E. B. BROWNING.

I think of thee!—my thoughts do twine and bud
About thee, as wild Vines about a tree,

YET, O my Palm-tree, be it understood,
I will not have my thoughts instead of thee
Who art dearer, better!

E. B. BROWNING.

By grassy slopes,
Hangeth the Vine her leafy ropes;
Wild Proteus, she, o' the wanton wood,
That ever shifteth her merry mood,
And, aye in luxury of change,
Loveth to revel, and dance, and range,
In leaves, not hers, she fleeteth through,
Hiding her large grape-bunches blue.

LORD LYTTON.

And the leaf-buds on the Vine are woolly,
I noticed that to-day;
One day more bursts them open fully,
—You know the red turns grey.

BROWNING.

Here are lovers quarrelling and "making it up again" in an English vinery—
'Tis folly to look glum because people didn't come
Up the stairs of your nursery to woo ye.
Ah me!
Poets in the Garden.

In a grapery one walks without looking at the stalks,
   While the bunches are green that they're bearing:
All the pretty little leaves that are dangling at the eaves
   Scarce attract e'en a moment of staring.
   Ah me!

But when time has swelled the grapes to a richer style of shapes,
   And the sun has lent warmth to their blushes,
Then to cheer us and to gladden, to enchant us and to madden,
   Is the ripe ruddy glory that rushes.
   Ah me!

O, 'tis then that mortals pant while they gaze on Bacchus' plant—
   O, 'tis then—will my simile serve ye?
Should a damsel fair repine, though neglected like a Vine?
   Both ere long shall turn heads topsy-turvy.
   WILLIAM MAGINN.

And here is a little episode of real love and mock wooing, nearly bringing about war to the knife in an Italian vineyard.

"Well, I have met you, cousin,
   Where not a soul can see;
What do you want?—'You love me?'
   You trifle, sir, with me.

"You love that grape-girl yonder—
   The one against the wall;
She climbs and climbs; but have a care:—
   A step, and she may fall.

"You walked with her this morning
   Her basket on your head;
'Twas better than my coronet,'
   Or something so, you said.
Poets in the Garden.

"And the grapes and yellow tendrils
Tangled in her hair
Were brighter than my ringlets,
And all the pearls I wear!

"You should have seen her lover,
Hid in the Vines hard by—
A swarthy, black-browed fellow,
With a devil in his eye;

"I should be very angry—
'Tis so unworthy you!
But since you say you 'jested,'
I must forgive, and do.

"I own I love you somewhat;
But ere you marry me
You must do one thing, cousin—
Let my grape-gatherers be."

RICHARD STODDARD.

Trellised grapes their flowers unmask,
And the new-born tendrils twine.

EMERSON.

Over them vast and high extended the cope of a Cedar,
Swinging from its great arms the Trumpet-flower and the
Grape-vine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,
Were the swift humming-birds that flitted from blossom to blossom.

LONGFELLOW.
Poets in the Garden.

IOLET.

The Violet must have been praised by nearly every poet who ever sang. To heap instance on instance would be truly, even to lovers of the Violet, a case of the fuel putting out the fire. But even more honour is paid to the Violet in the East. What are our cold Northern phrases compared with this saying of Mahommed himself, as told by tradition: "The excellence of the Violet is as the excellence of El Islam above all other religions" (Lane, "Arabian Nights").

In an Elizabethan miscellany of poems entitled, "A Handefull of Pleasant Delites," by Clement Robinson and divers others, 1584, the violet is the token for "faithfulnesse." Is this not why Shakespeare makes Marina promise to wear it in a grave garland? and why Milton bids it be strewn on the hearse where his Lycid lies? In "Paradise Lost" the latter also "broiders the ground" with Violet, Crocus, and Hyacinth, "in rich inlay." But it is useless to pick out one flower in poesy which grows so closely with others that many must be likewise uprooted with it. The mere name of a flower among many more is as nothing, unless no other mention of it can be found. Some idea of scent, colour, or outline, should accompany it, or else some deep thought, even though but half revealed, showing the poet had insouled Nature. So for Tennyson, even in the midst of his grief for his dead friend, the spring flowers have a voice.

There sprang the Violet all newe.

"ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE."

Violet is for faithfulnesse,
Which in me shall abide;
Hoping likewise that from your heart
You will not let it slide,
And will continue in the same,
As you have nowe begunne;
And then for ever to abide,
Then you my heart have wonne.

CLEMENT ROBINSON.

These blue-veined Violets whereon we lean.

SHAKESPEARE.

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

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

The yellows, blues,
The purple Violets and Marygolds
Shall as a chaplet hang upon thy grave,
While summer days do last.

SHAKESPEARE.

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

SHAKESPEARE.

I would give you some Violets, but
They withered all when my father died.

SHAKESPEARE

Poor Ophelia! she thinks, like so many of us in grief, that Nature dies also
with our dear dead. Or, if the earth is smiling it seems heartless. If her
father had lived, there would have been some one for her to turn to now
Hamlet is changed. Does some vague memory cross her gently distraught
brain of how when her brother was embarking, before all this woe was wrought,
he bade her—

For Hamlet and the trifling of his favours,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A Violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting;
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

SHAKESPEARE.

They are as gentle
As zephyrs blowing below the Violet,
Nor wagging his sweet head.

SHAKESPEARE.

I think the king is but a man as I am;
The Violet smells to him as it doth to me.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

Where Oxlips and the nodding Violet grows.

SHAKESPEARE.

To gild refined gold, to paint the Lily,
To throw a perfume on the Violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of Heaven to garnish
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

SHAKESPEARE.

When he lived, his breath and beauty set
Gloss on the Rose, smell to the Violet.

SHAKESPEARE.

The forward Violet thus did I chide:
"Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
If not from my love's breath?"

SHAKESPEARE.

You Violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own,
What are ye when the Rose is blown?

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that livest unseen
Within thy aery shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the Violet-embroidered vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:

MILTON.
Poets in the Garden.

Herrick, besides his first charming little seedlet of song, has another grotesque idea which is inserted here to show how fancy runs wild in these elder poets when searching for quaintness. Cowley is worse, being less classical when he writes—

The Violet, spring's little infant stands
Girt in purple swaddling bands.

COWLEY.

To Violets.

Welcome, Maids of Honour,
You doe bring
In the spring:
And wait upon her.

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

Y'are the Maiden Posies,
And so grac't,
To be plac't,
'Fore Damask Roses.

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

HERRICK.

How Violets came Blue.

Love on a day (wise poets tell)
Some time in wrangling spent,
Whether the Violets should excel
Or she, in sweetest scent.
Poets in the Garden.

But Venus, having lost the day,
Poor girls she fell on you:
And beat ye so (as some dare say)
Her blows did make ye blue.

HERRICK.

A Violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky.

WORDSWORTH.

The Violet is a nun.

HOOD.

The poets have taught us to associate the idea of modesty invariably with the sweet half-hidden Violet. It is a pretty conception, but change is pleasing.

Here is a German idea—

The spring's blue eyes are open,—
Up from the grass they look;
I mean the lovely Violets,
Which for a wreath I took.

LELAND (FROM HEINE).

As the scent of a Violet, withered up,
Which grew by the brink of a silver lake,
When the hot noon has dried its dewy cup,
And mist there was none its thirst to slake,
And the Violet lay dead, while the odour flew
On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue.

SHELLEY.

As a Violet's gentle eye
Gazes on the azure sky,
Until its hue grows like what it beholds.

SHELLEY.
Poets in the Garden.

The Violet in her greenwood bower,
Where Birchen boughs with Hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, in copse, or forest dingle.

SIR W. SCOTT.

The smell of Violets hidden in the grass
Poured back into my empty soul’s frame,
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

TENNYSON.

And yonder, dark with dreaming of the rain,
Grows the Wood Violet, like a lowly thought.

BUCHANAN.

In conclusion, the Violet was the darling of the Troubadours. “The far-famed prize of the Golden Violet” was given at Toulouse to the master-singer among them. Clémence Isaure, a lady of the fourteenth century, instituted the Floral Games of Toulouse, and sent once her chosen flower, the Violet, to her imprisoned knight (see Anne Pratt).
WALLFLOWER.

The Wallflower long shared the name of Gilliflower with the Carnation, and retained it last. Herrick, of course, must needs have his joke about such a suggestive name. Perhaps some grew on the outhouse walls of the little vicarage he describes so delightfully simply—where he lived, and Prue the maid, the spaniel, the green-eyed kitling, and his hen that duly laid her "long white egg."

*How the Wallflower came first.*

Why this flower is now called so,
List, sweet maids, and ye shall know;
Understand this firstling was
Once a brisk and bonny lass,
Kept as close as Danæ was;
Who a sprightly springall loved,
And to have it fully proved,
Up she got upon a wall,
Tempting down to slide withal.
But the silken twist untied,
So she fell, and, bruised, she died.
Love, in pity of the deed,
And her loving, luckless speed,
Turned her to this plant we call
Now, "the flower of the Wall."

HERRICK.

Set Gilliflowers all,
That grows on the wall.

TUSSER.
Poets in the Garden.

The yellow Wallflower, stained with iron brown.

THOMSON.

The very name of the Wallflower at once suggests ruined abbeys and castles; recalls picnics, tours at home, travels abroad, moonlight scenes, or noontide moments—long past!

