



The Divine Child and the Passion Flower.

(A Reverie.)

BY ENFANT DE MARIE—ST. CLARE'S.

O DEPTH of lustrous meaning in those eyes
 That sadly gaze upon the mystic flower!
 Dark shadows swiftly gather round the Child,
 Low voices murmur of His Passion hour.

Yes! shadows from the moon-lit olive trees
 Where He will kneel in agony alone,
 And see! the petals of this flower enfold
 A spear and nails, as emblems of His own.

The Virgin-Mother's tender, watchful gaze
 Is resting on that far-off vision now,
 His robe, as in the vintage time seems dyed,
 A thorny circlet wreaths that Infant-brow.

Her heart is wounded as with sword of pain,
 And yet in peace (like His) so deep and still,
 These sweet hearts beat in unison of love
 And calm submission to the Father's will.

The joyous Christmas-songs have died away;
 But softly, with a plaintive, touching power,
 These echoes linger of a legend old,
 Our Saviour gazing on the Passion-flower.

Fair blossom! thy symbolic imagery
 Is traced for us by master-hand divine,
 And seems to whisper, with a pleading voice:
 Bear impress of His Passion like to mine!

The brightest flowers of this lovely earth
 In woodland, lane, or shady garden-bower,
 No lesson teach more dear to Jesus' Heart
 Of patient suffering—than the Passion-flower.