



FIRST FRUIT OFFERINGS.

Our limits compel us to abridge *FIRST FRUIT OFFERINGS*, and to introduce the *GUARDIAN GENIUS OF CANADA*, just as she is sending her attendant Spirits in quest of fit subjects of contemplation for the young:—

"Who, that could drink where in sunlight gliding,
Gushes and sparkles the crystal tide,
Would fill his cup beneath dark weeds, hiding
The silvery waters their stems divide?"

"Who, that could pluck where the rim of gold
Gleams in ripe beauty around his head,
Would stoop to rake from the damp, dark mould,
The crude fruit moulder beneath his tread?"

"Away—away—amid Nature's bowers,
Call for the guiltless the fairest flowers
That deck the varying year;
Through the regions of earth and the records of time
Seek for all that is beautiful, and bright, and sublime,
And haste with the treasures here."

She said—Soft pinions parting fann'd
The summer air of the silver land;
And, ere in her bright career on high
The young moon waned in the vanished sky,
Ere yet at the porch of the trellis'd bower
From the embryo rose burst the full-blown flower,
It was fann'd by soft pinions again
And hush'd was the sound of the oracle's note,
And the melody pour'd from the mocking-bird's throat
By a sweet and a silvery strain.

"Home—home to our Western home
With first fruit offerings we are come."

In the sunshine of noon as we took our way
Our own loved land beneath us lay,
And the gush and the roar of her bright cascades,
And the whispering voice of her leafy glades,
And the sound of her lofty forest's sigh,
Rose, as they blended, in harmony.
We caught in a mirror of shadow and light
That landscape of loveliness glowing and bright;
We had a nymph, in her secret cell,
Treasure those sounds and guard them well,
That again they may float over wave and shore
When those lofty forests shall wave no more.

Winds and waves, as we hasten'd on,
Were hymning their great creator's praise,
And we took from ocean's deepen'd tone
A note to blend with the infant's lays;
Then, on to those elms were Eden smiled
Ere the fair young world was to guilt beguiled,
And over the waves of an inland sea,
To Bethlehem's plains and to Galilee,
On weariless wing we flew.

"What bring ye then from the gates of the morn;
From the hallow'd land where our Lord was born?"

"One lingering echo of the strain
"Peace on earth and good will to men."
And an olive bough bathed in dew,
And home, home to our Western home,
With first fruit offerings we are come."

The last notes rose on the liquid air.
The strain was caught by a sister fair.

"A wreath—a wreath from Albion's Isle,
We found her basking in summer's smile,
We heard the din from her cities swell,
But we turn'd away to mount and dell.
We have woven the hare-bell's beauteous blue,
And the blooming heart's empurpled hue,
With the rose's blush and the cherished flowers
That bloom in the shelter'd garden bowers,
For well do we know that a thorn there lies,
In their balmy breath and their beauteous dyes."

"Amid the Cheviot hills we stand,
Where the turf once blush'd with noble blood:
We linger'd in a crystal urn to fill,
Where flow'd from a rock a rippling rill.
There—where he mourn'd for his rival slain
The Percy level'd his burning brow,
While a tear, unmark'd by his warrior train,
Fell in the limpid tide below.
Ever since then, when pure and bright
They sparkled amid the moonlight light,
In the flash of these waters is borne a spell
The stormy spirit of feud to quell."

"Then, aloft on a southern cliff that, braving
The chafing Channel and ocean's roar,
Frowns stern and high o'er the wild wavesaving
Its base, the bulwark of the shore."

"We gazed on two of our sister train
Roving amid a level plain,
That the Seine's bright waters lave;
They will read the records of many a field,
They will trace the mottoes on many a shield,
Ere again they cross the wave."

"But we—ere we left the white cliff'd isle—
'Mid the Royal bowers of an ancient pile,
We sought the light of a cherub's smile,
We sought and we found it there."

And the genius that garners the riots of spring,
Waved o'er the treasure her mystic wing,
And forbade it to melt in air;
And home—home—to our Western home,
With those first-fruit offerings we are come."

Some of our band are wandering still,
In Ausonian vale, o'er Iberian hills,
Some are amid the ruin'd piles
And the myrtle bowers of the Grecian isles,
Through the fields of air as we took our flight,
We beheld in the distance their plumes of light,
And two—we have seen their bright locks wave
'Mid the plumes that o'ershadow Teumseh's grave;
But home—home to our Western home,
With these first-fruit offerings we have come."