O'er fallen shrine and ruined frieze,
The Wallflower rustles in the breeze.

MRS. HEMANS.

It must require close attention to hear a Wallflower rustling; but, as Ivy is well known by novelists to keep tapping at windows, especially when wanted, perhaps the Wallflower has chosen rustling on ruins for its poetic province.

Not a pastoral song has a pleasanter tune
Than ye speak to my heart, little wildings of June.
Of old ruinous castles ye tell.

CAMPBELL.

By the roofless tower,
Where the Wallflower scents the dewy air.

BURNS.

The flowers whose golden progeny
Still round the shattered brow in beauty wave.

WORDSWORTH.

Like a brown Wallflower blowing
Far out of reach in a crag.

JEAN INGELOW.

And smell the Wallflower in the crag
Whereon that dainty waft had fed,
Which made the bell-hung Cowslip wag
Her delicate head.

JEAN INGELOW.
Poets in the Garden.

Or Roses freshly blown
About the latticed farm,
And every Wallflower brown
In homely gardens warm,
Or neat sweet-smelling Stock.

LORDLYTTON.

It is noticeable what simple words our latter-day poets use. "Brown" is all Jean Ingelow and "Owen Meredith" have to say, with all their own sweetness, of the sweet Wallflower. Look back at Wordsworth—"golden progeny"! The expression is fine—almost too fine for us nowadays—although the whole image is beautiful.

WATER LILY.

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of Lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen, for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save.
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus.

MILTON.

And floating Water Lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the Oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light.

SHELLEY.

The Water Lily, pale with care,
Mourns as the waters pass her by;
"Alas!" she sighs, "what woes I bear!
And must submit to misery;
But time can never teach my heart
From love's delusive joy to part."

"THE ROSE GARDEN OF PERSIA."
Poets in the Garden.

The Water Lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright.
SIR W. SCOTT.

O beautiful thou art,
Thou sculpture-like and stately river-queen,
Crowning the depths as with the light serene
Of a pure heart!

Bright Lily of the wave!
Rising in fearless grace with every swell,
Thou seem'st as if a spirit meekly brave
Dwelt in thy cell.

MRS. HEMANS.

I know how softly bright,
Steeped in that tender light,
The Water Lilies tremble there, e'en now;
Go to the pure stream's edge,
And from its whispering sedge,
Bring me those flowers to cool my fevered brow.

MRS. HEMANS.

And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the Lilies blow,
Round an island there below—
The island of Shalott.

TENNYSON.

Now folds the Lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake;
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

TENNYSON.

Water Lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars.

LONGFELLOW.
Poets in the Garden.

"'Tis a cheerless morn for a gallant to swim,
And the moat shines cold and clear,
Sir Knight; I was never yet baulked of my whim,
And I long for the Lilies that float on the brim.
Go, bring me those blossoms here!
Then I offered them low on my bended knee,
"They are faded and wet," quoth the proud Ladye.

WHYTE MELVILLE.

And round about them grows a fringe of Reeds,
And then a floating crown of Lily flowers,
And yet within small silver-budded weeds;
But each clear centre evermore embowers
A deeper sky, where, stooping, you may see
The little minnows darting restlessly.

JEAN INGELOW.

WHIN, see Furze.

WILLOW.

We all know the expression to "Wear the Willow," but how old it may be no one seems to have ascertained. Shakespeare really quotes an old song as that of "Maid Barbara," which poor Desdemona sings—

The poor soul sat sighing by a Sycamore tree,
Sing all a green Willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing Willow, Willow, Willow.
The fresh streams ran by her and murmured her moans,
Sing Willow, Willow, Willow;
Her salt tears fell from her and softened the stones,
Sing Willow, Willow, Willow.
Sing all a green Willow must be my garland.

SHAKESPEARE.
Poets in the Garden.

I'll wear a Willow garland for his sake.

SHAKESPEARE.

There is a Willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.

SHAKESPEARE.

It was when climbing into this tree to hang her funereal garlands on its "pendant boughs" that poor distraught Ophelia falls into the stream and is drowned.

I offered him my company to a Willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Palm and May make country-houses gay,
And we hear aye birds tune this very lay—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pee-we, to-witta-woo.

NASH.

This last line is as fair an imitation of bird-notes as written words perhaps can give. Was it not Charles Kingsley who fancied some of our strange fol-de-rol refrains might originally have been meant in rude imitation of our feathered choristers, the singing vagabonds who ask no pence?

In Nash's lines, the Palm means of course the Willow, branches of the latter being borne on Palm Sunday. Shakespeare and Herrick mean the same in the following lines—

Look here what I found on a Palm-tree. I was never so be-rhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat.

SHAKESPEARE.

Thawed are the snowes, and now the lusty spring
Gives to each mead a neat enameling.
The Palms put forth their gemmes, and every tree
Now swaggers in her leavy gallantry.

HERRICK.

Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal Yew;
Maidens, Willow branches bear;
Say I died true.
Poets in the Garden.

My love was false, but I was firm
   From my hour of birth,
Upon my buried body lie
   Lightly, gentle earth!

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

The Willow is the only tree
   Whose slender boughs for ever wave;
Devotion in their homage see
   To Him who leaves and blossoms gave;
And love that gentle Willow knows,
   Bending its glances towards the Rose.

FROM THE "ROSE GARDEN OF PERSIA."

Pope was first to introduce the Weeping Willow into England, and that in a strange way. A little basket had been sent him from Turkey, one of the twigs of which, seeming alive, he planted. It grew; and thus, prospering by the Thames, this twig became the ancestor of all its English-born descendants (Kirby’s “Trees”).

The following lines were written for an urn made from the trunk of Pope’s Willow at Twickenham—

Ere Pope resigned his tuneful breath,
    And made the turf his pillow,
The minstrel hung his harp in death
    Upon the Weeping Willow;
That Willow, from Euphrates’ strand,
    Had sprung beneath his training hand.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

April, cold with dropping rain,
Willows and Lilacs brings again.

EMERSON.

Saturate
With good agreeing with its fate
Willow and Violet, maiden and man.

EMERSON.
Poets in the Garden.

WOOD SORREL.

The Wood-Sorrel or Oxalis, was called Alleluia, or Cuckoo's Meate, by Gerard. His explanation is delicious! Because: "Either the cuckoo feedeth thereon, or by reason when it springeth forth and flowreth, the Alleluia is sung in the churches."

The Woodland Sorrel's petals pale
Veined with fine purple streaks we found,
Hid in the thicket-mantled ground,
And cropt admiring.

BISHOP MANT.

Who from the tumps with bright green masses clad,
Plucks the Wood-Sorrel with its light green leaves,
Heart-shaped and triply-folded; and its root
Creeping like beaded coral.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.
My shroud of white, stuck all with Yew,  
Oh! prepare it.  

SHAKESPEARE.

In olden days, there were appropriate flowers or evergreens for each season as Herrick often records, "When Yew is out, the Birch comes in." Keats makes his young Endymion, striving to shake off his love sorrow for the moon, exclaim in his hunter's ardour—

Again I'll poll  
The fair-grown Yew-tree for a chosen bow.

KEATS.

The English long-bows of Yew did good service in many a battle. Again and again they are mentioned with praise by our old chroniclers, as in the hands of skilful archers turning the fortunes of the day to victory. It is supposed with some show of reason that Yews were grown in the churchyards for this purpose.  
And Endymion cries to his love, his "Indian bliss"—

Now
Where shall our dwelling be? Under the brow  
Of some steep mossy hill, where ivy dun  
Would hide us up, although spring leaves were none;  
And where dark Yew trees as we rustle through,  
Will drop their scarlet-berry cups of dew!  

KEATS.

The expression "cups of dew" seems at first sight overstrained as applied to the waxy-soft Yew-berries. Yet, thinking twice, they are scarlet cups, and
Poets in the Garden.

there is dew in them truly, if not from the sky, yet exuded from the parent tree, tough dry parent though it looks for such tender fruit. Keats loves Yews. In his "Ode to Melancholy," he says in low lament—

Make not your rosary of Yew berries,
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.
But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning Rose,
And so forth on all Beauty, Love, and aching Pleasure, for—in the very temple of Delight, Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine.

KEATS.

I love this gray old church, the low, long nave,
The ivied chancel, and the slender spire;
I love those Yew-tree trunks, where stand arrayed
So many deep-cut names of youth and maid.

A simple custom this—I love it well—
A carved betrothal and a pledge of truth;
How many an eve, their linked names to spell,
Beneath the Yew-trees sat our village youth!
When work was over, and the new-cut hay
Sent wafts of balm from meadows where it lay.

Ah! many an eve, while I was yet a boy,
Some village hind has beckoned me aside,
And sought mine aid, with shy and awkward joy,
To carve the letters of his rustic bride,
And make them clear to read as graven stone,
Deep in the Yew-tree's trunk beside his own.

JEAN INGELOW.
Poets in the Garden.

Cypress and Yew, sorrowful trees,
Years are your dew, sighs are your breeze.

CAVLEY.

The Ash has livelier verdure than the Yew:
And yet the Yew's green longer, and alone
Found worthy of the holy Christmas time.

E. B. BROWNING.

O, not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom.

TENNYSON.

