FABLES
OF
FLOWERS,
FOR
THE FEMALE SEX.
WITH
ZEPHYRUS AND FLORA,
A VISION.



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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK FABLES OF FLOWERS FOR THE FEMALE SEX. WITH ZEPHYRUS AND FLORA, A VISION ***

FABLES OF FLOWERS, FOR THE FEMALE SEX. WITH ZEPHYRUS AND FLORA, A VISION.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF

HER HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE CHOICE EMBLEMS, &C. &C.

NATURE here
Wantons as in her prime, and plays at will
Her virgin fancies.
MILTON.

LONDON:

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MDCCLXXIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LADY CHARLOTTE FINCH.

THESE NEW FABLES
WRITTEN FOR THE AMUSEMENT

OF

HER HIGHNESS,

CHARLOTTE,

PRINCESS ROYAL OF ENGLAND.

ARE MOST HUMBLY DEDICATED BY
HER LADYSHIP'S
MOST HUMBLE
AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

WHEN I survey the divine simplicity and blooming attractions, that are displayed amongst the variegated tribes of the vegetable creation, I cease to wonder, that *Queens forego, for a while, the compliments of a nation, or withdraw from the glitter of a* COURT, *to be attended with the more splendid* EQUIPAGE *of a* BED *of* FLOWERS; where nothing seems wanting but the power of *speech*, to make them become the most pleasing Monitors.

How far the Author of the following Fables, written for the amusement of an exalted Personage, may have succeeded, in descriptive fancy, as a poet: it is hoped, that, the moral and refined admonitions which may be found to breathe, from the fragrant bosom of a silver-robed Lily, or a blooming Jonquil, will throw a veil over any poetical inaccuracies; *for who can paint like Nature?*

As to the novelty of the plan, I cannot but hold myself, in a great measure, indebted to an ingenious Lady[1], well known in the literary world. And can only say, that I have found both health and recreation in the completion of it; by sharing some of the sweetest hours of contemplation, among the lovely subjects of the following pages.

THE AUTHOR.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
ZEPHYRUS and FLORA	1
FABLE I.	
The Hollyhock and Lily of the Vale	24
II.	
The Aloe in Blossom	31
III.	
The Rose and Hornet	37
IV.	
The Sensitive Plant	42
V.	
The Hawthorn and the Primrose	47
VI.	
The White Rose and the Red	53
VII.	
The Crocus	59
VIII.	
The Anemone and the Passion Flower	64
IX.	
The Lily and Narcissus	69
X.	
The Ivy and Sweet Briar	73
XI.	
The Violet Transplanted	77
XII.	
The Tulip and the Amaranth	81
XIII.	

The Honey Succkle and Youth 87

XIV.

Belinda and the Blue-Bell 92

XV.

The Larkspur and the Myrtle 97

XVI.

The Poppy and the Sun-Flower 102

XVII.

The Iris and the Rose 109

XVIII.

The Nasturtium and the Wall Flower 113

XIX.

The Traveller and Lapland Rose 119

XX.

The Deadly Night Shade 124

XXI.

The Crown Imperial and Hearts Ease 129

XXII.

The Water Lily 133

XXIII.

The Funeral Flowers and the Lover 137

XXIV.

The Field and Garden Daisy 142

XXV.

The Pinks and Arbutus 147

XXVI.

The Cockscomb and Sweet William 153

XXVII.

The Jasmine and Hemlock 157

XXVIII.

The Carnation and Southernwood 161

XXIX.

The Rosemary and Field Flower 165

XXX.

The Judgment of the Flowers 169

ZEPHYRUS

AND

FLORA:

A VISION.

I.

AS late I wander'd o'er the flow'ry plain,
Where Cambrian Cluyd pours his silver tide,
Amidst the pleasures of fair Plenty's reign,
And blushing flow'rs and fruits on ev'ry side:

II.

Soft sigh'd the west winds, murm'ring o'er the dale,
Whose ev'ry charm rose fresher from the breeze;
The lofty hills more boldly kiss'd the gale,
Which skimm'd their tops, and shook the wavy trees.

III.

The sun descending, shot his golden beams
Askance, with many a cloud his ev'ning throne
Adorn'd; while mountains, woods, and lucent streams,
With the last blushes of his radiance shone.

IV.

Far stretching hence, Cambria's rough heights I view,
Where Liberty long since forlorn retir'd,
Left fairer climes, and skies of brighter hue,
And, but at last, triumphantly expir'd:

V.

And wide around me wound the fertile vale[2],
Fit theme and subject of the poet's song;
Whose num'rous beauties load the passing gale,
Whose breath repeats them, as it glides along.

VI.

Bright Phœbus sunk, dim twilight now succeeds,
Still gleaming dubious with uncertain ray,
While tremblingly among the vocal reeds
The ev'ning breezes still more faintly play.

VII.

Amid this beauteous, soft, and flow'ry scene,
On a high bank, all listless, I reclin'd;
Whose shelving sides were crown'd with lively green,
By tufted trees and bord'ring flow'rs confin'd.

VIII.

Here, while the landscape faded on my sight,
Wild Fancy's eye still brighter scenes supply'd;
I view'd not the last track of parting light,
Nor mark'd the fanning breezes as they dy'd.

IX.

At length, Imagination, roving maid,
Though gentle sleep had fetter'd all my pow'rs
In golden chains, my busy soul convey'd
To other landscapes and immortal bow'rs.

X.

Methought I stood amidst a garden fair,
Whose bounds no sight of mortal eye could trace,
Situate mid-way, betwixt earth, seas, and air,
Unmark'd by Time, uncircumscrib'd by Space.

XI.

Not half so sweet was that delightsome dale,
Which to my waking view appear'd so bright;
For *here* did never-ceasing suns prevail,
With mildest sweetness temp'ring heav'nly light.

XII.

Spring breath'd eternal glories o'er the land:
And gentlest winds, o'er fragrant lawns that blow,
Nurs'd beauteous buds unset by mortal hand,
And op'ning flow'rs that without planting grow.

XIII.

Serene the heav'ns, save where a cloudy shrine,
Big with cœlestial plenty, sail'd on high,
Show'r'd Spring's own roses from her seat divine,
And drew a purple radiance o'er the sky.

XIV.

Meanwhile, soft music echoing from each grove,
Tun'd to enchanting notes most soft and clear,
That breath'd the soul of harmony and love,
Thrill'd the rapt breast, and charm'd the list'ning ear.

XV.

And still the while, with voices loud and sweet,
The warbling birds in dulcet concert join'd,
The waters murm'ring flow with cadence meet,
"Low answer'd by the gently whisp'ring wind."

XVI.

These themes of wonder silent I survey'd,
Attentive hanging on each dying sound;
Pleas'd with the glories which I saw display'd,
And scenes of joy and pleasure op'ning round.

XVII.

Yet still methought a certain want appear'd,
Of some to own this spot, so heav'nly fair,
Else were each charming flow'ret vainly rear'd,
"To bloom unnotic'd to the desart air:"

XVIII.

Else, were in vain these soft melodious strains,
Which the whole soul of harmony inspir'd,
Pour'd to the wild woods and the lonely plains,
Though worthiest still by all to be admir'd.

XIX.

Such were creation's first imperfect hours,
When the gay heav'ns in early beauty shone,
And earth, bedeck'd with beasts, birds, plants, and flow'rs,
Spread all her bosom to the genial sun;

XX.

Unfinish'd still the mighty work appear'd,
Till Man, the lord of all, was bid to rise;
With open brow his face divine who rear'd,
And sought with upright look his native skies.

XXI.

Thus as I paus'd, still louder swell'd the notes,
From ev'ry bush, and brake, and echoing hill;
While choirs cœlestial seem'd to tune their throats,
And, with glad voice the chearful chorus fill.

XXII.

Then, by some magic pow'r swift snatch'd away,
Ev'n to the midst of that delightful land,
I view'd at once all clad in bright array,
A thousand Genii of the gardens stand.

XXIII.

But far above all these a seat was plac'd,
Dress'd with each flow'r that ev'ry season knows,
Whose vary'd tints, in gem-like order, grac'd
The rural theatre which gradual rose.

XXIV.

For lo! the Genius of each blooming flow'r
Brought his own fav'rite with peculiar care,
To deck the arch of this inchanted bow'r,
And, bowing at the throne, he plac'd it there.

XXV.

A sight more beauteous ne'er did eye behold,
Than these bright tribes that glitter'd on the day;
And, rich in purple dyes and flaming gold,
Did their bright bosoms to the sun display.

XXVI.

Such was the throne;—but oh! what pen can trace
The heav'nly beauties of the matchless Two,
Who, glowing with each bright cœlestial grace,
Sat there aloft, conspicuous to the view!

XXVII.

The first, a youth of sweet and gentle mien,
With many a wreath and knotted garland crown'd;
Whose beauteous visage glow'd with charms serene,
And on whose shoulders purple wings were bound:

XXVIII.

These when he spreads, reviving Nature pours
Her copious treasures of immortal bloom;
Whilst through vast realms he scatters vernal stores,
And from his downy pinions shakes perfume.

XXIX.

His name was Zephyrus; and next him sat
The beauteous goddess of the blooming year,
The constant partner of his rural state,
To heav'n and earth, to gods and mortals dear;

XXX.

Flora, bright pow'r, who sheds a thousand sweets
O'er thousand lands, what time her gifts appear,
What time her consort with his kisses greets
Her coral lips, and wakes the rising year.

XXXI.

Her beauteous face was deck'd with youthful pride,
Her graceful form in flamy robes was dress'd;
And ev'ry charm wild Nature could provide,
Adorn'd her head, and beam'd upon her breast.

XXXII.

Beside the throne, rang'd in fair order, stood
The various Seasons of the rolling year;
By all their train of months, weeks, days, pursu'd:
And all their various symbols flourish'd here.

XXXIII.

First came the Spring, led by the rosy Hours,
With all the Loves and Graces in her train;
Deck'd with her wreath of never-fading flow'rs,
Diffusing odours o'er the smiling plain.

XXXIV.

Next Summer came; his cheeks with ardour fir'd,
With his own blushing fruits and harvests crown'd;
Before whose face the infant Spring retir'd,
And with her roses strew'd the russet ground.

XXXV.

Stain'd with the grape's press'd juice, with steadier pace,
Still looking backward on preceding time,
Ripe AUTUMN next succeeded in his place;
Scatt'ring rich fruits, the growth of ev'ry clime.

XXXVI.

Last WINTER comes, with heavy step and flow,
A hoary captive bound in icy chains;
With haggard eyes, and mantle dipp'd in snow,
Who still of cold in Spring's own realms complains.

XXXVII.

Not one of these, but from their various store
Some off'ring meet to lovely Flora pay;
Not one of these, but with that off'ring more,
And her soft reign most willingly obey.

XXXVIII.

Ev'n WINTER's self, with look averted, throws,
His thin-strewn flow'rets on the goddess' shrine;
Ev'n *his* cold bosom for a moment glows,
When he beholds her radiant form divine.

XXXIX.

But now the Genii of each plant and flow'r,
Rang'd in fair order, wait her high commands;
And each, approaching her delicious bow'r,
In expectation of her verdict stands.

XL.

For many of the *garden's* painted race,
And some that with their colours deck the *field*,
Rivals in wealth, in beauty, and in grace,
Had wag'd high wars, unknowing how to yield.

XLI.

All claim'd preferment, and each one could boast
Of some bright beauty or perfection dear,
Which should induce mankind to prize *her* most,
And to preferment make her title clear.

XLII.

And some, of empty shew and titles vain;
Alas! that Pride so many should deceive!
Claim'd o'er their kindred plants and flow'rs to reign:
And of their birthright others would bereave.

XLIII.

The Crown Imperial, and the spurious Flow'r
Which boasts of royal arms and royal mien[3];
The warlike Plant that claims immortal pow'r[4],
And that gay lady call'd the Meadow's Queen.

XLIV.

All these, and more, that scorn'd a subject state,
Rose to the claim of high imperial sway:
Forgetting—to be *good* was to be *great*—
They rose to rule, unpractis'd to obey.

XLV.

Others again for *beauty's* meed contend,
Chief amidst whom appear'd the Tulip race;
A painted tribe, born only to contend
For praise, where *all* is giv'n external grace.

XLVI.

