

and causing great distress, because they are not only disfiguring, especially if in the face, but very painful as well. These boils also point to a state of the blood which sadly needs reform; indeed, the general health of girls who suffer in this way is at a very low ebb. Everything, then, should be done that tends to increase the strength and purify the blood. Simple laxatives, such as cream of tartar or Gregory's powder, should be taken twice or thrice a week. The digestion should be carefully attended to, nothing being eaten that is in the least likely to disagree, and not too much of anything eaten at one time. Exercise in the open air should be abundant, but not fatiguing, and the soap bath taken every day. (I have already described the method of taking this bath in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.) Tonic medicines should be taken also, say a teaspoonful or more of quinine wine three times a day and ten drops of the tincture of iron.

Touching the little boils three or four times a day with a drop or two of Goulard water, and suffering it to dry on, may tend to keep them back, or hot water may be tried.

A sty is simply a small painful boil on the eyelid; it should be bathed three or four times a day with warm milk and water, and a poultice applied at night. As soon as it points, great relief will be gained by pricking it with a fine but perfectly new sewing needle.

WHAT THE FLOWERS SAY.

"Is there any moral shut within the bosom of the rose?"—*Tennyson.*



YOU may look at flowers in two ways—botanically, which is very interesting, or sentimentally and poetically, which is

more interesting still. They are almost all surrounded by a halo

of human thought, and we find in them—or fancy we find in them, which is much the same thing—an approach to human expression. We speak of them as possessing pride, modesty, boldness, delicacy, as *inspired* by joy, sorrow, and ambition. We give them a voice and a language.

We do not, of course, always know what they say. You remember the man in the fairy tale who had the gift of understanding the speech of animals, but lost it through telling the secret to his wife. Now it is not unlikely that the exact language spoken by the flowers, if ever it was known, has been lost in some such fashion. We comprehend it very imperfectly, guessing at it as we might guess at the speech of our dogs and cats.

Some people can never understand its meaning, any more than they can make out what is told by any of the other wonders of nature. Such are not desirable acquaintances at all. Keep far away, says a wise man, from those who have no sympathy for flowers.

The great thing requisite is to be in love with what is beautiful, and to have an open

and tender heart. To all happy natures of whom this is the description flowers say strange things, and birds and beasts make surprising revelations.

The object of this article is to speak of the language of flowers as it is at present understood. By the matter-of-fact this language has been held of small account, and has often been sadly misrepresented, but, girls, to speak



THE MOSS ROSE.

seriously, it contains a genuine truth to which good sense will not refuse attention. The more the things of nature are mixed up with our own spiritual being the more interesting, the more enjoyable, the more beautiful the world will appear. Connect things with thoughts, then things are truly valuable.

If the study of the language of flowers did nothing more than send you to the garden and the fields, it would not be an unsatisfactory result. The value of the open air is not half understood, and how few, after all these years, have discovered that there is more genuine happiness to be obtained in the healthy round of rural life than amidst all the bustle of society.

There is a great deal of poetry still left in the country, though perhaps not quite so much—and the more's the pity—as in the olden time, when "the elves danced full oft in many a green mead," and the cowslips were the pensioners of the fairy queen.

Flowers are in a special manner connected with the romance of life. They are mixed up with all our remembrances, and the older we grow the most quiet nooks they occupy in our hearts. It would be a curious calculation how many withered flowers there are in the world treasured as relics beyond price, and forming the links that connect us with a happy past. It is, therefore, of great interest to know the sentiments connected with different flowers, and the human attributes and human passions which they are held to denote and express.

There can be no doubt that the language of flowers came originally from the East, the home of so many marvels. It received a great deal of attention in Europe in the Middle Ages, and was of good service to lords and ladies, who in those times knew as little how to write as how to read. We have not the only example of its utility in the case of the fair prisoner who, having no opportunity of speaking to her lover, informed him of her captivity by throwing from a lofty tower a rose bathed in her tears.

Those who have tried to reduce the language of flowers to a system have laid down several rules for its use. The first of these is that a flower presented in an upright position ex-

presses a certain thought, but given with its head hanging downwards utters just the contrary sentiment. You may also, they say, vary the expression of flowers by altering their position. The marigold placed on the head, for example, signifies sorrow of mind; above the heart, pangs of love; resting on the breast, *ennui*. It makes a difference, too, if you present a flower with or without its leaves or without its thorns, if it happens to have any thorns. A rosebud, with all its thorns and leaves, means, "I fear, but I hope;" stripped of its thorns, "There is everything to hope for;" stripped of its leaves, "There is everything to fear."