The black Yew-hedge like a beleaguering host,
Round some fair garden province.

BAILEY.
Various Flower Pieces.

Here are many flower passages in our English poetry from Chaucer's days downwards, in which one can hardly detach the lines without destroying the flower nosegay. Some are, therefore, introduced here: to begin with an extract from a poem, by one of Chaucer's many belated scholars,—"The Court of Love." The writer is unknown; the date supposed about 1500. A choir of birds have just been singing May-day matins in honour of Love; the "Cokkowe" last, with Benedictus thanking God in haste, glad to end the service which he finds too long. What an excellent clerk, with "Cuckoo," sounding deep at every pause, for Amen!

Then—

Furth goth all the courte, both moste and leste
To feche the flowrês fressh, and braunche and blome;
And namly Hawthorn brought both page and grome,
With fressh garlantis, partie blewe and white,
And hem rejoysen in her grete delite.

Eke ech at other threw the flowrês brighte,
The Prymerose, the Violet, and the Golde—

On which as he, the young Philogenet, a Cambridge clerk, beheld the royal sight of this pretty play among the courtiers of Venus, his lady with a sudden look smote him through

The veray harte as blive (so swiftly)
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.
Poets in the Garden.

Extract the second, from Drayton's "Polyolbion," describes the marriage of Thame and Isis. The naiads and nymphs are joyously busy on the winding banks twining dainty chaplets and brave anadems (or garlands); some nose-gays, and some baldricks (or rich girdles).

But for that Thame should be
Still manlike as himself, therefore they will that he
Should not be drest with flowers to garden that belong
(His bride that better fit)—

Therefore they gather him only flowers from the meads and pastures near.

The Primrose placing first, because that in the Spring
It is the first appears, then only flourishing;
The azur'd Harebell next with them they neatly mixed
To allay whose luscious smell they Woodbine place betwixt.
Amongst those things of scent, there prick they in the Lily:
And near to that again her sister Daffodilly.

The Cowslip then they couch, and the Oxlip for her meet:
The Columbine amongst they sparingly do set;
The yellow Kingcup wrought in May a curious fret,
And now and then among of Egantine a spray,
By which again a course of Lady-smocks they lay:
The Crowflower, and thereby the Clover flower they stick;
The Daisy over all those sundry sweets so thick,
As Nature doth herself, to imitate her right;
Who seems in that her pearl so greatly to delight,
That every plain therewith she pow'd'reh to behold:

This is one of the happiest allusions anywhere to be found. Nature's pearl is also a different expression from that of other writers; pearl being the synonym of Marguerite. The "powdered plain" is a little touch so true to Nature it might pass unobserved.

The crimson Darnel flowers, the Bluebottle, and Gold,
Which, though esteemed but weeds, yet for their dainty hues,
And for their scent not ill, they for this purpose choose.

---

1 Both Gold and Marigold are mentioned here by Drayton. Golde was sometimes applied to other yellow flowers besides the Marigold.
Thus having told you how the bridegroom Thame was drest
I'll show you how the bride, fair Isis, was invest.

They curiously dispose
The red, the dainty white, the goodly Damask Rose;
For the rich ruby, pearl, and amethyst, men place
In kings' imperial crowns, the circle that enchase.
The brave Carnation then, of sweet and sovereign power
(So of his colour call'd, although a July flower),
With th' other of his kind, the speckled and the pale:
Then th' oderiferous Pink, that sends forth such a gale
Of sweetness; yet in scents as various as sorts.
The purple Violet then the Pansy there supports:
The Marigold above t' adorn th' arch'd bar:
The double Daisy, Thrift, the Button-Bachelor,
Sweet-william, Sops-in-Wine, the Campion; and to these
Some Lavender they put with Rosemary and Bays:
Sweet Marjoram with her like, Sweet Basil rare for smell,
With many a flower whose name were now too long to tell:
And rarely with the rest, the goodly Fleur-de-lis.

DRAYTON.

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
On to their blissful bower: it was a place
Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and Myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, Roses, and Jessamine,
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; under foot the Violet,
Poets in the Garden.

Crocus, and Hyacinth, with rich inlay
Brothered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

Milton.

Bring the rath Primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted Crow-toe, and pale Jessamine,
The white Pink, and the Pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing Violet,
The Musk Rose and the well-attired Woodbine,
With Cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And Daffodillies fill their cups with tears
To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.

Milton.

Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace,
Throws out the Snowdrop, and the Crocus first;
The Daisy, Primrose, Violet darkly blue,
And Polyanthus of unnumbered dyes;
The yellow Wallflower, stained with iron brown;
And lavish Stock that scents the garden round:
From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
Anemonies; Auriculas, enriched
With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves;
And full Ranunculus, of glowing red.
Then comes the Tulip-race, where beauty plays
Her idle freaks; from family diffused
To family, as flies the father-dust,
The varied colours run; and while they break
On the charmed eye, th' exulting florist marks,
With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
No gradual bloom is wanting; from the bud,
First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes:
Nor Hyacinths, of purest virgin white,
Low-bent, and blushing inward: nor Jonquils,


Poets in the Garden.

Of potent fragrance; nor Narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still;
Nor broad Carnations, nor gay-spotted Pinks;
Nor, showered from every bush, the Damask Rose.
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
The breath of nature, and her endless bloom.

THOMSON.

Oh, Luve will venture in.

Oh, Luve will venture in where it daurna weel be seen,
Oh, Luve will venture in where wisdom ance has been;
But I will down yon river rove, amang the wood sae green—
And a' to pu' a posie to my ain dear May.

The Primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
And I will pu' the Pink, the emblem o' my dear,
For she's the Pink o' womanhood and blooms without a peer—
And a' to pu' a posie to my ain dear May.

I'll pu' the budding Rose, when Phoebus peeps in view,
For it's like a balmy kiss o' her sweet bonnie mou';
The Hyacinth's for constancy, wi' its unchanging blue—
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The Lily it is pure, and the Lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom I'll place the Lily there;
The Daisy's for simplicity and unaffected air—
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The Hawthorn I will pu' wi' its locks of siller gray,
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day,
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away—
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.
Poets in the Garden.

The Woodbine I will pu' when the e'enin' star is near,
And the diamond-drops o' dew shall be her een sae clear;
The Violet's for modesty, which weel she fa's to wear—
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I'll tie the posie round wi' the silken band o' luve,
And I'll place it in her breast, and I'll swear by a' above,
That to my latest draught o' life the band shall ne'er remove—
And this will be a posie to my ain dear May.

BURNS.

Thee.

The Violet loves a sunny bank,
The Cowslip loves the lea,
The scarlet Creeper loves the Elm;
But I love—thee!

The sunshine kisses mount and vale,
The stars they kiss the sea,
The west winds kiss the Clover-blooms!
But I kiss—thee!

The Oriole weds his mottled mate,
The Lily's bride o' the bee,
Heaven's marriage-ring is round the earth:
Shall I wed—thee?

J. BAYARD TAYLOR.

Love-Letters made of Flowers.

An exquisite invention this,
Saying all one feels and thinks
In clever Daffodils and Pinks;
In puns of Tulips; and in phrases,
Charming for their truth, of Daisies:
Poets in the Garden.

A letter comes, just gathered. We
Dote on its tender brilliancy,
Inhale its delicate expressions
Of Balm and Pea, and its Confessions
Made with as sweet a Maiden’s Blush
As ever morn bedewed on bush:
(‘Tis in reply to one of ours,
Made of the most convincing flowers)
Then, after we have kissed its wit,
And heart, in water putting it
(To keep its remarks fresh) go round
Our little eloquent plot of ground,
And with enchanted hands compose
Our answer,—all of Lily, Rose,
And little darling (Mignonette);
Of Look at me, and Call me to you
(Words that while they greet, go through you):
Of Thoughts, of Flames, Forget-me-not,
Bridewort—in short, the whole blest lot
Of vouchers for a lifelong kiss—
And literally, breathing bliss!

LEIGH HUNT.

The Flower-Girl.

For those who late in life would tarry
I’ve Snowdrops, winter’s children cold;
And those who seek for wealth to marry,
May buy the flaunting Marigold.

I’ve Ragwort, Ragged Robins, too,
Cheap flowers for those of low condition;
For bachelors I’ve Buttons blue,
And Crown Imperials for ambition.
Poets in the Garden.

For sportsmen keen who range the lea
    I've Pheasant's-eye and sprigs of Heather;
For courtiers with the supple knee
    I've Parasites and Prince's Feather.

For thin, tall fops I keep the Rush;
    For peasants still I'm Nightshade weeding;
For rakes I've Devil-in-the-bush;
    For sighing Strephons Love-lies-bleeding.

MRS. CORBOULD.

Borrowed Flowers.

Welcome, dear Heart, and a most kind good-morrow!
The day is gloomy, but our looks shall shine.
Flowers I have none to give thee, but I borrow
Their sweetness in a verse, to speak for thine.

Here are red Roses, gathered at thy cheeks:
The white were all too happy to look white;
For love the Rose, for faith the Lily speaks—
It withers in false hands, but here 'tis bright.

Dost love sweet Hyacinth? Its scented leaf
Curls manifold—all love's delights blow double;
'Tis said this flow'ret is inscribed with grief;
But let that hint of a forgotten trouble.

