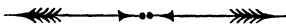


# FLORA,

→ The Goddess of Flowers and of the Spring. ←



**I**N the progress of Divine works there arrived a period in which this earth was to be called into existence. Before that period the whole earth was one shapeless mass where confusion ruled and chaos held her empire, but this rude and formless heap was about to feel a motion penetrate deep as the centre, from above, and beneath and all around. The Deity arose in his might and with a word created the world. "Let there be light," said the Almighty and from the bright presence of morn darkness fled and nature stood revealed. The earth brought forth grass, herbs and fruit trees, the pristine garden was formed and Flora reigned triumphant the fairest conception of creative power. Our first parents are introduced and all is beauty, harmony, innocence and joy. The aerial songsters attracted hither by Flora's leafy shade, burst forth into melody, more ravishing than the sounds of the sweetest lute, then pure delight and soft emotions glowed in their hearts, their souls confessed the sweet transport, and their lips singing in unison with the warbling of the birds attained the praise of the eternal God. But a change comes over the spirit of the scene, the arch fiend of mankind creeps into the garden in disguise, fear and unrest enter into their breasts, they disobey God, and joy departs. Flora furnishes them with their first clothing and the Almighty drives them out of this beautiful garden. The fiat goes forth, "out of