But all this is too elaborate for most people, and we must always bear in mind that the poetry of nature may be ruined by indulgence in fantastic whims.

Let us speak first of the rose, the flower of love and beauty. No other has been more highly praised by poets in every country and in all past times. It has had the most high-sounding names given to it: Queen of Flowers, Daughter of the Sky, Glory of Spring, and Ornament of the Earth show the depth of enthusiasm it has excited. We therefore naturally expect it to take a leading place in speaking the language of flowers. And so it does.

Roses represent a different sentiment according to their colour. The white rose indicates "candour;" the musk rose "affectation;" the single rose "simplicity;" the damask rose "freshness;" the cabbage rose goes forth as "an ambassador of love;" and a white and red rose together form a symbol of unity.

A yellow rose means "decrease of love" or "jealousy," yellow, according to one of the articles of folk-lore, being a jealous colour. If you wish to indicate "charming grace and beauty," you must select a China rose. That



THE LILY.

must have been the flower sent by the poet with the famous verses—

"Go, lovely rose,
Tell her that wastes her time and me
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be."

In the East, the rose is above all others the flower of affection. There is a beautiful story which represents the bulbul—so the Armenians call the nightingale—as falling in love with the rose, and as only beginning to

sing when inspired by the tender passion. This fable has been put into verse by Thackeray:—

“ Under the boughs I sat and listened still,
I could not have my fill.
‘How comes,’ I said, ‘such music to his
bill?
Tell me for whom he sings so sweet a trill.’



THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

“ ‘Once I was dumb,’ then did the bird disclose,
‘But looked upon the Rose;
And in the garden where the loved one grows
I straightway did begin sweet music to compose.’ ”

The rose used to be employed as the symbol of silence, and from this arose a phrase one often hears, “under the rose.” It seems that in ancient times it was a custom to place chaplets of roses above the heads of the guests, and on these occasions when people wished what they said to go no farther than those present they remarked that their observations were made “under the rose.” Thus the phrase we use took its origin.

The lily is the emblem of majesty and purity. This flower is closely connected with the legendary history of the Virgin Mary, the



SNOWDROP.

lily which generally appears in pictures in connection with her being the great white lily of our gardens. As a token of purity it was frequently placed by artists in the Middle Ages in the hands of female saints.

The lily of the valley has always been held to be symbolical of purity and holiness. In some country places this humble but graceful plant is understood as pointing men’s thoughts to a better world; it is called there the “ladder to heaven,” a name evidently suggested by the arrangement of the flowers.

The snowdrop is another of those emblems of purity of which the world cannot have too many. This flower has become invested with a kind of sacredness; no doubt because it forms about the first sign that after the long sleep of winter Nature is rousing herself to begin the life and work of spring.

As an emblem of modesty we have the daisy, the badge of Maid Margaret, that was so meek and mild, a very popular saint in the olden time. Another flower speaking the same language is the humble violet. The violet is also a lover’s flower, and stands for constancy. As the old rhyme has it:—

“ The violet is for faithfulness,
Which in me shall abide.”

We have a contrast to these plants of modest looks and lowly thoughts in the tulip, which is held to be a symbol of grandeur and magnificence. During last century this flower created a sensation at



ROSEMARY.

which we may well imagine violets, daisies, and all quiet-minded flowers were much amazed. The love of tulips became a mania. It was no rare thing to see a family ruined through the passion of the father for tulips.

The thistle in the language of flowers stands for “retaliation.” To the Scotchman, however, as everyone knows, it speaks of nothing but the glories of his own native land, of which it is the emblem.

It became the emblem of Scotland, if legends be true, in the following way:—When the Danes invaded Scotland, a long time ago, it was thought a shabby thing to attack an enemy except in broad daylight. On one occasion the invaders resolved to avail themselves of stratagem, and to come upon the Scots by night. To prevent their tramp from being heard they marched barefooted. They thus got unobserved within a short distance of the Scottish forces; but a Dane unluckily set his foot on a superb prickly thistle, and he gave such a howl of pain that the Scots heard him. They immediately ran to their arms and defeated the foe with great slaughter. After this the thistle was, out of pure gratitude, made the emblem of the Scottish kingdom.

Another Scottish flower is the harebell, the blue-bell of Scotland. In the language of flowers the harebell represents “submission.” According to the poet:—

“ The harebell, for her stainless azure hue,
Claims to be worn of none but those are true.”



HEARTSEASE.

