

Poetry.

HYMN TO THE FLOWERS.

BY HOBACH SMITH.

DAY-STARS! that open your eyes with morn to twinkle  
From rainbow galaxies of earth's creation,  
And dew-drops on her holy altar sprinkle,  
As a libation!

To matin worshippers! who, bowing lowly  
Before the uprisen sun, God's lidless eye,  
Throw from your chalices a sweet and holy  
Incense on high!

To bright mosaics! that with storied beauty  
The floor of nature's temple tessellate,  
What numerous emblems of instructive duty  
Your forms create!

'Neath cloistered boughs each floral bell that swingeth,  
And tolls its perfume on the passing air,  
Makes Sabbath in the fields, and ereg ringeth  
A call to prayer!

Not to the domes where crumbling arch and column  
Attest the foebleness of mortal hand;  
But to that fane, most catholic and solemn,  
Which God hath planned!

To that cathedral, boundless as our wonder,  
Whose quenchless lamps 'bove sun and moon supply,  
Its choir the winds and waves, its organ thunder,  
Its dome the sky!

There, as in solitude and shade I wander  
Through the lone aisles; or stretched upon the sod,  
Awed by the silence, reverently ponder  
The ways of God.

Your voiceless lips, O flowers! are living preachers,  
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book,  
Supplying to my fancy numerous teachers  
From loneliest nook!

Floral apostles! that, in dowy splendor,  
"Weep without wo, and blush without a crime,"  
Oh, may I deeply learn, and ne'er surrender,  
Your lore sublime!

"Thou wast not, Solomon, in all thy glory,  
Arrayed," the lilies cry, "in robes like ours!  
How vain your grandeur! Ah, how transitory  
Are human powers!"

In the sweet-scented pictures, heavenly Artist,  
With which thou paintest Nature's wide-spread hall,  
What a delightful lesson thou impartest  
Of love to all!

Not useless are ye, flowers! though made for pleasure,  
Blooming o'er field and wave by day and night;  
From every source your sanction bids no treasure  
Harmless delight.

Ephemeral ages! what instructors hoary  
For such a world of thought could furnish scope?  
Each fading eph'ry a *memento mori*,  
Yet fount of hope!

Posthumous glories! angel-like collection!  
Upraised from seed or bulb interred in earth,  
Ye are to me a type of resurrection  
And second birth.

Were I, O God! in churchless lands remaining,  
Far from all voles of teachers or divines,  
My soul would find, in flowers of thy ordaining,  
Priests, sermons, shrines!

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May 3, 1854.

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Feb. 1857

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