# BIRDS BEES AND BLOSSOMS

Katie A. Ardagh
(from Uncle John & Aunt Annie)
March 27th 1867

Mabel H. Foster
(from the above-named cousin)
May 5th 1882

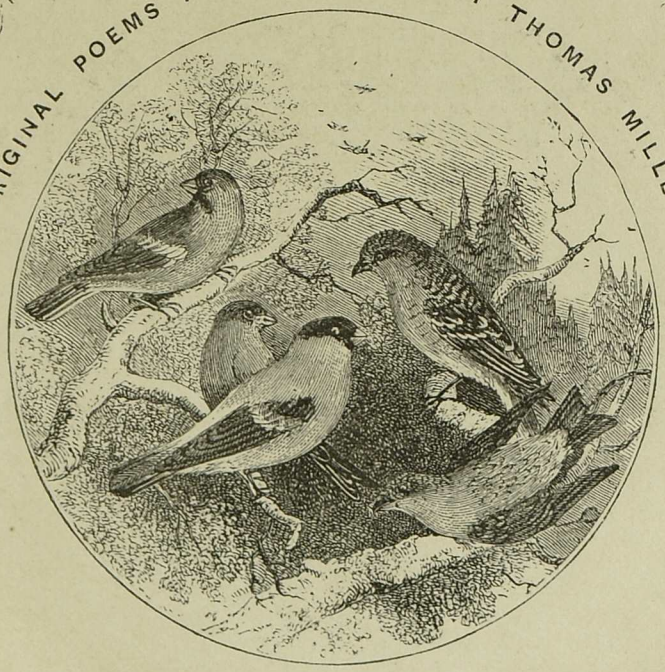
Marian Morton
from
mother

# BIRDS, BEES, AND BLOSSOMS.

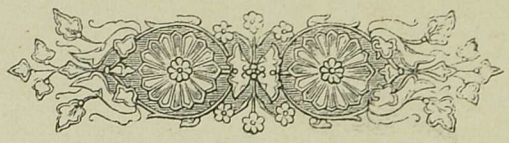
BIRDS.

# Birds Bees and Blossoms

ORIGINAL POEMS FOR CHILDREN, BY THOMAS MILLER.



T. Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh, and New York.



# CONTENTS

## BIRDS.


| | Page |
|---|---|
| THE DEAD SWALLOW, | 9 |
| HOW THE ROBIN BECAME RED, | 13 |
| SPARROWS, | 19 |
| ROOKS, | 21 |
| THE RAVEN, | 26 |
| THE RESTLESS BIRD, | 28 |
| THE CUCKOO, | 30 |
| THE THRUSH, | 32 |
| THE BITTERN, | 34 |
| SWALLOWS, | 36 |
| THE WATER WAGTAIL, | 41 |
| THE PEACOCK, | 43 |
| THE GREEN WOODPECKER, | 45 |
| THE NIGHTINGALE, | 47 |
| THE SKYLARK, | 49 |


## BEES, AND OTHER INSECTS.


| | |
|---|---|
| BEES, | 53 |
| THE ANT-LION, | 60 |
| THE CRICKET, | 63 |
| SONG OF THE SMALL INSECTS, | 66 |

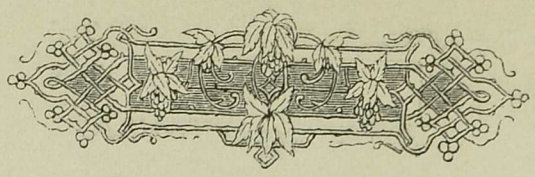
Page

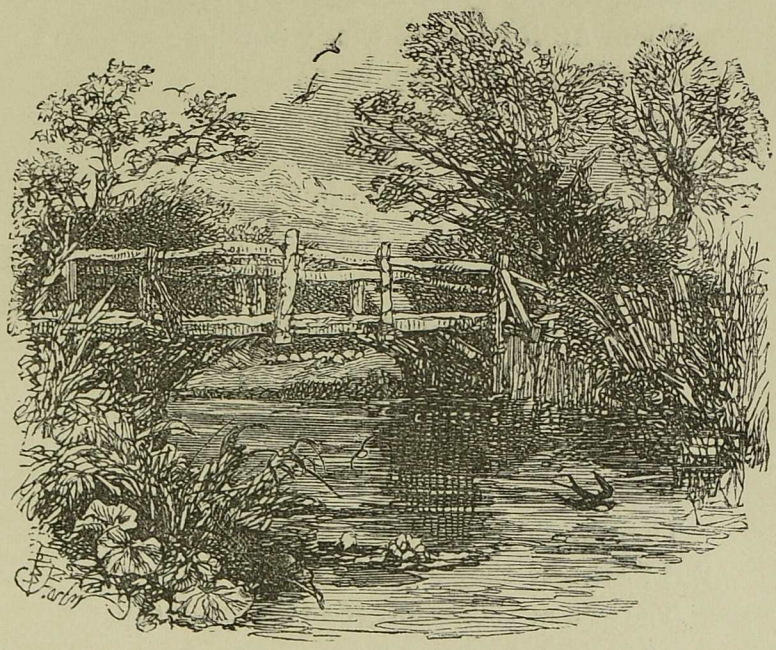
THE FROG-HOPPER, ... ... ... ... ... 69
THE CHEESE-HOPPER, ... ... ... ... 71
THE BURYING BEETLE, ... ... ... ... 73
THE GARDEN SPIDER, ... ... ... ... 76
THE CRANE FLY, ... ... ... ... ... 79
THE WATER SPIDER, ... ... ... ... 81
THE SNAIL, ... ... ... ... ... 83
THE DEAD BUTTERFLY, ... ... ... ... 85
THE BUTTERFLY, ... ... ... ... ... 87

## BLOSSOMS.

SONG OF THE DAISIES, ... ... ... ... 93
BLUE-BELLS, ... ... ... ... .. 97
FLOWERS IN MOTION, ... ... ... ... 99
MAY, ... ... ... ... ... ... 101
PRIMROSES, ... ... ... ... ... 104
THE ROSE AND THE VIOLET, ... ... ... ... 106
THE HARE-BELL, ... ... ... ... ... 109
THE WATER LILY, ... ... ... ... ... 111
THE SNOWDROP, ... ... ... ... ... 114
HOW MAY WAS FIRST MADE, ... ... ... ... 116
DAISIES, ... ... ... ... ... 119
THE GOLDEN CELANDINE, ... ... ... ... 121
"ALL-A-BLOWING—ALL-A-GROWING:"— ... ... ..
WHAT I MEAN, ... ... ... .. ... 123
LONDON CHILDREN, ... ... .. ... 125
THE COUNTRY CHILD, ... ... ... ... 127
THE PAUPER, ... ... ... ... ... 129
THE POOR SEMPSTRESS, ... ... .. ... 131
THE LONDON MILKMAID, ... ... ... ... 133
THE OLD HOSTLER, ... ... ... ... 135

# BIRDS.





## THE DEAD SWALLOW.

"AND why did it come there to die?"
Such was the question put to me;
And to the child I made reply:
"It was too ill and weak to fly
With its companions o'er the sea,
So still kept on that stony ridge
Where it could watch the waters flow,
Under the dark arch of the bridge,
And see the branches wave below:
Five once sat there all in a row.

"There they were hatched, that is the nest,
Built on the keystone of the arch;

It often did my eye arrest,
When April followed windy March,
Tracing its progress day by day,
Thinking how dangerously it stood,
And should by chance the nest give way,
The young would perish in the flood :
My fears were vain : the work was good.

"The young were hatched, and fledged, and reared,
Above the torrent's angry roar ;
I watched them oft, and sometimes feared
Danger was nearer than before,
And that when standing in a row,
They would into the water fall ;
But fearlessly they looked below,
Though, at their mother's twittering call,
They drew back nearer to the wall.

"Drew back from that small giddy ledge,
That looked deep down and stood so high,
Seeming to know, too near the edge
They must not go till they could fly.
The Pike so hungry, fierce, and grim,
When looking down they often saw
Under the gloomy archway swim,
With his huge length of hideous jaw :
No doubt they looked at him in awe.

"I think the one that there lay dead,
Was injured, or had had a fall ;
It always seemed to droop its head,
I never saw it fly at all,

Although I came day after day,
But always found it moping there
After the rest had flown away.
The parent birds were ever near,
And did their best its heart to cheer.

"They brought it food all summer through,
And gave it water just the same;
I wondered then what it would do
When the migrating season came,
And all the swallows crossed the sea:
I have no doubt the parents tried
To take it, but that could not be;
So of necessity it died,
For on their wings it could not ride.

"After they left it, there it stood,
Still looking down with wondering eyes—
Watching the ever rolling flood,
Watching the branches fall and rise
As they were by the current shook,
While the o'erhanging wild flowers swayed.
Perhaps it at itself would look,
The water like a mirror laid,
So still at times within the shade.

"And that poor bird would sit for hours,
Till all the bridge was wrapt in gloom,
Until you couldn't see the flowers,
Much less the colours of their bloom:
There it would sit from night to morn,
And hear the cold rain dropping down
From off the bridge upon the thorn;

Then lower, on the sedge so brown,
Where the dark archway seemed to frown.

"Beyond, so close the branches fell,
So thick the torrent was embowered,
That from the bridge you could not tell
What plants they were below that flowered.
And when the sun bathed all in gold,
That forlorn bird would twitter sweet;
But when the shadows, dark and cold,
Fell on the foliage at its feet,
To the chill wall it would retreat,

"Bury its head, and so remain,
As it back by the keystone shrank.
I fear it neither ate nor drank
After its parents crossed the main.
I tried, but never could get near,
It made me giddy but to look,
And no one could a ladder rear
In that unfathomable brook.
I tried, and then the cause forsook.

"There was no hold for hands nor feet;
I tried to get down every way,
But no projecting ledge could meet,
And too far down the keystone lay.
It grieved me to the very heart,
Although to save it I oft tried,
From that poor famished bird to part.
And so upon that ledge it died,
From whence it never once had flied."

## HOW THE ROBIN BECAME RED.

### FIRST PART.

IN Autumn time his song we hear,
When the leaves are red and sear;
And when Winter winds pipe shrill,
He hops upon the window sill,
And leaves the imprint of his claw
Deep in the flakes of feathered snow.
There is no other bird so good
As Robin, Hero of the Wood;
And I dare say you've often cried,
While reading how those children died,
Those pretty Babes, who, hand in hand,
Wandered o'er that dreary land;

Wandered up and wandered down,
Yet never saw come from that town
The man who was to bring them bread.
You all know how they were found dead;
And many a time you have been told,
In that story good and old,
How Robin tucked up both his sleeves,
And covered those dead Babes with leaves.
There were Blackbird, Magpie, Thrush,
All idling in a neighbouring bush,
Looking on with unpitying eyes;
And though they were twice his size,
Wouldn't lend a helping hand,
Nor scratch up one grain of sand;
Although Robin cried out, "Shame!"
Not one to his assistance came;
So, with his heart brimful of grief,
He slowly piled up leaf on leaf,
Placing one here, another there,
And wetting them with many a tear.
For I know from his pitying eye,
It don't take much to make him cry.

SECOND PART.

Now, though it is so long ago,
I'm positive all Robins know
About those pretty Babes that died
In that forest old and wide,
In that forest wide and old,
Through which the Autumn's winds blew cold,
And with a child-like faith believe.
The lesson Robins first receive,

When by their parents taught to sing,
Is all about the burying
Of those dear Babes in the Wood;
And is as clearly understood
By every Robin that is born,
As if they'd stood that Autumn morn
And seen them lying side by side,
Their sweet lips with blackberries dyed.
Never before those Babes lay dead
Was the Robin's breast dyed red.
It was the Autumn leaves, 'tis said,
He piled upon those children dead,
Which gave his breast the ruddy stain
That every Robin doth retain.
He saw the leaves, and full of pity,
Thought their graves would look so pretty
If he only red ones brought;
So up and down the wood he sought,
Full of pity, full of dolour,
For those that were a scarlet colour;
Yellow and green he threw aside,
And picked up none but what were dyed
In the richest Autumn red,
To cover those dear children dead.

THIRD PART.

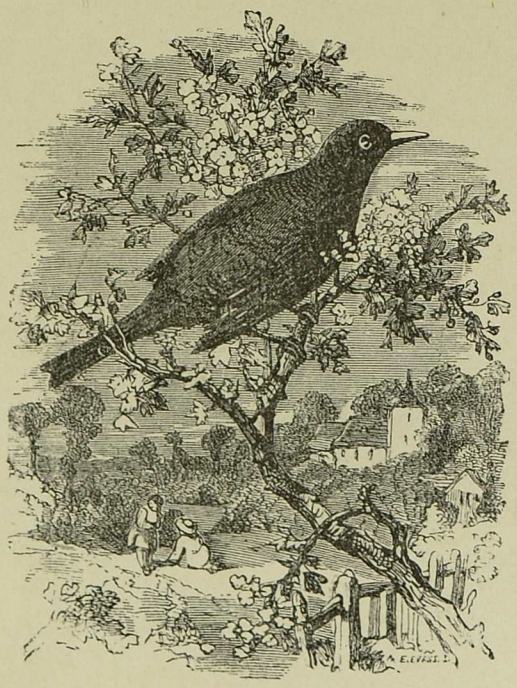
Now the Fairies who stood watching,
Found his sorrow very catching;
Saw his breast was red and sore,
Through the loads of leaves he bore;
Saw the feathers worked clean off,
Heard him troubled with a cough,

While those other lazy thieves
Stood idling among the leaves,
The great Blackbird, Magpie, Thrush,
Looking on idly from a bush.
All this saw the Fairy Queen,
Peeping through the leaves so green;
And she gave an angry look,
As her fist she at them shook.
Robin she beckoned with her hand,
And when he did before her stand,
Patted the feathers on his head,
And unto him she kindly said:
"For the good deed thou hast done,
Lasting glory thou hast won;
Thy praise shall ring throughout all time
In a tale of glorious rhyme,
Which I myself will write
Without fail this very night,
And call it the 'Babes in the Wood,'
Recording all thy actions good.
This scarlet kirtle which I wear,
Thou on thy noble breast shalt bear;
And the honours I thee give,
By every Robin that may live—
By every Robin yet unborn—
Shall be through all ages worn."
This said, the pretty Fairy Queen
Stooped down amid the leaves so green,
Slipped off her scarlet petticoat,
Fastened it round dear Robin's throat;
Then a few magic words she said,
And it was changed to feathers red.

And every Robin since that day
Does the same crimson mark display.
Though their breasts were brown before,
From that time they were brown no more.

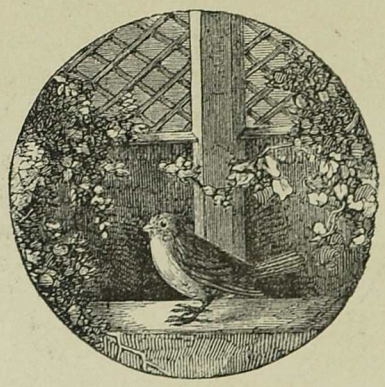
CONCLUSION.

Until that night, (so says old story,)
The Blackbird shone in golden glory,



And was as yellow as Canary;
That night he was touched by the Fairy,
And changed to black, all but his bill;
Black he remains, and ever will.

The Magpie, that before was white,
Escaped before he was changed quite.
As for the Thrush, he flew away
And hid himself for many a day.



## SPARROWS.

CHIRRUP! chirrup! here we all be,
A noisy thieving company.
We are the poor birds of the street;
Where there's a house you will us meet,
And where poor children most abound
There we are always to be found,
Like them playing on the ground.

In the courts and alleys we play,
Like them all the livelong day;
They rummage the gutters, so do we,
Pouncing on the first crust we see;
Under the eaves like them we lie,

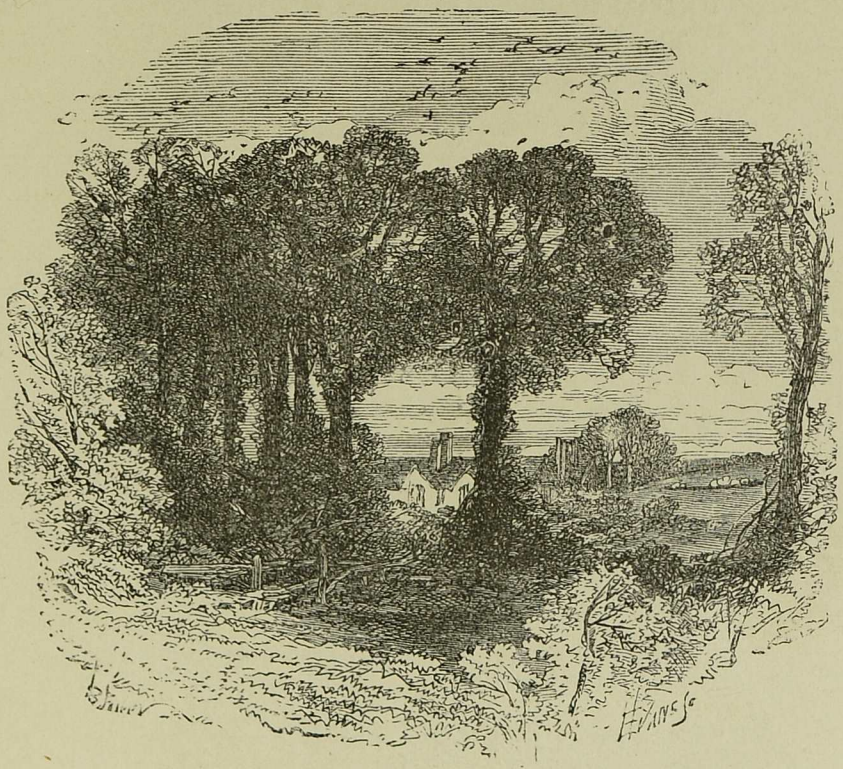
Up in the attic near to the sky :
He watcheth us all who reigns on high.

