

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.