

The sparrows chirp and twitter in the trees,
And from the hedgerows sing the grasshoppers
A lively song, which makes me fain to sing.
And since our master Boaz gives me leave,
I'll work the livelong day with willing heart;
But yet, I vow, I would not be the wife
Of Boaz, for the wealth of all the land.

Martha.

Our master Boaz is as God hath made him,
A kindly good and honorable man;
And what thy sister says is very true.
For since your father died I do not know
How I had fared, had it not been for Boaz.
For every year, when winter cometh on,
He brings me down a barrel full of meal,
And ever with the meal a cruise of oil;
And once, when I was sick at Purim-Tide
And ye were serving in a neighbor's house,
When Boaz heard it, he would daily come
And tend my sickness with a gentle hand
Like to a woman's. Long may Boaz live,
God give him such a wife as he deserves.

Rebecca.

I know the kind of maiden she should be;
And though I ne'er have seen her in the flesh,
Yet could I draw her picture to the life.
For she should have a meek and lowly heart,
And love the common duties of the house
And working in the fields at harvest time
Amidst her maidens. When her lord returned
From hunting or the labours of the day,
She would be ready, waiting his approach,
With all her children plucking at her gown.
The distaff would be ever at her side,
And wool and flax would occupy her hands;
So should she be; a woman whose desire
Were ever to her husband; such a wife
Were meet for him, and he would love her well.

Mary.

Rebecca.

What kind of man wouldst thou choose for a husband?

If I could have my choice—which God forbid,
For I should of a surety choose me wrong—
But if I had the choice, then I would choose
A merry man, a man who loved me well,
But not too well to lose his merriness;
For they who love too well are sad at heart.
I would not wish for one who seemed to fear me,
For I should spurn and hate him for his fear.