A crust of bread, to play they go,
Leaving for us a crumb or so :
Nothing's wasted nor thrown away
Where sparrows and poor children play.
No doubt we both are a poor race,
But we each live in a poor place,
Though poverty is no disgrace.

If you would smell real London smoke,
In our nests your nose just poke ;
And if it doesn't make you sneeze,
May I never more taste cheese !
We strive our hardest to keep clean,
Wash and rub, and dust and preen,
And then are scarce fit to be seen.

Down come smuts, down come "blacks,"
On our heads, and tails, and backs :
And then the dust below they make,
When their dirty mats they shake ;
Why it comes drifting up in heaps,
Into our very beds it creeps,
And makes us all as black as sweeps.

Cats, too, do so plague our lives,
Chasing our husbands and our wives ;
As for a sister, or a brother,
They're sure to have one or t'other.
'Tis bad enough to live near rats,
Be hunted by poor ragged brats,
But nothing when compared to cats.



## ROOKS

HIGH up among the tall elm trees
We build and quarrel, sleep and caw;
But we're terribly troubled with thieves,
Though we give them all Lynch law
When any come within our claw.

For my own part I never steal,
Though my heart it greatly grieves
To say we have too many that do,
That what one takes another receives,
And we are never safe from thieves.

To steal the house in which you live,
The very bed on which you lie,
You must admit is theft indeed;
And yet on my poor wife and I
Did fall this great calamity.

Oh, how hard we both did work
For days and days in early spring!
We went for miles in search of sticks,
From light to dark were on the wing,
And oh, the loads that we did bring!

It was in autumn I proposed:
Miss Rook said if till spring I tarried
She would help me to build our nest;
And many a heavy stick she carried,
That we might be the sooner married.

"Once get a house that's all our own,"
She said, "then no one can us tease;
We can get up just when we like,
We can lie down just when we please."
Bless her! she loved to take her ease.

We built our nest, and when we'd done,
She one fine morning to me said—
"We are invited out to-day,
My mother gives a splendid spread,
And she was most genteelly bred."

I said, "My dear, of course we'll go,
And bring her back to see our nest."

I smoothed the feathers on her back,
Saw that they all were nicely dressed,
And that she had put on her best.

The party went off very well,
And finer grubs I never saw
Than those provided for the feast
By my dear old mother-in-law.
We parted with a loving caw.

When we reached home our nest was gone!
We couldn't find it anywhere;
I looked up, and I looked down,
Then at my wife, and said, "My dear,
All this is very strange and queer."

My wife she had been looking too,
And, as her eye is rather quick,
She pointed to a bough, and said,
"I am quite sure that is our stick;
Just look how crooked it is, and thick."

Said I, "Why, what a burning shame!
I am quite sure of that stick too;
They've stolen our nest while we've been out,—
The job we had to make it do!—
The work to break that stick in two!"

Said she, "We've but been gone six hours,
And when we went I didn't see
A nest upon that branch at all;

There's no doubt who the thieves can be,
Through its being built so suddenly.

"It took us days, and we went miles
To fetch those rafters, joists, and beams."
I said, "My dear, you scarce could sleep;
I've heard you mutter in your dreams,
'Oh what hard work this building seems!'

"Looked on you with a loving eye,
When other Rooks have been at strife,
And thought, 'Ere we fight may I die;'
For I believe, my own dear wife,
No Rook e'er had a better life."

She put her horny beak to mine,
I saw the tear stand in her eye,
I pressed her head against my wing,
And said, while wiping her cheek dry,
"We now will raise a hue and cry."

Loud as we could we called, "Police!"
Didn't we give a deafening caw?
They came, we told them all our wrongs;
And when the stolen nest they saw,
Didn't they pitch the thieves the law?

The rookery rang with cry of "Thieves!"
The police pecked them with their beaks,
They struck them with their great black wings
About their noses, eyes, and cheeks,
Till they were black and blue for weeks.

They chased them from the rookery,
And said, "If ever you come here
Again the longest day you live,
Or near our neighbourhood appear,
We will you into pieces tear."

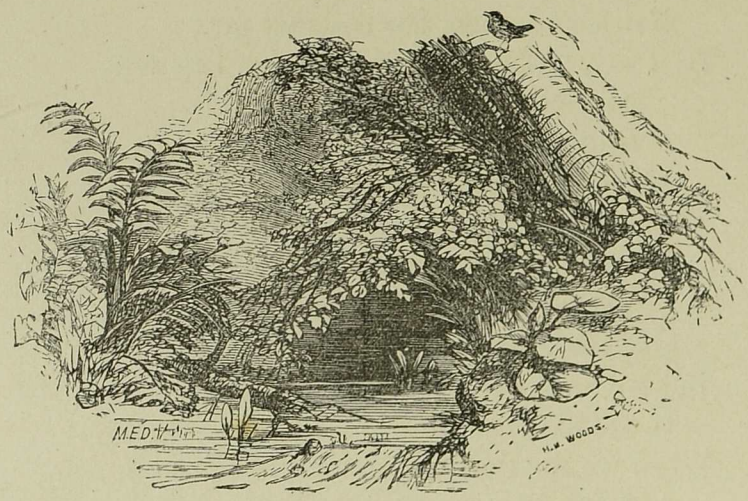
The police Rooks then set to work
And built us up another nest,
And in it we live happily;
With little Rooks we now are blest,
And grandmother's at times our guest.

We never let them go to play
With little, dirty, low-bred Rooks;
They sit for hours upon the boughs,
And I see that they mind their books,
While mother cleans our nest and cooks.

## THE RAVEN.

I AM a raven, and live alone;
When my old woman's abroad
You never see me with any one;
I hate intruders near my abode.
I live for an hundred years or more,
And in that time what changes I see!
Why, an old man that's full fourscore
Is a mere child compared with me!
I've watched and seen a tall tree grown,
Then stood upon its branches high;
I've seen the woodman cut it down,
I know he now doth in it lie.
That small twig they buried him in,
I knew well in the days of old;
Knew when it scarcely reached my chin,
And wasn't three inches deep in mould.
In it I built, and reared my young,
Watched years of flowers pass away,
Saw all the birds die off that sung;
For years but seem to me a day.
Old men white as hoary rime,
I have seen dandled on the knee;
Have croaked to please them many a time,
Before they knew their A, B, C.
An hundred years is long to live,
Up in a tree so cold and high;
And often the shivers it does give me
When I haven't a thing about me dry.

Though we are old and often cold,
Neither blankets nor coals we get;
So I say, "Old woman, our wings let's fold,
And in spite of the weather,
Still cling together,
We've lived too long to fret.
We are not what we were of yore,
It takes longer to fly to yon cliff;
We can't do what we have done before,
Our joints are too old and stiff.
But we have been happy and blest,
In the summers long gone by,
When we watched our young in their nest,
And fed them, and taught them to fly.
Though they didn't all behave well to me:
I've had to fight with Ralph my son,
'Cause he would build in my old tree;
But I soon made the rascal run,
When I poked his cheek
With my horny beak—
He was forced to eat sop for a whole long week."
Croak, croak, croak,
The thought of it makes me choke.
I wish my old wife had a warm cloak—
But I am growing too hoarse to speak.



## THE RESTLESS BIRD.

ALTHOUGH I do not know your name,
Nor can I tell from whence you came,
Yet never such a restless fellow
Before wore suit of green and yellow.
A treasure would a footman be
Possessing thy agility.
A chirrup here, a chirrup there,
Seeming to come from everywhere.
Pray what's the matter with that fruit?
He jerks his head—it does not suit.
He does not like those trees in blossom,
But spreads his wings and flies across 'em,
Hops first on that bough, then on this,
And never doth his footing miss,
But down descends with step secure,
Knowing his eye and foot are sure.

'Tis but a hop and he is here—
Another spring, no one knows where;
And now he seems to dance a jig
Upon that ever-bending twig;
And now he has another notion,
And with a soft and noiseless motion,
He on the topmost spray alights:
Another distant branch invites.
I plainly see he won't remain;
He spreads his wings and's off again,
And now he's on the old oak stump.
Thou'rt like a child at hop-step-and-jump,
That runs away and cries out "Whoop:"
A tumbler dashing through a hoop:
A girl that holds her head aside,
Shakes it, and pouts her lips in pride,
Then smiles and dances to herself:
All these and more, thou woodland elf;
There's nothing with thee to compare,
Nought like that ever-changing air;
That strut, that swagger, and that stare;
But oh! thou art as sweet a bird
As ever leaf or blossom stirred:
In vain I may search far and wide
For actions so diversified.

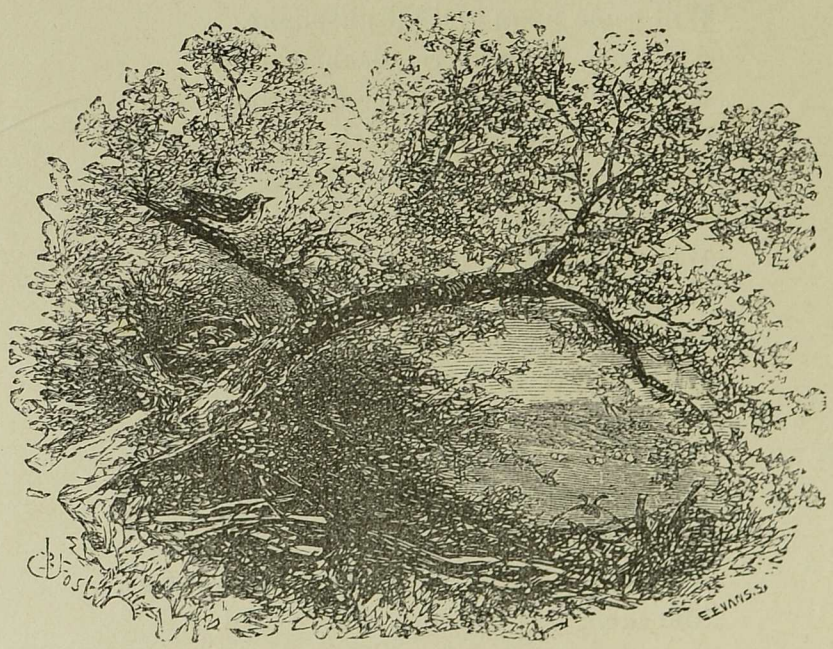
## THE CUCKOO.

"Cuckoo—cherry tree—
Come down and tell me
How many cherries hang
A-top of that old cherry tree."
OLD SONG.

O did each tiny child first greet thee,
No matter where he chanced to meet thee;
It was enough thy voice to hear,
Whether thou wert remote or near;
And at that sound off all would run,
Shading their eyes from the bright sun,
As they looked up in every tree,
And strained to get a glance of thee,
While chanting that old melody.
Thy double note, thy summer tale,
Rang o'er each hill and lengthened vale;
Heard here, heard there, heard everywhere,
No trumpet-note more loud or clear.
The smallest child doth stare around,
Up at the sky, down at the ground;
Puzzled, and can't make out at all
From whence doth come thy summer call;
And how his eyes light up with glee,
When he that blue-gray bird doth see,
And then he crows out lustily
The legend of the cherry tree.

Such simple pleasures, children dear,
Will come in many an after year,

With memories of cheerful thought;
Will come upon you all unsought,
And with them no reproaches bring,
But pictures of remembered Spring;—
Of "meadows painted with delight,"
Stealing through pleasant dreams of night;
The tree, the path, the rustic stile,
When that song did the hour beguile;
When all beside was bright and still,
Save the cock crowing from the hill,
With answer from some distant grange:
Ay, many a scene and many a change
Will that voice so old and loud,
When heard in after years, unshroud;
Will bring back those who by your side
Walked with you through the valleys wide,
And memories of those who've died.



## THE THRUSH.

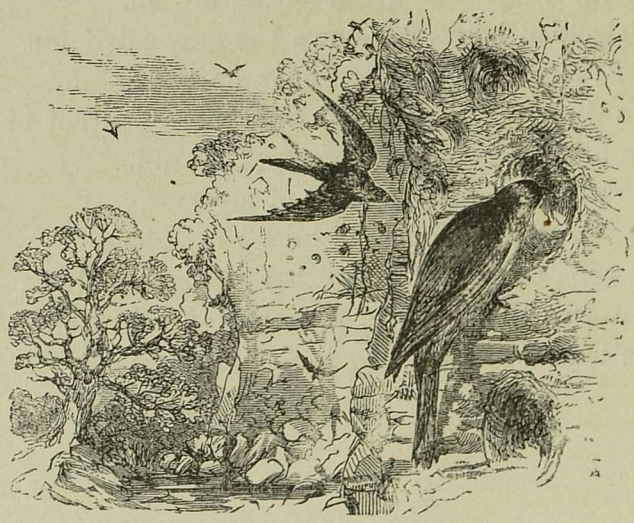
LONG before the peasant waketh,
Breakfast the hungry Throstle taketh,
Nor what he eats much mindeth,
But picks up what he findeth.
A snail with shell so bony,
When placed upon a stone, he
Makes of his beak a hammer
And ere the snail can stammer,
"Oh, pray don't, if you please, sir!"
And goes down on his knees, for
To beg a little respite,
To which Thrush don't acquiesce quite;

But he a stunning blow, sir,
Doth at the snail let go, sir,
That smashes up his household,
And makes the very mouse cold,
That witnesseth that murther.
Going a little further,
Thrush sees a worm out-peeping,
Between awake and sleeping.
Under his claw he sets him,
Till in his beak he gets him,
Saying to worm, "Now, steady,
And don't kick until I'm ready;
For if you bend and double,
You'll put yourself to trouble;
So better do it quietly,
For I can swallow you rightly;
And you are so smooth and brown, sir,
And so nicely will go down, sir;
Though I've swallowed many a score, sir,
Ne'er saw a finer worm before, sir,
So, by your leave, here goes, sir."—
Then Thrush feels a pair of claws, sir,
For down a great hawk comes,
And takes him between his thumbs,
Saying, "I'm very hungry too, sir,
And have come to swallow you, sir!"

## THE BITTERN.

OWN I'm a most unsociable fellow,
And that, like a bull cutting his teeth, I oft bellow.
The villagers tremble to hear my deep boom,
When the marsh and the fen are buried in gloom.
I know I have not the most musical voice,
But that was a matter in which I'd no choice;
And you need not any telling, of course,
That wading in rivers will make a bird hoarse.
I stand by the reeds near the river's green brink,
For hours by myself, and have a good think.
What do I think about? oh, many things,
But most of the changes that moving Time brings.
I think of the Bitterns that have gone before,
And of the deeds done by that old river shore;
For I belong to as ancient a race
As any you'll find in that reedy place.
Before England's green fields were fenced in with a hedge,
My ancestors boomed in the wild marshy sedge;
When nothing was seen but wood, mere, and wold,
And the roused bison bellowed in those forests old,
When the bear growled all day, and at night the wolf howled.
Then there was no man alive to affright,
No fire to redden the darksome midnight.
Rocked to sleep by the lapping of waves on the shore,
We were not then woke by the railway's deep roar.
Before Stonehenge was built, or before human sound
Had startled this island, we on it were found;
Ay, ages before the mailed Romans came,
Ere the white cliffs resounded with proud Cæsar's name;

Ere the Druids unto the green woods did go,
And with golden hooks cut down the gray mistletoe.
I think of these things while I look on the ground—
Think the time will soon come when there will not be found
A Bittern alive if you search England round.
For I know I am nearly the last of my race,
And that few will be found to fill up my place,
And that soon there will be neither vestige nor trace
Of the Bitterns that boomed through long thousands of years.
Do please lend me something to dry up my tears.



## SWALLOWS.

OVER city, and village, and spire,
Over streets that look like streaks of fire,
With all their blazing lines of gas,
Over vast pathless swamps we pass;
Over the mountains, over the sea,
Through rain and sunshine, away go we.
No matter whether 'tis dark or light,
We fly by day, we fly by night.
The sea may roar, the wind may blow,
We can fly high, or we can fly low.
Sometimes when earth doth clouded lie,
We're soaring above in a sunny sky;
Sometimes through earth when wild winds roar,
We high above in calm air soar;
High above, in a sky as blue
As ever Summer overhead threw.

And when aloft the black clouds frown,
We find it clearer lower down,
And so go on our way together,
Dodging the wind and watching the weather.
There's nothing to run against in the sky,
No stoppage nor toll-gate where we fly.
You may boast about liberty,
Would you enjoy it, fly with me;
Look at the space spread every way,
Broad and open as the day.
Millions of miles around the earth,
Where Morn and Evening have birth,
We in our upward flight descry,
And thitherward we often fly;
Space beyond space we trembling see,
Still stretching out eternally.

---

I in green England love to build,
Where the sun my nest doth gild;
"Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state:"
There, far from the way of harm,
I build my nest, so snug and warm,
By the window, or under the eaves,
When Spring shoots out her first green leaves.
I plaster with my beak and breast—
No one helps me to build my nest.
I mix my mortar, carry it too,
For I have everything to do.
I have no scaffold on which to stand,
Haven't a trowel, haven't a hand;

With my claws I cling to the wall,
For if I didn't I should fall;
So I can't work with them at all.
Though my tail's very useful indeed,
When I press it down, so it had need.
At dawn of day my work I begin;
And plaster away with my breast and chin;
You may see my head move to and fro;
But not too much at a time I do;
I build about a good half inch—
I could do twice as much at a pinch;
For, you see, if I build too high,
And it didn't quickly dry,
There would be a terrible fall—
Down would come nest, and mud, and all;
And if it were in the street of a town,
Fetch some fellow a crack on the crown.
Then he would look up and hallo,
And say, "You're a nice sort of a Swallow,
To throw your dirt at me that way."
So I build half an inch and then go play,
And leave it to dry until the next day.
Next morning I begin again,
Unless it should chance to rain;
Then I can't get on at all,
My work won't stick against the wall;
So I fly about river, town, and spire,
And wait until the weather is drier.
If every day I build up a row,
At the week's end I make a good show;
But right well my work I do.
This hint may be of use to you:

Do nothing slovenly nor ill;
Better be idle and sit still.
If you ask "Why?" the reason's plain,
Some one must do it over again.
Not to be careful is a sin!
Fancy my nest and young ones in,
And the whole lot to tumble down
On the hard pavement of the town,
And all because 'twas badly built!
On me alone would rest the guilt.
To think of such a thing is awful,
To do it would indeed be woful.
But let us talk of something else.

