

Flowers of Antiquity.

BY BRIG A BRAC.



WHEN desiring information on the subject of garlands, Myrtilus entreats Ulpian in the feast of the Deipnosophists not to quote passages out of the *Crowns* of Cælius Asclepiades, "as if," he says, "I were unacquainted with that book; but say something now besides what you find there." Accordingly in that discussion we are offered nothing of the crowns; but Democritus had already mentioned a book of Menodotus relating to the meaning of Anacreon when he alludes to people being crowned with osiers at their feasts:

"But now full twice five months are gone
Since kind Megisthes wore a crown
Of pliant osier, drinking wine
Whose colors did like rubies shine."

If the case could have been solved to show the cause of that preference, some light might have been thrown on the origin of the custom of wearing wreaths at entertainments; for that kind Megisthes should have chosen for his garland a kind of plant apparently better adapted to plaiting and binding than to such use as he made of it, would seem only capable of being explained by some significant reason. But the curious learning brought out in that company after Cælius Asclepiades had been set aside as too common an authority, was little to the purpose of accounting for the osier crown; so that the matter would have come to an end without the introduction of an acceptable theory of any kind had not Democritus finally concluded that the fact was more simply explained by supposing that Megisthes wore a garland of osier, because there was a great quantity of those trees in the place where he was feasting, and therefore he used it to bind his temples. The opinion of Democritus favored the reasoning of some of the ancient physicians who discoursed on the wearing of flowers bound about the brow at entertainments. Those who suffered in their heads after drinking stood in need of some remedy, as this class of writers conjectured. Andreas was the supposed authority for the statement that a certain man having a headache pressed his head and found relief, and so invented a ligature as a remedy for headache. Accordingly it was said that men using these ligatures as assistants in drinking used to bind their heads with whatever came in their way. "And first of all they took garlands of ivy, which offered itself as it were of its own accord, and was very plentiful and grew everywhere, and was pleasant to look upon, shading the forehead with its green leaves and bunches of berries, and bearing a good deal of tension so as to admit of being bound very tight across the brow, and imparting also a certain degree of coolness without any stupefying smell accompanying it." Myrtle crowns were adopted according to the fancy of the ancient doctors on account of the exciting

properties of that plant, and from its being thought to repress any rising of the fumes of wine; garlands of roses were thought to have been chosen because of their coolness, and that they to a certain extent, relieved headache; bay leaves also were considered as having some appropriate connection with drinking parties. But garlands of white lilies were avoided, and those also of amaranthus, and wreaths of any other flower or herb having a tendency to produce heaviness or torpid feelings in the head.

The ancients, however, were not unanimous in accepting the idea of use to account for the origin of garlands. Many attributed to Janus the invention of garlands, as well as of ships and coined money; it was for that reason that in various Grecian cities, and in Italy and Sicily, were coins having on one side a head with two faces, and on the obverse, a boat, a garland, or a ship.

Aristotle is to be imagined as having had divided opinions about this custom; for once he considers that the ancients, on account of the headaches produced by their wine-drinking, adopted the fashion of wearing garlands made of anything which came to hand, as the binding of the head tight seemed to be of service to them; but that in later times men added also some ornaments to their temples, which had a reference to their employment of drinking. Again he finds it more reasonable to suppose that it was because the head is the seat of all sensation that men wore crowns upon it, than that they did so because it was desirable to have their temples shaded and bound as a remedy against the headaches produced by wine; but a finer idea is introduced in his banquet, where he says: "We never offer any mutilated gift to the gods, but only such as are perfect and entire, and crowning anything indicates filling it in some sort." But herein was no doubt some reference to the wreathing of goblets employed in libations. Sappho leaves out entirely the coarser idea of service in the drinking of wine, recognizing only the religious sentiment in that usage as she sets it forth with delicate charm of verse.

"But place those garlands on thy lovely hair,
Twining the tender sprouts of anise green
With skillful hand, for offerings of flowers
Are pleasing to the gods, who hate all those
Who come before them with uncrowned heads."

Much thought unquestionably was given to the physical properties of plants in that custom as it existed, just as similar ideas were exercised in relation to perfumes. And the latter luxury is well known to have claimed distinguished scientific consideration among the ancients. A treatise by Theophrastus is understood to have been one of the most esteemed authorities on the subject of scents. The extracts from roses, myrtles and apples were considered suitable for drinking parties; the last was thought good for the stomach and useful for lethargic people; the same was said of vine leaves and the scent extracted from crocus; that from white violets was considered good for digestion. The great attention which Arsinoe and Berenice paid to matters of this kind was the cause of the unguents made in Alexandria being brought to high perfection in their time. Ephesus also once had a

high reputation for the excellence of its perfumes, that especially of megallium. For the placing of garlands on the breast, as was sometimes practiced, there was the same reason as for using perfumes in that manner. Anacreon alluded to the wearing of lotus flowers on the bosom, and the divine Sappho noticed persons wreathing garlands,

"In numbers round their tender throats."