Alcæa proud[5]; and lovely Venus' joy,
That does from adverse winds its title claim[6];
The once conceited, self-admiring Boy[7],
Whose love prepost'rous gave a flow'r a name.

XLVII.

The proud Carnation dipp'd in brightest dyes,
Who still with thirst of praise and glory burns;
With her whose mirrour cheats deluded eyes[8],
And she that still to her lov'd Phœbus turns[9].

XLVIII.

There, with their num'rous chiefs of diff'rent hues,
The painted Cock's Comb, and his lofty train,
Their beauties vaunting, to the rest refuse
To share the glories of their gaudy reign.—

XLIX.

The judges sat, each sep'rate claim was heard,
While some for *rule*, and some for *praises*, sought;
And some had been disgrac'd, and some preferr'd,
As in the goddess' mind their various pleadings wrought

L.

But her lov'd consort, gently whisp'ring, said:
"What means my Queen, on these to cast her sight,
Who have but pride or lust of sway display'd,
Nor brought their real worth or virtues to the light?"

LI.

How many absent now, more fair than these,
With greater fragrance in lone valleys blow?
Or, if the garden's flow'ry tribe more please,
Where do the Rose and lovely Vi'let glow?

LII.

The Lily where, and all that num'rous host,
Who claim true praise to innate virtue due;
Or do they *merit least* who *loudest boast*,
And with false glare impose upon the view?

LIII.

For sure, of all who feel my genial gale,
Or to the sun their fragrant breasts unfold,
The best and sweetest that on earth prevail,
Yet do I not in this fair court behold.

LIV.

He said; and FLORA, rising from her throne,
Bade present search for ev'ry one be made:
Who, though their off'rings on her altar shone,
Their modest haste had from the court convey'd.

LV.

Strait they return'd:—The lovely blushing Rose,
The Lily ever chaste and ever fair,
The Vi'let sweet with purple tints that glows,
And Myrtle green, that scents the ambient air:

LVI.

With many more, grateful to sight and smell,
By bounteous heav'n with matchless charms endu'd;
That in the fragrant meads or gardens dwell,
Or which wild wastes from human eyes seclude.

LVII.

These by their Genii now in modest guise,
Excus'd from pleading 'midst the mingled throng.
Claim'd but the tribute all allow'd their prize,
Nor sought their own just praises to prolong.

LVIII.

Yet, these once seen, abash'd their rivals stand;
And would have fled, but FLORA this deny'd;
Who, rising graceful, with her out-stretch'd hand,
Thus briefly to th' assembled pow'rs apply'd:

LIX.

"Genii of gardens, meads, and sylvan scenes,
Attendant still in FLORA'S vernal train,
Say what this ardent, fond contention means,
Why strive you thus for pow'r, and strive in vain?

LX.

Are you not all beneath our sceptre blest;
Say, do not all confess our gentle sway?
Then seek not one to triumph o'er the rest,
But each in peaceful order still obey.

LXI.

So *all* the glories of my reign shall share,
So *all* be still in poets songs renown'd,
So shall my ZEPHYR still with gentlest air,
Wave o'er your beds, with bloom eternal crown'd.

LXII.

And *you*, who not for pow'r, but beauty's charms,
For gaudy tints, still fiercely would contend;
What envious fire such gentle bosoms warms?
And where, alas! must the mad contest end?

LXIII.

Each has her charms, and each peculiar worth,
To all in various portions duly giv'n,
By secret Nature working at its birth,
The lavish bounty of indulgent Heav'n.

LXIV.

Each has her charms:—but view the blushing Rose,
Behold the beauties of the Lily fair;
Few boast of equal excellence to those,
Yet with their modest merit none compare.

LXV.

These, therefore, we prefer; and though no Queen
Besides Ourselves we will to hold the reign;
Yet, for their true desart conspicuous seen,
We rank them foremost on the flow'ry plain.

LXVI.

Hear, and obey; and if aught else abide,
To raise dispute among your orders bright;
Still by true merit let the cause be try'd,
And specious *shew* yield to more solid *right*."

LXVII.

She spoke;—the Seasons, and the winged Hours,
Confirm'd her voice; then breath'd a rich perfume,
Which ZEPHYR scatter'd wide o'er all the flow'rs,
And deck'd their leaves with more than mortal bloom.

LXVIII.

Then, his lov'd consort straining in his arms,
With gentlest touch salutes her swelling breast;
Who strait shone forth in more refulgent charms,
As JUNO when by vernal JOVE caress'd.

LXIX.

And sudden joining in a mazy dance,
The airy phantoms of the scene appear'd;
Some to the sprightly timbrel did advance,
While some their clear harmonious voices rear'd.

LXX.

But One among the rest, who view'd me stand
Intent, and gazing on the prospect near,
Came forth, and gently touch'd my trembling hand,
And bade me mark his words, and nothing fear:

LXXI.

"And seest thou not (said he) these vary'd flow'rs,
Contending still for beauty or for sway?
Such are the contests which employ man's hours,
In life's short, busy, transitory day.

LXXII.

For what is gaudy beauty's short-liv'd bloom,
The pomp of pow'r, of riches, or of pride;
Soon bury'd in the undistinguish'd tomb,
Which all their boasted pomp at once must hide?

LXXIII.

VIRTUE alone survives, immortal maid!
Her truly amaranthine flow'r shall blow,
When all the rest are wrapt in dusky shade,
And laid in dark and dusty ruins low.

LXXIV.

Hear, and attend!—improve the moral strain,
So may'st thou sail safe through life's dang'rous sea;
So from these scenes thou wisdom may'st attain,
And FLORA prove MINERVA's self to thee."

LXXV.

He ceas'd; and well I mark'd the prudent lore,
And much revolv'd his saying in my mind;
Bent all the mystic moral to explore,
By this romantic, splendid scene design'd.

LXXVI.

But, the full concert swelling on my ear,
The bands of Sleep dissolv'd, away he flies;
At once the train of phantoms disappear,
And on my waking sight the vision dies.

LXXVII.

No longer now near FLORA's bow'r I stood,
But view'd with op'ning eyes the rising day;
Then down the Valley fair my path pursu'd,
And homeward took my solitary way.

FABLES OF FLOWERS.

Fab. I.

The Holly Hock & Lily of the Vale

Fab. II.

The Aloe in Blossom

FABLE I.

The HOLLYHOCK and the LILY of the VALE.

I.

'TWAS early morn, Sol's radiant beams
Illum'd the landscape round.
The dew-drops glitter'd on the day,
And gem-like deck'd the ground.

II.

Within the garden's cultur'd walks
A Hollyhock there grew;
And there the Lily of the Vale
Kept humble distance due.

III.

Elate with pride, the gaudy flow'r
Expands its swelling breast;
And, joying in the vernal scene,
The LILY thus address'd:

IV.

"What dost thou here, mean paltry thing,
"Go blow in yonder field;
"Nor thus disgrace fair FLORA's tribes,
"That heav'nly beauties yield.

V.

"Go, with thy faint and sickly hue;
"Some chearless vale adorn;

“But here intrude not on our reign,
“Nor drink the dew of morn.

VI.

“Whilst I with heighten’d colours glow,
“In Summer’s liv’ry gay;
“Imbibe the softest tints of light,
“And glitter on the day.

VII.

“Me yonder golden sun shall warm,
“At morn and noon-tide hour;
“And me his ev’ning beams attend,
“Like his own fav’rite flow’r.

VIII.

“Nor yonder Rose, nor Bacchus’ Plant,
“Which twining near me grows,
“Can boast more excellence than me,
“Or brighter dyes disclose.

IX.

“Hence thou! nor this fair spot profane,
“Where fairer flow’rets blow;
“Return again to shades obscure,
“And there neglected grow.”

X.

The Lily heard, with decent grace,
That scorn’d the boaster’s pride;
Then from her lone, unenvy’d bed
She thus in brief reply’d;

XI.

“From vaunting loud what fame is gain’d,
“To raise the boaster’s name;

“Or might not yonder blushing Rose
“Exert a fairer claim?

XII.

“And many a flow’r that round thee blows,
“In the bright garb of Spring;
“Or, rich in elegant perfumes,
“That scent the Zephyr’s wing.

XIII.

“The vine, with purple clusters deck’d,
“Shall soon rich sweets bestow;
“Whilst thou, a barren flow’r at best,
“Art only made for show.

XIV.

“For ME;—what Nature form’d, I am;
“I envy not thy pride;
“Nor seek to raise a greater boast,
“By Providence deny’d.

XV.

“Yet in some dark and dang’rous hour,
“When tempests rude assail;
“Ev’n thou may’st wish the humbler state
“Of LILY OF THE VALE.”

XVI.

Safe from her humble spot she said,
And view’d the changing sky;
From op’ning clouds the thunders break,
The livid lightnings fly.

XVII.

Full on the garden’s lofty wall,
The flow’rs exalted place,

The fires æthereal swiftly fall,
And rend its solid base.

XVIII.

And now the boaster's trust and pride
Assur'd her overthrow;
Her glories buried in the dust,
By one destructive blow.

XIX.

The LILY view'd the ruin'd flow'r,
And strait this Moral drew;
Beauty and Pride are idly vain,
But Praise is Merit's due.

XX.

Daughters of Albion, timely wise,
Attend the moral tale;
And imitate with prudent care
THE LILY OF THE VALE.

FABLE II.

The ALOE in Blossom.

I.

"FROM warmer climates early borne,
"Where beams the god of light;
"How gaily blooms yon lofty plant,
"In native colours bright!

II.

"The root, the plant, the leaf, the flow'r,
"Alike our wonder raise;
"And all confess the fragrant stock,
"Renown'd in ancient days.

III.

"Some say, but one revolving age
"Beholds thy beauties spread;
"And rear aloft to genial suns
"Its highly blooming head.

IV.

"But thou, like Merit, kindly nurs'd,
"An early spring wilt know;
"While, check'd by rigid, frowning skies,
"Thy gems forget to glow.

V.

"Emblem of Genius rarely known,
"And still more rarely giv'n;
"To reap the good itself imparts,

"And share the gifts of Heav'n.

VI.

"Say, glorious stranger, rear'd erewhile
"In distant, sunny lands;
"Can either India more bestow,
"Than Albion's isle commands?

VII.

"In western and in southern climes
"Too long hast thou been plac'd;
"And India's sands, and Afric's wilds,
"Thy beauteous presence grac'd.

VIII.

"Deign then, O sov'reign plant, thy balm,
"On this our land bestow;
"And give thy flow'rs in all their grace
"And lustre here to blow."—

IX.

The Guardian Sylph, that watch'd the flow'r,
Confess'd before me stood;
And shook his bright and sunny locks,
And thus my suit withstood:

X.

"Cease, cease, he cry'd, such boons to ask,
"As scarce deserve a name;
"While Albion, favour'd from above,
"Can greater blessings claim.

XI.

"Still, still, their gems and spicy store,
"Let either India boast;
"And Afric vaunt the precious sands,

“That glitter on her coast.

XII.

“Not these, nor all the hidden wealth,
“That earth or sea possess;
“Can match those richer gifts of heav’n,
“Which fair Britannia bless.

XIII.

“Peace, Freedom, Wealth from farthest shores,
“By golden commerce brought;
“All these are hers, and ev’ry good,
“By happiest nations sought.

XIV.

“Nor *this* alone; here Genius blooms,
“A *Flow’r* excelling *mine*.
“Nor asks a whole revolving age,
“In glories to refine.

XV.

“Here too the Fair, with beauty bright,
“The hearts of heroes warm;
“Those *human blossoms* genial blow,
“And put forth ev’ry charm.

XVI.

“Cease then, *nor envy other climes*
“*Their beauties thinly strewn*;
“*But learn with decent pride to prize*
“*The blessings of your own*.”

Fab. III.

The Rose & Hornet

Fab. IV.

The Sensitive Plant

FABLE III.

The ROSE and the HORNET.

I.

DEEP in a lone sequester'd vale,
Where many' a streamlet flows;
And nurs'd by many' a gentle gale,
Soft bloom'd a damask Rose.

II.

The Summer's suns, the Zephyrs bland,
All own'd her peerless queen;
The honey'd Bee, Spring's sweetest child,
Oft' sought her breast serene.

III.

Her beauties op'ning on the day,
With ev'ry grace were crown'd;
Imbib'd the golden solar beam,
And deck'd the desart ground.

IV.

