

SPRING SONGS



AND
SKETCHES.

Griffith, Farran & Company.

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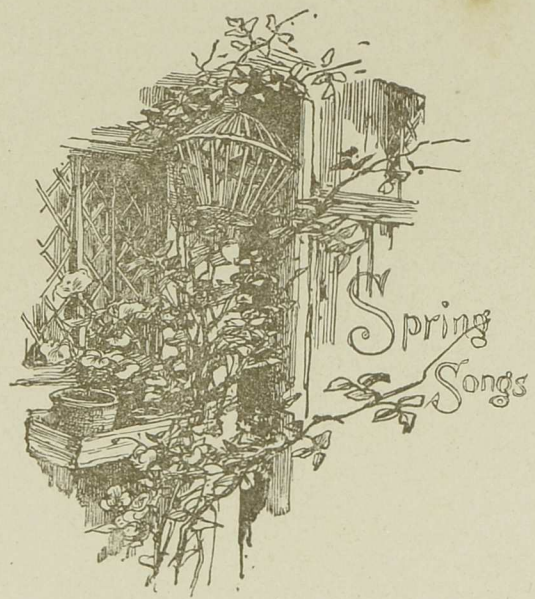
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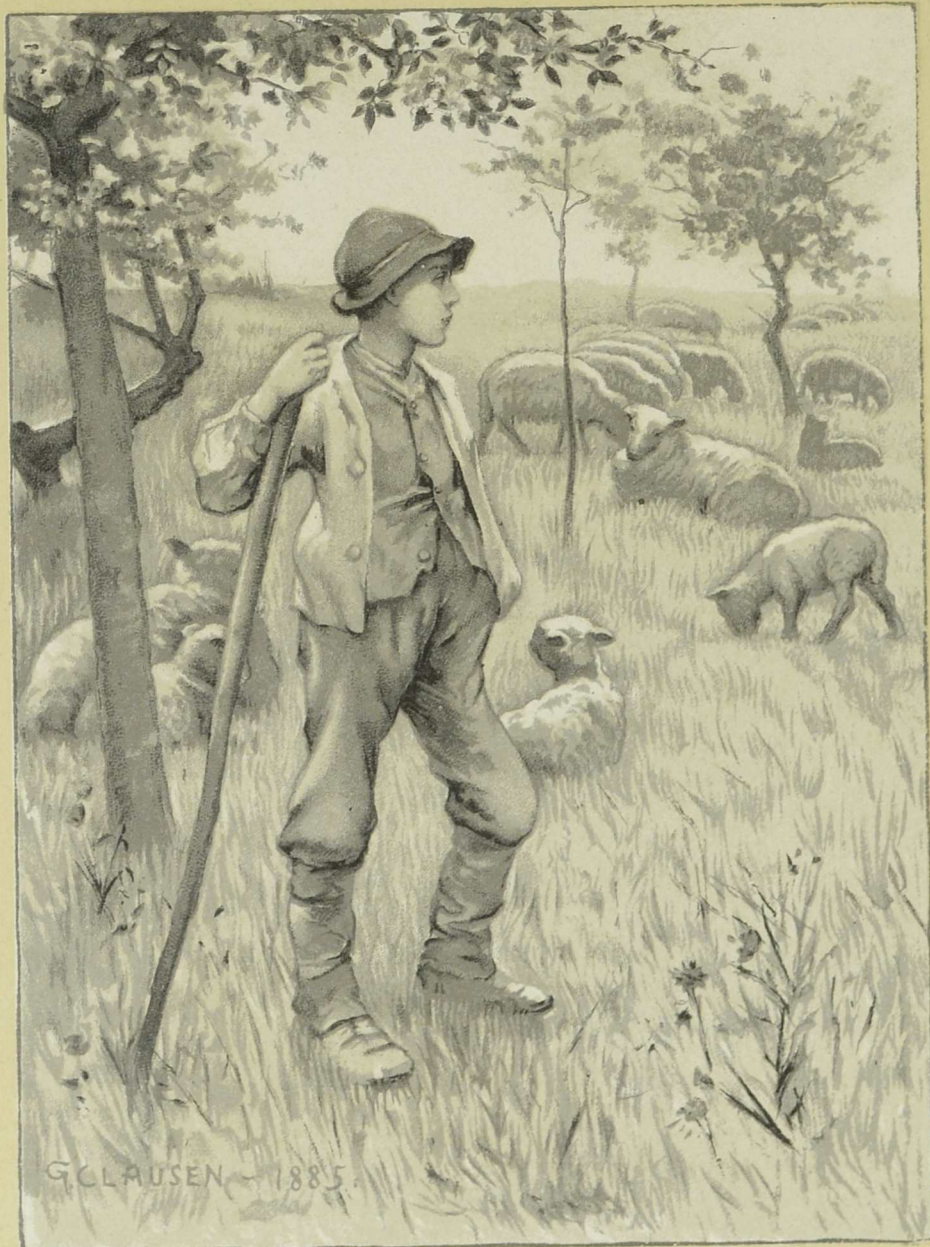
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SPRING.