I plucked the Primrose at night's dewy noon;
Like hope, it showed its blossoms in the night:
'Twas like Endymion, watching for the Moon!
And here are Sunflowers—amorous of light.
These golden Buttercups are April's seal—
The Daisy stars her constellations be.
These grew so lowly I was forced to kneel;
Therefore I plucked no Daisies but for thee.

Here's Daisies for the morn, Primrose for gloom,
Pansies and Rosies for the noontide hours,
A wight once made a dial of their bloom—
So may thy life be measured out by flowers.

HOOD.
Index to Flowers.

ACACIA: Moore, 5; Swinburne, 5; Tennyson, 5.
Acanthus: Tennyson, 5.
Almond: Landon, Miss, 6; Milton, 2; Spenser, 6; Tennyson, 6.
Adonis-flower. See PHEASANT'S EYE.
Aloe: Campbell, 6; Lytton, Lord, 5-6.
Amaranth: Milton, 2, 7; Tennyson, 8.
Amaranthus Candatus: Campbell, 8; Swinburne, 9.
Anemone: Bryant, 10; Clare, 9; Hemans, Mrs., 9; Lytton, Lord, 10-11; Morris, L., 10; Shelley, 9, 10; Tennyson, 10.
Apple-tree: Browning, E. B., 11; Shakespeare, 11; Swinburne, 11.
Apricot: Shakespeare, 12.
Arum: Ingelow, Jean, 12.
Asphodel: Browning, E. B., 13; Hogg, 12; Pope, 12; Shelley, 13.
Aster: Emerson, 13.
Azalea: Emerson, 13; Whitman, S., 13.

BALSAM (Yellow): Shakespeare, 14; Smart, C., 14; Spenser, 14; Turberville, 14.
Basil (Sweet): Keats, 15.
Bay: Browning, E. B., 16; Shakespeare, 15; Spenser, 16; Swinburne, 16.
Index to Flowers.

Bean-flower: Browning, 16; Ingelow, Jean, 16; Morris, W., 16.
Bella-donna Lily: Lytton, Lord, 17.
Bindweed. See Convolvulus.
Blackthorn: Anonymous verse, 17; Burns, 18; Chaucer, 17; Elliott, E., 17; Morris, W., 18.
Bluebell. See Hyacinth.
Bluebottle: Morris, W., 18.
Bog-myrtle: Anonymous verse, 19.
Borage: Burton, 19; Lytton, Lord, 19.
Bramble: Elliott, 20; Emerson, 19; Lytton, Lord, 19; Shakespeare, 19.
Briar. See Dog-rose.
Broom: Burns, 21; Chaucer, 20; Cowper, 20; Hood, 21; Ingelow, Jean, 21; Melville, Whyte, 21; Shakespeare, 20; Spenser, 20; Swinburne, 21; Wordsworth, 20.
Buttercup: Barnes, 22; Browning, 22; Campbell, 22; Chatterton, 22; Ingelow, Jean, 22, 23; Lytton, Lord, 23; Tennyson, 22; Wordsworth, 22.

Camomile: Mallet, 24; Old Proverb, 24; Shakespeare, 24.
Campanula. See Harebell.
Carnation: Anonymous verse, 26; Barnfield, 27; Beaumont, F., 26; Cowley, 27; Drayton, 27; Drummond, 26; Goldsmith, 27; Herrick, 26; Milton, 26; Shakespeare, 25; Spenser, 25, 26; Tennyson, 27.
Cedar: Milton, 28; Tennyson, 28; Thomson, 27.
Celandine: Howitt, Mrs., 29; Wordsworth, 28-29.
Cherry: Allison, Richard, 30; Chaucer, 30; Herrick, 30; Ingelow, Jean, 31; Longfellow, 30; Occleve, 29; Shakespeare, 30.
Chicory. See Succory.
Clematis: Keats, 31; Mant, Bishop, 31; Tennyson, 31.
Clovepink. See Carnation.
Clover: Burns, 31, 32; Emerson, 32; Hurdis, 31; Norton, Mrs., 32; Rückert, 32; Tennyson, 32.
Columbine: Browne, 32; Browning, E. B., 33; Chapman, 33; Chaucer, 33; Emerson, 33; Herrick, 33; Ingelow, Jean, 33; Shakespeare, 33; Skelton, 33; Spenser, 33.
Convolvulus: Jonson, Ben, 34; Keats, 35; Shelley, 35; Tennyson, 35.
Index to Flowers.

Corn-cockles: Drayton, 34; Shakespeare, 34; Spenser, 34.
Cornflower. See Blue-Bottle.
Cotton-grass: Anonymous verse, 34.
Cowslip: Bowles, Caroline, 37; Browning, R., 38; Burns, 37; Chatterton, 37; Drayton, 35; Gay, 37; Hemans, Mrs., 38; Herrick, 36; Howitt, W., 37; Jonson, Ben, 36; Milton, 37; Shakespeare, 36; Shenstone, 37.
Crocus: Anonymous verse, 40; Browning, E. B., 40; Holmes, O. W., 40; Howitt, 38; Lytton, Lord, 40; Mason, 39; Milton, 39; Pope, 40; Shakespeare, 39; Shelley, 40; Spenser, 39; Stanley, 39; Tennyson, 40; Thomson, 39; Wotton, 39.
Crowfoot. See Buttercup.
Crown Imperial: Chapman, 41; Shakespeare, 41.
Cuckoo-flower: Buchanan, R., 41; Drayton, 41; Shakespeare, 2, 41; Tennyson, 41.
Cuckoopint. See Arum.
Cypress: Anonymous verse, 42; Browning, E. B., 42; Byron, 42; Cayley, 42; Herrick, 42; Keble, 42; Shakespeare, 42; Spenser, 42.

Daffodil. See Narcissus.
Dahlia: Elliott, E., 43; Longfellow, 43.
Daisy: Browne, W., 45; Burns, 46-47; Chaucer, 44-45; Herrick, 45; Lindesay, Sir D., 45; Milton, 46; Montgomery, James, 49; Nash, 45; Shakespeare, 2, 45; Shelley, 47; Skelton, 45; Spenser, 45; Suckling, Sir J., 46; Wordsworth, 48.
Dandelion: Anonymous verse, 49; Barnes, 49; Lowell, 49.
Daphne: Byron, 50; Carew, 50; Milton, 50; Pope, 50.
Date-tree: Browning, R., 50; Moore, 50.
Dhatura: Heber, Bishop, 51.
Dog-rose: Anonymous verse, 52; Burns, 52; Chaucer, 51; Melville, Whyte, 53; Shakespeare, 51, 52; Tennyson, 53; Thomson, 52.
Dropwort. See Meadow-sweet.
Dutch Myrtle. See Gale.

Eglantine: Chaucer, 54; Herrick, 55; Keats, 55; Marlowe, 55; Scott, Sir W., 56; Shakespeare, 54; Spenser, 54, 55; Wordsworth, 56.
Index to Flowers.

Evening Primrose: Barton, 56. 
Eyebright, or Euphrasy: Elliott, E., 57; Shenstone, 57; Wordsworth, 57.

Fennel: Browning, R., 59; Longfellow, 59; Milton, 58; Shakespeare, 58; Turberville, 58.

Ferns: Anonymous verse, 60; Arnold, M., 60; Burns, 60; Butler, 59; Lytton, Lord, 60; Scott, Sir W., 60; Shakespeare, 59.

Fig: Browning, E. B., 61; Keats, 61; Thomson, 61.

Flag-flower. See Iris.

Flower-de-luce. See Iris.

Forget-me-not: Anonymous verse, 62; Coleridge, 62; Longfellow, 62; Tennyson, 62.

Foxglove: Brown, W., 63; Buchanan, R., 64; Carrington, 63; Coleridge, 64; Cowley, 63; Hemans, Mrs., 63; Ingelow, Jean, 64; Keats, 63; Lytton, Lord, 61; Mickle, 63; Scott, 64; Tennyson, 64.

Fritillary: Arnold, M., 65.

Fuchsia: Aldrich, J. Bailey, 65.

Furze: Anonymous verse, 66; Arnold, M., 67; Brown, 66; Buchanan, 67; Goldsmith, 66; Howitt, Mary, 67; Keats, 66; Swinburne, 67; Tennyson, 67; Tusser, 65.

Gale (Sweet): Tennyson, 68.

Gentian: Coleridge, 68; Emerson, 69; Goodall, 69; Ingelow, Jean, 69; Montgomery, James, 68.

Geranium: Anonymous verse, 69; Browning, R., 69; Heber, Bishop, 69.

Gillyflower. See Carnation.

Gladiolus: Lytton, Lord, 70.

Gorse. See Furze.

Grasses: Ballantine, James, 72; Browning, R., 72; Chaucer, 70; Emerson, 70, 71; Morris, 71; Norton, Mrs., 72; Poe, E. A., 71; Shakespeare, 70, 71; Shelley, 71; Taylor, A., 72; Wither, G., 71; Wordsworth, 71.

Guelder Rose: Browning, E. B., 72.

Harebell: Browne, W., 73; Burns, 74; Keats, 74; Mickle, 73; Ramsay, Allan, 73; Scott, 74; Shakespeare, 73; Shenstone, 73; Tennyson, 74.
Index to Flowers.