Daughter of Nature, still she blow'd,
Where human face ne'er shone;
And spread her blossoms to the view
But of the Sun alone.

V.

Pride of the East, a brighter glow,
Beyond our garden's bloom,
Bade her with heighten'd beauty blush,

And scatter rich perfume.

VI.

Her rudely rushing through the air
An angry HORNET 'spy'd;
Vow'd to enjoy the heav'nly flow'r,
In all her blooming pride.

VII.

Bold son of heat, with rudest haste,
His course he strait address'd;
To rifle all her charms in spite,
And riot on her breast.

VIII.

He search'd each leaf, each blossom wounds
With rude unhallow'd rage;
Yet nothing could his search explore,
His passion to assuage.

IX.

The beauteous flow'r, though wildly rent,
No sweetness would afford;
But hurt by many a vengeful thorn,
His rashness he deplor'd.

X.

At length, thus baffled and deceiv'd,
Enrag'd, he silence broke;
And now of ev'ry hope bereft,
He thus insulting spoke;

XI.

"Vain gaudy flow'r, they term thy breast
"Engaging, bright, and fair;
"Who seek thy bosom, ne'er shall find

"Or joy or sweetness there.

XII.

"The Bee indeed, thy fav'rite, still
"Says, Honey springs from thee;
"Yet nought but trouble, care, and pain,
"Hast thou bestow'd on me.

XIII.

"Then boast no more thy beauteous form
"That still excites desire;
"Since *Thorns* alone thou canst bestow,
"To quench a lover's fire."

XIV.

Then thus the Rose,—"Intruder vile!
"Who thus would'st force employ;
"Though arm'd with pow'r; know 'tis not thine
"To taste substantial joy.

XV.

"The Bee, who sips each sweet that glows
"In lawn or shady bow'r,
"Tastes all the honey as he flies,
"But never wounds the flow'r.

XVI.

"Whilst thou, both impious and unwise,
"Of all our tribes the scorn:
"For ev'ry violated sweet
"Shalt always meet a thorn."

FABLE IV.

The SENSITIVE PLANT.

I.

RARE plant, or flow'r, or nymph-like tree,
With human sense endu'd;
Why dost thou shrink beneath the touch,
And bear but to be *view'd*?

II.

Say does some Hamadryad chuse
In that green stem to live?
And to her highly favour'd shrine
This strong sensation give?

III.

Well for thy sake their ancient oaks
The wood-nymphs might forsake;
And in thy purer bosom with
Their lov'd abodes to make.

IV.

Yet why indignant from each hand
Alike dost thou retire?
Does ev'ry touch, replete with ill,
Alike thy hate inspire?

V.

Too cautious nymph! well might'st thou deign
To some thy breast unfold;
Sure those would *worship* at the *touch*,

Who *love* when they *behold*.

VI.

Shrunk in herself, with modest grace
The Plant thus fair reply'd,
"Whate'er my source, my maiden state
"But ill agrees with pride[10].

VII.

"In purity alone I joy;
"I seek no other fame,
"But that which from chaste wishes grows,
"And suits a virgin's name.

VIII.

"Nymphs of the woods, the groves, and streams,
"Too oft have found the smart
"Of looser fires, which, once indulg'd,
"Will rankle in the heart.

IX.

"Me no rude touch shall e'er profane;
"That guard if once I leave,
"Of ev'ry virtue well I know
"Mankind would me bereave.

X.

"Nor this alone, know, curious youth,
"A thorny mail I own;
"Foe to the rash unthinking hand
"That violates my throne.

XI.

"And ev'n within this spotless breast
"Does deadly venom spring;
"So he that ravishes the sweets,

"May meet the mortal sting.

XII.

"Go then, and range from flow'r to flow'r,
"Amidst the gaudy train:
"But sacred be my homely plant,
"To bright-hair'd Vesta's reign.

XIII.

"She ceas'd; nor I the flow'r profan'd,
"To chastity devote;
"But on the sand with rustic pen,
"This sacred moral wrote:

XIV.

The Nymph who slights strict virtue's guard,
Shall quickly meet a snare;
And Pleasures, rais'd on Virtue's bane,
Are fatal, as they're fair.

Fab. V.

The Hawthorn & Primrose

Fab. VI.

The White Rose & Red

FABLE V.

The HAWTHORN and the PRIMROSE.

I.

BENEATH a wild and rustic shade,
Impervious to the view;
In the sweet-smiling month of May,
A lovely Primrose grew.

II.

The gentle child of early Spring
By bounteous FLORA crown'd;
With vernal beauties born to deck
The unfrequented ground.

III.

The brightest dye, the sweetest scent,
Her yellow leaves could yield;
Were spent upon the empty air,
Nor e'er adorn'd the field.

IV.

For round her grew a bushy brake,
With many' a thorn beset;
And many' a weed obscene and foul
Deform'd the green retreat.

V.

But high above the rest advanc'd
A spreading Hawthorn rose;
Whose lengthen'd branches overhung

The seat of her repose.

VI.

Her gem-like blossoms wide display'd
The darkling dell adorn;
With grateful fragrance kiss the wind,
And drink the dew of morn'.

VII.

Her the lone Rose in mournful guise
Full many a day had ey'd;
And thus at length one summer's eve
She all impatient cry'd.

VIII.

"Ah Thorn! the bane of all my hopes!
"Ah Thorn! that wound'st my peace!
"Still must I view thy branches spread,
"And still my woes increase:

IX.

"I who long since had, happier far,
"Been by some fair caress'd;
"Had drunk the radiance of her eye,
"And panted on her breast?

X.

"What have I done, O wretch! that still
"This evil treatment meets;
"Or hast thou aught in lieu to give
"To those who lose my sweets?"

XI.

She said:—the Hawthorn thus reply'd,
"Fond pageant of an hour!
"Art *thou* displeas'd because *I* bloom,

“Though shelter’d by my pow’r?

XII.

“And know’st thou not that but for *me*
“Thy boasted bloom were vain;
“By grazing herds trod under foot,
“And level’d with the plain?

XIII.

“*Thee* I protect; *myself* am known
“Among the warlike race;
“Whom Nature arms with prompt defence
“Of most excelling grace.

XIV.

“Nor idly I these weapons wear,
“Nor idle is my bloom;
“One arms me for myself and thee;
“The other sheds perfume.

XV.

“And oft as this returning month
“Adds vigour to the year;
“Crown’d with my gems in rustic dance
“The nymphs and swains appear.

XVI.

“Me the fleet hare, and tim’rous fawn,
“Seek at their greatest need;
“They rest secure beneath my shade,
“And on my bounty feed.

XVII.

“But most the plaintive Philomel,
“Sweet warbler of the grove,
“Joys ’midst my branches to repose,

"And sing her hapless love.

XVIII.

"Against my thorns her bosom plac'd,
"She strains her tuneful throat;
"And by my useful aid exalts
"Each sweetly trilling note.

XIX.

"Sacred to FLORA, of her train
"Although no flow'r am I;
"And born to flourish many a moon,
"When thou shalt fade and die."

XX.

"Cease then, nor envy this my state,
"Which must *thy own* defend;
"The thorns I bear shall save thy flow'r,
"And prove thy surest friend."

XXI.

So spake the HAWTHORN, justly wise;
The ROSE unansw'ring heard:
I caught the Moral, as it rose;
And thus its sense appear'd:

XXII.

Life's humble vale is most secure;
Cares on th' exalted wait:
Yet those who well the weak protect
Deserve UNENVY'D STATE.

FABLE VI.

The WHITE ROSE and the RED.

I.

CONTENDING beauties, whom the doom
Of Fate has still assign'd
Two fragrant rival flow'rs to blow,
And scent the western wind;

II.

The WHITE ROSE and the BLUSHING RED,
Each one the garden's pride,
With equal grace their leaves display'd,
And flourish'd side by side.

III.

The *first* of spotless beauty vain
That sudden caught the eye,
The *last* attentive praise to gain
From her more sanguine dye.

IV.

Of sov'reign virtue both well known,
Both favour'd from above:
Still full of glory rose each flow'r,
Emblems of gentle Love.

V.

Yet 'twixt their stocks wild feuds subsist,
To work them lasting woe;
Whilst each of other still complain'd,

And strove her overthrow.

VI.

“Shame, said the RED, on that pale hue,
“Which speaks the wearer’s heart;
“That, void of virtue as of grace,
“No colour can impart.

VII.

“Unlike the blushes that adorn
“My flow’r with colour meet,
“AURORA’S, when she wakes the day,
“Appear not half so sweet.”

VIII.

“Nay! Shame on thee, the White reply’d,
“Whose blush by *guilt* was giv’n:
“Ev’n by the blood of VENUS shed,
“Our patroness in Heav’n[11].

IX.

“Till then like me all Roses were,
“Whose ancient stock I claim;
“And, void of crime, still reprobate
“Their colour with their name.”

X.

“This and much more she angry said:
“But JOVE’S immortal flow’r[12]
“Their ill-meant conversation broke,
“With soft, persuasive pow’r.

XI.

“Forbear, she cry’d, in haughty guise,
“Reproachful to contend:

“Whoe’er the victrix, small her gain,
“That thus can lose a friend.

XII.

“Ally’d by Nature in your kind,
“And diff’ring but in Hue:
“You both possess intrinsic worth,
“And outward beauty too.

XIII.

“Long was the strife your[13] ancient state,
“In this our isle pursu’d;
“Which many a year drench’d either Rose,
“In seas of kindred blood.

XIV.

“Oh! may no more such horrors rise,
“Within our Garden’s pale:
“But all with emulation strive,
“That concord may prevail!

XV.

“May civil feuds and ranc’rous hate
“From hence be banish’d far;
“Foul is that strife, where friends contest,
“And wage inhuman war.

XVI.

“Then to this solemn truth give ear;
“*Where trifles thus are priz’d,*
“*If two for victory contend;*
“*They both will be despis’d.*”

Fab. VII.

The Crocus

Fab. VIII.

Anemone & Passion Flower

FABLE VII.

The CROCUS.

I.

"SAY, beauteous flow'r, whose burnish'd leaves
"With Spring's own livery glow:
"In these bleak months, why dost thou chuse
"T' adorn a waste of snow?

II.

"Say, dost thou grudge to summer-skies,
"That bloom divinely bright:
"Or, are thy beauties clearer seen,
"Through this thin Robe of White?

III.

"The Snow-drop, thy companion fair,
"As well thy foil might prove,
"And both might bloom in seasons sweet,
"And far from hence remove.

IV.

"To Summer's gayer months benign;
"Should'st thou transfer thy reign,
"Thy beauties still would brighter glow,
"And doubly grace the plain.—"

V.

I said:—the lovely smiling flow'r,
The beauty of its race;
And friendly to the sons of men,

Reply'd with decent grace:

VI.

"Nature's great book before thee set:
"She blames thee not to scan
"Her works on every side display'd,
"The fit employ of man.

VII.

"When Spring and Summer glad the earth,
"Ten thousand beauties bloom;
"And various flow'rs of brightest hue,
"Diffuse a rich perfume.

VIII.

"Autumn of fruits her tribute brings,
"With, yellow harvests crown'd;
"Then laugh the hills and vales, and meads
"With richest plenty crown'd.

IX.

"Winter, at length, with gloomy brow,
"Comes on to close the year;
"When flow'rs and fruits, and all their race,
"Almost extinct appear.

X.

"Yet still some few the gracious Pow'rs
"Permit of these to bloom:
"Nor heap alike all FLORA's race,
"In one remorseless tomb.

XI.

"And soon as to the wat'ry Signs,
"The Sun retreats again;
"Then she my flamy dyes awakes,

“And bids me deck the plain.

XII.

“Nor less my worth because ’midst snows,
“My head I early rear;
“My flow’r still fresh and lively blooms,
“As at the closing year.

XIII.

“And know, when Autumn’s Sun prevails,
“My kindred flow’rs arise;
“In forms which heav’nly pow’rs might praise,
“And scent the ambient skies[14].

XIV.

“These ev’ry dismal gloom dispel;
“Which mis’ry can impart,
“And joy and gladness still inspire,
“And harmonize the heart.

XV.

“Meanwhile my earlier station here,
“(Health’s harbinger) I keep,
“To glad the sad and cloudy days;
“When Spring’s soft Zephyrs sleep.

XVI.

