

SELECTIONS FOR APRIL.

The Rainbow.

Hiawatha saw the rainbow,
In the eastern sky the rainbow,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered,
"'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there,
All the wild flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,
When on earth they fade and perish
Blossom in the world above us!"

— Longfellow.

Plant a Tree.

(By LUCY LARCOM.)

He who plants a tree
Plants a hope.
Rootlets up through fibres blindly grope;
Leaves unfold into horizons free.
So man's life must climb
From the clouds of time
Unto heavens sublime.
Canst thou prophesy, thou little tree,
What the glory of thy boughs shall be?

He who plants a tree
Plants a joy;
Plants a comfort that will never cloy,
Every day a fresh reality.
Beautiful and strong,
To whose shelter throng
Creatures blithe with song.
If thou couldst but know, thou happy tree,
Of the bliss that shall inhabit thee!

He who plants a tree
He plants love;
Tents of coolness spreading out above
Wayfarers, he may not live to see
Gifts that grow are best;
Hands that bless are blest;
Plant,— life does the rest!
Heaven and earth help him who plants a tree,
And his work its own reward shall be.

Boats Sail on the Rivers.

Boats sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,
As pretty as you please;
But the bow that bridges heaven
And overtops the trees
And builds a road from earth to sky,
Is prettier far than these.

— Christina Rossetti.

An Elm.

The great elm-tree in the open, posed
Placidly full in front, smooth bole, broad branch,
And leafage, one green plenitude of May.
O you exceeding beauty, bosomful
Of lights and shades, murmurs and silences,
Sun-warmth, dew-coolness,— squirrel, bee and bird,
High, higher, highest, till the blue proclaim's
'Leave earth, there's nothing better till next step
Heavenward!'— so, off flies what has wings to help.

— Robert Browning.

Spring.

The alder by the river
Shakes out her powdery curls;
The willow buds in silver
For little boys and girls.
The little birds fly over,
And oh, how sweet they sing!
To tell the happy children
That once again 'tis spring.

The gay green grass comes creeping
So soft beneath their feet,
The frogs begin to ripple
A music clear and sweet,
And buttercups are coming,
And scarlet columbine,
And in the sunny meadows
The dandelions shine.

And just as many daisies
As their soft hands can hold,
The little ones may gather,
All fair in white and gold,
Here blows the warm red clover,
There peeps the violet blue;
O happy little children!
God made them all for you.

— Celia Thaxter.

Give fools their gold and knaves their power;
Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall;
Who sows a field, or trains a flower
Or plants a tree is more than all.
For he who blesses most is blessed;
And God and man shall own his worth
Who toils to leave as his bequest
An added beauty to the earth.— Whittier.

The Dutch Windmill,
(By a Boy.)

(Imitate the sound of the mill.)
This is the way the Dutch windmill goes round:
High, then low; high, then low;
Kissing the sky and the air and the ground,
Ho, oho! Ho, oho!

Arms spreading wide in the soft autumn breeze.
High, then low; high, then low;
Fanning the flowers and grasses and trees.
Ho, oho! Ho, oho!

— St. Nicholas.