Some suppose that the placing of perfumes on the breast had been first thought of because of the soul having its abode in the heart; others conjectured simply that the heart is soothed by these odors, or that the mere thought might have been that scents ascend upward from the breast to the seat of smelling.

But with this, so much of the ideal relative to the use and choice of flowers, that it would have been difficult to define the limits of the multiplied ideas belonging to the custom. At the public festival of any god, the particular herb or flower which was sacred to him was used. Naturally, at other times, such flowers as taste suggested, or as the season afforded, would be made use of. The Athenians were known to have had a special fondness for violet chaplets. The garland of Ariadne, it was said, was made of the theseum flower.

"The soft theseum, like the apple blossom,
The sacred blossom of *Lycera*,
Which the fair goddess loves above all others."

The peculiar delight which sweet-singing old Anacreon took in the ivy, no doubt, had reference rather to this plant being devoted to Bacchus than that it made an effective binding about the head. His old harp, one finds, always being tuned to the key either of love or of wine.

"When the nectar'd bowl I drain
Gloomy cares forego their reign;
Richer than the Lydian King,
Hymns of love and joy I sing.
Ivy wreaths my temples twine,
And while careless I recline,
While bright scenes my vision greet
Tread the world beneath my feet."

The idea of decoration with flowers could hardly have been wanting at any time in the abundantly blossoming lands of the ancient nations. The Egyptians were exceedingly fond of gardening, and in their temperate climate they were able to produce all the year round many of the flowers which in other countries were to be found only at particular seasons. But in that fertile soil, roses and white lilies, and numerous other varieties of flowers, were kept in bloom continually. Of the manner of their use some idea is to be had from the celebrated spectacle given by Ptolemy Philadelphus, where, "although this entertainment took place in the middle of winter, still there was a show of flowers which was quite incredible to foreigners. For flowers, of which one could not easily have found enough to make one chaplet in any other city, were supplied in the greatest abundance here, to make chaplets for every one of the guests at the entertainment, and were thickly strewed over the whole floor of the tent, so as really to give the appearance of the most divine meadow."

Two kinds of wreaths from the lotus flower were made in Alexandria, one of which was called the garland of Antinous. The lotus growing in the marshes, in summer, bore flowers of two colors, as was noted by Calixenus, the Rhodian, when visiting that country. One of these colors, as he described it, was like that of the rose, and the garlands woven of flowers of this color were the ones properly called the garland of Antinous; but what was called simply the lotus garland was of the flowers having a dark hue. Also from that writer comes the account of the naming of the former garland: "And a man of the name of Pancrates, a native poet, with whom we ourselves were acquainted, made a great parade of showing a rose-colored lotus to Adrian, the emperor, when he was staying at Alexandria, saying that he ought to give this flower the name of the flower of Antinous, as having sprung from the ground, where it drank in the blood of the Mauritanian lion, which Hadrian killed when he was out hunting in that part of Africa, near Alexandria, a monstrous beast which had ravaged all Lybia for a long time, so as to make a great part of the district desolate. Accordingly, Hadrian, being delighted with the utility of the invention, and also with its novelty, granted to the poet that he should be maintained for the future in the Museum at the public expense."

The sending of gifts of flowers in token of regard came into practice at an early time. For it is related that it was owing to the present of a garland that Amasis, who had originally been a private individual of the class of the common people, became king of Egypt. Having made a garland of the most beautiful flowers which were to be had, he sent it to the king Patarmis, who was celebrating a birthday festival. Patarmis, being delighted with the beauty of the garland, sent to invite Amasis to supper, and after this treated him as one of his friends. Finally, on one occasion, he made the mistake of sending him out as his general when the Egyptians were in rebellion, and they, from hatred to Patarmis, made Amasis their king in his stead.

The time of distributing the wreaths provided by the host in the Grecian entertainment varied with different occasions. It was sometimes, however, and perhaps most generally, when the tables were removed, and before the libations commenced.

"Now is the time to clear the table, and
To bring each guest some water for his hands,
And garlands, perfumes, and libations."

But guests at other times were crowned at the beginning of a feast. At the noted entertainment of Caranus this ceremony was performed before the company entered the dining-room. The chaplets however in this instance were golden ones, each of the twenty guests having one presented him of the value of five pieces of gold. At royal banquets in Syria a very curious luxury was introduced. When garlands had been given the guests, some slaves would come in having little bladders full of Babylonian perfumes, and going round the room at a little distance from the guests, would bedew their garlands with the perfumes, sprinkling nothing else.

Jaunts in and about Dublin.