“So, in the Winter of his days,
“Chear thou thy drooping friend;
“His sorrows sooth, his griefs assuage,
“And prompt assistance lend.

XVII.

“So, when his fate and fortune lour,
“Thy better aid impart;
“And with thy fortune’s warmer ray,

"Revive his dying heart.

XVIII.

She said;—the moral well became
The sweet, propitious flow'r;
I mark'd the lore with heedful mind,
And own'd fair FRIENDSHIP'S pow'r.

FABLE VIII.

The ANEMONE and the PASSION FLOWER.

I.

"BRIGHT flow'r renown'd in ancient times,
"Amidst the Cyprian shades;
"The theme of wonder and of praise
"To soft Sidonian maids.

II.

"Hail! Goddess-born! hail! thou produc'd
"From the bright mingled flood
"Of VENUS' tears, as bards have sung,
"And her ADONIS' blood.

III.

"Rich are thy blossoms in each hue
"That can inchant the fight;
"And strike at once the ravish'd eye
"With wonder and delight.

IV.

"Hail! sacred Plant, born but to shew
"ADONIS' yearly wound;
"By gentle VENUS taught to bloom,
"With heav'nly beauties crown'd."

V.

I said; when lo; an awful form
Upon my orgies broke;
And, like some bright cœlestial pow'r,

In lofty accents spoke:

VI.

“Hence, thou profane; nor wound me thus
“With thy unhallow’d song;
“But turn, and see, who blossoms here,
“To whom thy strains belong.

VII.

“The Tyrian Boy, and VENUS’ self;
“Before my face shall fly;
“Their beauty gone, their lustre lost,
“And all their charms shall die.

VIII.

“I am the only flow’r on earth,
“With signs divine adorn’d;
“By me, of Heav’n thus favour’d high,
“All Pagan Gods are scorn’d.

IX.

“The purple ring, the bloody crown,
“The nails, and guilty spear,
“That slew the Lord of Life, behold
“In my symbolic sphere.

X.

“Deep to Lethéan shades my root
“Still downward seems to tend;
“As from the Cross’s sacred base,
“To Hell it would descend.

XI.

“Then here thy mis-plac’d rev’rence shew,
“And bow before this shrine;
“Where Angel Hosts themselves might pray,

"And own the Plant divine."

XII.

She said; ADONIS' flow'ret bow'd,
As to superior pow'r;
My conscious heart was struck with dread;
Before the wond'rous flow'r.

XIII.

But whilst intent my rev'rence there
With honour due to pay;
The heav'ns withdrew their useful light,
And clos'd the hours of day.

XIV.

I look'd;—no more those signs I saw,
Which had my rev'rence drawn:
For ever shut the mirrour stood[15],
Which thus had grac'd the lawn.

XV.

A while I gaz'd; at length I cry'd,
And art THOU mortal too?
Are all THY sacred beauties fled,
Or faded on the view?

XVI.

Vain then is all external awe,
That images impart;
And HE *that rules above is best*
Recorded in the HEART.

Fab. IX.

The Lily & Narcissus

Fab. X.

The Ivy & Sweet Briar

FABLE IX.

The LILY and NARCISSUS.

I.

"AH! hapless discontented flow'r,
"That yellow leaves adorn;
"Who once in life's gay vernal pride
"The brightest nymphs could'st scorn.

II.

"Hard was thy lot, and short thy date,
"By form too fair undone;
"Thou met'st, alas! a timeless doom,
"Ere half thy course was run.

III.

"Unhappy, self-admiring youth,
"A lesson thou shalt prove;
"T' avoid vain pride, that idle toy,
"And shun prepost'rous love.

IV.

"Fair when a boy, now chang'd, no more
"Those beauties can'st thou boast;
"But ever sadly may'st repent
"In vain those beauties lost.

V.

"View yonder Lily's snowy pride,
"Sprung from a seed divine;
"Then own how much her beauty bright,

"Fond flow'r, out-rivals thine!"

VI.

With modest grace the Lily bow'd
The honours of her head;
Then, with a sweet and modest grace,
She thus instructive said:

VII.

"Well may they droop, to whom their fate,
"With form divinely fair,
"No other, better boon has giv'n
"To make that beauty dear.

VIII.

"For not this glossy white I bear,
"Delight of human eyes;
"Nor this so graceful form admir'd,
"Are what I wish to prize.

IX.

"From heav'nly strain[16] I first arose,
"Emblem of chaste desires;
"And still that chastity retain,
"And check unhallow'd fires.

X.

"No empty self-admirer, I
"Would Folly's trophies raise;
"Such *virtue* then let all applaud,
"Not empty *beauty* praise."

XI.

She said; and strait the moral found
Deep entrance in my breast;
BEAUTY, *if not with* VIRTUE *join'd,*

Is but an idle jest.

FABLE X.

The IVY and SWEET BRIAR.

I.

"HAIL, sacred Ivy! hail," I said,
"Devote to Bacchus' shrine;
"Parent of wreaths, which deck the brows
"Of Gods and men divine.

II.

"Why call thee baleful, why despise
"Thy ancient friendly race;
"Who clasp the Elm and sturdy Oak
"In mystical embrace.

III.

"Minerva's bird too deigns to dwell
"Where thou art frequent seen;
"Who loves the calm and peaceful hour,
"And courts the deep serene.

IV.

"Thou, like the Vine, thy patron's joy,
"Thy nurture wilt receive,
"And, twining close with friendly arms,
"Wilt still supported live.

V.

"With Phœbus' laurel justly thou
"May'st hold divided claim;
"The crown of glorious conquerors,

"And meed of deathless fame."

VI.

Thus whilst I spoke, the West wind rose,
And scatter'd rich perfume,
From thickets, where sweet Eglantine
Appear'd in vernal bloom.

VII.

Thence a soft voice salutes my ear,
Which thus complaining said;
"Fond youth, to yonder noxious weed
"Why all these honours paid?

VIII.

"The Vine, 'tis true, will wed her Elm;
"But view the dow'r she brings!
"From yonder steril, forc'd embrace
"Alas! what profit springs?

IX.

"Like a false friend, too sure, she twines,
"Intent but to destroy;
"As Jealousy, Love's offspring, still
"Impoisons all Love's joy.

X.

"How poor that *virtue*, which retires
"To solitude for aid!
"*How weak that wisdom*, which can shine
"Alone in night's dun shade!

XI.

"And what, though gods and godlike men
"Their victor brows have bound
"With ivy'd wreaths; is then the weed

"For that alone renown'd?

XII.

"Say rather, in that purer age,
"When spotless honour reign'd;
"The victor, seeking only fame,
"A worthless crown obtain'd.

XIII.

"Hence Ivy, Parsley, Oaken Boughs,
"Their labour well repaid,
"Who not for gain, but glory's charms,
"Their gen'rous strength display'd.

XIV.

"But thou, regardful of fair truth,
"And glory justly gain'd;
"Scorn the frail claim of upstarts base,
"By such false means obtain'd.

XV.

"*Not borrow'd names from high descent,*
"*Are real honour's meed;*
"*But they alone are* GREAT, *whose fame*
"*Springs from* THEIR OWN *fair deed.*"

Fab. XI.

The Violet Transplanted

Fab. XII.

The Tulip & Amaranth

FABLE XI.

The VIOLET TRANSPLANTED.

I.

WHERE fragrant field-flow'rs, gaily spread,
Drink deep the morning dew;
Close by a murm'ring riv'let's side
An humble Vi'let grew.

II.

To her the cultur'd spot unknown,
She bloom'd in her retreat;
And there in native fragrance bless'd,
Dispers'd a world of sweet.

III.

But yet not undisturb'd her lot
By Providence was cast;
For oft' the herds went grazing forth
And laid the meadow waste.

IV.

And oft' the trav'ler's careless step
Had laid her on the plain;
Yet, by the living streamlet fed,
She soon reviv'd again.

V.

At length a curious Florist saw
The sweetly blooming flow'r;
Call'd her the field's and garden's pride,

And plac'd her in his bow'r.

VI.

Here, with a thousand beauties rang'd,
Her elegance was lost;
No more the cultur'd spot she grac'd;
No more fair FLORA's boast.

VII.

Abandon'd by his hand, who first
Her charms with pleasure view'd;
She in her rise beheld her fate,
And now neglected stood.

VIII.

She droop'd, she pin'd; the richer soil
No nurture could afford;
And oft' in vain her humbler lot
The fading flow'r deplor'd.

IX.

The happier tribes that flourish'd round
Did each her state deride;
Rejoicing that she paid so dear
For what they deem'd her pride.

X.

The Sun in Cancer flam'd aloft
Dry thirst her moisture drank;
In vain she wish'd the lucent flood,
Or shade of osiers dank.

XI.

Oppress'd at length she drooping fell,
As ready to expire;
Her bosom unresisting spread

To Sol's consuming fire.

XII.

When lo! from heav'n a gentle rain
Cool'd that too fervid ray;
And soon reviv'd the beauteous flow'r,
Which glow'd upon the day.

XIII.

Her bloom restor'd, renew'd again;
Her former lord attends;
And midst the fairest of the fair
She numbers now her friends.

XIV.

Yet, deeply struck with former ills,
An humble flow'r she blooms;
No pride that lovely bosom knows,
Whence Zephyr steals perfumes;

XV.

And to the Fair this useful truth
She evermore reveals;
That she best knows her Beauty's force,
Who modestly conceals.

FABLE XII.

The TULIP and the AMARANTH.

I.

WHERE various beauties mingled rise,
All grateful to the view;
With variegated beauties bright,
A gaudy TULIP grew.

II.

Its leaves with flamy splendour shine,
Mix'd with more vivid green;
And all the tints that deck heav'n's bow
Upon the flow'r are seen.

III.

The gently passing vernal air
The beauteous plant caress'd;
And ZEPHYR ever pleas'd reclin'd
Upon the charmer's breast.

IV.

While near at hand the GENTLE FLOW'R,
Call'd AMARANTH, below
The blooming guest of JOVE's own seats,
Deign'd in her prime to grow.

V.

Yet she with hairs uncouthly deck'd,
Unlike the Tulip race,
Is not among the flowr'ets found,

Whose colours mark their grace.

VI.

This swell'd her rival's empty pride,
And, vain of empty shew;
The Amaranth askance she ey'd,
And thus contemptuous spoke;

VII.

"Of all the flow'rs that deck the lawn,
"The progeny of Spring;
"And all that of maturer birth
"The later seasons bring:

VIII.

"Of all that for their fairer forms
"May raise the justest claim;
"Of all that men for beauty prize,
"Or from perfection name:

IX.

"Behold me, first and fairest known,
"Still lov'd and valu'd most;
"Soft daughter of the vernal hour,
"The cultur'd garden's boast.

X.

"Why deign I then so long with *these*
"To dwell without reserve;
"That scarce, though vulgar eyes they charm,
"The name of FLOW'R deserve?"

XI.

The blooming Amaranth, unmov'd,
Repress'd her forward pride;
The boaster's arrogance despis'd,

And wisely thus reply'd;

XII.

"Yes, gaudy thing; thy various hues
"Are fine indeed and gay;
"Glaring thou glitter'st on the sight,
"And flaunt'st it to the day!

XIII.

"No flow'r around more bright can blow,
"In beauty more mature!
"But tell me, false, frail, giddy thing,
"How long shall that endure?

XIV.

"Me, not the least of FLORA's tribe,
"Me thou hast laugh'd to scorn,
"And deem'd my claim to beauty vain,
"Although cœlestial born.

XV.

"For know, though scarce allow'd by thee
"To rank among the flow'rs;
"From Heav'n I draw my high descent,
"And bloom'd in Eden's bow'rs.

XVI.

"And still eternal is my race,
"No frail decay I know;
"But, emblem of the first great Spring,
"For ever bloom below.

XVII.

"But thou! the pageant of an hour,
"Too quickly shalt deplore
"Those beauties with'ring all away,

"Which fade, to charm no more.

XVIII.

"*Thou*, wretch! no second Spring shalt see,
"To renovate thy bloom;
"Whilst *I* survive the stroke of fate,
"And triumph o'er the tomb.

XIX.

"Cease then thy boast! in Wisdom's lore
"Go learn thyself to know;
"And by *her* never-failing rule
"Judge all things here below.

XX.

"*A fleeting joy, a fading bloom,*
"*May charm the ravish'd sight;*
"*That only which is truly good,*
"*Is lasting, as 'tis bright.*"

Fab. XIII.

