

AT THE END OF THE WOOING

"FROM its frail stem tear not the rose,"
you said,

"Nor brush from wings so fragile all their
gold,

Lest in your unrewarded hand you hold
Only, alas, torn plumes and petals dead !
Ah, plead no more"—you bowed your
troubled head—

"Lest we who loved and listened, dear,
of old,

In life's cage kiss this singing glory cold,
And find bruised petals where the rose
hung red !"

I take the solace, and endure the smart ;
Bend close, O wondering brow, and turn
to me

Those wistful lips, those eyes of mourn-
ful blue,

Where still the old smile steals, for, light
of heart,

The fleeting rose, the unassuaging
voices, see,

I leave and lose, but You—oh, never You !