

THE QUEEN AND THE SLAVE.

She was the Queen of that garden of flowers,
 And he was a slave from the north.
 Long had he loved her in silence ; at last
 His passion one day burst forth.

" Futile your love ; for I am the Queen,
 And you—you are only a child !
 No, no, poor boy ; not even a kiss ! "
 And the Queen leaned back and smiled,—

Leaned back in the grass till her jewelled arm
 On the scales of a coiled snake press'd ;
 Quick as a flash the forked fangs smote
 Right into her queenly breast.

The slave bent over his Queen and said :
 " Now, I thank the gods for this ;
 For only my lips on your wounded breast
 Can save you, by one long kiss."

Then close to the passionate youth she crept,
 And tenderly gazed in his eyes :
 " Ah ! never, poor boy, for you surely know
 Who tastes of the poison dies.