The Youth & Honeysuckle

Fab. XIV.

Belinda & the Blue-bell or Venus's Looking-Glass

FABLE XIII.

THE HONEYSUCKLE.

I.

AT height of noon, a youth reclin'd
Beneath a woodbine bow'r;
Defended by whose thick'ning shade,
He pass'd the sultry hour,

II.

But when mild breezes cool'd the air,
And length'ning shadows rose;
He scann'd with philosophic mind
The place of his repose.

III.

High over-head the twining boughs,
Where thousand blossoms glow,
Of ev'ry beam of light bereave
The cool alcove below.

IV.

"Ah! (said the youth) ungrateful still!
"And dost thou thus repay
"The bounties of that glorious God,
"Who wak'd thee into day?

V.

"While he in his meridian course
"Illumines wide the sky;
"Dost thou, O wretch, resist his pow'r,

"And all his beams defy?

VI.

"Unlike to thee, ingrate, behold
"The Sun-flow'r drinks his light;
"Lives, to his radiance ever true,
"And with him sinks to night.

VII.

"But like some faithless fav'rite you,
"Or some more faithless fair;
"Spurn at the very pow'r that grac'd,
"And made you what you are.

VIII.

"Oh! useful lesson to be learn'd,
"With scanty hand to pour
"Those blessings, which, when once conferr'd,
"Shall ne'er be thought on more!"

IX.

Unmov'd the beauteous Woodbine heard,
Then, nodding from on high,
Shook the green honours of her brow,
As thus she made reply:

X.

"Vain is the hypocritic plea
"That gilds the selfish end;
"And base the poor unfeeling heart
"That ill repays a friend.

XI.

"For *me*, not such my care ill-plac'd;—
"My blessings unconfin'd,
"I give each gentle breathing air,

"And scatter to the wind.

XII.

"What if my leaves exclude that Pow'r
"By whom thou say'st I live;
"Yet He beholds me, while I bloom,
"A grateful tribute give.

XIII.

"My fragrance, nay, that friendly shade,
"Which you ungrateful blame,
"Are off'rings still to PHŒBUS' self,
"Who nurs'd them with his flame.

XIV.

"He, for the use of base mankind,
"Bade me all these dispense:
"For whom I spread these vernal charms,
"So pleasing to the sense.

XV.

"Ungrateful THOU, thy ill-meant charge
"Take back, so mis-apply'd:
"And fairly reason with thy heart,
"And check thy selfish pride.

XVI.

"Thou, in my shadows late reclin'd,
"Could'st pass the hours at ease;
"*Then*, what is *now* ingratitude,
"Thy narrow mind could please.

XVII.

"Take back the charge; thy maxim too;
With thee let others use:—
"Keep THOU this moral in thy mind,

"T' enjoy, but not abuse."

FABLE XIV.

THE BLUE-BELL; or, VENUS'S LOOKING-GLASS.

I.

O'ER verdant lawns, and dappled meads,
The young BELINDA stray'd;
On ev'ry tree, on ev'ry flow'r,
Philosophis'd the maid.

II.

The Cowslip, and the Primrose too,
Had oft-times been her theme;
And yellow Crocus' flaming dyes
Had ting'd her waking dream.

III.

For, roving o'er the pathless grass,
Or through the woodland wild;
She oft with Contemplation walk'd
Bright Fancy's sweetest child.

IV.

Absorb'd and lost in Nature's maze,
Then rapt from earth she stood;
And, pleas'd, in all his various works,
The great Creator view'd.

V.

'Twas smiling May; the op'ning year
With vernal grace was crown'd;

And ev'ry plant, and ev'ry flow'r,
Diffus'd fresh fragrance round.

VI.

From cultur'd gardens far remote
The beauteous charmer rov'd;
And listen'd to the birds wild notes,
And rang'd those meads she lov'd.

VII.

To court the touch of her fair hand,
Each field-flow'r eager press'd;
To bask beneath her funny eyes,
And kiss her snowy breast.

VIII.

Amongst the crowd, a flow'r she 'spy'd,
Long since well known to fame;
Of *Venus' Looking-glass* whose pride
Assum'd the pompous name.

IX.

"And how! she cry'd, can'st thou display,
"To captivate the sight,
"More than the stream, which yonder rolls
"Its glassy mirrour bright?"

X.

She sought in vain; a bell-shap'd flow'r,
With Vi'let blossoms crown'd:
Diffus'd itself with mingled corn,
And purpled o'er the ground.

XI.

She pluck'd, but strait away she cast
The vain pretender far;

Which angry ruffled all its flow'rs,
In vegetable war:

XII.

"What had bright VENUS' mirrour done,
"Thus to be cast aside?
"Or how (she said) could VENUS' Nymph
"The Goddess' gift deride?"

XIII.

"Peace! angry thing! BELINDA said;
"Not VENUS I despise;
"But *you*, who by your own false glass
"Would cheat deluded eyes.

XIV.

"What boots it thus your high descent,
"As Goddess-born, to claim;
"If not one smallest trace appear
"Of your exalted name?

XV.

"Go! in yon' *real* mirrour view
"The form which you possess;
"Then speak but what you *really are*;
"And be your boasting less.

XVI.

"A Blue-bell of the finest dye,
"You well may be allow'd;
"But *Venus' Looking-glass* in vain
"Would cheat a giddy crowd."

XVII.

The haughty flow'r corrected stood.—
Attend, ye British fair:

Let not appearances *prevail*;
Be real worth *your care*.

XVIII.

And know, whoe'er by vain pretence
Shall others seek to blind;
Must stand abash'd, when brought before
The MIRROUR OF THE MIND.

Fab. XV.

The Larkspur & Myrtle

Fab. XVI.

The Poppy & Sun-Flower

FABLE XV.

The LARKSPUR and the MYRTLE.

I.

FAV'RITE of MARS, amidst the tribes
That on bright FLORA wait,
And swell the glories of her reign
With more than regal state;

II.

The Larkspur, plant of ancient stock,
Advanc'd his ensign high;
And claim'd th' immortal wreath of fame,
Due to a Deity.

III.

Like some bold warrior's is his mien;
Helmet and spurs he wears;
And on his coat of vary'd dyes
Each warlike blazon bears.

IV.

Proud of his form, and of the[17] Pow'r
That from his contact sprung;
Exalted above all his peers,
Thus Pride inspir'd his tongue:

V.

"Ye painted, puling race, avaunt!
"To greater merit yield;
"Forego the honours of the day,

"When I dispute the field.

VI.

"Far hence your tinsel trappings bear
"To some luxuriant bed,
"Where, nurs'd by ZEPHYR's wanton gales,
"Their idle bloom may spread!

VII.

"In ME behold the warrior's grace,
"And monarch's pow'r display'd;
"In me, to Heav'n itself ally'd,
"In martial pomp array'd.

VIII.

"Emblem of thund'ring MARS I rise,
"My boast and offspring too;
"Then own the progeny divine,
"And pay the tribute due."

IX.

The Myrtle heard;—fair VENUS' care,
With peaceful honours crown'd;
The glory of the genial hour,
By lovers still renown'd.

X.

"And how! said she, redoubted knight,
"Would'st thou with US engage?
"Did ever MARS, of glory vain,
"Rough wars with VENUS wage?

XI.

"*Her* flow'r I am; *her* name I boast,
"Who can mankind subdue;
"And by a gentler method far

"Than any known to you.

XII.

"Say, boaster, what are realms destroy'd
"By many a foughten field;
"When desp'rate battles, bravely won,
"A bloody harvest yield?

XIII.

"Can these atone the dreadful ills
"That wasteful wars supply;
"When from the horrid din of arms
"The Loves and Graces fly?

XIV.

"Remember, when the blue-ey'd Maid
"With NEPTUNE did contend:
"Say, who the greatest gift produc'd;
"And let our contest end.

XV.

"The Palm to PALLAS was decreed,
"Who nam'd fair ATHENS; there
"The warlike steed, great NEPTUNE's boast,
"Yields to the Olive fair.

XVI.

"Then thou, proud Knight, exult no more,
"Abase thy haughty crest;
"Give honour due to meek-ey'd Peace,
"And Love, her genial guest."

XVII.

Let then great MARS *his Pow'r resign*
To brighter VENUS' *fame;*
And quit the glories of the field,

When LOVE *disputes the claim.*

FABLE XVI.

The POPPY and the SUN-FLOWER.

I.

TRANSPLANTED from the neighb'ring mead,
Which long her presence grac'd;
The crimson POPPY rear'd her head,
In the rich garden plac'd.

II.

Thence, fann'd by many a gentle gale,
Full oft her scent is borne;
Both when the ev'ning shades prevail,
And at the rise of morn.

III.

At noon, when ev'n without *her* aid
The flow'rs all droop'd around;
CLYTIE, bright PHŒBUS' love-sick maid,
With all *his* glories crown'd,

IV.

Still turning to his orb her face,
Survey'd th' intruding guest;
And, foe to ev'ry sleepy pow'r,
The stranger thus address'd;

V.

"Long have we seen each field-flow'r bloom
"Our cultur'd gardens shame:
"Which, hither brought, triumphant rise,

"And share our nobler fame:

VI.

"Thou, drowsy POPPY, too, at last,
"Our rival dost appear,
"Replete with drugs, whose pois'nous strength
"Corrupts the ambient air.

VII.

"But think not here, insulting weed!
"(Fair CERES' hate and bane)
"Thy drowsy magic shall prevail,
"To blot our brighter reign.

VIII.

"Go, seek thy fields; with noxious weeds
"Divide detested sway:
"Or, where thy slumbers nought disturb,
"Shun the glad face of day.

IX.

"Whilst I, to PHŒBUS ever true,
"Rejoicing in his light;
"To the great God his tribute pay,
"And check the pow'rs of Night."

X.

She spoke;—The nodding POPPY then,
Serene, made this reply:
"Proud flow'r, I envy not thy state,
"Nor coat of richest dye.

XI.

"What boast'st thou of his genial pow'r,
"Who slighted all thy charms;
"And, in thy beauty's brightest noon,

"Fled to another's arms?

XII.

"How didst thou mourn, and how revenge?
"LEUCOTHOE[18] speaks thy crime;
"Whose odours still to Heav'n ascend,
"And shall to latest time.

XIII.

"Not *Love*, but *Pity*, mov'd high Heav'n
"To make thee what thou art;
"And place amidst the blooming flow'rs
"A Nymph with broken heart.

XIV.

"Cease then to vaunt thy heav'nly love,
"Nor me so much despise;
"Full plain th' advantages appear,
"Which from my pow'r arise.

XV.

"Me CERES *hates not*; but my seed
"Great Nature near her sows;
"Where, far unlike a noxious weed,
"The beauteous flow'ret blows.

XVI.

"Sleep, gentle God, the ease of grief,
"To weary man I bring;
"From care and pain the sweetest balm,
"Of vig'rous health the spring.

XVII.

"I, to the wretched friendly still,
"The mourning captives aid;
"My succour to the poor extend,

"And ease the love-sick maid.

XVIII.

"Then what Heav'n order'd for the best,
"Do thou no longer blame:
"Let *me* old MORPHEUS' honours share,
"Joy *thou* in PHŒBUS' flame.

XIX.

"More need I add?—Search Earth around,
"And thou shalt truly say,
"*More Virtues in Life's shade will bloom,*
"*Than in her blaze of day*."

Fab. XVII.

The Iris & Rose

Fab. XVIII.

The Nasturtium & Wall flower

FABLE XVII.

The IRIS, or FLOWER de LUCE, and the ROSE.

I.

YES, there are some who, proudly vain
  Still boast of others' due;
With empty titles cheat the crowd,
  And set false shows to view.

II.

Such ever ancient worth disgrace,
  Make real titles scorn'd;
While by bright Honour's genuine race
  Those titles are adorn'd.

III.

The fairest of sweet FLORA's tribe
  Boast not the proudest name;
Nor men, with gaudiest titles deck'd,
  Are truest sons of Fame.

IV.

What art thou, bold and spreading flow'r,
  In fields and gardens known;
That still assum'st a Monarch's grace,
  And claim'st a Pageant throne?

V.

"Genius of nations, guardian pow'rs,
  "That still on Monarchs wait!

"You your own plant shall still protect,
"An emblem of your state.