Hawthorn: Arnold, M., 78; Browne, 76; Browning, E. B., 78; Burns, 77; Chaucer, 75; Coleridge, 77; Goldsmith, 78; Heber, 77; Herrick, 76; Keats, 78; Morris, 78; Shakespeare, 75; Shelley, 77; Tennyson, 78; Wordsworth, 76.

Heart's Ease. See PANSY.

Heath and Heather: Burns, 79; Evans, Sebastian, 79; Hemans, Mrs., 80; Howitt, Mary, 79; Ingelow, Jean, 79.

Herb of Grace. See RUE.

Herbs (Sweet): Drayton, 81, 82; Herrick, 82; Shenstone, 80-81; Spenser, 80.

Holly: Burns, 84; Chatterton, 83; Herrick, 83; Shakespeare, 83; Southey, 84.

Hollyhock: Arnold, M., 85; Ingelow, Jean, 85; Tennyson, 85.

Honesty: Drayton, 85.

Honeysuckle: Anonymous verse, 86; Arnold, M., 87; Browning, E. B., 88; Burns, 87; Chaucer, 85; Cowper, 87; Dyer, 87; Keats, 87; Milton, 86; Shakespeare, 86; Shenstone, 87; Tennyson, 88; Thomson, 86.

Hyacinth: Addison, 89; Arnold, M., 90; Buchanan, R., 91; Collins, 89; Drummond, 88, 89; Holmes, O. W., 90; Keats, 89; Milton, 89; Shelley, 90; Tennyson, 90; Wordsworth, 90.

Hypericum, or St. John's Wort: Cowper, 91.

IRIS: Browning, E. B., 93; Byron, 92; Chaucer, 92; Longfellow, 93; Milton, 92; Shelley, 92; Spenser, 92; Swinburne, 93; Tennyson, 93.

Ivy: Browning, E. B., 95; Dickens, 95; Keats, 94; Shakespeare, 94; Shelley, 95; Spenser, 94; Wither, 94.

JASMINE or Jessamine: Anonymous verse, 97; Coleridge, 98; Cowper, 97; Eliot, George, 98; Hood, 97; Landon, Miss, 97; Lytton; Lord, 98; Milton, 96; Moore, 97; Prior, 96; Shenstone, 97; Spenser, 96; Tennyson, 98.


KINGCUP. See BUTTERCUP.

Knot-Grass: Keats, 100; Milton, 101; Scott, 101; Shakespeare, 100.

LABURNUM: Cowper, 102; Hemans, Mrs., 102; Hood, 102; Tennyson, 102.
Index to Flowers.

Lady-smocks. See Cuckoo-flowers.
Larkspur: Beaumont, F., 102; Holmes, O. W., 103; Tennyson, 102.
Laurel: Browning, E. B., 104; Burns, 104; Chaucer, 103; Dryden, 104; Emerson, 104; Herrick, 103; Shakespeare, 103; Spenser, 103; Swinburne, 104; Tennyson, 104.
Laurustinus: Swinburne, 104-105.
Lavender: Drayton, 105; Shakespeare, 105; Shenstone, 105; Spenser, 105.
Lichen: Anonymous verse, 127; Browning, 127.
Lilac: Burns, 106; Cowper, 106; Shenstone, 106; Tennyson, 106.
Lily: Browne, 109; Chaucer, 106-109; Cowley, 109; Drayton, 108; Hood, 109; Jonson, Ben, 108; Montgomery, A., 108; Rossetti, C., 110; Shakespeare, 107; Shelley, 109; Smart, C., 109; Spenser, 107; Wordsworth, 109.
Lily-of-the-Valley: Churchill, 110; Clare, 111; Hunt, Leigh, 110; Keats, 110, 111; Macdonald, Geo., 111; Mant, Bishop, 111; Scott, J., 110; Shelley, 111; Tennyson, 111; Thomson, 110; Wordsworth, 110.
Linnea: Elliott, E., 112; Emerson, 112.
London Pride: Howitt, Mrs., 112.
Long Purples: Anonymous verse, 113; Shakespeare, 113; Tennyson, 113.
Lotus: Anonymous verse, 113: Longfellow, 113; Lytton, Lord, 114; Tennyson, 114.
Love in a Mist: Swinburne, 114.
Love-lies-bleeding. See Amaranth.

MAGNOLIA: Campbell, 115; Harte, Bret, 115; Longfellow, 115; Pickering, 115; Wordsworth, 115.
Mallow: Clare, 116; Crabbe, 116; Dryden, 115.
Mandrake, or Mandragora: Shakespeare, 116, 117.
Marigold: Browne, 119; Chatterton, 118; Carew, 119; Chaucer, 117; Cleveland, 118; Douglas, Gawin, 118; Gerard, 118; Gower, 118; Herrick, 119; Keats, 120; Lyndesay, Sir David, 118; Shakespeare, 117; Wither, Geo., 119.
Marjoram: Clare, 121; Shakespeare, 120; Skelton, 120.
Marsh-Marigold: Ingelow, Jean, 121; Tennyson, 121.
May. See Hawthorn.
Index to Flowers.

Meadow-Sweet: Arnold, M., 121; Campbell, Calder, 121–122; Swinburne, 121.
Medlar: Chaucer, 122; Shakespeare, 122.
Mezereum: Cowper, 122.
Mignonette: Harte, Bret, 123; Hood, 123; Shelley, 124; Tennyson, 123.
Mint: Anonymous verse, 124; Ingelow, Jean, 124.
Mistletoe: Bailey, T. H., 124; Longfellow, 125; Shakespeare, 124.
Monk's-Hood: Arnold, M., 125; Dryden, 125; Hood, 125; Keats, 125; Shakespeare, 125.
Moon Daisy. See Ox-Eye.
Moonwort. See Honesty.
Morning Glories. See Convolvulus.
Moss: Anonymous verse, 127, 128; Coleridge, 126; Crabbe, 126; Emerson, 127; Hemans, Mrs., 127; Herrick, 126; Ingelow, Jean, 127; Shakespeare, 126; Wordsworth, 126.
Mulberry: Cowper, 128; Morris, W., 128; Muloch, Miss, 128; Shakespeare, 128; Spenser, 128.
Musk Rose: Cornwall, Barry, 129; Dekker, 129; Keats, 129, 130; Milton, 129; Tennyson, 130.
Myrtle: Arnold, M., 133; Browning, E. B., 133; Drayton, 132; Hemans, Mrs., 132; Ingelow, Jean, 132; Milton, 131, 132; Shakespeare, 131; Swinburne, 132.

Narcissus: Anonymous verse, 134, 135; Herrick, 136; Ingelow, Jean, 138; Jonson, Ben, 134, 137; Keats, 137; Milton, 137; Morris, Lewis, 139; Shakespeare, 135; Shelley, 137; Spenser, 134, 136; Swinburne, 138; Wordsworth, 138.
Nettle: Browning, E. B., 140; Browning, R., 140; Herrick, 139; Hill, Aaron, 140; Shakespeare, 139.
Nightshade: Cornwall, Barry, 141; Herrick, 140; Keats, 141; Scott, Sir W., 141.
None-so-prettty. See London Pride.

Olive: Browning, E. B., 143; Horace, 142; Lytton, Lord, 143; Shakespeare, 142; Shenstone, 142; Swinburne, 143.
Orange: Dryden, 144; Eliot, George, 145; Herbert, G., 144; Longfellow, 144; Lytton, Lord, 145; Marvell, 144; Scott, Sir W., 144; Shakespeare, 143; Tennyson, 144.
Orchis: Anonymous verse, 145; Arnold, M., 145; Buchanan, R., 145; Ingelow, Jean, 145; Mant, Bishop, 145.
Index to Flowers.

Ox-Eye: Jonson, Ben, 146; Spenser, 146. Oxlip: Shakespeare, 146; Tennyson, 146.

Paigle. See Cowslip.
Pansy: Drayton, 148; Herrick, 148; Hunt, Leigh, 149; Jonson, Ben, 148; Milton, 149; Poe, E. A., 149; Shakespeare, 147; Shelley, 149; Spenser, 148.

Passion-flower: De Vere, A., 150; Hemans, Mrs., 149; Ingelow, Jean, 150; Tennyson, 149.

Peach: Browning, E. B., 150; Longfellow, 150; Lytton, Lord, 151.

Pears: Browning, 151; Shakespeare, 151.

Peony, or Piony: Browne, 152; Keats, 152; Mant, Bishop, 152; Shakespeare, 151.

Periwinkle: Anonymous verse, 152; Hurdis, 152; Wordsworth, 153.

Pheasant's Eye: Anonymous verse, 153; Jonson, Ben, 153; Shakespeare, 153.

Pomegranate: Anonymous verse, 153; Browning, E. B., 154; Ingelow, Jean, 154; Lytton, Lord, 154; Marvell, A., 155; Moore, 154; Shakespeare, 154.

Poppy: Bailey, P. J., 157; Burns, 156; Clare, 156; Crabbe, 156; Hunt, 156; Keats, 157; Morris, 156, 157; Shakespeare, 155; Spenser, 155; Swinburne, 156.

