

# PETERSON'S MAGAZINE.

VOL. XXX.

PHILADELPHIA, SEPTEMBER, 1856.

No. 3.

## A HOMILY UPON FLOWERS.

BY W. S. GAFFNEY.

WHAT! another homily upon flowers? Well, we cannot help it. We never tire of what we love, and we confess a life-long penchant for flowers.

For are they not emblems to us of all that is good and lovely? They illustrate the various duties of life, as well as the innumerable obstacles pertaining thereto. They are symbols of life and of death; and they are pregnant with many fruitful lessons. They are teachers—eloquent teachers of a silent language. They speak to the affections, and their utterance falls upon the sensitive heart. They are the glory of the morning and the beauty of the evening. They are emblems of *other flowers* too.

Behold the rose, the immortal queen among flowers. Who does not love the glowing petals of the rich scented rose? Is it not emblematic of the child of wealth and of affluence? It is admired and cherished by all. It assumes the most prominent place in the garden, during the season of flowers; and, when the chilling blasts of winter hover near, it is carefully removed to the hot-house, there to be nurtured and tended and cherished.

Then we have cowslips and daisies—are they not emblems of the children of want and obscurity? They breathe their little lives in unseen nooks and fields during the summer festival; but alas! for the reign of Janus—soon they disappear to rise again no more! Not so with the flowers of life. Death may blast their tender reign, and lay his icy hand upon their glowing petals, but they will bloom again—they are immortal!

Little children! are they not the flowers—the blossoms, and the dew-drops of life? Yea; treasure them well. They are lambs, too, of a heavenly flock, of which the great I AM is shepherd! Suffer not the chilling hand of vice to blast their spotless purity. The Saviour loves them—not those only that dwell in the hot-

houses of the rich; but those also who dwell in the unknown nooks of poverty. They are above all price, those tender flowers. "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not—for of such is the kingdom of heaven." So spake the Saviour of the world: He knew their precious worth and their beauty. He whilst traversing this dreary vale of tears and mortal probation, took them in His arms and blessed them. Little children—blessed of the Saviour!

Oh, mother! cherish thy charge—shield thy blossom. 'Tis sweeter and richer than all of earth and nature—it is the recipient of the benediction of the Most High! Lead it in the path of rectitude—fold its little hands in prayer, and shield it from the polluted breath of the enemy.

The holy task is yours; is it not a holy one?—training blossoms for heaven! Mother! sweetest of earthly names—you are a favored creature. In loving tenderness you kiss the dew of heaven from the lips of your gentle babe, and inhale its elysian sweetness! The first cherub smile which plays upon its rosy lips, and the first faint articulation proceeding from the same are thine, thine alone. And should the will of a Divine Master bear it from thee, even in the bitterness of thy fate art thou blest, for the united voice of earth and of heaven proclaim thee *mother of an angel!*

Oh, world! deal gently with Eden's blossoms, and especially with those tender little beings who have *no mother!* Man of the world—open thy coffers freely to the relief of the isolated orphan.

Oh! ye mothers of angels! sisters of Eve! be the guardians of their footsteps on earth, and guide them to heaven. Woman—blessed name! be thine the holy task to shield them from the snares of the world, and to instill into their lonely and troubled bosoms the teachings of



virtue; for whence shall they flee on earth if thy sympathizing, comforting, and relieving smiles greet them not? Give us more homilies upon the flowers of earth and of heaven—we love them; and what we love we never tire of.

## THE CARELESS WORD.

BY ANNA SHIPTON.

Oh, never say a careless Word  
 Hath not the power to pain;  
 The shaft may ope some hidden wound,  
 That closes not again.  
 Weigh well those light-winged messengers;  
 God marked your heedless Word,  
 And with it, too, the falling tear,  
 The heart-pang that it stirred.

Words! What are Words? A simple Word  
 Hath spells to call the tears,  
 That long have lain a sealed fount,  
 Unclosed thro' mournful years.  
 Back from the unseen sepulchre,  
 A Word hath summoned forth  
 A form—that hath its place no more  
 Among the things of earth.

Words—heed them well; some whispered one  
 Hath yet a power to fling  
 A shadow on the brow; the soul  
 In agony to wring;

A name—forbidden, or forgot,  
 That sometimes, unawares,  
 Murmurs upon our wak'ning lips;  
 And mingles in our prayers.

Oh, Words—sweet Words! A blessing comes  
 Softly from kindly lips;  
 Tender, endearing tones, that break  
 The spirit's drear eclipse.  
 Oh! are there not some cherished tones  
 In the deep heart enshrined,  
 Uttered but once—they pass'd—and left  
 A track of light behind?

Words! What are words? Ah! know'st thou not  
 The household names of love?  
 The thousand tender memories,  
 That float their graves above?  
 Long buried by the world's cold tread,  
 Yet 'mid the crowd they rise,  
 And smile, as angel-guests would smile,  
 With gentle, earnest eyes.

## I THINK OF HER NOW.

BY H. T. SPERRY.

I THINK of her now, with her sunny brow,  
 And her eye full of childish glee,  
 When the world seemed bright, in the golden light,  
 Of the scenes which were yet to be.

I think of her now, with her laughing brow,  
 And her girlish heart ever true,  
 When a well known eye brought the crimson dye  
 To her cheek of the lilies hue.

I think of her now, with her thoughtful brow,  
 And her eye undimmed by a tear,  
 As she sang her song to the May-day throng,  
 On the morn of her eighteenth year.

I think of her now, with her peaceful brow,  
 A sho moved with a queenly grace,  
 Through the dim church aisle, with a prayerful smile  
 On her calm and radiant face.

I think of her now, when her bridal vow  
 Floated out through the Summer air,

While her brow gleamed bright with the holy light  
 From the smiles of the angels fair.

I think of her now, with her stricken brow,  
 As she wept by the little bed  
 Of her angel child, when he sweetly smiled  
 On the visions that bless the dead.

I think of her now, with her weary brow,  
 And her meek eye grown dim by tears,  
 That told of the grief, and the pleasures brief  
 She had known in her later years.

I think of her now, with her marble brow,  
 As she lay in the arms of death,  
 Where the wind went by, in a mournful sigh,  
 With the tomb's damp air on its breath.

I think of her now, with her shining brow,  
 On the Sabbath shore of the blest,  
 By the great white throne where the angels roam,  
 With her cherub boy on her breast.