VI.

"And, Goddess of the painted Bow!
"Still to thy flow'r prove true;
"Ally'd to thee, I justly claim
"Thy name and colours too[19].

VII.

"Which then of all the painted train
"That swell this garden's pride,
"Shall with my honour'd name compare,
"Or sway with me divide?"

VIII.

This mark'd the Rose, a modest flow'r,
With maiden blushes bright;
Who, vex'd to hear the boaster's vaunt,
Asserts her native right.

IX.

"What are thy titles vain, she said,
"That claim superior sway?
"Or why should all fair Flora's tribes
"A rule like thine obey?

X.

"False is thy boast; thy title vain
"Not Gallia's self will own;
"Whose *real* Lilies droop and fade,
"Where-e'er my flow'rs are known.

XI.

"Why Iris?—Why by Heav'n's own bow
"Would'st thou thus climb to fame?

"Or cannot many a vary'd flow'r
"Exert a fairer claim?

XII.

"Plain FLAG thou art;—let that suffice;
"With LILIES I contend;
"But flow'rs like thine I still regard,
"Alike as foe or friend."

XIII.

The vain pretender heard, abash'd,
And hung her drooping head;
While to the genial fun her leaves
The ROSE expanding spread.

XIV.

Her odour strait proclaim'd her queen
Of all the smiling flow'rs;
While the Bee sought the fragrant breast,
And left his honey'd bow'rs.

XV.

Thus to the ROSE the meed was giv'n;
FLORA confirm'd her reign;
And worth, like her's, approv'd by Heav'n,
Shall Heav'n itself maintain.

FABLE XVIII.

The NASTURTIUM and the WALL FLOWER.

I.

AGAINST a funny fence below
The fair NASTURTIUM plac'd,
Beheld how well its highest tops
The fragrant WALL-FLOW'R grac'd.

II.

Without some useful kind support
Unable to survive;
Ill could she bear another flow'r
By the same means should thrive.

III.

At length, one sultry summer's noon,
When radiant PHŒBUS shone
On both alike with chearing ray,
She envious thus begun:

IV.

"Had I the WALL-FLOW'R's fragrant scent,
"Would I alone thus bloom;
"On yonder peak obscurely dwell,
"And waste my rich perfume!

V.

"For shame, yield to inferior flow'rs
"That strange and uncouth place;

“Nor, like some noxious worthless weed,
“Nurse there thy beauteous race.

VI.

“Besides, *I* claim the humbler boon,
“Against this fence to blow;
“While thee the more indulgent Heav’n
“May safely place below.”

VII.

She spoke;—the WALL-FLOW’R thus reply’d,
“Ambition is not mine;
“My native place is still my joy:
“Do thou delight in thine.

VIII.

“Full well I know that perils still
“On frequent change attend:
“And they oft spoil their present state,
“Who hasty strive to mend.

IX.

“Nor less can I *thy* drift observe,
“Who, envious of my lot,
“Would’st me of ev’ry help bereave,
“Drawn from my native spot.

X.

“Too selfish flow’r, who vainly this
“Would’st me of life deprive;
“And by my downfall think’st to rise,
“And on my ruin thrive.

XI.

“Know, that th’ all-chearing lamp of day
“On both alike bestows

“His sov’reign gifts; for All his light
“Without distinction glows.

XII.

“Is not that source of genial fire
“Sufficient *both* to warm,
“That thou should’st thus unkindly seek
“Thy quiet neighbour’s harm?

XIII.

“And what if I consenting give,
“Ambitious! thy desire?
“Were I now low in ashes laid,
“Say, could’st thou climb the higher?

XIV.

“For shame, th’ ungen’rous wish forego,
“Rejoice in others’ joy;
“And lengthen’d scenes of double bliss
“Shall all thy hours employ.

XV.

“For know, where Envy’s pow’r prevails,
“Peace, Love, and Joy, retire:
“Her vot’ries feel eternal pains,
“And burn with ceaseless fire.”

XVI.

Felicity with Concord dwells;
And ev’ry joy of peace
Heav’n’s sacred hand still bounteous gives,
And blesses the increase.

Fab. XIX.

The Lapland Rose.

Fab. XX.

The Deadly Nightshade.

FABLE XIX.

THE LAPLAND ROSE.

I.

A wand'ring youth, by Fortune led
To bleakest northern shores,
Beyond the track of Russian wilds,
Where Lapland's tempest roars;

II.

Who twice the Arctic circle pass'd,
And view'd bright HECLA's[20] flame;
At length, through many a waste of snow,
To fair NIEMI[21] came.

III.

And thence where TENGLIO[22] rolls his stream,
Survey'd the prospect round;
Beheld its banks with verdure deck'd,
And blushing roses crown'd.

IV.

Stuck with the scene, a while he paus'd,
As lost in sweet delight;
And ey'd the fairest of the train
In native beauty bright.

V.

Yet, as he view'd the stranger flow'r,
He deeply musing cries,
"How strange that beauties such as thine

"'Midst climes like these should rise!

VI.

"Thee no bright youth nor gentle fair
"Alas! shall e'er caress;
"Nor splendid southern suns shall warm,
"Nor genial gales shall bless!"

VII.

On hollow winds, o'er distant plains,
The murm'ring accents flew;
NIEMI'S mountains caught the sound,
Which from the lake his shadows drew.

VIII.

And now before the youth confess'd
The Genius of the clime
Appear'd; who thus instructive spoke,
In awful strains sublime;

IX.

"Fond youth, who view'st that beauteous flow'r,
"So luckless in thy fight!
"Forbear to mourn her lonely state,
"Whom these rude climes delight.

X.

"Unrival'd here she sweetly blooms,
"And scents the ambient air;
"Nor deems her brightest beauties lost,
"While foster'd by *my* care.

XI.

"Nor envies she the gaudy tribe
"Beneath the southern skies,
"That bloom in some luxurious bow'rs,

"Where mingled sweets arise.

XII.

"The child of bounteous Nature! here
"She bids her bloom dispense
"Fresh sweets, the trav'ler's soul to chear,
"And glad his weary'd sense.

XIII.

"Her no bright youth nor gaudy fair
"Shall COURT *but to* DESTROY;
"But Lapland's simple swains shall view,
"With *unaffected joy*;

XIV.

"And, oft' as yon' returning Sun
"Illumes our northern sphere,
"Well pleas'd shall trace these flow'ry banks,
"And pay their homage here.

XV.

"Let *others* seek where spacious meads,
"Or painted gardens glow;
"Despise *my* solitary flow'rs,
"And live the slaves of show.

XVI.

"But know, high Heav'n in desart wastes
"Can bid rich Spring to bloom;
"And waken Nature into life,
"From Winter's dreary tomb.

XVII.

"The gracious Pow'r who rules on high,
"Bids ALL his blessings share;
"And ev'ry creature of his hand

"Is govern'd by his care.

XVIII.

"Convinc'd that Providence will thus
"For ALL alike provide;
"*Learn to restrain Affliction's tears,*
"*And check the boast of Pride*."

FABLE XX.

The DEADLY NIGHTSHADE[23].

I.

"**DETESTED** weed, enrag'd, I said,
"That spread'st thy poison'd train
"In this fair land, midst blooming flow'rs,
"Which grace the happy plain!

II.

"Thy baleful root most surely springs
"From deep Tartarean shade;
"By envious Dæmons nurs'd below,
"In Stygian gloom array'd.

III.

"Thee CIRCE, and MEDÆA too,
"In black enchantment us'd;
"With baneful plants most fitly mix'd,
"In hellish steams suffus'd.

IV.

"Ah! why does Parent NATURE form,
"Such works, *her* works to spoil;
"And by *her own hand* teach mankind,
"Infernal arts and guile?

V.

"Say, fell Enchantress of the plain,
"The foe of human-kind?
"Say for what crimes man's hapless race

"From thee such evils find!

VI.

"Oh! quit the woods, the plains, the fields,
"Where health and plenty bloom:
"Retire to rocks and desart-wilds,
"Or shade the Murd'rer's tomb.

VII.

"Or rather haste to PLUTO's realm;
"*There* hide thy hated head,
"And flourish still unrival'd there;
"Where Styx' nine streams are spread.

VIII.

"But *here* may ev'ry healing flow'r
"In prime of beauty bloom:
"To sick'ning Man restoring health,
"And shedding rich perfume!"

IX.

I ceas'd—The Flow'r indignant heard;
And all its leaves display'd
A deep'ning gloom, which flung around
A double NIGHT OF SHADE.

X.

"Insulting Man!" she trembling cry'd,
"Of creatures most unjust;
"Still taxing Nature with those faults,
"Sprung from *his* evil lust.

XI.

"The poison'd Snake, the noxious Weed,
"Earth's venom'd juices drain;
"And, more than all yon' fragrant flow'rs,

"Enrich with health the plain.

XII.

"Nay of *my race* grows many a plant,
"Which, of rich gifts possest,
"The sage Physician culls with care,
"To ease the Patient's breast.

XIII.

"Let Man his own wild passions tame,
"And hush them into Peace;
"MEDÆA'S wand, and CIRCE'S cup,
"Were innocent to *these*.

XIV.

"For ME, great Nature's high behest;
"Contented I fulfil;
"Nor dream that aught by *her* ordain'd,
"Can ever end in *ill*.

XV.

"*Go thou, fond youth, and* VIRTUE'S *charge*
"*With equal care obey:*
"*Then ev'ry Weed shall prove a Flow'r,*
"*To strew thy destin'd way.*"

Fab. XXI.

The Crown Imperial and Heartsease.

Fab. XXII.

The Water Lily.

FABLE XXI.

The CROWN IMPERIAL and HEART'S-EASE.

I.

LO! where from Persia's warmer clime,
And ancient Bactria's land;
With interwoven purple wrought,
The ensign of command,

II.

The CROWN IMPERIAL rears aloft
His rich and gorgeous head,
And, pointing to the distant sky,
Bids all his glories spread.

III.

Beneath, in humbler station plac'd,
The fair VIOLA grew,
Which the lov'd name of *Heart's-Ease* bears,
Whose pow'r can Care subdue.

IV.

The purple monarch swell'd with ire,
Indignant to behold
The flow'ret blooming near his side,
And thus his anger told;

V.

"Rash flow'r, seest thou my aweful state,
"That speaks the garden's king?

“See’st thou th’ Imperial Crown that decks,
“And gems that round me spring.

VI.

“I from the East my lineage draw,
“Where chief of flow’rs I rise;
“And amidst thousands raise my fame,
“Ev’n to the starry skies.

VII.

“Go then, base daughter of the earth!
“Near some vile cottage grow;
“Nor give thy paltry race to rise
“Where my bright blossoms blow!”

VIII.

The sweet VIOLA inly mourn’d
The boaster’s ill-plac’d pride;
And, while this answer she return’d,
The flow’r with pity ey’d:

IX.

“Great is the boast, I own, she said,
“Of pomp and scepter’d pow’r;
“But *greater* are the blessings found
“In life’s serener hour.

X.

“*Thee* purple honours still adorn,
“Which teach thy leaves to shine;
“But to breathe fragrance on the day,
“Proud plant! was never *thine*.

XI.

“That *I* am stranger to thy race,
“The cause is plain to tell;

“For when did *Heart’s-Ease* ever deign
“With *crowned heads* to dwell?

XII.

“Me still in life’s more humble vale
“Most certain will you find;
“There most *my* simple sweets are known,
“Where Fortune proves least kind.

XIII.

“Go learn, *That neither wealth nor pomp*
“*True blessings can bestow*;
“*On sweet* Content *alone await*
“*All joy and bliss below*.”

FABLE XXII.

THE WATER LILY.

I.

WITHIN a crystal riv'let bright,
Whose sides, with verdure crown'd,
From shelving banks reflected wide
The landscape bord'ring round,

II.

A WATER LILY peaceful rear'd
Her lovely, graceful head;
And on the gently-heaving stream
Her beauteous flow'rs were spread.

III.

Thence she beheld the banks with flow'rs
Of various kinds array'd;
And nodding trees, that far dispers'd
Their over-hanging shade;

IV.

For there the lofty Poplar grew,
Still mingling white with green;
And there the rustling Aspin too
With trembling leaves was seen.

V.

The Willow, nodding o'er the brook,
Drinks deep the stream below;
Cowslip and Primrose near at hand,

And purple Iris glow.