Primrose: Browning, E. B., 162; Burns, 162; Carew, 159; Coleridge, H., 162; Chaucer, 158; Donne, 160, 161; Fletcher, 157; Herrick, 159, 160; Jonson, Ben, 160; Keats, 162; Milton, 161; Shakespeare, 158; Shelley, 161; Spenser, 158, 159; Wordsworth, 162.

Privet: Tennyson, 162.

Pumpkin-flower: Chaucer, 162; Shelley, 163; Whittier, 163.

Reed: Browning, E. B., 165; Lyly, 164; Milton, 165; Shakespeare, 164; Shelley, 165.

Rose: Anonymous verse, 166, 170; Browning, E. B., 173; Burns, 171, 172; Cleveland, 169; Dunbar, 166; Eliot, George, 173; Herbert, G., 169; Herrick, 169; Hood, 172; Hunt, Leigh, 172; Melville, Whyte, 173; Moore, 171; Pope, 170; Shakespeare, 167, 168; Shelley, 172; Spenser, 166; Tennyson, 173; Waller, Edm., 170; Wordsworth, 172.
Index to Flowers.

Rosemary: Anonymous verse, 174, 175, 176; Herrick, 174-175; Shakespeare, 174, 175, 176; Shenstone, 176; White, H. K., 177.
Rue: Chaucer, 177; Dunbar, 178; Milton, 178; Shakespeare, 177, 178; Spenser, 178.
Rush: Burns, 180; Herrick, 180; Ingelow, Jean, 180; Milton, 179; Shakespeare, 178, 179; Spenser, 179; Swinburne, 180.

ST. JOHN'S WORT. See HYPERICUM.
Scorpion Grass. See FORGET-ME-NOT.
Sea Pink. See THRIFT.
Sensitive Plant: Shelley, 181.
Shamrock: Hogg, 182; Melville, Whyte, 182; Moore, 182.
Sloe. See BLACKTHORN.
Snake's Head Lily. See FRITILLARY.
Snapdragon: Arnold, M., 182.
Snowdrop: Browning, E. B., 185; Buchanan, R., 185; Churchill, 183; Cornwall, Barry, 184; Keble, 184; Mason, 183; Montgomery, 183; Morris, L., 185; Norton, Hon. Mrs., 185; Scott, J., 183; Tennyson, 183, 185; Thomson, 183; Wordsworth, 184.
Southernwood: Crabbe, 185.
Speedwell: Buchanan, R., 186; Mant, Bishop, 186; Tennyson, 186.
Spurge Laurel. See DAPHNE.
Spurge Olive. See MEZEREUM.
Stock: Arnold, M., 186; Lytton, Lord, 186.
Strawberry: Keats, 187; Mant, Bishop, 187; Morris, L., 188; Shakespeare, 187; Spenser, 187; Tusser, 187; Wordsworth, 188.
Succory: Emerson, 188.
Sundew: Swinburne, 188-189.
Sunflower: Blake, Wm., 190; Browning, 191; Hood, 190; Moore, 190; Smart, Chris., 190; Swinburne, 191; Tennyson, 190.
Sweet Briar. See EGLANTINE.
Sweet Gale. See GALE.

Index to Flowers.

Thistle : Barnes, 197; Browne, 194; Browning, 196; Burns, 195; Crabbe, 196; Dunbar, 193, 194; Hogg, 195; Leyden, 196; Lytton, Lord, 196; Rossetti, Christina, 196; Shakespeare, 194; Tusser, 194; Wordsworth, 196.

Thrift : Anonymous verse, 197.

Thyme : Beaumont and Fletcher, 198; Buchanan, R., 198; Clare, 198; Drayton, 197; Mant, Bishop, 198; Milton, 197; Shakespeare, 197; Shenstone, 198; Spenser, 197; Tennyson, 198.

Tiger Lily : Morris, L., 199; Tennyson, 199.

Traveller’s Joy. See Clematis.

Trefoil. See Clover.

Tuberose : Moore, 199; Prior, 199; Shelley, 199.

Tulip : Browning, 203; Carew, 200; Cowley, 201; Churchill, 201; Fanshawe, 201; Fletcher, 201; Gay, 201; Herrick, 201; Hood, 203; Landon, Miss, 202; Marvell, 200; Pope, 201; Quarles, 201; Shenstone, 202; Southey, 202; Tennyson, 203; Young, 202.

Valerian : Spenser, 204.

Various Flower Pieces : Anonymous, 2, 227; Burns, 231; Corbould, Mrs., 233; Drayton, 228; Hood, 234; Hunt, Leigh, 1, 232; Marvell, 3; Milton, 229, 230; Shakespeare, 2; Taylor, J. Bayard, 232; Thomson, 230.

Verbena : Browning, E. B., 204.

Vervain : Jonson, Ben, 205; Scott, Sir W., 204.

Vetch : Ingelow, Jean, 205; Shenstone, 205.

Vine : Browne, 206; Browning, 207; Browning, E. B., 207; Emerson, 209; Fletcher, 206; Longfellow, 209; Lytton, Lord, 207; Maginn, Wm., 208; Milton, 206; Shakespeare, 205, 206; Stoddard, R., 208-209; Thomson, 207.

Violet : Anonymous verse, 210; Buchanan, 215; Campbell, 4; Cowley, 213; Herrick, 213-214; Hood, 214; Leland, 214; Milton, 212; Robinson, C., 210; Scott, Sir W., 215; Shakespeare, 2, 210-212; Shelley, 214; Tennyson, 215; Wordsworth, 214; Wotton, Sir H., 212.

Virgin’s Bower. See Clematis.

Wallflower : Burns, 217; Campbell, 217; Hemans, Mrs., 217; Herrick, 216; Ingelow, Jean, 217; Lytton, Lord, 218; Thomson, 217; Tusser, 216; Wordsworth, 217.

Water Lily : Anonymous verse, 218; Hemans, Mrs., 219; Ingelow,
Index to Flowers.

Jean, 220; Longfellow, 219; Melville, Whyte, 220; Milton, 218; Scott, Sir W., 219; Shelley, 218; Tennyson, 219.

Wayfaring Tree. See Guelder Rose.

Whin. See Furze.

White Thorn. See Hawthorn.

Willow: Anonymous verse, 222; Beaumont and Fletcher, 222; Emerson, 222; Herrick, 221; Montgomery, James, 222; Nash, 221; Shakespeare, 220, 221.

Windflower. See Anemone.

Wolf's Bane. See Monk's Hood.

Wood Sorrel: Mant, Bishop, 223; Smith, Charlotte, 223.

Woodbine. See Honeysuckle.

Yew: Bailey, 226; Browning, E. B., 226; Cayley, 226; Ingelow, Jean, 225; Keats, 224-225; Tennyson, 226.
Index to Authors.

ADDISON: Hyacinth, 89.
Allison, R.: Cherry, 30.
Anonymous verse: Blackthorn, 17; Bog-myrtle, 19; Camomile, 24; Carnation, 26; Cotton-grass, 34; Crocus, 40; Cypress, 42; Dandelion, 49; Dog-rose, 52; Ferns, 60; Forget-me-not, 62; Furze, 66; Geranium, 69; Honeysuckle, 86; Jasmine, 97; Long Purples, 113; Lotus, 113; Mint, 124; Moss, 127, 128; Narcissus, 135; Orchis, 145; Periwinkle, 152; Pheasant’s Eye, 153; Pomegranate, 154; Rose, 166, 170; Rosemary, 174, 176; Thrift, 197; Various Flowers, 227, 228; Violet, 210; Water Lily, 218; Willow, 222.
Arnold, M.: Ferns, 60; Fritillary, 65; Furze, 67; Hawthorn, 78; Hollyhock, 85; Honeysuckle, 87; Hyacinth, 90; Meadow-sweet, 121; Monk’s Hood, 125; Myrtle, 133; Orchis, 145; Snapdragon, 182; Stock, 186.

BAILEY, PHILIP JAMES: Poppy, 157.
Ballantine, J.: Grasses, 72.
Barnes: Buttercup, 22; Dandelion, 49; Thistle, 197.
Barnfield: Carnation, 27.
Barton: Evening Primrose, 56.
Beaumont and Fletcher: Thyme, 198; Willow, 221–222.
Beaumont, F.: Carnation, 26; Larkspur, 102.
Index to Authors.

Blake, Wm.: Sunflower, 190.
Bowles, Caroline: Cowslip, 57.
Brown, W.: Foxglove, 63; Furze, 66; Harebell, 73.
Browne: Columbine, 32; Daisy, 45; Grasses, 73; Hawthorn, 76;
     Lily, 109; Marigold, 119; Peony, 152; Thistle, 194; Vine, 206.
Browning, E. B.: Apple-tree, 11; Asphodel, 13; Bay, 16; Cactus, 24;
     Columbine, 33; Crocus, 40; Cypress, 42; Fig, 61;
     Guelder Rose, 72; Hawthorn, 78; Honeysuckle, 88; Iris, 93;
     Ivy, 94; Laurel, 104; Myrtle, 133; Nettle, 140; Olive, 143;
     Peach, 150; Pomegranate, 154; Primrose, 162; Reed, 165;
     Rose, 173; Snowdrop, 185; Verbena, 204; Vine, 207; Yew, 226.
Browning, R.: Bean-flower, 16; Buttercup, 22; Cowslip, 38;
     Date-tree, 50; Fennel, 59; Geranium, 69; Grasses, 72;
     Moss, 127; Nettle, 140; Pear, 151; Sunflower, 191; Thistle, 196;
     Tulip, 203; Vine, 207.
Bryant: Anemone, 10.
Buchanan, R.: Cuckoo-flower, 41; Foxglove, 64; Furze, 67;
     Hyacinth, 91; Orchis, 145; Snowdrop, 185; Speedwell, 186;
     Thyme, 198; Violet, 215.
Burns: Blackthorn, 18; Broom, 21; Clover, 31, 32; Cowslip, 37;
     Daisy, 46; Dog-rose, 52; Ferns, 60; Harebell, 74; Hawthorn, 77;
     Heath, 79; Holly, 84; Honeysuckle, 87; Laurel, 104;
     Lilac, 106; Poppy, 156; Primrose, 162; Rose, 171, 172;
     Rush, 180; Thistle, 195; Various Flowers, 231-232; Wallflower, 217.
Burton: Borage, 19.
Butler: Ferns, 59.
Byron: Cypress, 42; Daphne, 50; Iris, 92.