---

Often at night I poke out my head,
And watch the dear children put to bed,
Saying their prayers, all in a row,
And think my little ones may do so:
Stand all in a row and twitter His praise
Who to man and bird His goodness displays.
I know they will twitter on the eaves
When Summer is clad in her longest leaves;
That He will help when help is needed,
Who's promised "not one shall fall unheeded,"
Though but a poor Swallow, "upon the ground."
And in this knowledge I've comfort found,
When winging my way o'er the pathless sea,
Knowing His eye was fixed on me;
Knowing that He who watches on high,
Will guard my young ones when they fly;

That there's no object, however small,
But what He guards who seeth us all.

---

When Autumn comes, in thousands we meet,
And keep up for days a twitter tweet tweet,
Where willows do give a silver shiver,
When stirred by the wind beside the river;
Where marshes spread out and banks rise in ridges,
And under and round the arches of bridges,
There do we in thousands assemble,
Making the branches we 'light on tremble,
And keeping up such a continual chatter,
That people turn round to see what's the matter.
Let a fair wind come, and away go we,
Over the mountains, over the sea,
To a land where the sun doth brightly shine.
But I say to those little Swallows of mine,
"The land where I reared you is dearer than all,"
And I teach them green England their home to call.
And we pine and sigh till the flowery Spring
Doth us backward again to dear England bring,
In our old haunts to build and sing.
I've no more to say;
The wind changed to-day,
So over the sea I must away.

## THE WATER WAGTAIL.

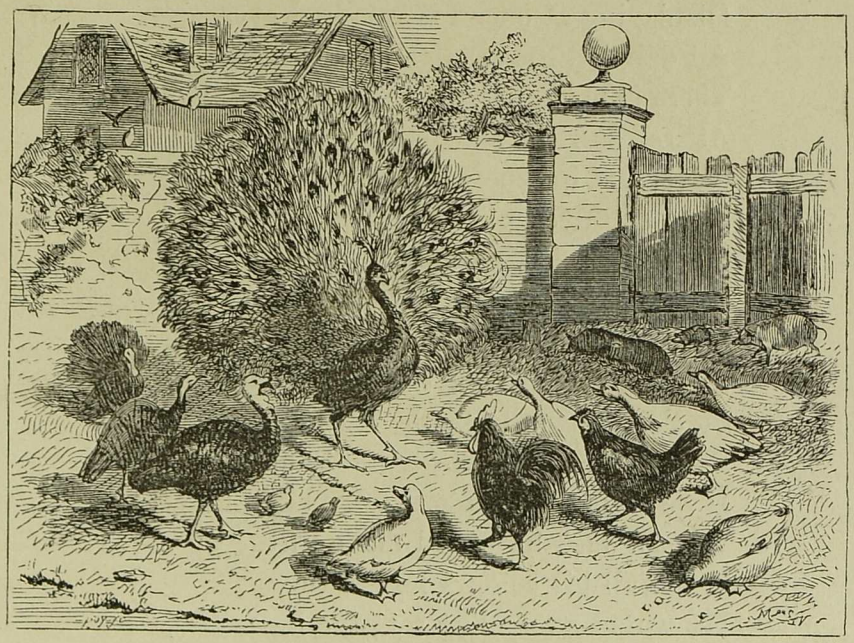
THE smallest bird that walks am I,
You know me by my wagging tail,
And my piercing round black eye;
Through frost, through snow, through rain or hail,
I stay here all the winter through,
And that is more than some birds do.

Where water is, there you'll find me,
For insects are in plenty there;
And no bird can them sooner see.
The coldest day in all the year
I can contrive to find a meal,
When the black frost cuts like steel.

You never see me hop, hop, hop,
As if my legs were tied together,
But one foot at a time I drop,
As if I wore real patent leather.
I stride out like a grenadier,
Right, left, quick march, and I am here.

I often peck about a pump,
And laugh to see the birds hop round;
Like men tied in a sack they jump,
With both their stiff legs off the ground,
Whilst I step out with my one, two,
And time my steps as well as you.

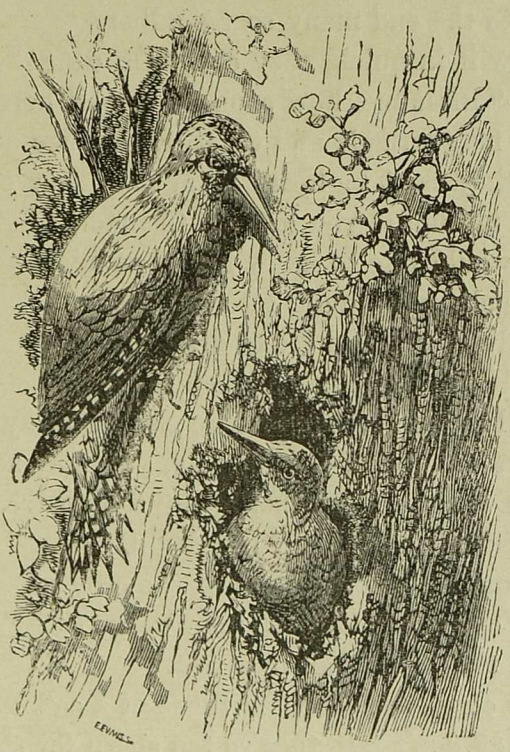
We Wagtails oft turn out for drill,
  And are put in the awkward squad,
If we do our duty ill;
  "Eyes right, toes out, heels in, my lad,"
Is our old drill sergeant's cry,
And if we don't keep time, oh, my!
Won't he in a passion fly!



## THE PEACOCK.

SAW ye ever in a large crowd
Any one that looked half so proud?
He walks by measure, he strides by jerks,
This way and that his head he perks;
And then, O dear, those dreadful screams!
But may be he's not so proud as he seems.
I'd be a lark and soar on high,
Soar and sing in the clear blue sky,
Sooner than sit on a pillar all day,
By some ancient hall that through age is gray,
Uttering that most horrible cry:
And yet—and yet—I know not why.
After all he has some cause to be vain;
Look when he spreads his gaudy train!

Displaying at once his hundred eyes,
All dappled round with richest dyes;
There is not a lady in the land
Attired so rich, nor jewelled so grand.
Never did queen such colours unfold,
Such sun-dyed purple, green, and gold.
Oh, yes, he has some cause to be vain—
So would you, Miss, with such a train.
Look how richly the colours run in—
You can't tell where they end or begin;
So close they all together blend,
As if they'd neither beginning nor end.
If he were a lark, oh, my eye!
What a dash he would make in the sky!
When all his colours he did reveal,
He would go up like a Catherine wheel,
Like rainbows flying, bars of gold,
Purple and silver, and green unrolled;
And all the rich colours together run,
You wouldn't be able to see in the sun,
Unless you'd an Ugly over your eyes,
He would dazzle you so with his gaudy dyes.



## THE GREEN WOODPECKER.

IF you want a workman, come and see
How I make my hole in a large old tree.
No shipwright's auger can be found
To bore it more true, and clean, and round.
You couldn't count the bobs of my head,
When I make the hole where my young are bred.
I hold by my claws, and I peck away,
And do a good deal in the course of a day;
For I tell you I'm not to be caught by a knot,
But when I come to one look for another spot.
When hungry, I go where insects throng,
And just put out my long sticky tongue,

And to the end many scores adhere.
I draw it in quick, they cry, "Oh dear!"
And, "Bless me, how soon we are all here!"
They may wriggle and twist, it's no use at all,
Nor they can't be heard if for help they call.
If by my house you happen to roam,
And would like to know if I'm at home,
Just poke your finger into my nest,
I'm always up and ready drest;
And if you shouldn't happen to squeak,
You'll know I'm somewhere else with my beak.
Before my young ones can fly, you may see
Them chase one another all up a high tree;
Up and up, and down and down,
Without a slip or a crack of the crown.
They cry out, "Mother, here we go!"
Then they set off all in a row.
Their claws are sharp as those of a cat,
So they don't fall, they're too sharp for that.
With my head out of my hole I sit,
And sometimes laugh myself into a fit.
But if a martin or hawk they see,
Oh, don't they come scuttling home to me!
It's pretty to see them run here and there,
Then scamper off in terrible fear;
Although perhaps there was nothing at all,
Except a dried leaf that happened to fall.
But oh! I am happy when under each wing
For warmth I feel them close to me cling;
And sometimes hear one say to another,
"Don't talk so loud or you'll waken mother,"—
Just as a sister would to a brother.

## THE NIGHTINGALE.

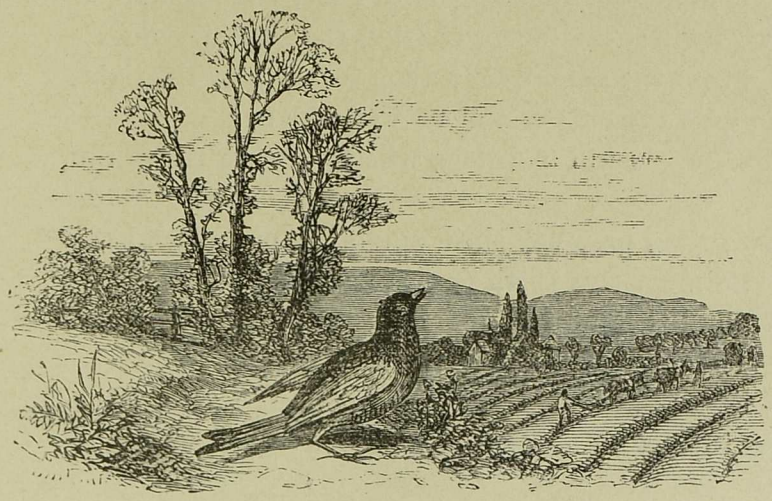
TO hear the Nightingale's sweet lay,
Go listen in the moonlight hours,
When 'neath the overhanging spray
You cannot see the folded flowers;
For it is then a pleasant time
To hear that ancient minstrel's rhyme.

Oh, how it cheers the woodland gloom,
And gives a voice unto the night!
The fragrance from the hidden bloom
Comes on us like a new delight;
And the calm clouds upon the sky
Like flocks at rest appear to lie.

The Guider of the morning star
Drives quicker up the opening east,
And leaning from his golden car,
His ear with melody doth feast;
Before the rosy gates of day
Swing wide, and scareth thee away.

And that sweet song was heard on earth
When long-haired Eve in Eden dwelt;
Ere Sin to Death had given birth;
When Cain in innocence still knelt,
With folded hands each morn to pray,
By Abel's side at dawn of day.

Spring treads upon the skirt of June ;
  When Summer comes in darker green,
Then we no longer hear that tune,
  The Nightingale is nowhere seen ;
For she doth make but little stay—
A few sweet songs, and then away.



## THE SKYLARK.

BEAUTIFUL bird ! thou soarest merrily
On wings which time thy music's silver flow,
Which rolls across the flowery-sprinkled lea,
And echoes o'er the hill's wood-waving brow,
Along the river, that reflects the sky,
And thee, thou warbling speck, deep mirrored
from on high.

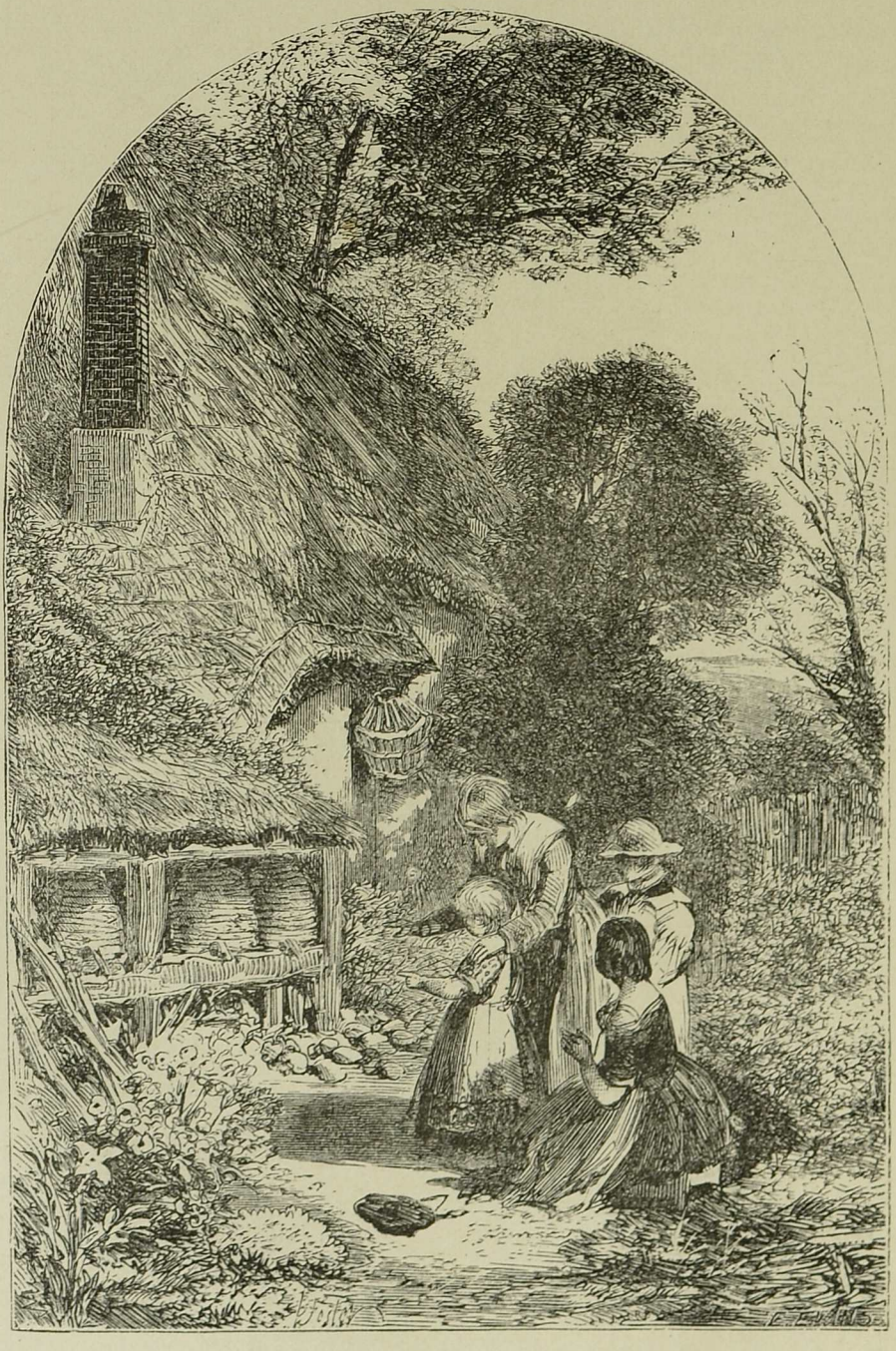
The broad unbounded sky is all thine own,
The silvery-sheeted heaven thy wide domain ;
No landmark there, no hand to pull thee down,
Sole monarch of the blue expanding plain.
To thee is airy space far stretching given,
The vast unmeasured floor of the wide wind-swept heaven.

Thou lovest to sing alone above the dews,
  Leaving the nightingale to cheer the night,
When rides the moon, chasing the shadowy hues
  From the dark trees ; thou lovest best the light,
To quit the daisies and be with the sun,
Looking on hill and dale, where rippling rivers run.

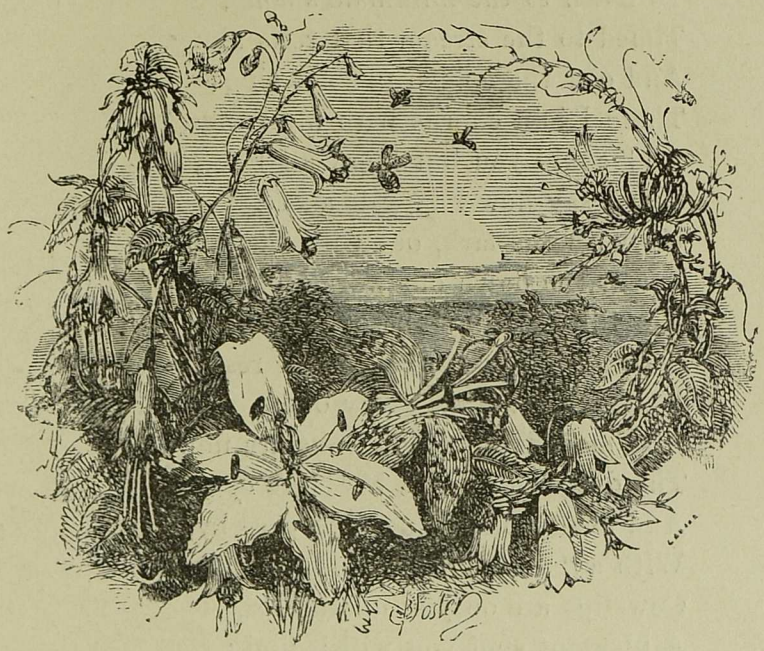
Now thou hast vanished, singing from my sight;
  So must this earth be lost to eyes of thine.
Around thee is illimitable light ;
  Thou gazest down, and all appears to shine
Bright as above. Thine is a glorious way,
Pavilioned all around with golden-spreading day.