VI.

The LILY saw, and to the lake
Thus soft-complaining cry'd,
While gentle ZEPHYRS bore the sound,
Which spread from side to side:

VII.

"Ah hapless lot! while *others* bloom
"On yonder happy shore,
"Amongst their kindred tribes—*my* fate
"Here lonely I deplore.

VIII.

"Condemn'd amid this watry waste
"For ever to remain;
"Nor taste the joys which *others* know
"On yonder flow'ry plain."

IX.

The GODDESS OF THE WATER heard,
And Anger mov'd her heart;
"How dar'st thou thus affront (she said)
"The Pow'r by which thou ART?

X.

"Those other trees and flow'rs thou see'st,
"ALL sprang from Mother Earth:
"And grateful tribute ALL return
"To Her who gave them birth.

XI.

"While *thou*, alas! should *I* withdraw
"The least of this my store;
"Shalt call on *other* Pow'rs in vain,

"And sink, to rise no more.

XII.

"Beauteous thou art, nor meanly priz'd:
"Then lay no blame on me;
"Nor seek what, though it *others* bless,
"Must surely ruin *thee*.

XIII.

"But still revere this facted truth,
"*Whatever may betide*;
"*What Heav'n decrees is always* BEST,
"*And all is* BAD *beside*."

Fab. XXIII.

The Lover & Funeral Flowers

Fab. XXIV.

The Field & Garden Daisy

FABLE XXIII.

The FUNERAL FLOWERS.

I.

AS, lonely walking o'er the plain,
With solemn step and slow,
A hapless swain, at midnight hour,
Went forth to vent his woe;

II.

His hand the sweetest flow'rets fill'd
That glow'd with beauty's bloom;
Now destin'd with their richest tints
T' adorn his LAURA's tomb.

III.

Lo! there each mournful flow'r he strew'd,
Which vernal FLORA bears;
With frequent sighs dispers'd them round,
And water'd them with tears.

IV.

There was the VI'LET's purple hue,
And HYACINTHUS seen;
The leaves with monarch's names inscrib'd,
And plaintive notes between.

V.

Sweet ROSEMARY, and many a plant
In Eastern gardens known;
And Lover's MYRTLE, which the Queen

Of Beauty deigns to own.

VI.

A Sage, who wander'd there alone
In the dank dews of night,
To gather plants of mystic pow'r,
Beneath the moon's pale light,

VII.

With scornful smile, and eye askance,
The hapless youth survey'd;
Who paid the last sad tribute there
To the departed maid.

VIII.

"And what! (said he) shall those sweet flow'rs,
"Which sinking life can save,
"And plants of aromatic scent,
"Adorn a *dreary grave*?

IX.

"For shame, fond youth! learn Nature's gifts
"With better skill to prize.
"Attend her precepts; read them here:
"Be *frugal*, and be *wise*."

X.

He ceas'd; the sighing youth reply'd,
"To LAURA's shade I give,
"Unblam'd, each emblematic flow'r,
"Which *she* first taught to live.

XI.

"And frequent here fair FLORA's train
"*Uncull'd by* ME shall bloom;
"And, nurs'd by bright AURORA's tears,

"Diffuse their rich perfume.

XII.

"Then urge me not, with narrow mind,
"To wrong the dust below;
"But rather THOU expand thy heart,
"And gen'rous tears bestow."

XIII.

Thus as he spoke, the REDBREAST mild,
The friend of human-kind,
Wide scatter'd leaves o'er the low mound,
And on the turf reclin'd.

XIV.

While PHILOMEL with plaintive notes
Funereal dirges sung
O'er LAURA's tomb, who oft' in life
Had mourn'd *her* ravish'd young.

XV.

And vain (she sang) was Wisdom's lore,
That taught the heart to hide;
And vain the empty idle boast
Of Philosophic Pride.

XVI.

The flow'rs more sweetly seem'd to smile
Reviving at her lay;
And sweeter scent, and fresher green,
The swelling leaves display.

XVII.

The Sage stood check'd, the solemn song
Such virtue could impart;
He dropp'd a tear, to pity due,

That humaniz'd the heart.

XVIII.

The "graceful softness of the soul"
He learn'd thenceforth to prize;
And own'd, *where* NATURE *touch'd the Heart,*
'Twas FOLLY *to be* WISE.

FABLE XXIV.

The FIELD and GARDEN DAISY.

I.

IN fields, where Thames her swelling wave
Translucent pours along;
Where many a blooming green retreat
Inspires the poet's song;

II.

A mead with native beauty crown'd,
Extends its verdant bed;
Where fragrant Field-flow'rs wildly bloom,
In sweet confusion spread.

III.

It chanc'd a sportive youth had there
A GARDEN DAISY rear'd,
Which 'midst the tribe of wilder sort
Full haughtily appear'd.

IV.

"Away! (she cry'd) ye meaner train,
"Whose leaves no culture know;
"Respect the Cultivated Flower,
"That *deigns* in fields to grow!

V.

"And chiefly *thou* that boast'st *my* name,
"Though surely *not ally'd*;
"Claim kindred with thy native weeds,

"Nor flourish by *my* side!

VI.

"I know thee not;—thy form I scorn;
"In native splendour bright
"IRIS has dipp'd my painted leaves,
"All beauteous to the sight.

VII.

"Whilst THOU!—but vainly spent the time,
"On such a flow'r bestow'd:
"Disdain'd by all the Garden's tribes,
"*My* late belov'd abode.

VIII.

"Know ME your queen, ye low-born race,
"Confess superior sway;
"Nor longer in my presence bloom,
"But tremble, and obey."

IX.

"To foul reproach (the DAISY said)
"What answer can we yield,
"When *cultivated flow'rs* insult
"The natives of the field?

X.

"Yet what art THOU? proud gaudy toy,
"Descended but from me,
"Who mourn too late I e'er gave birth
"To such Ingrates as thee!

XI.

"I have my use, and oft' am seen
"The village maids t' adorn:
"Go prouder *thou*, in gardens bloom,

"And be the great-ones scorn.

XII.

"But here, proud flow'r, thy date is short,
"The soil denies thee room;
"And ev'n this spot, where now thou swell'st,
"Shall shortly prove thy tomb."

XIII.

The Sun gaz'd hot, the foreign field
No moisture would supply;
Soon did the boaster droop her head,
And wither, fade, and die.

XIV.

What need I more?—The village swain,
While on the sod reclin'd,
Feels the plain Moral of the Tale
Deep graven on his mind.

Fab. XXV.

The Pinks and Arbutus.

Fab. XXVI.

The Cockscomb & Sweetwilliam.

FABLE XXV.

The PINKS and ARBUTUS.

I.

VIRTUE, the growth of ev'ry clime,
Alike should be rever'd;
Whether from distant regions brought,
Or in *our* country rear'd.

II.

Rome, the great mistress of the world,
Such height had ne'er attain'd;
The train of worth in ev'ry land
Had her proud sons disdain'd.

III.

From *foreign* arms, from *foreign* arts,
Her *native* glory rose;
And more than half her boasted state
She borrow'd from her foes.

IV.

Vain is that boast of selfish pride,
Which deems no worth is found,
But in the narrow sphere confin'd
Of its own native ground.

V.

Though not to foreign lands, untaught,
We need for Virtue roam;
Yet real Virtue, nurs'd abroad,

Should be rever'd at home.—

VI.

On fair Ierne's happy shore
A tall Arbutus plac'd,
Bloom'd near a sweetly-cultur'd spot,
By Pinks unnumber'd grac'd,

VII.

'Twas on the border of that lake[24],
Where vary'd prospects rise,
Of sunny hills, o'er-hanging rocks,
And low'ring misty skies;

VIII.

Selina, wand'ring near the Lake,
The foreign tree survey'd;
"And bloom'st thou 'midst our native Flow'rs?"
Exclaim'd the redd'ning maid—

IX.

"O could these hands thy root remove!
"But since that may not be,
"Far I'll transplant my fragrant Race,
"Now plac'd too near to thee."

X.

She said—when strait before her stood
An ancient Hermit grave;
With silver'd locks and streaming beard,
The tenant of the cave;

XI.

"Desist, fond maid! the Hermit cry'd,
"Lest these thy favour'd flow'rs
"Should die, if hastily remov'd

"From these their well-known bow'rs;

XII.

"What if the tall ARBUTUS share
"Th' indulgence of thy land;
"Do not his sweetly fragrant flow'rs
"As fair a lot demand?

XIII.

"Nor let IERNE's children grieve,
"Where foreign worth is shown;
"But learn with cultivating care
"To make that worth *their own*.

XIV.

"For thee, fair maid—the patriot flame
"Still nourish in thy breast:
"But let that flame by Reason's rules
"Be modell'd and repress'd.

XV.

"Know that thy country's weal depends
"Not on *herself* alone;
"But each assisting hand that strives
"To fix fair Freedom's throne.

XVI.

"Commerce and Stores from other lands
"Your glories still increase;
"Encourage then the golden stream,
"And ev'ry art of peace.

XVII.

"Nor foreign Flow'rs, nor foreign Plants,
"Deny a fost'ring place;
"When those fair Plants or blooming Flow'rs

“Bring Profit, Sweet, or Grace.

XVIII.

“Reject alone the idle weed,
“That blooms but to destroy;
“To cultivate the rest with care
“Your utmost skill employ.”

XIX.

He ceas’d;—the Nymph her task forsook,
And still together bloom
The beautous Tree, and fragrant Flow’rs,
Whence Zephyrs steal perfume.

FABLE XXVI.

The COCK'S COMB and SWEET WILLIAM.

I.

HIGH rose the Sun, the fleeting hours
  Verg'd tow'rds meridian height,
And all around the glitt'ring scene
  Was lost in floods of light.

II.

The flocks and herds, that graz'd awhile,
  Now left the sunny glade;
And in the stream their fervour cool'd,
  Or sought the shelt'ring shade.

III.

Beneath a high projected fence,
  At this irradiate hour,
The sweet *Dianthus*[25] humbly blew,
  A solitary Flow'r.

IV.

But where a thousand mingling sweets
  Diffus'd a rich perfume;
The gaudy Cock's Comb, idly vain,
  Appear'd in all its bloom.

V.

And "Matchless excellence!" he cry'd,
  "With me what can compare?

“The sweetest of the vernal train
“Were never half so fair.

VI.

“My crested head erect I rear,
“And bloom with matchless grace;
“The brightest hue my leaves adorns,
“Of all the flow’ry race.

VII.

“Nay, to immortal pow’rs a-kin,
“Descent from Heav’n I claim[26];
“And from eternal-blooming Flow’rs
“Derive my honour’d name.”

VIII.

I view’d the Plant, its form admir’d;
When a more modest Flow’r
Engag’d my eye, where soft it rose
Within its lonely bow’r.

IX.

“Sweet tribes, (he sang,) fair Flora’s care,
“What beauties you display!
“My breast expands with social joy
“To see your bright array.

X.

“To *me*, the last of flow’rets, give,
“Within this pale to grow:
“And give the west winds gentle breath
“O’er this my bed to blow.”

XI.

He spoke—the pow’rs indulgent heard,
Soft Zephyrs fann’d the trees;

And o’er his humble earthy bed
Diffus’d a gentle breeze.

XII.

Smit with the fragrance of the scent
The winds rejoicing bore;
I own’d the pow’r of modest worth,
Whose rival charm’d no more[27].

XIII.

Say, Fair-ones, is the Moral plain,
In easy Fable drest?
It is but this—*To Merit true,*
Throw Coxcombs from your breast.

Fab. XXVII.

The Jasmine and Hemlock.

Fab. XXVIII.

The Carnation and Southernwood.

FABLE XXVII.

The JASMINE and HEMLOCK.

I.

TOW'RING aloft, a JASMINE sweet
In a rich garden stood;
And thence, nurs'd by wild Nature's care,
The neighb'ring HEMLOCK view'd.

II.

High o'er the pale the angry flow'r
Rear'd her affronted head;
And, glowing in her vernal bloom,
She thus contemptuous said:

III.

"Say, worse than Aconite, pernicious weed!
"How dar'st thou here to grow;
"And thy detested head advance,
"Near where my blossoms blow?"

IV.

The angry HEMLOCK strait reply'd,
"Thou proud insulting thing!
"Vain is thy pride, and vain thy boast,
"Though deck'd by gaudy Spring.