YOU are wasting your time here, you are indeed," moralize much traveled friends, advising us to curtail our stay in Dublin; "you should be spending all this time in London or Paris." We listen to, agree with, and do not follow this sage advice, finding this city venerably but not oppressively ancient, stirring and cheerful, full of interest and delight.

Our artist makes sketching tours along the beautiful bay of Killiney, or into the heathery solitudes of the mountains of Wicklow, trusting to fate and the jaunting-car driver to conduct him to something interesting, and returning at night very tired, furiously hungry; with portfolio crammed with "delicious bits," and heart filled with enthusiasm. The architect will admire the public buildings, which, though neither remarkable for size, nor for richness and profusion of ornament, are built in a pure classic style at once simple and imposing. Those among us who love history find here many old landmarks, from the round tower, now part of Dublin Castle, whence, a thousand years ago, fierce Danes held absolute sway over the conquered Irish, to the obscure house where Dean Swift first saw the light. In these streets Goldsmith distributed his indiscreet but warm-hearted charities, or, loitering through these alleys he heard some belated wayfarer or houseless wanderer drowsily crooning the song, child of his brain, for which he had recently received the modest sum of five shillings. Through these streets ran Peg Woffington, the little bare-footed cress seller, attracting attention by her beauty, and her shrill cries, "All this young salad for a penny." Through these streets she afterwards drove as the great actress, the famous beauty, wealthy, courted and flattered.

On the south side of the Liffy, in the broad public square called College Green (for the inconsequent reason apparently that there is not a blade of anything green thereabout), historical interest centers

For here, when the cobble-stone pavement, over which all manner of vehicles are clattering, was dim woodland, or wild heath, Henry II., recent conqueror of Ireland, pitched his magnificent pavilion, and entertained the Irish chieftains with feasts, tournaments, and all the most splendid and costly amusements of those times.

That great semicircular pile on one side of the square, with its magnificent colonnade of Ionic columns, was formerly the Irish Parliament House, and those old walls have resounded in their day to mighty eloquence. Since the union of the kingdoms it has been used as the bank; many of the windows are walled up, others are protected by strong iron bars, and in the portico two grim-looking grenadiers, with shouldered arms, walk up and down in a manner painfully suggestive of the movements of caged wild beasts.

Just opposite is the somber mass of Trinity College; statues of Burke and Goldsmith, two of her most gifted sons, are on either side of the door, and behind are the courts which have resounded to the dismal tootings of Goldsmith's unlawful flute. The students being absent on the summer vacation, we take advantage of the desertion of the classic halls to invade the precincts into which nothing feminine, except actually scrubbers and laundresses, and metaphorically the muses, is supposed to enter. Through two great flagged courts we are admitted to the library, a large building standing by itself, said to contain two hundred thousand volumes, and entitled by law to a copy of every work published in Great Britain. Verily of making many books there is no end. We stand in a large and very lofty hall, surrounded by shelves, tier above tier, every shelf crowded with books; spiral staircases ascend to the very ceiling, their tops still among books. The works are said to be printed in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Sanscrit, besides all modern European languages. Are *said*—for our rusty looking conductor, who volunteers this information, insists that it be taken on trust, and a lady of our party attempting to examine a heavy and ancient tome, in strange foreign characters, meets with a surly repulse quite unworthy of the land of chivalry and of blarney. We will but peep with awe at the unsightly literary treasure, though, were we unprincipled bibliomaniacs, bent on stealing it, we doubt whether its loss would be felt or regretted by the somber-gowned but frolicsome students, who seem for the most part to prefer pranks to ancient tongues, and flirting to conic sections.

We visit the museum, an entirely new and costly building, the lofty ceiling of the entrance hall being supported by polished pillars of variously colored Irish marbles, a dark-red from Cork, deep sea-green from the far west, orange, black, and a pure Italian marble, white as the driven snow. The museum contains a fine geological collection, shells, preserved insects, bottled snakes, ancient weapons, and ghastly skulls and bones; we found most entertainment in the school for engineers, where were models of bridges, tiny marvels of delicacy and exactness, and little locomotives and steamboats, which, could they be introduced into a nursery, would cause boundless delight.

The younger portion of our company find never-exhausted pleasure in a promenade down Sackville Street, the great artery of the city's life. Exceeding in width any other thoroughfare in Europe, this street is lined with fine stores and public buildings, and combines, like our own Broadway, the business and the pleasure of a great city. The young business man, hurrying from post-office or bank, the lawyer with anxiety in his brow and briefs in his bag, and the collegian going to lecture, are able to bestow a bow on the belle in quest of silks, laces, and flowers, wherein to dazzle them all at the next great ball. And besides the goods from all parts of Europe, displayed behind the plate glass windows, and the shifting crowd that gazes on them, the many picturesque costumes to be seen on Sackville