All blue flowers, however, the bard should have noticed, have equal rights in this way, it being laid down in the old rhyme that blue is the colour of true love, as green is that of grief, and yellow that of love forsaken.

Now we come to “the sweet forget-me-nots that grow for happy lovers.” The language of this flower lies in its name, and its name it is said arose from the following incident:—Two lovers were once loitering on the margin of a lake, when the maiden noticed some flowers growing on the surface of the water, near an island at some distance from the shore. She expressed a wish to obtain them, and her knight, in the true spirit of ancient chivalry, at once plunged into the water, and swimming to the spot plucked the wished-for plant. His strength, however, failed, and feeling that he could not regain the shore, although very near it, he threw the flowers on the bank; then, casting a last affectionate look upon his lady-love, he cried, “Forget me not!” and was buried in the waters.



REEDS.

Rosemary stands for remembrance. At one time this plant was thought to strengthen the memory, and in consequence of this it became the symbol of remembrance amongst friends and lovers. A lover would say to his lass:—

"Rosmary is for remembrance
Between us day and night;
Wishing that I might always have
You present in my sight."

Ophelia, in her madness, gives rosemary to her brother, "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember."

Silence is represented by lavender. There is a superstition in some parts of the Continent that lavender has the power of restoring speech to those who have lost it.

Eglantine means just the reverse of lavender, and stands for "you speak well."

Amongst our winter decorations holly has an important place, and it speaks a language of great interest. The Romans of old held holly to be a sign of peace and goodwill, and it has thus come to be the emblem of the principal festival of a religion which preaches peace and goodwill to all mankind. With the northern nations of Europe holly used to be a type of the life which preserved nature through the desolations of winter.

The laurel speaks of triumph or glory. In the middle ages this plant served to crown poets, artists, and men of learning, who had particularly distinguished themselves. From this practice we have derived our expression *poet-laureate*. During the time when Rome ruled the world the laurel was held to be the emblem of victory, and also that of clemency. Whenever a despatch was sent telling of a great success it was wrapped up in, and ornamented with, laurel leaves. And in triumphal processions leaves of laurel were worn by the victorious generals, and the common soldiers bore sprigs of it in their hands.

Friendship, fidelity, and marriage are represented by ivy. This pleasant duty has been performed by this plant for many a day. In Greece wreaths of ivy used to be presented to newly-married people as a suitable emblem of undying affection amid the ravages of time.

But we must not linger over the subject in this way or we shall never have done. Our purpose, girls, is to give just enough to show you that there is a language of flowers and that it is worth looking into for yourselves. We shall hurry on and just mention a few more of the commoner plants with the language popularly assigned to them.

Rushes are held to signify "submission" or "docility," and if any day you watch the wind sweeping over them, you will see that the plant speaks quite in character. Heath signifies solitude. Pink verbena, on the contrary, has a leaning towards society, and is an emblem of "family union." Jasmine stands for "amiability," fern for "sincerity," and foxglove, which always wears a brazen-faced air, for "insincerity."

The acacia stands for "friendship" or "platonic affection." There is a deeper sentiment at work when one presents a sprig of mignonette, which signifies "your qualities surpass your charms"—*mental* qualities, be it understood, and *personal* charms. Apple-blossom is still more serious, for it means "preference;" but "preference" is cold compared with "generous and devoted affection," and that is indicated by a sprig of honeysuckle.

As the flame of affection burns still brighter, the heliotrope, the camellia, the pansy, and the mistletoe find employment. The heliotrope says, "I am ever faithful and devoted;" the camellia, "In me behold constancy itself;" the pansy, "I think of you, think of me;" and the mistletoe, "Whatever difficulties are in the way of winning you, I shall surmount them all." And may that be the fortune of all the honest-hearted hard-working lovers in the world.

JAMES MASON.



THE STARRY SKY.—II.

AS there are many readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER in every part of the world, we must not confine our remarks on the Starry Sky to the northern hemisphere. To the dwellers in Australia, or New Zealand, or South America, or the Cape Colony, the heaven has an unwonted aspect, as well as the earth a different vegetation. The celebrated traveller Alexander von Humboldt describes the strange sensation, in passing from one hemisphere to another, as he saw the stars to which he had from childhood been familiar sink towards the horizon, and gradually disappear. "Nothing," he says, "impresses more vividly on the mind of the traveller the vast distance to which he has removed from his native country than the sight of a new firmament." The same idea is expressed by an English emigrant, who thus wrote in the *Leisure Hour*, "Walking the decks on fine nights, the heavens seemed palpably changed, and the thought of being far, far from home was impressed upon the mind with a power never known before. Stars which had been watched in the northern sky with interest and delight in the days of childhood and youth drooped towards the horizon, and were at length looked for in vain. Others usually seen towards the south were high overhead, while strangers appeared in the direction we were sailing, ascending higher and higher till there was almost a new heaven aloft, without any intimation that the old earth had passed away."

