

ODE VIII

LOVE THE ALL-SUBDUER ¹

THE god of love I sing
Who garlands bears of many-coloured
flowers;
Hearts ever conquering,
Mightiest of masters, subtle power of powers,
Thou rul'st the gods and all
Mortals thy wiles enthrall.

¹ In this fragment of a hymn in *Clemens Alexandrinus* we have the old conception of Eros which obtained in the age of Anacreon. In the time of the early lyric poets the god of love was represented as a youth of surpassing beauty, verging on manhood, grave and dignified, with a deep expression in his eyes which appears so effectively in the sculpture of Praxiteles. But shortly after the death of Alexander, which fell out in 323 B.C., Eros began to be depicted as a sportive and mischievous elf—a conception more in keeping with the traits and attributes which were now assigned to him.