And thou hast gone, perchance, to catch the sound
  Of angel voices, heard far up the sky ;
And to thy mate, low nestling on the ground,
  Wilt teach the songs which thou brought'st from on high ;
Then both ascend and carol o'er the bowers,
Where the wild roses wave, and the bees sip the flowers.

# BEES, AND OTHER INSECTS.



BEES.



## BEES.

### FIRST PART.

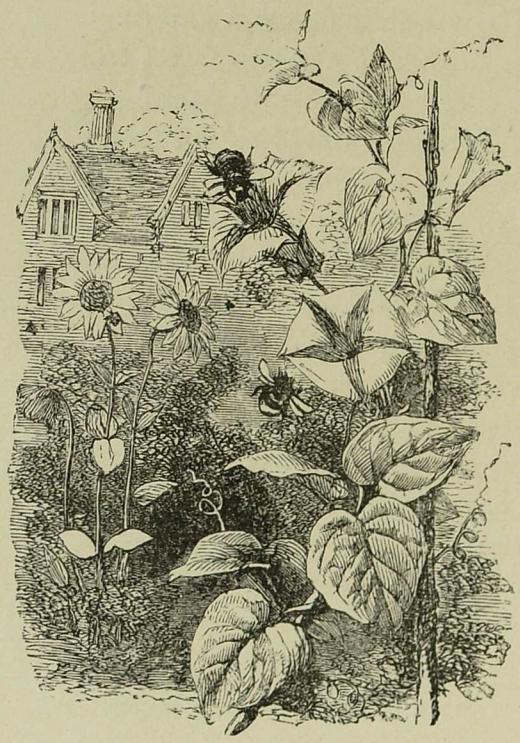
WE wander through the summer bowers
To many a little town of flowers,
All ancient freeholds of our own,
And to us for long ages known.
When you think we're but murmuring,
'Tis of these places that we sing.
Unto some brother bee I say—
"Pray, whither are you going to-day?"
Then unto me he will reply—
"I to the Village of Roses fly.
Then to the Thorpe of May I go,
Near the grange where woodbines blow,

To listen to the milkmaid's song,
Timed to the stream that rolls along,
And o'er the golden pebbles sings
There I join chorus with my wings."
Ah! could you but know all I see,
You'd say how happy is a bee.
Up with the lark, out with the sun,
For at the dawn our work's begun.
Nor till the sun sinks in the west,
Do we from our sweet labour rest;
Merry companions every one,
And more industrious there are none.
The dragon-fly turns his large eye,
And shakes his wings as I pass by,
With a "How do, dear brother bee?
Cowslips are on yon upland lea,
A pleasant spot you will it find;
I've left my little ones behind."
The great stag-beetle, when we meet,
Bows low his head and scrapes his feet;
No gentleman in all the land
Can more politely shake your hand.
The butterfly "hopes I am well,"
As she swings on some wild-flower bell.
The armëd gnats aside will fly,
Nor close their ranks till I've passed by.
The wasp, who knows I too can sting,
Leaves me a wide space for each wing,
And looks at me as if afraid—
He knows mine is an honest trade;
For out of every flower you see
I make my sweet confection'ry.

And we had sugar of our own,
Ages before its name was known.
Those early homes 'neath forest trees
Were ever "musical with bees."
King Vortigern would sit for hours,
And watch us working at the flowers;
And when Rowena saw us feed
She'd think of brewing her next mead.
Old Britons without clothes or money
Were happy if they'd store of honey.
The cottager with rows of hives
Our habits copies and he thrives.
In the academies of old
Our names were written up in gold;
In blazing letters you might see,
"BE THOU INDUSTRIOUS LIKE THE BEE."
Even their knowledge bearded sages
Did learn from us in early ages;
'Tis written in their lasting pages.

SECOND PART.

Oft we go forth with merry march
To towns which red-streaked woodbines arch;
Far into the flower-clad woods
To war amongst the velvet buds,
Which back with trumpet-sound we bring,
And then like cheerful masons sing
While building golden roofs—to store
The treasures we from summer bore.
And when we work, we work indeed.
Our labourers leave not off to feed,



But lower the trunk and bend the head,
And in a second they are fed,
And busy at their combs again;
For the nurses that we train
Take care the workmen do not lag,
But each comes with her honey-bag,
So that they have no need to stop,
Opens it, and gives each a drop;
The next bee sees his turn has come,
Puts out his trunk and he gets some;
Quick to the next as speedy gone,
And feeds them all, nor misses one.

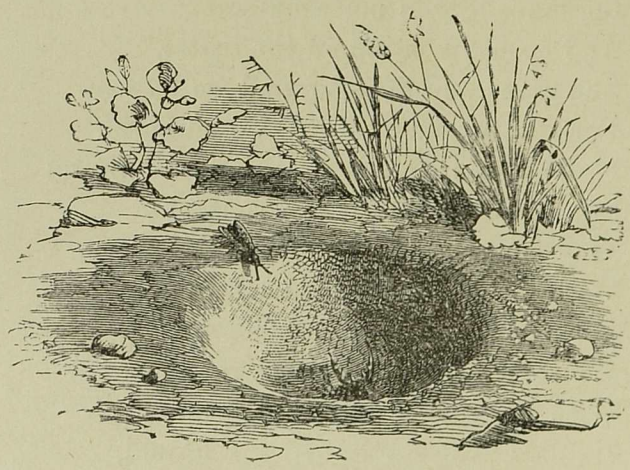
But the share is very small
Of those who will not work at all.
Instead of honey they get kicked,
Like idle boys who 're often licked.
When beaten still, to work they go,
Whether they it like or no,
And if they grumble they get more—
We whack 'em till their bones are sore.
Nurses see to the baby bees,
Give them their breakfasts and their teas;
For the little bees in bed
Are helpless all and must be fed.
This done, they smooth a comb or two,
When they've nothing else to do;
A comb the workers have left rough,
And thus we find them work enough.
Worst is, our owners take our store
Just at the time we can't make more;
Like the old Israelites, you know,
Who couldn't make bricks without straw,
Nor we make honey without flowers.
In autumn we may search for hours,
And in neither bud nor bell
Find one drop to enrich our cell.
Round dahlia and chrysanthemum
We may for a long hour hum;
But neither can for love nor money
Obtain a single drop of honey.

THIRD PART.

We have great trouble with our queens—
Bless you, you never saw such scenes.

The first that from her cell gets out
Will go and knock the rest about,
Ill use them, bite them, nor refrain,
'Till every other queen she's slain.
But although she wears the crown,
We've force enough to keep her down.
To do this, we're compelled to fight her,
Hold fast her wings, scratch her, bite her;
Then she sulks and will not eat,
Though we get round her and entreat,
Give her a word or two in season,
Beg she will hear a little reason.
"The other queens are in their cells,"
We tell her, "and no one rebels.
You'd better far appoint a day
And take some thousand bees away.
It is high time that you did swarm,
The hive 's become so very warm,
And so thick and close we lie,
There'll be no moving by-and-by.
Even now we tread on one another,
And the baby-bees we smother,
Although we take our golden belt in;
Even the very wax is melting,
And the honey runs like water.
Now be a real royal daughter,
As the mother was that bore you.
You know well she swarmed before you,
Led the way to empty hives,
And by doing so saved our lives.
Go, seek some other summer bowers,
Where there are lanes and miles of flowers;

We'll send you forth in regal state,
So, madam, you must emigrate,
And sooner you are off the better."
She raves and goes on, and we let her,
For well we know words do no harm,
Make up our minds that she shall swarm.
She knowing this at last consents.
Thousands beside will pitch their tents
With her wherever she may go—
For ages this has been bee law.
We send her off in grand array,
With trumpeters to sound the way,
Heralds, whose numbers are untold,
And pursuivants in belted gold.
Thousands and thousands will attend her,
To swell her train, and show her splendour.



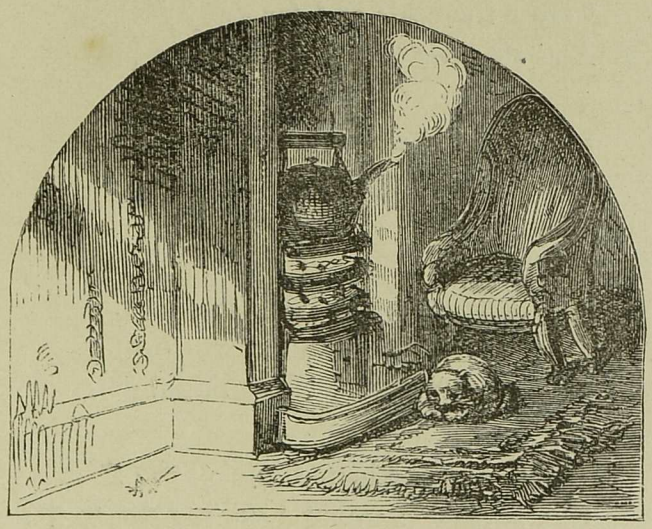
## THE ANT-LION.

BY digging a hole in the sand
I live—and catch what comes to hand;
Hard work it is when there are stones,
And often tries my poor old bones.
I get a stone upon my back,
Just as a pedlar does his pack;
But mine is loose and his is fast.
Out of my pit I must it cast,
And many times I have to try
Before I get it up so high;
Many a heavy tug and strain,
I reach the top, it's down again.
Then I must descend my pit
And once more have a tug at it;
Neither cord nor strap to bind it,
And no one behind to mind it.

Hard work it is, and so you'd say
If you but tried it for a day.
If you can but spare the time,
Up a steep embankment climb,
On your back a large loose stone,
And what it is will then be known.
I have no doubt you would own,
If like me you earned your bread,
You'd need no rocking when in bed.

Out of this hole a head you'll see,
And two crooked paws—that is me,
At least all I care to show;
My body's in the hole below.
An insect near the top now crawls;
The sand is loose, and down he falls.
Then into my hole I go,
And eat him up as you would do
If you had nothing else to eat,
Ah! and consider it a treat.
Sometimes he bigger is than I,
Then showers of sand I at him shy,
And happen hit him in the eye;
Then he can't see his way at all,
But hits his head against the wall;
And while he in his anger hums,
Another shower at him comes,
And then he says, "Well, hit or miss,
I must try and get out of this."
We go at it hammer and tongs;
He tries to stab me with his prongs,
But tries in vain, he can't get out,

So quick I kick the sand about,
So thick it comes, he cannot see
Even the slightest bit of me,
But wonders who's his enemy;
And so at random makes a thrust,
While I keep kicking up a dust.
If he's a wasp and got a sting,
Then I lay fast hold of one wing,
And turn as he turns round for hours,
Still throwing up the sand in showers;
Nor ever all the time leave go—
A trick worth two, of that I know.
He bends, he twists, while round I dodge,
Lest he his sting should in me lodge,
For that I know would be my death.
We never once stop to take breath,
But still continue the fierce strife—
We know we fight for very life;
For he would not go away,
Till with his sting he did me slay,
Even if I would let him go,
(You ask him and he 'll tell you so).
I knowing this, go in again—
I pull, I haul, I kick, I strain;
Then get into the sand his head,
Give it a bite, and he is dead:
And say, as I sit down to dine,
"What a hard life this is of mine!"
I only wish I could eat sand,
For that in plenty lies at hand;
But an ant-lion must lead a lion-like life,
And both of us live by slaughter and strife.



## THE CRICKET.

YOU'VE often heard me chirrup away,
And now I'll tell you what I say,
While on my instrument I play.

I sing, "'Tis warm and cosy here,
And though I care not to appear,
You know that I am always near."

I sing, "The frizzle of ham and eggs
Screws me up some hundred pegs,
And nearly carries me off my legs."

With the kettle I love to sing—
Oh, how we make the whole house ring,
She calling and I answering.

And we can play—what can't we play ?—
"Over the coals and far away;"
And then we haven't a piper to pay.

She shakes her lid like a castanet,
While I cry out, "More rosin yet;"
And then in a nice mess we get.

She boils over and I run in;
We know the housemaid will begin,
And there will be a deafening din.

"Burn the kettle and cricket too!"
She says—"I might have nought to do,
But be cleaning after you."

Truth is, I neither chirp nor call,
Have not a note, however small—
In fact I haven't a voice at all.

Believe me, I was born as dumb
As the stone of a green plum,
Or the nail upon your thumb.

It is not my throat that sings,
The noise I make is with my wings—
It is all done by jerks and springs.

My wings the bow I so oft twiddle,
My body is my only fiddle—
That's why my tune breaks in the middle.

Up go my wings, and fiddle away;
"Rosin," cries body, and don't we play,
Ofttimes until the dawn of day?

I always cease when it gets light,
In fact I can't play well at sight,
That's why I strike up in the night.

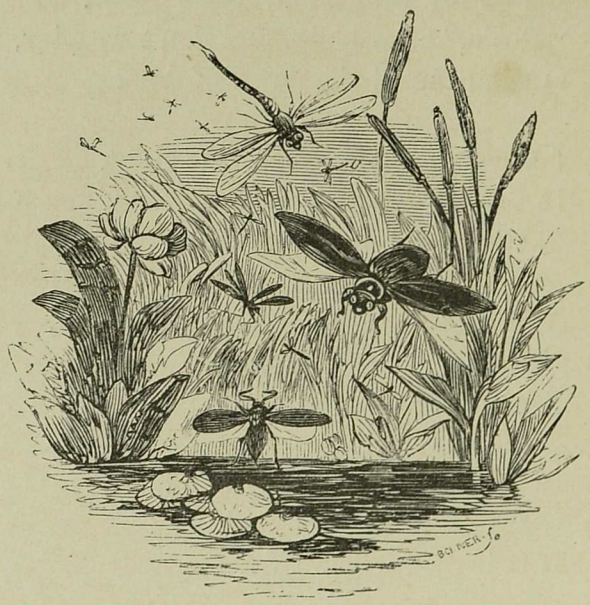
And though no beauty, as you know,
Nor ever cared to make a show,
I've still got two strings to my bow.

In the dark how happy am I,
If the place is warm and dry!
If it isn't, further I fly.

The grasshopper's akin to me,
Belongs to the same family,
But somehow we could never agree.

So, to put an end to strife,
He went and led a roving life,
And in the field camped with his wife.

He in the fields goes cricketing,
I within doors my music bring,
And to the cat and kettle sing.



## SONG OF THE SMALL INSECTS.

THOUGH you won't see us with the naked eye,
Yet take up a glass that will magnify,
And you'll say, though we are such tiny things,
We have the most beautiful bodies and wings
You ever beheld, or eye ever saw.

We live in the yellow pollen of flowers,
And a golden land is that of ours,
Where we among the stamens play
At hide and seek the live-long day,
And lift on high our speckled horns.

Behind the golden pillars we creep,
And there we hide and play bo-peep.

Into the yellow cells we run,
And through the petals in our fun ;
You have got no such play-grounds as we.

Though you can't see us with the naked eye,
With the richest jewels and flowers we vie.
Examine my horns : saw ye ever before
A grander scroll above window or door ?
And look at the feathers I shake when I play.

Look how the black and brown are blended,
Twisted and twined, then grandly ended
With tufts of such majestic plumes
As no lady e'er presumes
To place upon her titled brow.

None are so grandly clad as I.
The perfumed flowers my garments dye,
And all the richest colours they bear
I on my wings and body wear—
The rainbow's dull compared with me.

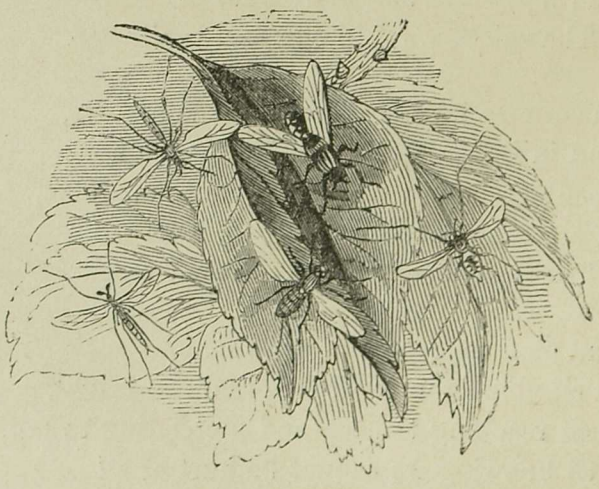
Sometimes we sport in a great sunflower,
And in its cells we can hide by the hour.
Deep deep down where the sunbeams play,
In a golden cavern so still we lay,
Those who seek us cannot find us at all.

And oh ! we ever find great delight
In climbing those golden pillars so bright,
Then reaching the top and pretending to fall,
Well knowing we cannot be hurt at all
When we tumble down in the yellow bloom.

Then what are your chariots rich and gay
To the golden worlds in which I play
With my jewelled sisters all the long day,
In a land where it is ever May,
  In a world that's covered o'er with flowers?

And other insects I can see,
Which are many times smaller than me;
So much smaller, that in my sight
I'm an elephant beside a mite,
  And like a mountain look by these!

And He made us who made you all;
Nor is there anything so small
As to escape His watchful eye,
That fills the whole o'erhanging sky,
  And neither day nor night is closed.



## THE FROG-HOPPER.

I AM a Frog-hopper of high renown,
And will jump you all for what you please,
And be the first to put my leg down,
For I know that I can beat you with ease.
I can leap a great many times my own length,
Without taking a run before making a spring.
For my size, neither lion nor tiger's my strength;
I am of all leapers and jumpers the king.