V.

"Thou, in the blooming garden plac'd,
"May'st please the roving eye.
"I in some field or secret shade

"My useful aid supply.

VI.

"Nay, scornful flow'r! what I declare,
"Great Nature's self will own:
"Ordaining all things fair and good,
"When once their use is known.

VII.

"Go ask of genial BACCHUS' tree,
"Where purple clusters glow;
"(Whose juice produces gen'rous wine,
"The balm of human woe.)

VIII.

"Go ask what various ills attend,
"That precious balm's abuse:
"Ills that too surely ev'n exceed
"Those of my baneful juice.

IX.

"Yet baneful *where*? when *mis-apply'd*;
"So is each blessing too.
"This lesson learn, and know thyself;
"Nor rob me of my due.

X.

"Me the grave Leech, who, greatly wise,
"Turns Nature's volume o'er,
"Oft snatches from my low abode,
"And places in his store.

XI.

"There, amongst health-bestowing plants,
"He ranks my honour'd name;
"And, whilst he well employs *my* pow'rs,

"Exalts *himself* to fame.

XII.

"Thus death and life alike are *mine*,
"Neither to *thee* belong:
"Though oft' by poets most admir'd,
"The theme of idle song.

XIII.

"Be thou so still; but ne'er despise
"Those gifts thou canst not share:
"But keep this maxim in thy heart,
"*The* USEFUL *is the* FAIR."

XIV.

She said—abash'd the JASMINE heard,
And hung her drooping head;
She saw, *That* NATURE'S *works were good*,
And all her Boasting fled.

FABLE XXVIII.

The CARNATION and SOUTHERNWOOD.

I.

RICH in a thousand beauteous dyes,
The sweet CARNATION stood;
While with a proud disdainful eye
The SOUTHERNWOOD she view'd.

II.

"Great is thy Pride," the flow'r exclaim'd,
"To place thee near my side;
"For ev'n to grow in this retreat,
"Argues thy matchless pride.

III.

"Say, what art thou, thyself no flow'r,
"That dar'st intrude thee here;
"'Midst plants fit for a prince's bow'r,
"Flow'rs fit for kings to wear?

IV.

"Whate'er I am," the Plant reply'd,
"My post I well maintain;
"And chearful lend my needful aid,
"Where thine, alas! were vain.

V.

"Say, could thy flow'rs of brightest dye
"*Infection's* force withstand?

“Ah! what could all thy beauties do,
“If plagues laid waste the land?

VI.

“Mean as I am, the task is mine,
“To purge th’ unwholesome air;
“To clear the brain, the blood refine,
“And seat HYGEIA[28] there.

VII.

“Nay farther still;—thyself shalt own
“How oft’ I’m join’d with thee;
“And thy bright blossoms brighter bloom,
“Because they’re plac’d by me.

VIII.

“Are not the *various tints*, which deck
“This scene, the Florist’s pride?
“ME then, imperious! venerate
“For pow’rs to thee deny’d.—

IX.

“Say, if each warbler of the grove
“Should chuse the self-same strain;
“Would the tir’d ear the concert please,
“Or wish to hear again?

X.

“Nature, who made us what we are,
“Did diff’rent gifts impart;
“And gave to all their portion due
“Of her all-plastic art.

XI.

“Contented then in diff’rent spheres
“Unenvying let us move:

“For this must still most grateful be
“To THOSE who rule above.

XII.

“*Me* let *thy* sweetest fragrance grace,
“Ev’n from the early May;
“And *thee* will *I* in gardens fair
“With sov’reign balm repay.

XIII.

“For, thus united while we stand,
“We need to ask no more;
“While mutually we take and give,
“We double all our *store*.”

XIV.

Prudent she said;—her rival, pleas’d,
Adopts the smelling green;
And one for *Use*, and one for *Show*,
Together now are seen.

XV.

Learn hence, *That various talents giv’n*
Mean variously to bless:
And thus on mutual wants kind Heav’n
Builds mutual Happiness.

Fab. XXIX.

Field Flower & Rosemary.

Fab. XXX.

Judgement of the Flowers.

FABLE XXIX.

The ROSEMARY and FIELD FLOWER.

I.

UPON the fam'd HYPANIS' banks,
By chance, in days of yore,
A tuft of Rosemary there grew,
Which scented all the shore.

II.

And near at hand a Field-flow'r rear
Its variegated head;
And view'd full many a spacious track,
With dreary desarts spread.

III.

But where the river roll'd its stream,
Unnumber'd insects swarm'd;
Which rose in myriads into life,
By PHŒBUS' influence warm'd[29].

IV.

The same revolving day that saw
Their scene of life begun,
Beheld them sink to dust again,
With the declining sun.

V.

And one of these, at noon-tide hour,
(The hardiest of his race)
Urg'd to the Field-flow'r bright and gay

His quick and eager pace.

VI.

But when no fragrant scent he found
In that same flow'r so bright;
He to the sweeter Rosemary
Immediate urg'd his flight.

VII.

The *lasting* aromatic plant,
His speed with wonder view'd;
Advis'd him other flow'rs to seek,
Nor on her spot intrude.

VIII.

"And how can I for *thee* (she said)
"My happier pow'rs display,
"Or with my lasting flow'r support
"The insect of a day?

IX.

"Sure Nature form'd thy race in sport,
"Continual to destroy;
"Nor ever meant thy race to taste
"One pure, substantial joy."

X.

"Not so," the wiser Insect cry'd,
"My high descent I claim
"From PHŒBUS' self—you cannot more,
"Nor wish a higher name.

XI.

"What if to me a shorter date
"By Nature's law is giv'n;
"Each moment that I live, *t' enjoy*,

"Is all I ask of Heav'n.

XII.

"Beneath the Mushroom's spacious shade,
"Or in the mossy bow'r,
"Or still at noon as *now* reclin'd,
"Beneath some fragrant flow'r.

XIII.

"Know, that as much of life I trace
"In one revolving sun;
"As yonder herds, whose destin'd course
"Full many an age has run.

XIV.

"For equal are great Nature's gifts,
"And but an idle dream;
"The boast of time, which glides away
"Swift as the passing stream.

XV.

"Well to employ the present hour,
"Sweet plant, be ever thine;
"LIFE's little day, *when once elaps'd*,
"*Shall seem as short as* MINE."

FABLE XXX.

The JUDGEMENT of FLOWERS.

I.

FAR from the busy haunts of men,
Far from the glaring eye of day;
Still Fancy paints, with Nature's pen,
Such tints as never can decay.

II.

Hast thou not seen, at ev'ning hour,
When PHŒBUS sunk beneath the main,
Reclin'd in some sequester'd bow'r,
The village maid, or shepherd swain?

III.

Hast thou not mark'd them cull with care
Some favour'd flow'ret from the rest,
To deck the breast, or bind the hair,
Of those they priz'd and lov'd the best?

IV.

And still expressive of the mind
The emblematic gift was found;
Whether to mournful thought inclin'd,
Or with triumphant gladness crown'd.—

V.

Near AVON's banks, a cultur'd spot,
With many a tuft of flow'rs adorn'd,
Was once an aged shepherd's lot,

Who scenes of greater splendor scorn'd.

VI.

Three beauteous daughters bless'd his bed,
Who made the little plat their care;
And ev'ry sweet by FLORA spread
Attentive still they planted there.

VII.

Once, when still ev'ning veil'd the sky,
The sire walk'd forth, and sought the bow'r;
And bade the lovely maids draw nigh,
And each select some favour'd flow'r.

VIII.

The first, with radiant splendor charm'd,
A variegated Tulip chose:
The next, with love of beauty charm'd,
Preferr'd the sweetly-blushing Rose.

IX.

The third, who mark'd, with depth of thought,
How those bright Flow'rs must droop away,
An Ev'ning Primrose only brought,
Which opens with the closing day.

X.

The sage a while in silence view'd
The various choice of flow'rs display'd;
And then (with wisdom's gift endu'd)
Address'd each beauteous list'ning maid!

XI.

"Who chose the Tulip's splendid dyes,
"Shall own, too late, when that decays,
"That, vainly proud, not greatly wise,

"She only caught a short-liv'd blaze.

XII.

"The Rose, though beauteous leaves and sweet
"Its glorious vernal pride adorn:
"Let her who chose beware to meet
"The biting sharpness of its thorn.

XIII.

"But *she*, who to fair day-light's train
"The Ev'ning flow'r more just preferr'd;
"Chose real worth, nor chose in vain
"The one great object of regard.

XIV.

"Ambitious *thou*! the Tulip race
"In all life's vary'd course beware:
"Caught with sweet Pleasure's rosy grace,
"Do *thou* its sharper thorns beware.

XV.

"*Thou* prudent still to Virtue's lore,
"Attend, and mark her counsels sage!
"She like *thy flow'r* has sweets in store,
"To soothe the ev'ning of thine age."

XVI.

He ceas'd—attend the moral strain,
The Muse enlighten'd pours;
Nor let her pencil trace in vain
The Judgement of the Flow'rs.

FINIS.

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By the same Author,

Handsomely printed in Quarto, Price 2s. 6d. with Allegorical Designs, engraved in the most beautiful and picturesque Style by Mr. WHITE,

Footnotes:

[1] The author of The Vizlis: or Enchanted Labyrinth; an Oriental Tale, 3 Vols.—Wherein describes with great taste and fancy, the different passions that are subject to misguide the warm and expanded imagination, of Youth by the Flowers they make choice of in the Labyrinth.

[2] The Vale of Cluyd.

[3] Iris, or Fleur de lis.

[4] Larkspur.

[5] The Hollyhock.

[6] Anemone, or Wind Flower.

[7] Narcissus.

[8] Bell Flower, Corn Violet, or Venus's Looking Glass.

[9] Clytie, or the Sun-Flower.

[10] This flower is encompassed with thorns, and its root is said to have a poisonous quality.

[11] According to the old Fable, the Rose was at first always white, till Venus, while she was pursuing Adonis, scratched herself with its thorns, and thereby stained it with her cœlestial blood.

[12] The Amaranth.

[13] Alluding to the Civil Wars of York and Lancaster, in which the White Rose and the Red were adopted as tokens or devices by their different partisans.

[14] It is here to be noted that the autumnal Crocus is the Saffron Flower, so famous in Medicine.

[15] This flower opens in the morning, and fades away in the evening, closing up, and never opening again.

[16] According to the Old Fable, Jupiter being willing to make Hercules immortal, caused him to suck Juno while she was asleep; when the milk gushing out into a great quantity, some of it being spilt upon the sky, made the galaxy or milky way there, while the rest falling to the earth, gave birth to the White Lily.

[17] Juno is said to have conceived Mars by only touching the flower called Larkspur.

[18] Apollo having forsaken Clytie for this Nymph; the former, in return, informed Leucothoe's father of his daughter's amour with Phœbus. He thereupon buried Leucothoe alive; but Phœbus changed her into a Frankincense Tree; and after this, Clytie being discarded by the God, who was beyond measure offended with her, she pined away, and was changed into a Sun-Flower.

[19] Iris being the name given to the Rainbow.

[20] A Volcano in the North, whose sides are covered with snow.

[21] The Mountains of NIEMI are in the neighbourhood of a lake of the same name, which is said by the inhabitants to be frequented by the immortal Genii.

[22] This River is bordered with Roses of as fine a bloom as those which grow in our gardens.

[23] The juice of this weed was generally supposed to be used in Enchantments—There are however several sorts of it, all of which are not esteemed deadly; but only this mentioned here, the juice of whose berries so intoxicated the army of Sweno the Danish King, being mixed in their liquor, that they became an easy prey to the Scotch army, which surprised and cut most of them to pieces.

[24] The Lake of Killarney, most romantically situated in the county of Kerry, in Ireland, where the Arbutus tree is found, which bears a most beautiful blossom, and a fruit sometimes

used for food, and which is supposed to have been transplanted thither from Italy.

[25] Another name for Sweet William.

[26] This Flower is a kind of Bastard Amaranth.

[27] The Cock's Comb being a gaudy Flower, without any agreeable smell to recommend it.

[28] The Goddess of Health.

[29] On the banks of the river Hypanis, there is a sort of insect, whose life is said only to extend from the rising to the setting of the sun.

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Antiquated spellings were not corrected.

The illustrations have been moved so that they do not break up stanzas.

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