

THE GARDEN OF RESURRECTION

CHAPTER I

It was the first, the very first, day of spring. A man walked by me with a narcissus in his coat and he was humming a tune.

By the looks of him—the tail-coat, the bowler hat, the little leather hand-bag—he was an artisan. You know that game of placing people. I put him down as an electrician. He had been attending to a job up West. He was returning to the premises of his firm in Bond Street. All this, of course, was surmise. But of one thing I was certain. He had no business to be walking through the Park. He ought to have been on a 'bus, or in the Underground Railway, speeding back to save his firm's most precious time, ready to start forth once more upon his firm's most urgent errands. Instead of this—it was the first day of spring—he was walking through the Park and I was envying him. I envied the narcissus in his coat. Even the very tune he was humming touched a sense of covetousness in my heart.

“Nor his ox,” thought I, “nor his ass, nor anything