Campbell: Aloe, 6; Amaranthus Candatus, 8; Buttercup, 22;
     Magnolia, 115; Meadow-sweet, 121-122; Wallflower, 217.
Carew: Daphne, 50; Marigold, 119; Primrose, 159; Tulip, 200.
Carrington: Foxglove, 63.
Cayley: Cypress, 42; Yew, 226.
Chapman: Columbine, 33; Crown Imperial, 41.
Chatterton: Buttercup, 22; Cowslip, 37; Holly, 83; Marigold, 118.
Chaucer: Blackthorn, 17; Broom, 20; Cherry, 30; Columbine, 33;
     Daisy, 44-45; Dog-rose, 51; Eglantine, 54; Grasses, 70;
Index to Authors.

Hawthorn, 75; Honeysuckle, 85; Iris, 92; Laurel, 103; Lily, 106, 109; Marigold, 117; Medlar, 122; Primrose, 158; Pumpkin-flower, 162; Rue, 177.
Churchill: Lily-of-the-Valley, 110; Snowdrop, 183; Tulip, 201.
Clare: Anemone, 9; Lily-of-the-Valley, 111; Mallow, 116; Marjoram, 121; Poppy, 156; Thyme, 198.
Cleveland: Marigold, 118; Rose, 169.
Coleridge: Forget-me-not, 62; Foxglove, 64; Gentian, 68; Hawthorn, 77; Jasmine, 98; Moss, 126.
Coleridge, H.: Primrose, 162.
Collins: Hyacinth, 89.
Corbould, Mrs.: Various Flowers, 233–234.
Cornwall, Barry: Musk Rose, 129; Nightshade, 141; Snowdrop, 184.
Cowley: Carnation, 27; Foxglove, 63; Lily, 109; Tulip, 201; Violet, 213.
Cowper: Broom, 20; Honeysuckle, 87; Hypericum, 91; Jasmine, 97; Laburnum, 102; Lilac, 106; Mezereum, 122; Mulberry, 128.
Crabbe: Mallow, 116; Moss, 126; Poppy, 156; Southernwood, 185; Thistle, 196.

Dekker: Musk Rose, 129.
De Vere, Aubrey: Passion-flower, 150.
Dickens: Ivy, 95.
Donne, Dr.: Primrose, 160–161.
Douglas, Gawin: Marigold, 118.
Drayton: Carnation, 27; Corn-cockles, 34; Cowslip, 35; Cuckoo-flower, 41; Herbs, 81, 82; Honesty, 85; Lavender, 105; Lily, 108; Myrtle, 132; Pansy, 148; Thyme, 197; Various Flowers, 228–229.
Drummond: Carnation, 26; Hyacinth, 88, 89.
Dryden: Laurel, 104; Mallow, 115; Monk's Hood, 125; Orange, 144.
Dunbar: Rose, 166; Rue, 177–178; Thistle, 193–194.
Dyer: Honeysuckle, 87.

Eliot, G.: Jasmine, 98; Orange, 145; Rose, 173.
Elliott, E.: Blackthorn, 17; Bramble, 20; Dahlia, 43; Eyebright, 57; Linnaea, 112.
Index to Authors.

Emerson: Aster, 13; Azalea, 13; Bramble, 19; Clover, 32; Columbine, 33; Gentian, 69; Grasses, 70, 71; Laurel, 104; Linnæa, 112; Moss, 127; Succory, 188; Vine, 209; Willow, 222. Evans, Sebastian: Heath, 79.

Fanshawe: Tulip, 201.
Fletcher: Primrose, 157; Tulip, 201; Vine, 206.

Gay: Cowslip, 37; Tulip, 201.
Gerard: Marigold, 118.
Goldsmith: Carnation, 27; Furze, 66; Hawthorn, 78.
Goodall, E.: Gentian, 69.
Gower: Cherry, 30; Marigold, 118.

Harte, Bret: Magnolia, 115; Mignonette, 123.
Heber, Bishop: Datura, 51; Geranium, 69; Hawthorn, 77.
Hemans, Mrs.: Anemone, 9; Cowslip, 38; Foxglove, 63; Heath, 80; Laburnum, 102; Moss, 127; Myrtle, 132; Passion-flower, 149; Wallflower, 217; Water Lily, 219.
Herbert, G.: Orange, 144; Rose, 169.
Herrick: Carnation, 26; Cherry, 30; Columbine, 33; Cowslip, 36; Cypress, 42; Daisy, 45; Eglantine, 55; Hawthorn, 76; Herbs, 82; Holly, 83; Laurel, 103; Marigold, 119; Moss, 126; Narcissus, 136; Nettle, 139; Nightshade, 140; Pansy, 148; Primrose, 159, 160; Rose, 168-169; Rosemary, 174; 175; Rush, 180; Tulip, 201; Violet, 213-214; Wallflower, 216; Willow, 221.
Hill, Aaron: Nettle, 140.
Hogg: Asphodel, 12; Shamrock, 182; Thistle, 195.
Holmes, O. W.: Crocus, 40; Hyacinth, 90; Larkspur, 103.
Hood: Broom, 21; Jasmine, 97; Laburnum, 102; Lily, 109; Mignonette, 123; Monk’s Hood, 125; Rose, 172; Sunflower, 190; Sweet Pea, 191; Tulip, 203; Various Flowers, 234-235; Violet, 214.
Horace: Olive, 142.
Howitt, Mrs.: Celandine, 29; Furze, 67; Heath, 79; London Pride, 112.
Howitt, W.: Cowslip, 37; Crocus, 38.
Hunt, Leigh: Lily-of-the-Valley, 110; Pansy, 149; Poppy, 156; Rose, 172; Various Flowers, 232-233.
Index to Authors.

Hurdis: Clover, 31; Periwinkle, 152.

Ingelow, Jean: Arum, 12; Bean-flower, 16; Broom, 21; Buttercup, 22, 23; Cherry, 31; Columbine, 33; Foxglove, 64; Gentian, 69; Heath, 79; Hollyhock, 85; Marsh-Marigold, 121; Mint, 124; Moss, 127; Myrtle, 132; Narcissus, 138; Orchis, 145; Passion-flower, 150; Pomegranate, 154; Rush, 180; Vetch, 205; Wallflower, 217; Water Lily, 220; Yew, 225.

Jonson, Ben: Convolvulus, 34; Cowslip, 36; Fritillary, 64; Lily, 108; Narcissus, 134, 136-137; Ox-eye, 146; Pansy, 148; Pheasant's Eye, 153; Primrose, 160; Vervain, 205.

Keats: Basil, 15; Clematis, 31; Convolvulus, 35; Eglantine, 55; Fig, 61; Foxglove, 63; Furze, 66; Harebell, 74; Hawthorn, 78; Honeysuckle, 87; Hyacinth, 89; Ivy, 94; Knotgrass, 100; Lily-of-the-Valley, 110, 111; Marigold, 120; Monk's Hood, 125; Musk Rose, 129, 130; Narcissus, 137; Nightshade, 141; Peony, 152; Poppy, 157; Primrose, 162; Strawberry, 187; Sweet Pea, 191; Yew, 224, 225.

Keble: Cypress, 42; Snowdrop, 184.

Landon, Miss (L. E. L.): Almond, 6; Jasmine, 97; Tulip, 202.

Leland: Violet, 214.

Leyden: Thistle, 196.

Longfellow: Cherry, 30; Dahlia, 43; Fennel, 59; Forget-me-not, 62; Iris, 93; Lotus, 113; Magnolia, 115; Mistletoe, 125; Orange, 144; Peach, 150; Vine, 209; Water Lily, 219.

Lowell: Dandelion, 49.

Lyly: Reed, 164.

Lyndesay, Sir David: Daisy, 45; Marigold, 118.

Lytton, Lord: Aloe, 6; Anemone, 10, 11; Bella Donna, 17; Borage, 19; Bramble, 19; Buttercup, 23; Crocus, 40; Gladiolus, 70; Ferns, 60; Fig, 61; Jasmine, 98; Lotus, 114; Olive, 143; Orange, 145; Peach, 151; Pomegranate, 154; Stock, 186; Thistle, 196; Vine, 207; Wallflower, 218.

Macdonald, George: Lily-of-the-Valley, 111.

