



Flowers For Our Lady's Altar on Candlemas Day.

For the Carmelite Review.



BY SISTERS N.

HERE are ways, our Lady knows them,
And her children all should know
How to find a flower for Mary
Underneath the deepest snow.

How to weave a lovely garland,
Winter though it be, and cold,
How to buy the rarest offering
Costing something, but not gold.

How to buy, and buy them dearly,
Gifts that she will love to take,
Nor to grudge the cost but give it
Cheerfully for Mary's sake.

Does this seem so strange an offering,
Nay, indeed, 'tis something new;
All can give her noble presents,
Shall I tell you of a few?

What were those the Magi offered,
Gold and myrrh and frankincense?
They, you say, were saints and monarchs,
That makes quite a difference.

Well, 'tis sometimes hard to listen
To a word unkind or cold,
And to smile a loving answer;
Do it, and you give her gold.

Thoughts of her in work or study
Are small grains of incense rare;
Cast upon a burning censer,*
Rise in perfumed clouds of prayer.

Here are sometimes bitter fancies,
Little murmurs that will stir
Even a loving heart—but crush them,
And you give our Lady myrrh.