

FLORA, THE GODDESS OF FLOWERS

Respectfully inscribed to

MRS. JAMES B. SMITH

FROM the days of the primitive man,
And his mate in their skin clothes bedight,
Dame Nature has schemed in her plan
To embroider the world with her bright
Fragrant blossoms to give us delight ;
And all homage we pay to her powers
For the vision that gladdens our sight,—
Fair Flora, the Goddess of Flowers.

As our planet led out in the van
When the day was first born of the night,
Overarching the heavens there ran
Bluest meadows with star flowers white,
And anon on the sheer mountain height,
Crystal clear bloomed the now gelid showers ;—
Then the worship began and the rite
Of Flora, the Goddess of Flowers.

While long dead is the goat-footed Pan
And exiled the gods once of might,
We note as the records we scan
That little man lost by their flight ;
Though derision we feel for their plight,
As we roam through the sunshiny hours,
We may never discrown nor indict
Dear Flora, the Goddess of Flowers.

May naught her annoy or affright
As she seeks Nature's pets in her bowers,—
May she triumph o'er Time's grudge and
spite,—
Our Flora, the Goddess of Flowers.

DAME NATURE, PRODIGAL (?)

*"So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life."*

The writer, who had been discouraged by the poor success of his efforts to naturalize certain wild flowers in his own locale. Nature's hobos, the weeds, strangling the tiny seedlings, had his attention called to the fact that Nature herself disperses thousands of seeds or millions of spores to reproduce a single plant, such her prodigality—or extreme carefulness.

OF choice wild flowers I planted many seeds,
Trusting to win them here with us to dwell ;
Hapless the fate my enterprise befell ;
Capricious Nature seemed to favor weeds,
And choked my seedlings with her vagrant breeds.
When weak meets strong with weak it is not well ;
End of my plantings is but brief to tell
When hand was none to meet the plantlets' needs.
Then Nature—"Thus and so my work is done :
By age-long process must progression be
In teeming life of earth and air and sea ;
In my own way must my own race be run ;
Man's meddling methods vex and hamper me ;—
Plant thou a thousand seeds—I'll grow thee one !"