

A SONG IN MAY-TIME.

A song for the joyful May-time,
A song like the song of a bird,
A song of the heart in its play-time,
With never a sorrowful word !

A song—but whence shall I win it,
Winged like the butterflies,
With the fresh-leaved wood's breath in it,
And the glow of the glad sunrise?

This is the song you ask, dear,
Would I could do your will !
But set me a song as a task, dear,
A test of the singer's skill !

A dweller in cities ever,
A toiler within the walls,
'Mid the tumult of man's endeavor,
Where the unseen fetter galls,

Little I know of the tender
Blithe songs that the free birds sing,
Little I know of the splendor
Of the wild wood's blossoming ;

And less of the hearts' sweet play-time,
So brief was mine you know ;
And the flowers of my beautiful May-time
Died under a strange, late snow.

Out of my life the cheery
Sweet spirit of youth is fled ;
My songs are the sighs of the weary,
My plaints for the dear ones dead.

Yet you've loved this sad song-voice, dear,
You would give it a noble range,
Then let it ring out and rejoice, dear,
With the mirth and the May-time change.

O ! joy to be your joy-bringer,
When 'tis joy, dear, even to pray
That a fairer and gladder singer
Will sing your song of the May !