Maginn, Wm.: Vine, 207-208.
Index to Authors.

Mallet: Camomile, 24.
Mant, Bishop: Clematis, 31; Lily-of-the-Valley, 111; Orchis, 145; Peony, 152; Speedwell, 186; Strawberry, 187; Thyme, 198; Wood Sorrel, 223.
Marlowe: Eglantine, 55.
Marvell: Orange, 144; Pomegranate, 155; Tulip, 200.
Mason: Crocus, 39; Snowdrop, 183.
Melville, Whyte: Broom, 21; Dog-rose, 53; Rose, 173; Shamrock, 182; Water Lily, 220.
Mickleton: Foxglove, 63; Harebell, 73.
Milton: Amaranthus, 7; Carnation, 26; Cedar, 28; Cowslip, 37; Crocus, 39; Daisy, 46; Daphne, 50; Fennel, 58; Honeysuckle, 86; Hyacinth, 89; Iris, 92; Jasmine, 96; Knot-grass, 101; Musk Rose, 129; Myrtle, 131, 132; Narcissus, 137; Pansy, 149; Primrose, 161; Reed, 165; Rue, 178; Rush, 179; Thyme, 197; Vine, 206; Various Flowers, 229-230; Violet, 212; Water Lily, 218.
Montgomery, J.: Daisy, 49; Gentian, 68; Willow, 222.
Moore: Acacia, 5; Date-tree, 50; Jasmine, 97; Pomegranate, 154; Rose, 171; Shamrock, 182; Sunflower, 190; Tuberose, 199.
More, Sir Thos.: Rosemary, 175.
Morris, L.: Anemone, 10; Grasses, 71; Narcissus, 139; Poppy, 156, 157; Snowdrop, 185; Strawberry, 188; Tiger Lily, 199.
Morris, W.: Bean-flower, 16; Blackthorn, 18; Bluebottle, 18; Hawthorn, 78; Mulberry, 128.
Muloch, Miss: Mulberry, 128.

Nash: Daisy, 45; Willow, 221.
Norton, Mrs.: Clover, 32; Grasses, 72; Snowdrop, 185.

Occleve: Cherry, 29.

Pickering: Magnolia, 115.
Poe, E. A.: Grasses, 71; Pansy, 149; Tamarind, 193.
Pope: Asphodel, 12; Crocus, 40; Daphne, 50; Rose, 170; Tulip, 201.
Prior: Jasmine, 96; Tuberose, 199.
Index to Authors.

Quarles, F.: Tulip, 201.

Ramsay, Allan: Harebell, 73.
Rossetti, C. : Lily, 110; Thistle, 196.
Rückert : Clover, 32.

Sanders, Clerk : Carnation, 26.
Scott, J. : Lily-of-the-Valley, 110; Snowdrop, 183.
Scott, Sir W. : Eglantine, 56; Ferns, 60; Foxglove, 64; Harebell, 74; Knot-grass, 101; Nightshade, 141; Orange, 144; Vervain, 204; Violet, 215; Water Lily, 219.

Shakespeare: Apple-tree, 11; Apricot, 12; Balsam, 14; Bay, 15; Bramble, 19; Broom, 20; Buttercup, 22; Camomile, 24; Carnation, 25; Cherry, 30; Columbine, 33; Corn-cockles, 34; Cowslip, 36; Crocus, 39; Crown Imperial, 41; Cuckoo-flower, 41; Cypress, 42; Daisy, 45; Dog-rose, 51, 52; Eglantine, 54; Fennel, 58; Ferns, 59; Grasses, 70, 71; Harebell, 73; Hawthorn, 75; Holly, 83; Honeysuckle, 86; Ivy, 94; Knot-grass, 100; Laurel, 103; Lavender, 105; Lily, 107; Long Purples, 113; Mandrake, 116, 117; Marigold, 117; Marjoram, 120; Medlar, 122; Mistletoe, 124; Monk's Hood, 125; Moss, 126; Mulberry, 128; Myrtle, 131; Narcissus, 135; Nettle, 139; Olive, 143; Orange, 143; Oxlip, 146; Pansy, 147; Pear, 151; Peony, 151; Pheasant's Eye, 153; Pomegranate, 154; Poppy, 155; Primrose, 158; Reed, 164; Rose, 167, 168; Rosemary, 174, 175, 176; Rue, 177, 178; Rush, 178, 179; Strawberry, 187; Thistle, 194; Thyme, 197; Vine, 205, 206; Violet, 210, 211, 212; Willow, 220, 221; Yew, 224.

Shelley: Anemone, 9, 10; Asphodel, 13; Convolvulus, 35; Crocus, 40; Daisy, 47; Grasses, 71; Hawthorn, 77; Hyacinth, 90; Iris, 92; Ivy, 95; Lily, 109; Lily-of-the-Valley, 111; Mignonette, 124; Narcissus, 137; Pansy, 149; Primrose, 161; Pumpkin-flower, 163; Reed, 165; Rose, 172; Sensitive Plant, 181; Tuberose, 199; Violet, 214; Water Lily, 218.

Shenstone: Cowslip, 37; Eyebright, 57; Harebell, 73; Herbs, 81; Honeysuckle, 87; Jasmine, 97; Lavender, 105; Lilac, 106; Olive, 142; Rosemary, 176; Thyme, 198; Tulip, 202; Vetch, 205.

Skelton: Columbine, 33; Daisy, 45; Marjoram, 120.
Smart, C.: Balsam, 14; Lily, 109; Sunflower, 190.
Index to Authors.

Smith, Charlotte: Wood Sorrel, 223.
Southey: Holly, 84; Tulip, 202.
Spenser: Almond, 6; Balsam, 14; Bay, 16; Broom, 20; Carnation, 25, 26; Columbine, 33; Corn-cockles, 34; Crocus, 39; Cypress, 42; Daisy, 45; Dog-rose, 52; Eglandine, 54, 55; Herbs, 80; Iris, 92; Ivy, 94; Jasmine, 96; Laurel, 103; Lavender, 105; Lily, 107; Mulberry, 128; Narcissus, 134, 136; Ox-eye, 146; Pansy, 148; Poppy, 155; Primrose, 158, 159; Rose, 166; Rue, 178: Rush, 179; Strawberry, 187; Thyme, 197; Valerian, 204.
Stanley: Crocus, 39.
Stoddard, Richard: Vine, 208-209.
Suckling, Sir J.: Daisy, 46.
Swinburne: Acacia, 5; Amaranthus Candatus, 8; Apple-tree, 11; Bay, 16; Broom, 21; Furze, 67; Iris, 93; Laurel, 104; Laurustinus, 104-105; Love in a Mist, 114; Meadow-sweet, 121; Myrtle, 132; Narcissus, 138; Olive, 143; Poppy, 156; Rush, 180; Sundew, 188-189; Sunflower, 191.

Taylor, A.: Grasses, 72; Sweet-william, 192.
Tennyson: Acacia, 5; Acanthus, 5; Almond, 6; Amaranthus, 8; Anemone, 10; Buttercup, 22; Carnation, 27; Cedar, 28; Clematis, 31; Clover, 32; Convolvulus, 35; Crocus, 40; Cuckoo-flower, 41; Daisy, 43; Dog-rose, 53; Forget-me-not, 62; Foxglove, 64; Furze, 67; Gale, 68; Grasses, 71; Harebell, 74; Hawthorn, 78; Hollyhock, 85; Honeysuckle, 88; Hyacinth, 90; Iris, 93; Jasmine, 98; Laburnum, 102; Larkspur, 102; Laurel, 104; Lilac, 106; Lily-of-the-Valley, 111; Long Purples, 113; Lotus, 114; Marsh-Marigold, 121; Mignonette, 123; Musk Rose, 130; Orange, 144; Oxlip, 146; Passion-flower, 149; Privet, 162; Rose, 173; Snowdrop, 183, 185; Speedwell, 186; Sunflower, 190; Thyme, 198; Tiger Lily, 199; Tulip, 203; Violet, 215; Water Lily, 219; Yew, 226.
Thomson: Cedar, 27; Crocus, 39; Dog-rose, 52; Fig, 61; Lily-of-the-Valley, 110; Snowdrop, 183; Tamarind, 193; Various Flowers, 230-231; Vine, 207; Wallflower, 217.
Turberville: Balsam, 14; Fennel, 58.
Tusser: Furze, 65; Strawberry, 187; Thistle, 194; Wallflower, 216.
Index to Authors.

WALLER, EDMUND: Rose, 170.
White, H. Kirke: Rosemary, 177.
Whittier: Pumpkin-flower, 163.
Wither, G.: Grasses, 71; Ivy, 94; Marigold, 119.
Wordsworth: Broom, 20; Buttercup, 22; Celandine, 28; Daisy, 47-48; Eglantine, 56; Eyebright, 57; Grasses, 71; Hawthorn, 76; Hyacinth, 90; Lily, 109; Lily-of-the-Valley, 110; Magnolia, 115; Moss, 126; Narcissus, 138; Periwinkle, 153; Primrose, 162; Rose, 172; Snowdrop, 184; Strawberry, 188; Thistle, 196; Violet, 214; Wallflower, 217.
Wotton: Crocus, 39; Violet, 212.

YOUNG: Tulip, 202.
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