



FLOWERS OF THE SEA.

an orange, with the rounded side up. It was of a fine rose color, and as clear as jelly. It looked much like pink jelly. Looking closer, I saw that the other side was shaped like a bell or an open parasol. It had something which looked like long leaves, and which opened and shut.

But this was not all that I saw. From the darker lines on the upper part of the bell ran out long pink arms. These were almost a yard long. Their edges had full ruffles. They were of a cream color, like soft lace. These long arms hung down in the water, which spread out their pretty edges. With a soft and gentle motion they waved from side to side. In my boat I went quietly near this creature. It floated here there, spread out in all its beauty. I kept near it to watch it. This lovely thing was a jelly-fish.

It has also another name, which means *nettle*. The fine, long arms of the jelly-fish can sting like a nettle. If taken from the water, jelly-fish die in a very short time. They die by drying up. A very large jelly-fish will dry to a thin, small skin.

It would surprise you to know what large and hard things these soft jelly-fish can soften and use as food. Fish, crabs, shell-fish, are caught and eaten by jelly-fish. There is something in the jelly-fish which can dissolve these hard things. But he often casts out from his mouth the harder and larger shells.

He does this as you would put from your mouth nutshells or plum-stones.

How do jelly-fish move in the water? They have no swimming-feet. They have no fins. Some of them move by spreading out the bell, or round part, of their bodies, and then drawing it up again. This motion, which is like the rise and fall of your chest when you breathe, drives them through the water. Other jelly-fish have a motion more like the opening and closing of the hands. Some have little oars, paddles, or hairs on the edge. Some seem to open and close as you would slowly open and shut an umbrella.

They can also shine. They can make a fine bright light, something as fire-flies do. They have been called Lamps of the Sea. I have seen the ocean bright with them for miles. It looked as if all the stars had fallen from the sky, and were glowing in the water. When the jelly-fish shine so, the light is like a ball. These balls are sometimes red, or blue, or white, or green, or yellow. Some jelly-fish are the size of a dime, of a dollar, of a plate, and so on, up to the size of a huge wheel. They are of many shapes. They are like balls, fans, bells, bottles, plumes, baskets, cups, flowers.

And now, here is another odd thing to tell you. The jelly-fish stays in one place, and grows fast, when he is young, but when he has grown up he swims about wherever he chooses. Some of the young jelly-fishes come from an egg. Some of them come from what is called a bud. The egg at once fastens to some solid thing on the sea bottom. It grows into what looks like a plant with stems and branches. On these branches are

little cup-shaped buds. These buds are so many little jelly-fish growing on one stem.

After a time, these buds open, and a young jelly-fish breaks from the slender stem, and at once goes swimming away, as happy as a jelly-fish knows how to be.

This sea baby gets his name from his shape,—star-fish. His coat is a thick, tough skin. It has upon it prickles much like those of a hedge-hog.

THE LADY-BIRD.

BY MRS. SOUTHEY.

LADY-BIRD! lady-bird! fly away home;
The field-mouse has gone to her rest,
The daisies have shut up their sleepy red eyes,
And the bees and the birds are at rest.

Lady-bird! lady-bird! fly away home;
The fairy bells tinkle afar!
Make haste, or they'll catch you, and harness you fast
With a cobweb to Oberon's car.

Lady-bird! lady-bird! fly away home;
To your house on the old willow-tree,
Where your children, so dear, have invited the ant
And a few cosy neighbours to tea.

Lady-bird! lady bird! fly away home;
And if not gobbled up by the way,
Nor yoked by the fairies to Oberon's car,
You're in luck—and that's all I've to say.

BABIES IN CHINA.

Among the sweltering millions of China there is a practice which seems to have a curious result. The mother carries her infant in a kind of bag or pannier on her back, and not as in other countries where the dorsal carriage is affected—with the face turned outwards, but—as, probably we ought to expect in China, where everything seems to go and come by the rule of contraries—with the face turned inwards. The result of that is that the baby's nose is pressed against its mother's back, whence, no doubt, say the learned in these matters, has been evolved, in the course of ages, the peculiarly flattened or blunted nose, characteristic of the Chinaman. Furthermore, Chinese girls, even when allowed to live, are little thought of. In the family generally they bear no names; they are known as Number One or Number Two, like convicts, and they are no more reckoned members of the family than the cat or the dog. So when a Chinaman is asked what family he has, he counts only his boys. And a boy is treated with great honour and ceremony by the women. When he is four months old he is set for the first time in a chair, and his mother's mother sends or brings him many presents, notably among which is sugar-candy. The candy is emblematic of the sweet things of life, and it is stuck to the chair to signify the hope that he may never lack such things. His first birthday is the second great day of rejoicing. He is then set upon a table in front of many things, such as ink, books, tools, etc., and which ever he lays his hand on decides his future occupation