

his study, and there in the fervour of her heart breathed a prayer for the happiness of that parent whom she was about secretly to desert, and who for her sake had lived a life of almost perfect seclusion, forsaking the world, its allurements and pleasures, looking only for the reward in this life which her happiness and society could afford him, mingled with feelings the most consolatory to his own heart, that he had religiously and conscientiously discharged his parental duties, and that in the most affectionate and tender manner. Alas! how great the disappointment to his cherished hopes, remains to be shown!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## LOVE OF FLOWERS.

BY THE AUTHORESS OF THE "BACKWOODS OF CANADA."

"Flowers, wherefore do ye bloom?  
We strew the pathway to the tomb."

I HAVE often said within myself: Surely, if there be one of our natural tastes and affections more refined from the dross of sin that mixes in the thoughts and feelings of man in his fallen state, than another, it is the LOVE OF FLOWERS.

Next to the instinctive love of the parent, and the domestic animals that find their place beside the hearth of the household, the love of flowers manifests itself in the heart of the child. I regard it as the earliest development of the purely intellectual faculties—an untaught admiration for beauty of form, and harmony of colours, uninfluenced by what philosophers have written and poets sung.

Flowers are among the first steps by which the infant mind is led upwards to adore the manifold works of the Creator. They are indeed meet emblems of man's frail, corrupted nature. Like him they grow up—they blossom—they bring forth good and bad fruit—they wither—they die. They are the natural types of his resurrection. Like him, they are destined to rise again from the dark confines of their earthly tomb, renewed in fresh loveliness.

How poetical are many of the passages in Holy Writ, which liken man to the flowers of the field:

"And the voice said, Cry! and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth; the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand fast for ever."—Isaiah 40—5, 6, 7.

How strikingly pathetic is that part of our burial service:

"Man that is born of woman," &c.

How deeply did the affecting truth of these words enter my heart, as I stood, with my weeping sisters, beside the grave that had been opened to receive the mortal remains of a dear and much lamented father. It was a May morning, of surpassing beauty—not a cloud obscured the deep blue of the sky—and the solemn pauses between the impressive words of the minister were filled by the voice of the cuckoo, from the thick grove that skirted the romantic church-yard of I—, and the full joyous notes of a blackbird, in the hawthorn hedge that skirted the enclosure. The broad gay sunshine, and the cheerful melody of birds, seemed but a mockery to our sad spirits; but the withering flowers and grass that had been untimely cut off by the spade of the grave-digger, and which lay in profusion beneath our feet, spoke to our hearts with meek eloquence; and we beheld in the withering herbage a meet emblem of the frail existence of him whom we had seen cut off in the pride and strength of manhood.

There is something in that, now almost obsolete, custom of strewing flowers on the graves of departed friends, and hanging garlands of that fadeless flower, that we call Life-everlasting, at their tombs, that harmonizes far more with our feelings than all the sable mockery of woe displayed in city burials, where empty carriages and liveried servants are sent to swell the shew of outward respect for the memory of the dead.

The custom of planting flowers and decking the graves of friends still continues in remote villages in Wales, and in the northern parts of England, but it is entirely discontinued in the more civilized counties. I would it were otherwise; for it speaks more certainly to the heart than storied urn or animated bust. The holy, the beautiful, the simple language of nature is hushed into silence—a foreign and artificial one is heard in its place.

I know not a more pleasing sight than a group of happy, careless children, on a bright spring day, seated on some green waste by the roadside, or in some bowery lane, each with its chaplet of daisies, and its lap full of cowslips, celandines, and sweet violets. What pretty rosy groups have I seen, sunning themselves in front of cottage doors, or delightfully roaming over the green meadows, or wide-spread heath, gathering flowers. In every cabin window the neat housewife finds a place for the handfulls of primroses and cowslips, plucked by the children's hands in their daily rambles; and, though arranged with little attention to taste or elegance, I still love to look upon the cottager's bouquet, for the love of flowers inclines the heart to the love of God.

If there be one study I would recommend to