

## THE VIOLET'S LOVE-STORY.

AMONG the lilies of the sacred stream  
There grew a violet, like a maiden's dream,  
And when the wind passed over them, it stirred  
Their white soft petals with its quiet word.

The sun looked on them and their leaves were  
glad ;  
Only the purple blossom there, that had  
No kindred by the stream, let fall a tear,  
Half wishing for the autumn of the year.

But when the summer came, the violet guessed,  
By some slow dream that thrilled her gentle breast,  
That some sweet thing might come to her ; she  
thought  
Through the long days of how her dream was  
wrought :

She guessed it woven of the spider's thread,  
And coloured like the river's changing bed  
Where polished pebbles shine ; she guessed it frail  
And perfect, with pure wings, like silver pale.

So there, behind the leaves and stems, her lids  
Grew deep with veins of love, and Bassarids  
Racing the dim woods through, beheld her face,  
Whispered together, and desired the place.

The grey was blushing in the Eastern sky  
When there drew near a child of poesy  
With full lips very tender, and grave eyes  
Where deep thoughts dwelt in some delicious wise.

He looked upon the lilies, and a tear  
Dropped on their blossom ; but a little fear  
Came to the bosom of the violet  
Lest he see not, or see her, and forget.

But he did see her, and drew close, and said :  
“O perfect passion of my soul, O dead  
Living desire, O sweet unspoken sin,  
Leave thou the lilies ; they are not thy kin.

“Within my heart one slow sweet whisper stole  
Consuming and destroying all my soul  
Lest, if the pure cold mind should conquer it,  
I might not know, although it still were sweet.

“My pure desires arose and cast out love  
That flew away, most like a wounded dove,  
Only the drops were mine its bosom bled.  
Now the last time it hovers by my head :

“Now the last time I turn and go to her.”  
The violet smiled at him: his fingers fair  
Plucked the sweet blossom to his breast; his eyes  
Mused like delight, and like desire were wise.

There was a maiden like the sun, to whom  
His footsteps turned amid the myriad bloom  
Of flowers and leafy pathways of the wood,  
Where, in a dell of roses white, she stood.

He came to her and looked so dear and deep  
Into her eyes, the wells and woods of sleep,  
And took the violet from his breast, and stood  
A glad young god within the golden wood.

He kissed the blossom, and bent very low,  
And put it to her lips—and even so  
His lips were set on them; the flower sighed  
For deep delight, and in the long kiss died.

Years fled and faded, yet a flower was seen  
Gracious and comely in its nest of green,  
And tender hands would water it and say  
“O happy sister, she that went away!

“For she brought back my lover to my heart,  
And knew her work was perfect, and her part  
Most perfect when she died between the breath,  
And in the bridal kisses kissed to death.”

So grew the newer blossom and was glad :  
Sweet little hopes her faint fair forehead had  
That one day such a death might crown her days.  
And so God too was glad, the story says.