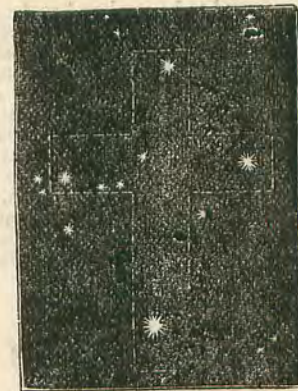
But the southern sky is as richly bedecked with "night's jewels" as the sky of the north, and its stars and constellations are as beautiful and as dear to those born under this light as are the familiar stars to the people of the old country. The most brilliant portion of the *Via Lactea* is in the south, and the numerous nebulae almost rival the lustre of the Milky Way. There is a profusion of bright stars in the constellations of the ship *Argo*, the *Centaur*, and the *Southern Cross*. The brilliancy of these stars appears the greater for contrast with the dark spaces in the heavens, almost starless to the naked eye. One of these spaces, in the midst of a bright part of the Milky Way, was called the *coal-sack* by the early settlers. And in the southern skies there is no more striking sight than the mysterious nebulae known as the *Magellanic Clouds*.

But we do not lose all our northern stars, though many of them have disappeared. For instance, *Orion*, which adorns our sky in the winter months, is seen in almost every habitable part of the globe south of the equator; in all places, at least, where English settlers live. *Sirius* also shines as brightly at the Cape as at *Greenwich*, and is better seen, being, when on the meridian, only eighteen degrees north of the zenith. *Vega* and *Alpha Cygni* are also visible in the latitude of the Cape and *New South Wales*. These familiar stars combine with the new ones to make the brilliant display which has led some astronomers to describe the southern sky as, on the whole, more beautiful than that of the

northern hemisphere. Let us see what are the most notable of these southern stars and constellations.

Our star map (p. 153) shows the aspect of the heavens at *Table Bay*, *Cape of Good Hope*, looking south, on the 15th of *March*, at 10 p.m., or the 15th of *April* at 8 p.m. The most important stations in *Australia*, *Sydney*, *Adelaide*, *Melbourne*, are within a few degrees of the same latitude, so that the maps serve equally for them at the same local time. The line of the spectator is supposed to be at or near 34 deg. south of the equator. In this view there are a few stars known to the ancients, but those within 40 deg. of the *South Pole* have been named and catalogued only in recent times.

The most notable object in the map is the *Southern Cross*. It is seen to the left of the meridian line of the chart, above *Table Rock Mountain*, and just above the black gap in the *Via Lactea*. The upper and lower stars, being of similar right ascension, are always on the meridian at the same time, and therefore serve, like the pointers in *Ursa Major*, or the *Great Bear*, to indicate the proximate position of the *South Pole*. In the latitude of the Cape and the great *Australian towns* it never sets below the horizon. The *South Pole* is about 27 deg. 38 min. from the largest and nearest star in the *Cross*. There is a small star near the position of the pole, but only visible at night, and only of use for the observation of astronomers. But the *Cross* is known to all in southern lands, and marks by its position the hour of the night. "How often," says *Humboldt*, "have we heard our guides exclaim, in the savannahs of *Venezuela*, or in the deserts extending from *Lima* to *Truxillo*, 'Midnight is past, the *Cross* begins to bend';" and elsewhere referring to his



"THE SOUTHERN CROSS."

first view of this famous constellation, he says, "We saw distinctly for the first time the *Cross of the South*, on the night of the 4th and 5th of *July*, in the 16 deg. of latitude. It was strongly inclined and appeared from time to time through the clouds. The pleasure felt on discovering the *South Cross* was warmly shared by such of the crew as had lived in the colonies. In the solitude of the seas we hail a star as a friend from whom we have been long separated. Among the Portuguese and the Spaniards peculiar motives seem to increase this feeling; a religious sentiment attaches them to a constellation the form of which recalls the sign of the faith planted by their ancestors in the deserts of the *New World*."

The sentiment is not confined to any national or sectarian history, but touches all Christian hearts. The poet *James Montgomery*, in his farewell lines to a friend about to sail to where day and night would be