When I come into the world I find a strange home;
You may see me lie on the leaves so green,
Buried all over in froth and foam,
And in a state hardly fit to be seen.
"Cuckoo-spit," some do me call;
They might as well call me the foam of the sea:
The cuckoo's no more to do with it at all
Than I have with him, or he has with me.

To me it's a kind of a crystal grot,
And pleasant enough I find it too
To be hidden beneath when the weather is hot,
Though sometimes the sun comes and pierces it through,
Drinks it all up and leaves not a drop;
And then I can tell you I'm in a nice way;
Under a leaf I am forced to pop,
And there compelled a long while to stay.

The very next day I begin a new brewing,
For I can't live long out of my crystal bed;

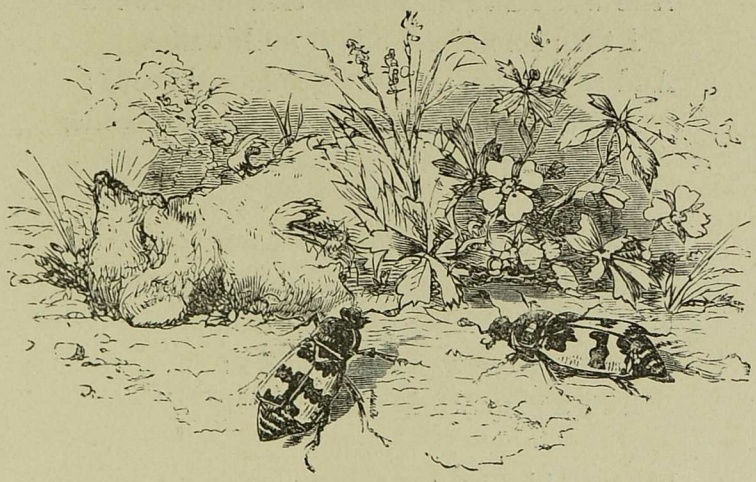
So I set to hissing, and frothing, and stewing,
  Until I find I've got it up to a nice head,
And hear it all round me gurgle and ripple,
  And then who is there more happy than I?
I lie down and sleep in the midst of my tipple,
  And have only to open my mouth when I'm dry.

When little I'm yellow, when bigger I'm green;
  But when I am what I may call fully grown,
I'm black and I'm white, but oftener seen
  In a fine speckled jacket of warm-coloured brown:
No longer I dwell in a grotto of foam,
  But leap where I please unfettered and free,
For every flower affords me a home,
  And what I live on is best known to me.

## THE CHEESE-HOPPER.

NOW listen to me—the Frog-hopper's a bragger,
And all he's told you is but empty swagger ;
Why, love you, at leaping I beat him to fits,
And at the first spring jump him out of his wits.
Were my size but a match for the elephant tall,
I could clear at one bound the dome of St. Paul !
If you watch, you can see how I first make a spring :
I do it by coiling myself up in a ring ;
With my mandibles I lay fast hold of my tail,
Give a jerk and leave loose, and then never fail
To leap at least fifty full times my own length.
There, Mr. Frog-hopper, that's what I call strength.
Just take up a glass and see how I am made,
And you'll own that I put the Frog-hopper in shade,
Will find that I have such an elegant shape,
That the very next time when your cheese-crust you scrape
You'll be very careful and do me no harm,
For once see me leap and your eye I shall charm.
And now when you see me alive in a cheese,
Let me beg that you won't eat me up, if you please,
But lay me aside, and you'll find by-and-by
I shall turn to a very beautiful fly.
Besides, if you eat me, I'm so very small,
To satisfy hunger I'm no use at all ;
Spare me, pray do, then I'll give a leap,
If into the cheese you'll again let me creep.
It's no joke, I can tell you, to lie very long
In a cheese that is old, and rotten, and strong,

And then to be always in fear of your life :
Now dodging a scoop, and then cutting a knife ;
Now wriggling away from a finger or thumb,
Then giving a wide berth to some tempting crumb,
Lest with it I should be sent down your red lane,
And never see cheese nor daylight again.
Then pray let me live, don't devour me, please,
But send me back, saying, "This isn't the cheese ;"
But oh ! let me live till I'm able to fly,
To feel the glad sunshine and soar in the sky.
And remember that if with your cheese you eat me,
I'm not to be blamed if it doesn't agree ;
I'm not to be blamed if I wriggle about,
And leap up my highest, and try to get out ;
For I am sure the same thing you would do,
Were I big and you little, if I swallowed you.



## THE BURYING BEETLE.

VERY old grave-digger am I,
Though I use neither pick nor spade,
And for many thousands of years
I've followed the grave-digging trade,
And a great many graves I've made.

Though I but use my body and feet,
A neater grave you never saw
Than the one I scoop in the earth.
I'll tell you how to work I go,
When I bury a mole or so.

A mole is forty times my size—
To me he seems a mountain high.
First I go and measure the ground,
Then a circle by-and-by
I make, and let him in it lie.

And when I've drawn my trench all round
I then sometimes climb up his side,
And say, "You'll take a good sized grave ;
But though you are long, high, and wide,
And a big one for me to hide,

I'll have you deep down in the earth,
And buried decent and out of sight,
Under three inches of black mould,
Long before to-morrow night ;
And do my work without a light."

Beneath him then a hole I make,
I go to work and scratch away,
Kick out the earth both right and left,
And never stop to rest or play,
But dig and dig without delay.

I feel him pressing on my back,
And then I know he's sinking lower ;
His own weight helps to bring him down,
I throw the earth out hour by hour ;
The worms stand wondering at my power.

See what a lofty bank I've raised !
He lies within a spacious mound.
Upon his back I climb again,
And press him deeper in the ground—
With earth he is already bound.

Into his grave I go once more,
And underneath him quickly pop.

If there's a stone, I sink a well,
  And into it the stone I drop—
  No obstacle my course can stop.

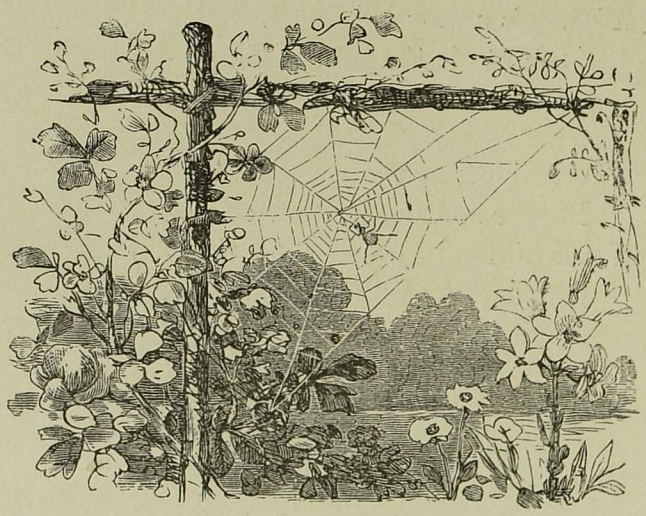
I feel him heavier on my back,
  Deeper and deeper down I go;
I ask him not how he likes that,
  For he must follow, whether or no—
  I pull his nose, I pull his toe.

And so I work on at my trade:
  I neither rest nor do I sleep
Until he lies beneath the earth
  Which I on his huge body heap,
  And bury him three inches deep.

For I am the great undertaker,
  And bury all such like small game,
No matter whether bird or mouse,
  For I just serve them all the same;—
  Burying Beetle is my name.

And when they are safe under ground,
  My eggs I in their bodies lay;
And when my young ones come to life,
  Food they find round them every way—
  Eat what they like, and nought to pay.

Like you I have my troubles, too;
  For oft a cat, or bird of prey,
Will come and carry off my prize
  When through my work I've got half way—
  And not a word I dare to say.



## THE GARDEN SPIDER.

I'M not so ugly as I appear :
Get a glass and examine me near,
And see what bands of white and brown
Streak me across and up and down ;
Look at my web, with dew-drops hung—
You never saw pearls more beautiful strung.

The old saw says, "Each one to his trade ;"
Would you know how my web is made ?
Listen and hear how I begin,
For I 'm the first that learnt to spin,
And span among the early flowers
When Adam and Eve walked in Eden's bowers.

I spin a thread, and let it float—
Where it adheres I take good note ;
I watch it rise, and wave, and bend,
Keeping tight hold of my own end ;

For where it touches there 't will stick,
As the glue that I make is strong and thick.

Should it not a right angle obtain,
I spin another and watch it again,
And keep repeating the old rhyme,
"I may have better luck next time."
Once right, and then to cross I 'm able,
And well do I try the strength of my cable.

You throw a rope up in the air,
Get up, then try if it will bear;
Suppose we say from tree to tree,
No one to fasten it like me.
Why, you would come down like a stone,
And in your body not leave a whole bone.

Without either pulleys or pegs,
My rope I tighten with my legs;
From it with all my weight I drop,
Spinning a web until I stop;
Headlong, as if thrown from a wall,
I plunge, but the web that I spin breaks my fall.

Like a pendulum there I swing,
My cable try with jerk and spring,
See it secured at both ends;
For on these cross-spun lines depends
The very safety of my web,
When I 'm rocked as the wind-currents flow and ebb.

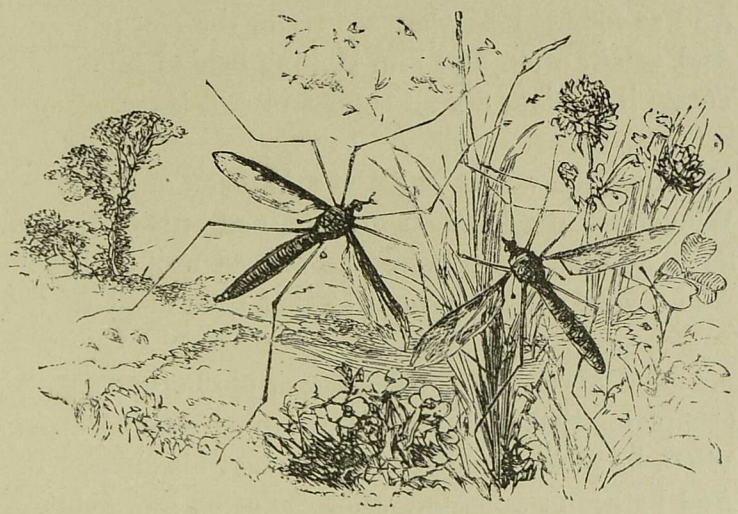
If you watch, you now will see
Two lines I spin that form a V;

These two V's join, as you now know,
The line above and line below;
My web may rock, the winds may sing,
With such strong supports I in safety swing.

And now to work goes every joint—
I spin my lines from point to point;
From the middle with toe and heel,
I fix my spokes as in a wheel;
And the first wheel made for a car
Was designed from my web—but I copied a star.

My star-rays finished, I go round,
With cross lines every beam is bound;
Nor can you in the finest lace
A truer piece of net-work trace.
Man can't invent what I can do—
While I make my own silk I am weaving it too.

I 'm sure you must confess I try
Most hard indeed to catch a fly;
But always I do not succeed,
And it seems very hard indeed,
When some great strong blue-bottle comes
With a dash through my web and breaks all the thrums.



## THE CRANE FLY.

OLD Daddy-long-legs is known to you all;
You have oft seen him scrambling up window
and wall,
Or making a handle of his leg in the candle,
And not seeming to mind it the least bit at all.

You have seen his large family out on the grass,
Drawing in their long legs to let each other pass.
Knock-kneed and in-kneed; oh! such a strange breed;
You would laugh if you saw them stuck in a morass.

If his two straggling legs, that hang out behind,
Were half an inch shorter, I don't think he 'd mind;
For so far out they lay, they always seem in his way,
And he runs foul of everything that he can find.

What a long way before him his horns do appear;
And as for his legs, they are far in the rear;
And you 'll often find him looking behind him
To see if his legs are all right and still there.

He thinks he was changed at a barber's one day,
Who stuck him hairs on for legs, and sent him away;
Says, he remembers before he walked well on the floor,
And a very good leg could at that time display.

He says he can't make any use of his horns;
Complains that he 's terribly troubled with corns.
When he picks up his pins, he grazes his shins,
And he hasn't a leg but what round on him spins.

Say to him, "Where are you?" he don't answer, "Here,"
But says, "Did you ask for my front or my rear?
My horns are out here, and my wings are out there,
And as for my legs, why, they 've run off somewhere."

When Daddy-long-legs near the candle you see,
Put him out of the window, and let him go free,
Or he 'll burn his legs, sure as eggs are eggs,
Singe his wings, and scorch his sharp-pointed body.

## THE WATER SPIDER.

DOWN in my diving bell I go.
Look and you 'll see it glitter below :
A little globe, as silver bright ;
A water star, a liquid light.
Who can make a silver bell
Save me, and live in it as well ?
I take in air and down I drop—
There 's always plenty at the top ;
And there I go when I want more.
I 've but to open my house door,
Let in the air, then down again ;
My silver bell keeps off the rain.
And though in water stands my house,
I 'm dry and warm as any mouse.
I spin in the water too,
A web the wet cannot get through ;
And such a roof weave of my thread
As keeps me quite dry overhead ;
Though it 's a fathom deep or more—
Was such a roof e'er made before ?
My own materials, too, I find ;
My glittering skein I but unwind,
And of it make myself a home,
Whose roof is a round silver dome.

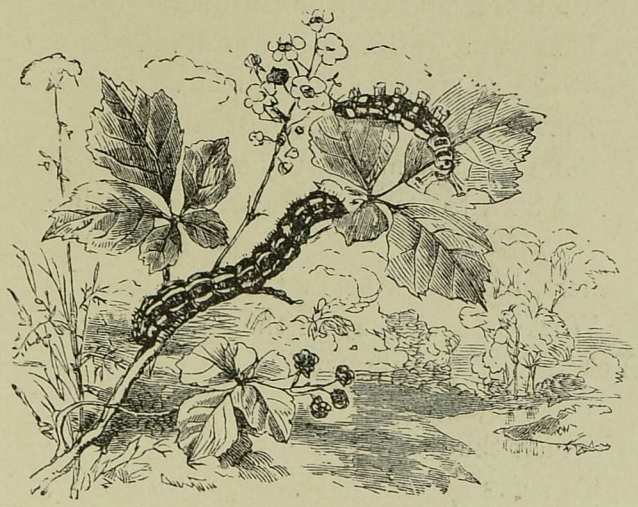
Underneath the water deep,
All winter long I lie and sleep ;
But if into my house you break,
I 'm pretty quickly wide awake ;

For when the wet comes in one's bed,
And rises high above one's head,
Runs in one's ears, and nose, and eyes,
I rather think it 's time to rise.
When up, I feel a little "pickish,'
And, though the water 's rather thickish,
Should any insect fall in my way,
I very quickly on him prey.
I form my nest in little cells,
Down where the water lily dwells,
And in it lay my yellow eggs;
And when my young ones feel their legs,
They find that in their watery home
There 's ample space enough to roam;
Ample space to play and dive,
And all they eat they catch alive.

## THE SNAIL.

CARRY as heavy a pack
As ever pedlar bore on his back;
And no matter where I roam,
With me I must take my home:
Walk where I may, go where I will,
My house is ever with me still.
If a day I wish to spend
With some old respected friend,
I must take with me house and all,
No matter upon whom I call.
Neither can I step inside,
Whatever cheer he may provide;
Out of doors we 're forced to dine,
For I can't ask him into mine.
No marvel that I travel slow,
When my house with me I draw.
And they would tell a different tale,
Who talk about a slow-paced snail,
And at my movements scoff and jeer,
If they had but their house to bear
Upon their backs, go where they might.
I find it handy though at night
To just draw in my horns and head,
Turn round, and be at once in bed;
Useful too when it does rain,
To pop out and pop in again.
If I travel for a week,
For lodgings I need never seek;

But when I want to take mine ease
Can turn in at what hour I please.
No one sits up to let me in,—
At my door there 's no midnight din;
No words between my wife and me
About my having the latch-key;
She with my house has nought to do,
Nor I with hers—a good job too.
All the winter long I sleep,
Nor ever out of doors once peep,
Until I the warm sunshine feel;
Then out my horns I softly steal,
And if it look a likely day,
Begin to move my house away,
And search for something green and sweet;—
For months I have had nought to eat.
Oh, how I do hate a thrush!
For with his beak my house he 'll crush,
Smash in both tiles, and roof, and rafter;
And when he 's killed me, eat me after.



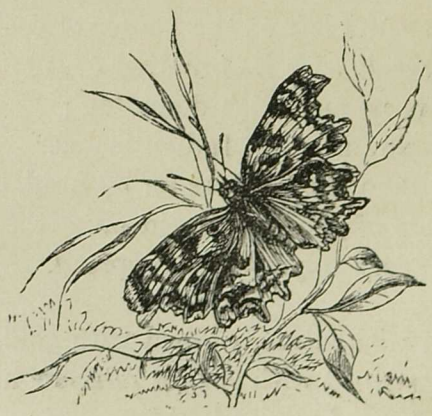
## THE DEAD BUTTERFLY.

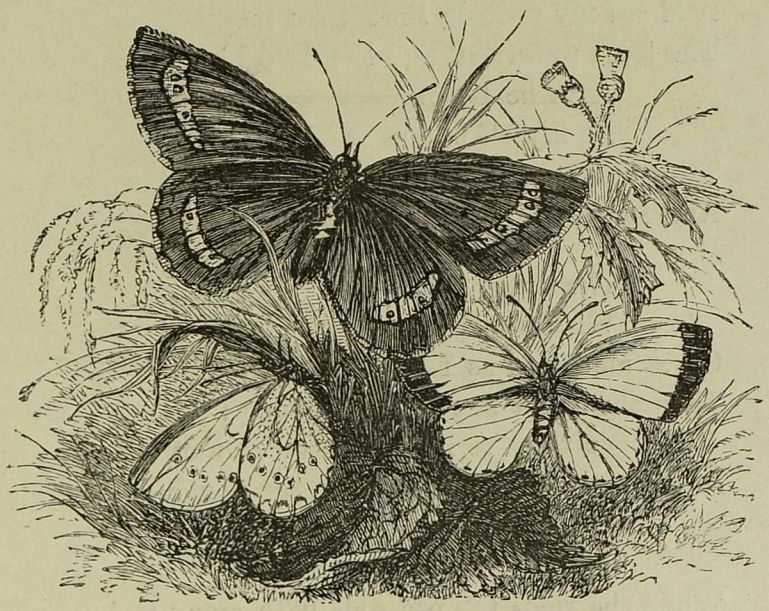
SURVEY it through this little glass,
Not high its magnifying power,
But surely nothing can surpass
This beauty of a summer hour,
That lives its little day, then dies.
Look at the border of each wing:
The peacock with its hundred eyes
Shows no such rich diapering;
No silk so fine from Indian looms.
And then the feathers on its head,—
All kinds of gaudy-coloured plumes
Are every way around it spread.

Frosted with silver, washed with gold,
And striped with richest rainbow hues,
No diadem of monarch old
Did e'er more glorious rays diffuse.

What was it first ?—a little thing,
  That came to life on leaf or stalk,
Showing no signs of gaudy wing,
  That had more of a crawl than walk ;
Coming from small eggs glued together,
Cased hard to stand rough winter weather.

Others, but grubs below the ground,
  Working their way in the dark earth,
Yet in another summer found
  Uprising from their grave-like birth,
To reach the beauty we now see ;
  To sport above the thick-leaved bowers,
In richer robes than bird or bee,
  And rivalling the choicest flowers ;
For such is Nature's mystery,
Worked in her chambers wondrously.





## THE BUTTERFLY.

WHAT a long way
I go in a day,
When I set out to take my pleasure!
I fly a distance you could not measure,
Over flowery valleys and tree-clad hills,
And I hear the murmur of silver rills,
That sing at noon
In the month of June,
When summer roses are in full bloom,
And flowers light up the forest's deep gloom.

With folded wing
I stand and swing,
On the sweetest and daintiest buds that blow;
I look in the water that lies below,

And see my form in the mirror lie,
The trees upturned, and the deep blue sky.
A while I look
At myself in the brook,
Then to some companion I hurry away,
And for an hour we round each other play.

The dragon-fly,
With his large eye,
Gives me a nod as I hurry along;
Then the sweet peas I rush among;
And when they 're in flower you cannot tell me,
As I shut up my wings, from the bloom of the pea
On the Painted Lady,
So cool and shady;
While she weds the pea-rods with many a ring,
I stand and look round me while I swing.

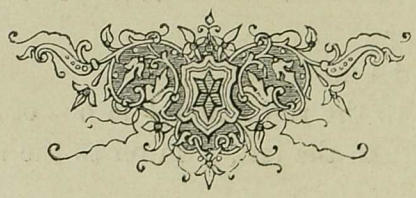
Away I fly
Where the roses lie,
And on the choicest of blooms alight,
For the richest flowers are mine by right.
On the finest bouquet that 's borne by a queen,
Before they graced her fair hand I have been;
Plunged into each bell,
Had the first sweet smell,
And flew with it hanging about me for hours,
Till I bathed in the perfume of fresher flowers.

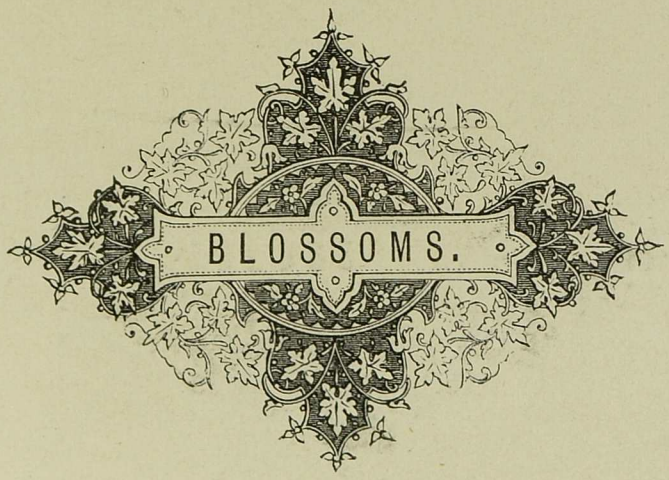
You wonder why
In jerks I fly,
Why I take such a zig-zag flight;
From right to left, from left to right.

And back again so quick, I defy
You to catch the motion with a sharp eye :
'T is the birds on the watch,
Who would me catch,
And be very happy to make me their prey,
If I didn't turn sharp and get out of their way.

They know my trick
Of turning quick,
So I pass them with a "How do you do?"
They snap their sharp beaks and say, "Oh, that's you."
Sometimes they come near and make me quake,
But in vain they try the same angles to take.
They turn here,
And I 'm off there ;
They turn to the right, and I 'm out of sight,
Make a dart to the left, I 'm off to the right.

Oh, what a way
I fly in a day !
Over miles and miles of outstretched flowers,
Where the fingers of Summer weave green bowers ;
Where the winds come every way,
Bringing the sweet perfume of May.
My eggs, you know,
Are laid row by row,
And in regular order so neat and clean,
And so close that you can't get a pin's point between.




BLOSSOMS.

BLOSSOMS.

## SONG OF THE DAISIES.

WE are the poor children's flowers;
Scattered broadcast, like the showers
That on the good and evil fall:
For we were sent to gladden all.
They call us Children of the Spring,
Because we early tidings bring
Of the flowers all ways coming;
Of the bees they 'll soon hear humming;

Of birds now crossing stormy floods,
To sing in England's summer woods;
Of increasing length of days;
Of miles of buttercups ablaze
With all their length and breadth of gold;—
All these are by our coming told.

Poets dead and gone have sung
"The daisies they are ever young."
Soon after Heaven's stars had birth,
We were made the stars of Earth;
And placed amid the grass so green,
That we might be the better seen.
We look up to the stars at night,
And they upon us shed their light:
It may be while we sing their praises,
The stars too hymn about the daisies!
Pluck us by millions—millions more
Will spring up where we sprang before,
And through all time fill up our place,
For we are an undying race.

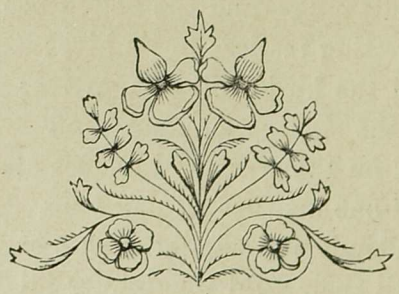
The snow-white lambs lie down to sleep,
  When we close our starry eyes;
When at the rising sun we peep,
  The lambs again prepare to rise.
Some say the lambs asleep can feel
  Our star-shaped petals, when we wake,
And that their eyes they then unseal;
  For by our sides their beds they make.
How, I cannot rightly tell,
  But between the lamb and me,

There 's ever been since Abel fell,
  A strange mysterious sympathy.
For I was Abel's favourite flower,
  And never bore a crimson stain,
Till he was in that fatal hour
  Murdered by the hand of Cain.
The lark amongst us does alight,
  And sleeps beside us all night long,
Till in the east the dawn breaks bright,
  And then she wakes us with her song.

Children do us daisies praise,
For we bring them sunny days;
Tell them winter 's past and gone,
And that summer 's coming on;
That the swallow o'er the sea
Is hast'ning—and the belted bee
Is getting restless in its hive;
That the birds will soon arrive:
All the singing summer band
Will on the trees and hedges stand,
And one another all day long,
Challenge and answer with a song,
Until their wild wood-notes fill
Ev'ry valley, dale, and hill.

"The daisies they are ever young:"
When off our silver fringe we 've flung,
Then to your eyes we still unfold
A rounded boss of chastest gold.
Oh! would you number us? first try
To count the stars upon the sky,

The leaves when summer decks the land,
The grains on ocean's beds of sand:
Then pluck as many as you may,
And more will come another day.
Gather us all, and have no fear
But more will come another year.
Then run, and laugh, and shout our praises—
Your trampling feet can't hurt the daisies.



## BLUE-BELLS.

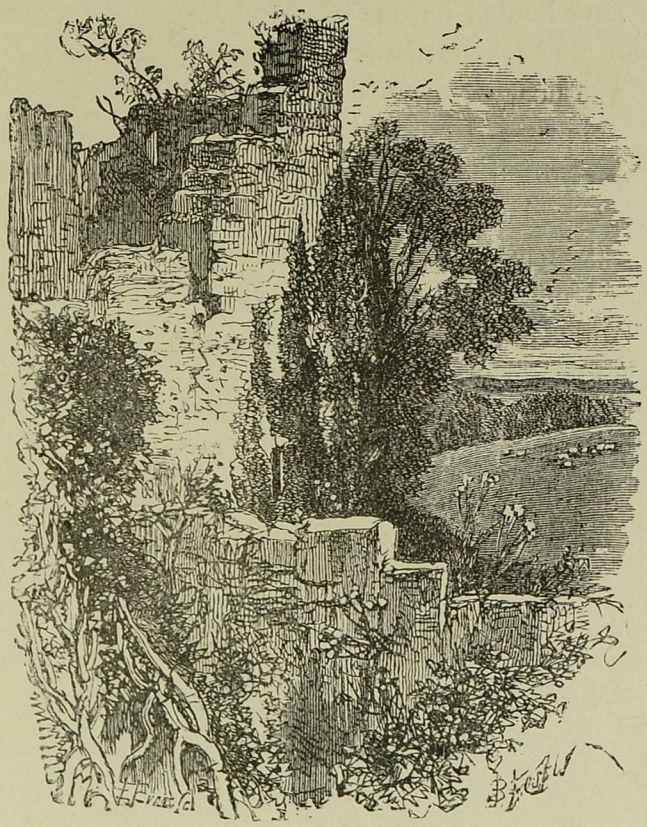
DEEP embowered in mossy dells,
We merrily shake our sweet blue-bells,
Nodding all our heads together
In green April's showery weather.
Come then and see us, as we lie,
Like a newly fallen sky,
So blue and tranquil, that has found
Its resting-place upon the ground;
Bordered too with clouds of gold,
Where primroses our beds infold.
You have heard the legend olden,
Sung upon those mornings golden,

By the birds on every bough,
When earth was nearer heaven than now,
That the Fairies, good and true,
Dwelt within our bells so blue.
Think not they their flight have taken,
Or that we are left forsaken,
But rise in the morning early,
When the dews lie round and pearly,
And the bees within our bells
Are pounding honey for their cells—
And then the legend you 'll believe.
New delights you will receive,
See sights your very eyes will bless,
And find a new-born happiness:
Visions of rich-dappled skies,
But seen by those who early rise;
Rare flowers the fragrant banks adorning,
Birds that sing but to the morning.
For on those that come too late,
The Fairies shut their palace gate,
Take the roses from the cheek,
Let not pearls drop when they speak.
Where idleness and no care is,
There you 'll never find the Fairies.
They 're but found in the sunrise early,
Where the dews lie bright and pearly.
Then don't forget the legend olden,
First sung upon those mornings golden,
By the birds from every bough,
When earth was nearer heaven than now.

## FLOWERS IN MOTION.

LOOK how they all move merrily,
Like children dumb, but full of glee,
Out playing in the windy weather :
Now they are all astir together.
Their music is the winds that blow :
Hark ! it strikes up, and off they go ;
But this time to another tune—
It is a gentle air of June,
Played slower than the dance of March.
How prettily their necks they arch !
While some with timid look appear,
And seem to move as if in fear
They should through the wrong mazes glide.
See how they hang their heads aside :
Now this bed unto that bed bows,
Change hands, and off they go in rows,
While thousands stand as lookers on,
But when wind-summoned, they are gone.
This dances and then moves aside ;
That stands as umpire to decide
Which bed of flowers dances best ;
And that seems standing still to rest.
The front is still, up jumps the rear,
And to the hedge goes tripping clear.
The scattered Grasses now join in,
And do their best applause to win.
That tall Cowslip shows some taste,
With one bell resting on its waist,

Another lifted in the air,
Just like the arm of lady fair;
Then daintily each golden finger
Just for a moment deigns to linger
In young Mr. Cowslip's hand.
Now louder blows the breezy band,
Quicker the flowery dancers fly,
Catching fresh colours from the sky.
Now they through golden sunshine sweep,
Anon in darker shadows creep,
As from the changing face of heaven
The shifting shine and shadow 's given.
Now a huge cloud inwraps the hill,
The June-wind sleeps and all is still;
The night drops down, each bows its head,
Closes its bell and goes to bed,
And sleeps beneath the summer skies
More soundly through such exercise.



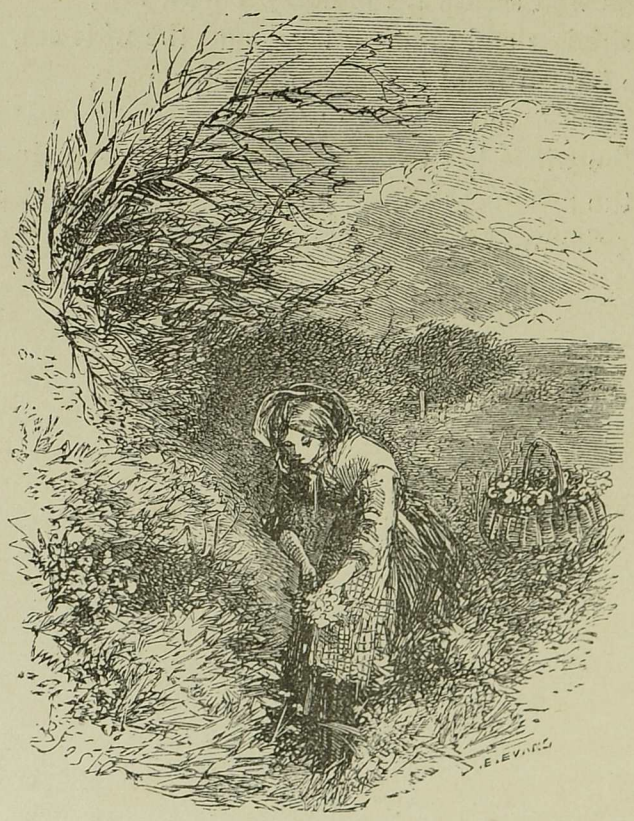
## MAY

THERE'S nothing older than sweet May,
And there are Thorns so aged and hoary,
Which stood—and still stand to this day--
Far back as England's earliest story
Bears record of the bygone years:
When forests spread out every way,
And fertile vales were inland meres,
The land was lighted up with May.
But this was long and long before
The Saxons in their rude ships came

And landed on our island shore.
  The Hawthorn is a Saxon name.
The hoary Hawthorn by the wood
  Is named in deeds of ancient date,
And often as a landmark stood,
  The boundary-line of some estate.
Saxon maidens came and went
  Under its boughs at milking time;
And Saxon Alfred caught its scent,
As on his way to Godrum's tent
  He hummed some quaint old Saxon rhyme,
Which to the Danish king he played.
  It grew where Saxon Harold fell,
And where the conquering Normans laid
  Their dead in many an English dell.
Wild birds upon its berries fed,
  In the old winters long ago,
Ere human footstep left its tread
  Imprinted on the silent snow.

When you look at me think of the years of yore,
That I stood when the tusked and savage boar
Rushed through the wild forest with hideous roar;
That I stood when this isle was a wilderness rude,
And the gray wolf's long howl broke the deep solitude;
When the long row of trees, which for leagues stretched away,
Was a forest-land filled with huge beasts of prey;
Ere an axe had been laid to the root of a tree;
When high up the eagle I often could see,
Until he shot down like a sun-ray at dawn,
And in his sharp talons swept up the young fawn,
While it gracefully tripped by the side of the doe.

All these wild scenes I, the hoary Thorn, saw,
While shipless and mastless lay round the wide sea,
And no human hand took a blossom from me,
And nought save the breeze with my fragrance was playing,
When the winds left the sea and came out a-Maying;
When the mammoth's huge hoof shook the ancient greenwood,
In the primeval forests securely I stood.



## PRIMROSES.

WE come to gladden heavy eyes;
We are the earliest of "spring cries."
The needle girl her door uncloses,
When in the street she hears, "Primroses,
Come buy my pretty primroses."

The invalid beside the fire
Knows that the sunny days are nigher,

That he has passed the wintry gloom,
When that cry 's ringing through his room :
"Come buy my pretty primroses."

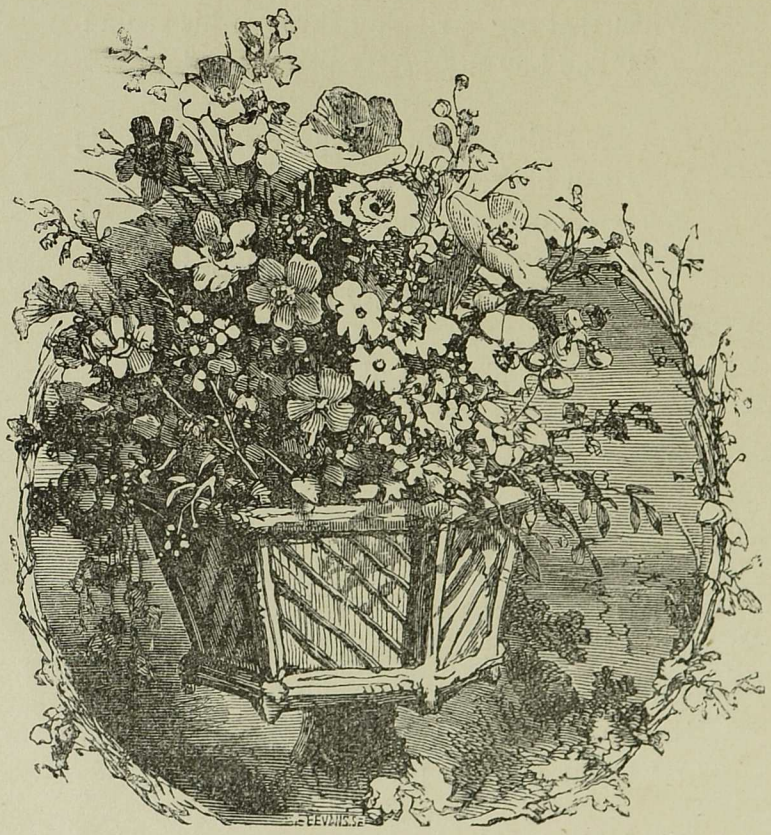
Old age smiles when our flowers are bought;
They call back many a pleasant thought;
Memories of far-distant springs
That cheerful sound for ever brings :
"Come buy my pretty primroses."

Memories of pleasant places,
Memories of happy faces,
Whose smiles were like sweet sunny weather;
When we all were young together:
"Come buy my pretty primroses."

In the pleasant paths of spring
Where we grow the skylarks sing,
And as they soar to heaven's gate,
Seem singing to their speckled mate:
"Come buy my pretty primroses."

Black thorns blossom where we grow,
Beside us early violets blow;
And the lambs with pleasant bleating,
Seem to give a welcome greeting:
"Come buy my pretty primroses."

Summer crowned with all her roses,
Cheers not like our "sweet primroses;"
For we to courts and alleys bring
With us that pleasant cry of spring:
"Come buy my sweet primroses."

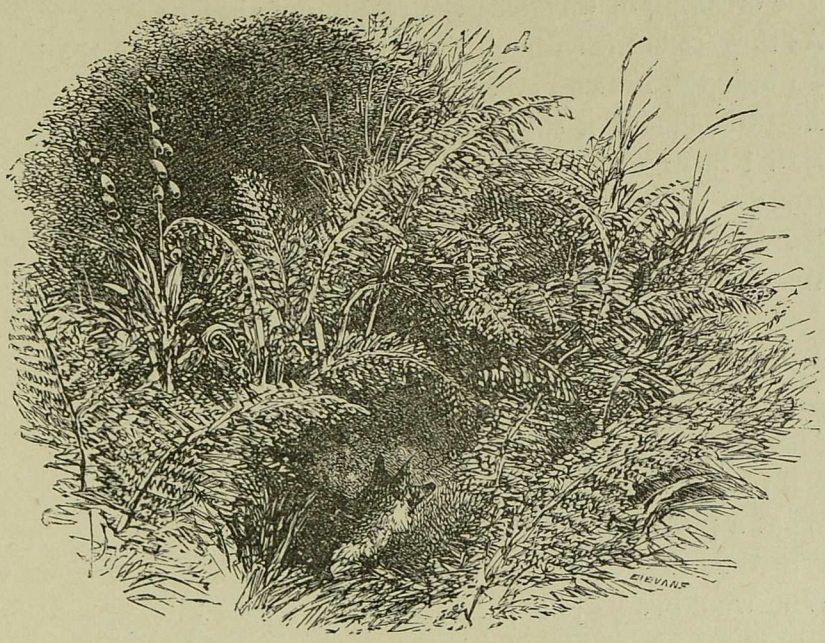


## THE ROSE AND THE VIOLET.

THOUGH the rose is very sweet,
And very pleasing to the eye,
Yet there 's many a flower we meet
In perfume does the rose outvie.
Sweet mignonette, to look upon,
Is nothing by this queen-like flower;
Yet soon her crimson beauty's gone—
It falls beneath that self same shower

In which the other fresher grows,
  Although it is an humble thing,
And at the poor man's window blows.
  The violet, darling of the spring!
An emblem is of modesty;
  No sweeter perfume scents the gale;
And yet how humble its degree!
  Among the moss in lowly vale,
'Mid the dead leaves we do it find,
  Led to it by the perfume sweet
It scatters on the wandering wind.
  So unaware we goodness meet,
That 's hidden in a lowly heart,
  Though not so pleasing to the eye;
While soon through that disguised by art,
  Its real deformity we spy.
It cannot stand truth's searching storm,
  Its gaudy petals are blown down;
The other shows a sweeter form,
  And opens out its starry crown,
When wind and rain have passed away.
  'Tis not the grandest that's the best;
True modesty makes no display,
  But shrinks back like "a timid guest."
Real virtue is not worn for look,
  Nor carried in an open hand;
Choice flowers much love the hidden nook:
  The poppy grows on barren land,
Out in the glaring eye of day;
  The primrose 'neath the hedge retires;
Their sweets the violets betray.
  He who the little flower admires

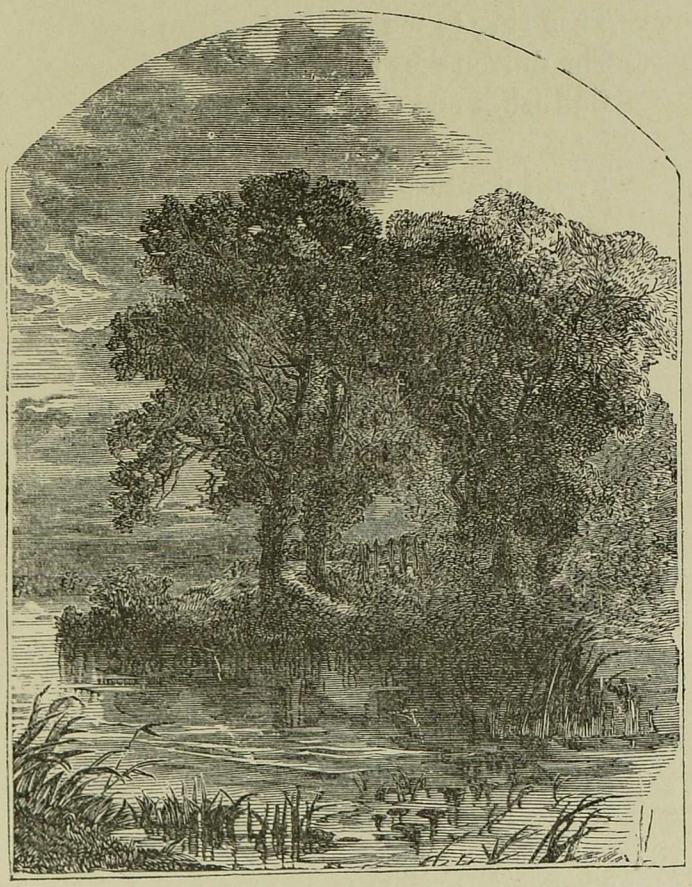
Must search among the leaves and grass;
  Not high above their heads they thrust;
Who looks aloft will by them pass.
  So do "the actions of the just
  Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."



## THE HARE-BELL.

MISTAKE me not for the blue bell of Spring;
I can only be seen when the corn reapers sing:
When Summer her long leaves casts on the ground,
And the fern 's turning red, then may I be found.
No slenderer stem doth a wild flower show
Than the light limber stalk on which my bells blow;
And there isn't a flower that bears such a blue,
For mine is the only one you can call "true."
A breeze which the light thistle down will not spread,
Makes me shake all my bells and keep nodding my head;
And a breath that the tall feathered grasses won't move,
Makes me shake as if March winds were rocking the grove.
Oh, I love to hear the ripe golden corn rustle,
The glad shout of harvest and all its loud bustle;

The creaking of waggons, the rattling of sheaves,
As they 're borne through the lanes, and shake down the leaves :
To hear the brown reapers all clapping their hands,
And the shouts of the gleaners from off the cleared lands.
Had I but grown in the green lap of Spring,
None of these sounds unto me could she bring ;
No voices of children who blackberrying go,
Who pull down the wild crabs and pluck the black sloe.
And oh ! what a pleasure I 've felt as I stood
And heard the glad nutters shout in the green wood,
And felt some blue eye all its love on me shower,
And a sweet voice exclaim, " What a beautiful flower !
I 'll pluck it and wear it, for it is true blue."
What a pleasure to be near a heart that is true,
Where neither deceit nor falsehood can reign ;—
Who wouldn't be plucked such a true friend to gain ?
To me the sweet pleasure is more than the pain.
A real noble nature would suffer and perish,
For the sake of the loved ones it laboured to cherish.
But I am forgetting I 'm only a flower,
And the pleasure I give can but last a brief hour.
Though my life is so short I will not repine,
For the blue-bell's of Spring is not happier than mine.



## THE WATER LILY.

AM the Lady of the Lake;
On a green couch my rest I take;
The ripples rock me to and fro:
While wild swans arch their necks of snow,
Forget-me-nots around me blow.

Often on my leafy brink
The little birds will stand to drink,

Then sing to me all the long day:
The dragon-flies around me play,
Bulrushes nod their heads alway.

I need not turn my head to see,
For all is mirrored before me;
The swallow with its skimming wing,
The butterflies that sit and swing
Upon me, and then upward spring.

At myself I look all day,
Can see the fishes under me play:
No queen has such a glass as I,
That throws deep down the trees and sky,
And all the birds that o'er it fly.

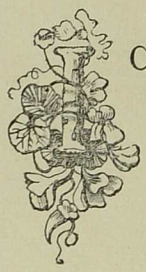
I sit upon a silver ground,
With silver I am hemmed all round,
Save where laburnum flowers unfold,
And o'er me swing their chains of gold,
Which in my mirror I behold.

The water hen shows me her brood,
When paddling round in search of food;
The fishes make a silvery light,
Flashing their scaly armour bright,
Then starting at my shadow white.

At night my coronet I close;
Beneath the water I repose;
Nor from my crystal couch arise,
Until I see the eastern skies
Dappled with gold and silver dyes.

The ripples murmur me to sleep,
The stars a watch around me keep;
I see them in my chamber lie,
Bright as if burning in the sky,
And Lady of the Lake am I.

## THE SNOWDROP.



I COME when the cold drifting snow
Lies white upon the frozen ground,
When Winter winds do loudly blow,
And all is bare and bleak around;
While Spring lies 'neath a winding sheet,
Protected from the snow and sleet.

I am the herald of the flowers,
Usher them in and then I go;
In vain you search the Summer bowers,
And Spring's sweet face I scarcely know;
Though for her eager watch I keep,
Till Winter wakens from his sleep.

Though trembling to her skirt I cling,
I never meet her face to face;
Although I am the child of Spring,
I never feel her warm embrace.
When April comes with sun and showers,
I am not found among the flowers.

And so I come, and so I go,
A little white neglected thing,
Left to stand out amid the snow:
And yet I know my mother Spring
Oft comes near me when I 'm asleep,
And in my dreams I hear her weep.

I come from a far distant land,
  But cannot see for sleet and snow
His face who leads me by the hand
  But 'tis an angel's voice, I know,
That cheers me in my lonely hours,
And sends me here to wake the flowers.

## HOW MAY WAS FIRST MADE.

AS Spring upon a silver cloud
Lay looking on the world below,
Watching the breezes as they bowed
The buds and blossoms to and fro,
She saw the fields with hawthorns walled;
Said Spring, "New buds I will create."
She to a flower spirit called
Who on the month of May did wait,
And bade her fetch a hawthorn spray,
That she might make the buds of May.

Said Spring, "The grass looks green and bright,
The hawthorn hedges too are green,
I 'll sprinkle them with flowers of light,
Such stars as Earth hath never seen;
And all through England's velvet vales,
Her steep hill-sides and haunted streams,
Where woodlands dip into the dales,
Where'er the hawthorn stands and dreams,
Where thick-leaved trees make dark the day,
I 'll light the land with flowers of May.

"Like pearly dew-drops, white and round,
The shut-up buds shall first appear,
And in them be such fragrance found
As breeze before did never bear;
Such as in Eden only dwelt
When angels hovered round its bowers,
And long-haired Eve at morning knelt
In innocence amid the flowers;
While the whole air was, every way,
Filled with a perfume sweet as May.

"And oft shall groups of children come,
Threading their way through shady places,
From many a peaceful English home,
The sunshine falling on their faces;
Starting with merry voice the thrush,
As through green lanes they wander singing,
To gather the sweet hawthorn bush,
Which homeward in the evening bringing
With smiling faces, they shall say,
'There 's nothing half so sweet as May.'

"And many a poet yet unborn
Shall link its name with some sweet lay,
And children oft at early morn
Shall gather blossoms of the May;
With eyes bright as the silver dews
Which on the rounded May-buds sleep,
And parted lips whose smiles diffuse
A sunshine o'er the watch they keep,
Shall open all their white array
Of pearls, ranged like the buds of May."

Spring shook the cloud on which she lay,
And silvered o'er the hawthorn spray,
Then showered down the buds of May.

## DAISIES.

'TWAS when the world was in its prime,
When meadows green and woodlands wild
Were strewn with flowers, in sweet spring-time,
And everywhere the Daisies smiled;
When undisturbed the ring-doves cooed,
While children sang the Daisy's praises,
And in embowered lanes did meet,
Or on some bank white o'er with Daisies
Sat, while the stream flowed at their feet,
And sang, "The Daisies they are sweet."

Unfettered then they roamed abroad,
And as they willed it passed the hours,

Now lingering idly by the road,
  Now loitering by the wayside flowers:
For what cared they about the morrow,
  Too young to sigh, too old to fear;
No time had they to think of sorrow,
  Who found the Daisies everywhere.
Still sang they through each green retreat,
"The Daisies they are very sweet."

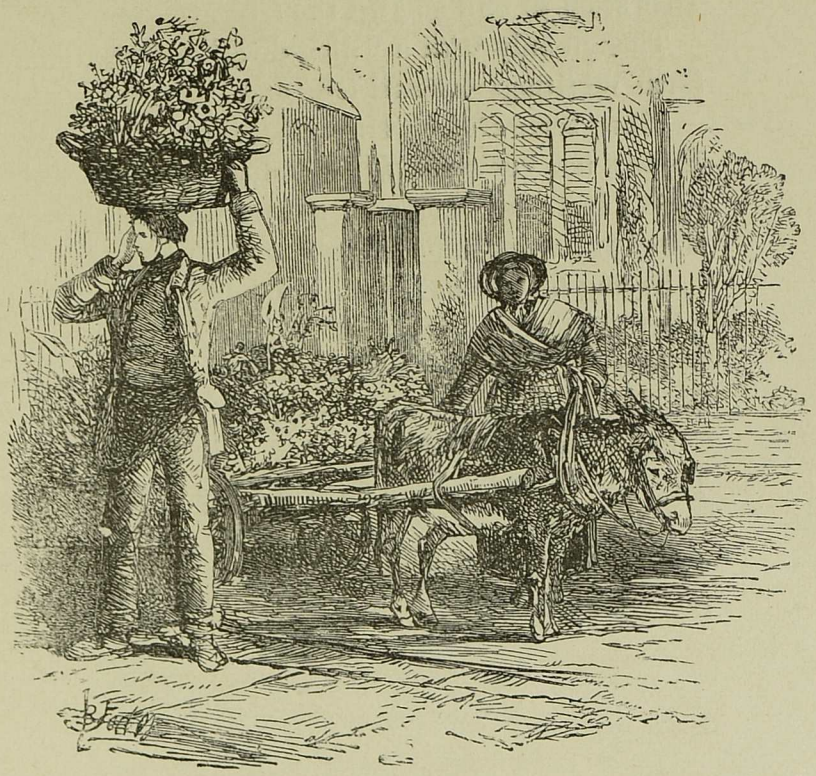
By many a woodland did they dally,
  Like a glad brook that turns away,
Here in, there out, across the valley,
  With every pebble stops to play;
Taking no note of space or time,
  Through flowers the banks adorning,
Still rolling on with silver chime,
  In star-clad night and golden morning:
So went they on through cold and heat,
Singing, "The Daisies they are sweet."

'Twas then the flowers were haunted
  With fairy forms and lovely things,
Whose beauty elder bards have chanted,
  And how they lived in crystal springs,
And swung upon the honied bells,
  In meadows danced round dark green mazes,
Strewed flowers around the holy wells,
  But never trampled on the Daisies.
They spared the star that lit their feet,
The Daisy was so very sweet.

## THE GOLDEN CELANDINE.

IN February's bleakest day,
When sparrows hide beneath the eaves,
Thou dost thy golden flowers display,
And all thy dark-green polished leaves.
And yet there are but few that know thee,
Star-shaped golden celandine :
Too many give the praise they owe thee
Unto flowers that are not thine.
Long weeks ere buttercups appear,
Under the hedge I see thee peeping,
With a sweet face that doth me cheer,
Telling that Spring is nearer creeping.
The primrose also comes with thee,
From the mysterious land of flowers,
As if it tried which first should be
With us to herald brighter hours.
I often have stooped down and found
Both your buds but half unrolled,
Both looking glad, and green, and round,
And tipped alike with points of gold;
Yet fearful, as it seemed, to show
All your open wealth of bloom,
Lest winter winds should colder blow,
And o'er ye cast a darker gloom.
And I have watched day after day,
To see which flower would first appear,
And to the sun its gold display:
Sometimes I fancied it was fear

Withheld ye,—that ye seemed to know
  Grim killing Winter still was near.
I 've seen you struggling through the snow,
  And thought how cold you both must be,
To sit amid it hours and hours:
  I thought the robin pitied thee,
Sweet celandine, above all flowers;
That in his song I heard him say,
  "Don't let your pretty head be seen,
Till surly Winter's gone away,
  Lest he destroy your gold and green;
'Twould grieve my heart so if he were.
  I 've waited for you many an hour;
I 've crept in here, and crept out there,
  And hunted for your yellow flower.
Don't let him strike you with his eye:
'Twould break my heart were you to die."



"ALL-A-BLOWING—ALL-A-GROWING."

*Cries of London.*

## WHAT I MEAN.

MY dear young Readers, you will see
That in these verses I have tried
To show how Fancy, once set free,
Becomes to other thoughts allied:
Pictures that spring up unaware,
Like words made to the bells that ring,

That seem to talk and fill the air,
  Though only with a "ding-dong" swing.
Such Whittington heard long ago,
  When sorrowful by Highgate stone
He sat, nor knew not what to do,
  Till London's bells with silvery tone
Rang to his ear a fancied strain,
  Saying he was not wholly undone;—
"Return again, return again,
  And be Lord Mayor of London."
So let the cry of "All-a-blowing"
  Send your fancy out to roam,
To miles of fields where flowers are growing,
  For fancy mopes if kept at home.
Then shut your eyes, and think you see
Some flower, road, field, a stream, or tree.

## LONDON CHILDREN.

"ALL-A-BLOWING, all-a-growing,"
Those spring sounds everywhere we meet,
Where the stagnant gutter 's throwing
Poisoned air into the street.
How different from the fragrant nook,
Where they all stood in beauty blowing,
While mirrored in the murmuring brook,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

Here doth the air a prison find,
By windows where no sunbeams play,
Where the freedom-loving wind
Doth fret, and cannot get away,
So round the houses sighs and moans.
Children are at each other throwing,
Cinders, rags, and dust, and bones,
While the court rings with "All-a-blowing."

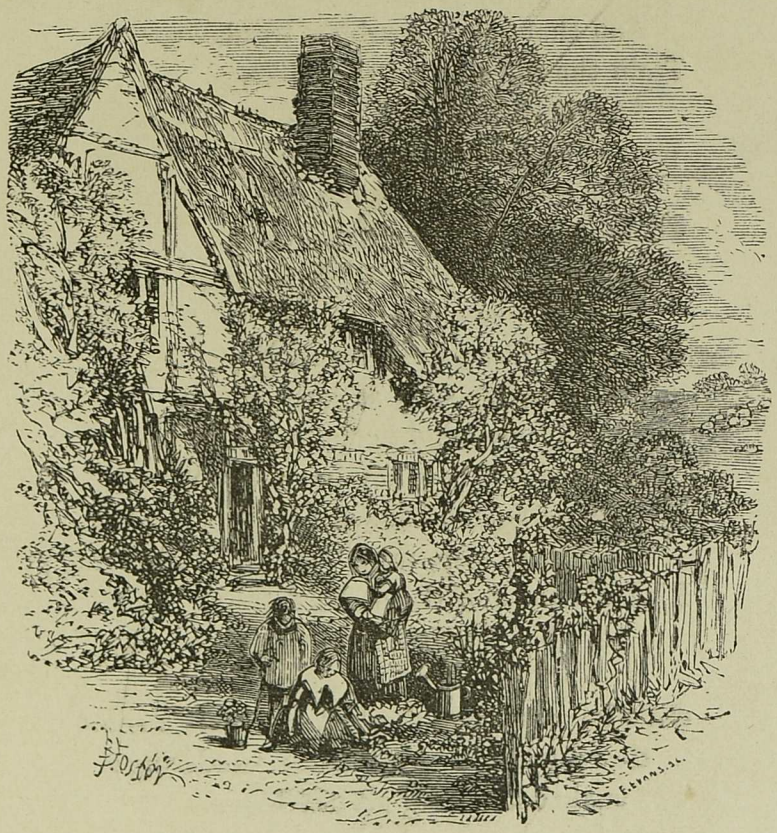
I pity thee, poor ragged child,
That with round wondering eyes dost stand;
That never saw a flower grow wild,
Nor miles of daisies light the land:
Whose home is in that stifling alley
Where half-washed clothes on lines are blowing;
Who never saw on hill or valley
The summer flowers "All-a-growing."

He thinks by human hands the flowers
Were coloured, clipped, and fixed, and made:

The shop at which he looks for hours
  Is where a flower maker's trade
Is carried on—he looks and crows
  When the pale girl her goods is showing;
About God's flowers he nothing knows,
  "All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

He groweth up a flower neglected,
  To teach him right no one finds time;
And by our law he is rejected,
  Until he plunges into crime.
While innocent none cries "God bless him;"
  When heavy guilt his head is bowing,
Some jailer then perhaps may press him
  To study God's works—"All-a-growing."

Neglected in the sunless court,
  He learns but thieving, swearing, lying;
Doth 'mid the dirty children sport,
  Beside the door where some one 's dying.
They nothing know of death or sorrow,
  Beyond the pang when hunger 's gnawing;
They never think about the morrow,
  Nor where the flowers are "All-a-blowing."



## THE COUNTRY CHILD.

AH, poor child! I know you well;
I saw the waggon that you came in
From the cot beside the dell,
Where the foxglove flowers were flaming;
And baskets bellied out with gold
Of gorse, a yellow light was throwing:
But when your cottage home was sold,
You left these treasures "All-a-blowing."

Other feet now press those walks,
And that summer arbour tread,
Train the roses round the balks,
And weed the speckled pansy bed
Where thy poor parents hoped to die.
Ever coming, ever going,
Thousands still listen to that cry
Of "All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

It calls up bleating lambs at play,
The throstle's song at early morn;
Perfume of moonlight-coloured May,
The smell of new hay homeward borne;
Murmur of golden-banded bees,
The "rasp, rasp, rasp," of mowers, mowing;
Rich blossoms of the orchard trees,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing:"

Calls back the gold-beaked blackbird's song,
Heard while in green lanes wandering;
The cuckoo shouting all day long,
And mocked by children in the spring;
Daisies that dews of silver hold,
Bright buttercups in sunshine glowing,
And flashing backward gold for gold,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

## THE PAUPER.

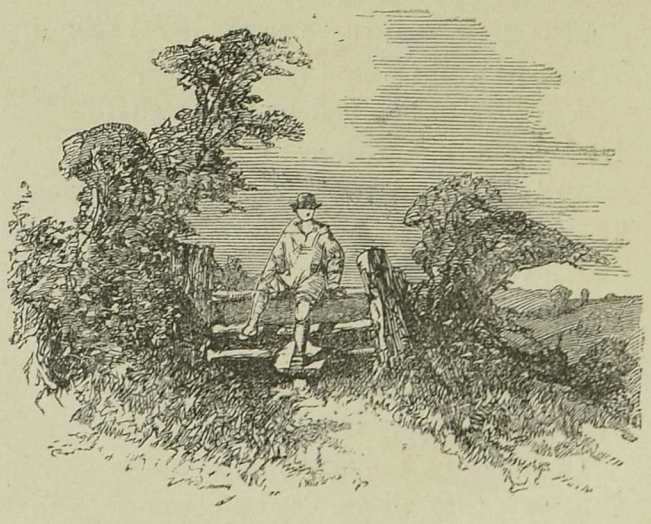
SEE that poor pauper pause to listen,
Watch the light break on his brow;
See how his poor dim eyes glisten:
I know that he is thinking now
Of the country sweet and green,
Of farms where early cocks are crowing,
And many a far-off flowery scene,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing:"

Of the lilies-of-the-valley,
That grew 'mid those remembered scenes,
Where he again would fondly dally,
And love to live had he the means;
He has not, but with age now bent,
And gray head 'neath the burden bowing,
That sound his thoughts have homeward sent
Where his loved flowers are "All-a-blowing:"

Where he with angling rod in hand
The happy hours did oft beguile;
Did by the silvery river stand,
Or linger by the rustic stile.
And now they all are dead and gone,
Those loved ones—and his eyes are thawing;
For in the workhouse there are none
Care for his flowers "All-a-blowing."

Hither, by false hopes allured,
He came, and in this busy city

Hard privation long endured,
  None to love him, none to pity.
That sound old memories doth awaken
  Of branches waving, rivers flowing,
Flower beds by the breezes shaken,
  "All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."



## THE POOR SEMPSTRESS.

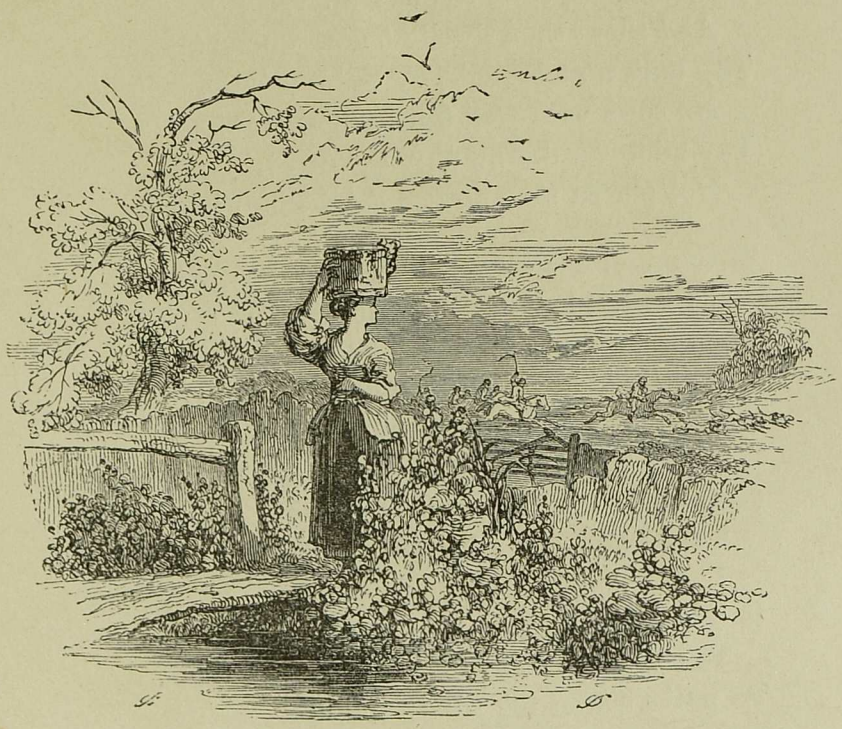
STOP, poor sempstress, stop and dream;
Forget thy room so close and dark,
Think of that cottage by the stream
Where thou wert wakened by the lark;
Think of the ringdoves in the woods,
The roses round the window bowing,
The velvet green of spring's first buds,
All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

I see the tears upon thy cheek,
I know thou 'st had thy share of sorrow;
I picture thee a maiden meek,
Blithe as a bird that hailed the morrow:
I know that sweet spring-sound doth cheat
Thee of the grief thine eyes are showing;
That fancy has fled from this street,
To "All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

In the attic's crazy story,
That looks down on a dead brick wall,
The sunshine comes in all its glory,
And on the broken floor does fall:
That and the sky are all she sees
Of God's great works above her bowing;
Stitching—she dreams of flowers and trees,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

Stitching, she listens to that sound,
Fancies she sees that hazel glade

With its primrose-covered ground,
  That quite a little sun land made.
Stitching, she wanders there again,
  And oft her head keeps backward throwing,
To ease that old cramped stooping pain—
  Stitches, and dreams of "All-a-blowing."



## THE LONDON MILKMAID.

MILKMAID with the Rose of Wales
Blooming in thy smiling face,
Telling that breezy peaks and vales
Lay round thy healthy native place,
Thy memory, too, is backward borne
To where the broom her gold is showing,
And spotted cowslips this bright morn
Are "All-a-blowing, all-a-growing:"

To pastoral sounds that filled the valley,
Till broken by thy artless song.

How different from the city alley,
And those thou dwellest now among!
Thy milk now brought by railway train,
No cows with well-filled udders lowing;
Thy milk-can drying near the drain,
Not placed near flowers "All-a-blowing."

That sound has carried thee away
To where, hemmed in with bracken brown,
Thou didst find out one sunny day
A little hidden flowery town
Of hare-bells and bright crimson heather:
Ripe blackberries at hand were growing,
Corn rustled in that harvest weather,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

It takes thee back to field and fold,
To children round the mountain straying,
To walks across the windy wold,
Companions with whom thou went'st Maying,
Now hidden 'mid the leaves so long,
Through which some half-spied face was showing,
Anon all bursting into song,
Of "All-a-blowing, all-a-growing;"

Of milk-pail poised upon thy head,
With one hand resting on thy side,
Crossing the bridge with cautious tread;
Of banks with rainbow colours dyed;
Thy image thrown upon the stream,
With all thy long hair backward blowing;
Where mirrored flowers seemed to dream,
Reflected downward, "All-a-growing."

## THE OLD HOSTLER.

GRAY-HAIRED hostler stand and smile,
The country red 's still on thy cheek;
Thou see'st thy cot behind the stile;
The little alder-shaded creek
That by thy father's garden ran;
The field where with him thou went'st mowing,
Before thou hadst grown up a man,
The flowers thou left'st there "All-a-blowing."

That cottage years since was another's;
Those walks by wood, and field, and lane,
With father, mother, sisters, brothers,
Thou never more wilt see again;
All but thyself are dead and gone,
Laid where the churchyard trees are growing;
Friend or relation thou hast none,
To see the flowers "All-a-blowing."

The sunshine on the stable floor
Often recalls the yellow broom;
The smell from out the hay-loft door
That opens on thy sleeping room,
Brings dreams to thee of new-mown hay,
Of grasses 'neath the breezes bowing;
Of those with whom thou oft didst play,
Who sleep where flowers are "All-a-blowing."

In thy old age 'tis very hard
  To change the daisy-covered hill
For a rank-smelling stable-yard;
  The clacking of the water-mill,
And hum of insects round the pool,
  For sound of horses ever gnawing;
To leave the pleasant white-washed school,
  And the sweet flowers "All-a-blowing:"

In Winter's snow and Summer's rain,
  To hear no more the stirring trees;
No more about the window-pane
  The humming from the hives of bees:
Stables and horses ever cleaning,
  Hay and corn away still stowing;
To hear no sound of reaping, gleaning,
  No smell of flowers "All-a-blowing."

But he halts not who seeks employment,
  Who to and fro is ever going;
For to him life brings no enjoyment—
  They tell him that "there's nothing doing."
He looks up at the sky o'erhead,
  Where the clouds are darker growing,
And wishes it would rain down bread,
  Nor heeds the flowers "All-a-blowing."

That laundress by the stopped-up drain,
  Where scent of flowers never found her,
Doth dread the sweet refreshing rain;
  It poisons all the air around her,
Stirring old sickly stagnant smells.
  She buys primroses "All-a-growing;"

But placed a few days where she dwells,
The buds will soon cease "All-a-blowing."

No spots round her which hawthorns light,
Whose bloom, when in the distance seen,
Seems like soft clouds of silver bright,
Resting upon a sky of green.
For all she of the seasons knows,
Is sunshine, raining, hailing, snowing;
From year to year she never goes
Where the sweet flowers are "All-a-blowing."

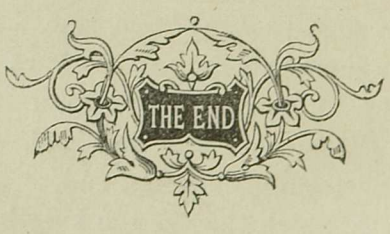
Even that sharp policeman's eye
From off the thief a moment strays,
While listening to that summer cry;
And he thinks of those early days
When a mere boy he "tented corn,"
With his bird-clapper loudly crowing,
And saw the flowers at dawn of morn,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

And that sound brings hope, also,
To the poor half-broken hearted:
Winter's cold, and frost, and snow
Have till another year departed.
So will all troubles have an end,
Beneath which they've too long been bowing;
A flower to them comes like a friend,
"All-a-blowing, all-a-growing."

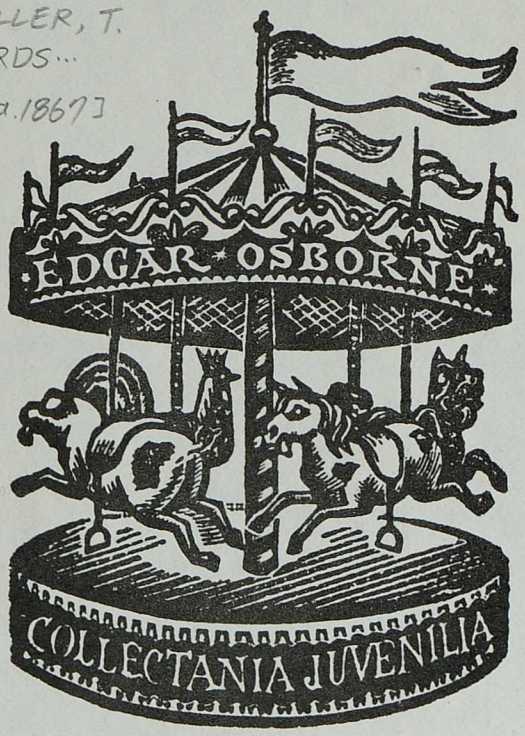
Dim visions of a little grave
To some that flower-cry doth bring;

Where all a mother's heart did crave
  Lies cold beneath the buds of Spring.
And though tears fall like April rain,
  Though there affection's bells are growing,
Tears never can bring back again
  That dead white blossom "All-a-blowing."

Nor Summer shine, nor Summer rain,
  Nor murmur of the Summer bee,
Can ever soothe the aching pain,
  Nor fill the void that 's left by thee.
But in God's garden high above,
  Where heavenly flowers are ever blowing,
Thou oft wilt feel that mother's love,
  While to a heavenly angel growing.



P.
MILLER, T.
BIRDS...
[ca.1867]




37131 053 590 204

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Presented to the*
*Osborne Collection by*

Scott Thompson