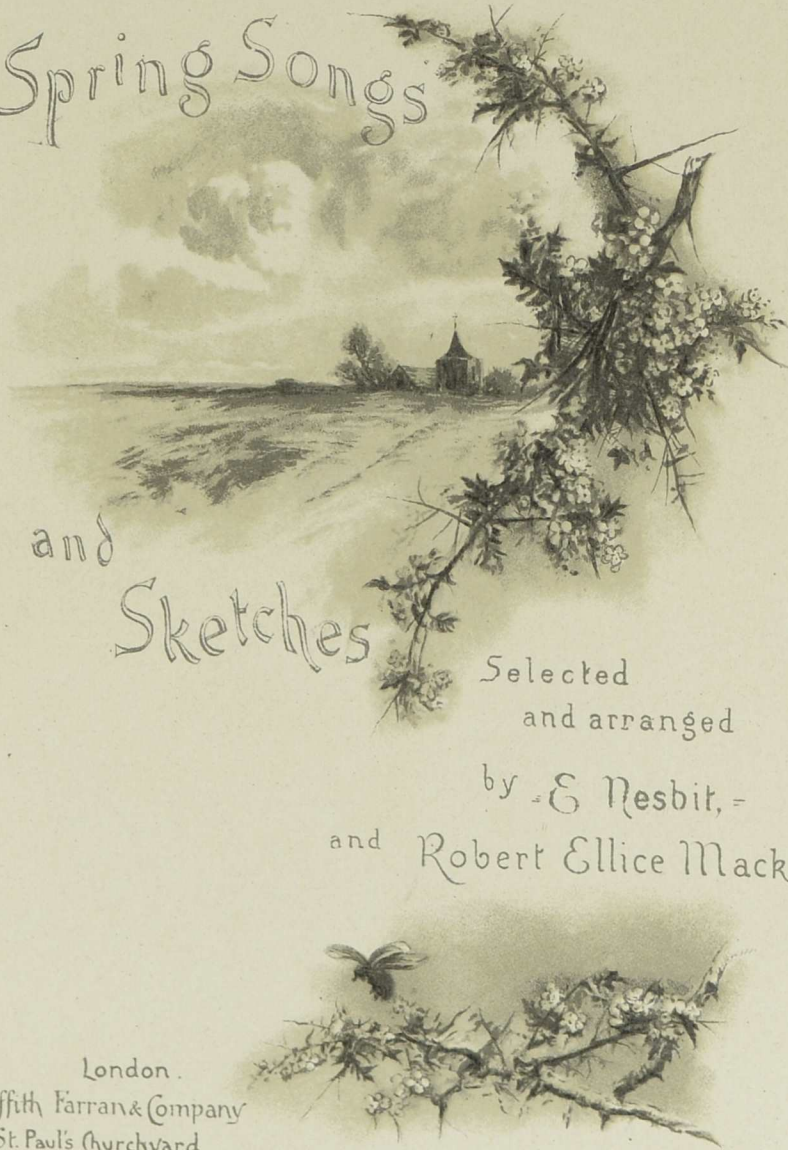
Spring Songs

and
Sketches

Selected
and arranged

by E Nesbit,
and Robert Ellice Mack.

London.
Griffith Farran & Company
St. Paul's Churchyard.





Spring Songs



AN APRIL DAY.

HIS day Dame Nature seemed in love;
The lusty sap began to move;
Fresh juice did stir th'embracing vines,
And birds had drawn their valentines.

The jealous trout that low did lie,
Rose at a well-dissembled fly;
Already were the eaves possess'd
With the swift pilgrim's daubèd nest:

The groves already did rejoice,
In Philomel's triumphing voice:
The showers were short,
the weather mild,
The morning fresh,
the evening smiled.





Joan takes her neat-rubbed pail, and now
She trips to milk the sand-red cow.
The fields and gardens were beset
With tulips, crocus, violet;
And now, though late, the modest rose
Did more than half a blush disclose.
Thus all looks gay and full of cheer,
To welcome the new-liveried year.

SIR H. WOTTON.



II.

ILVER lilies stood up in a row,
Tall sentinels of state,
Nodding their heads as the little feet
Pattered down to the gate;
The rose threw down a shower of leaves
Over her yellow hair,
And the eglantine slyly slipped a rope
And caught her unaware.

Sudden and sweet a robin sang
From a milk-white hawthorn bush,
And far away, like a voice in a dream,
Carolled a building thrush.
A flash of white in the golden air,
A magpie flitted across,
And bees were humming their drowsy tune
Over the thymy moss.



Daisies curled in their snowy frills,
 Silvering the grassy lane,
Wooded the small fingers to pluck and weave
 Their pearls in a fringed chain ;
A field-mouse peeped with his diamond eyes
 From some waving ribbon grass,
And a squirrel climbed the chestnut tree
 To see our darling pass.

A wandering wind, that had gathered
 The secrets of all the flowers,
Chased through the shadow and sunlight
 This restless baby of ours ;
Afar in the green wood's hollow
 A cuckoo proclaimed the spring,
But our bird's voice was the sweetest
 That day of thanksgiving.

C. BROOKE.



III.

I *WANDERED* lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden Daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the Daffodils.

WORDSWORTH.



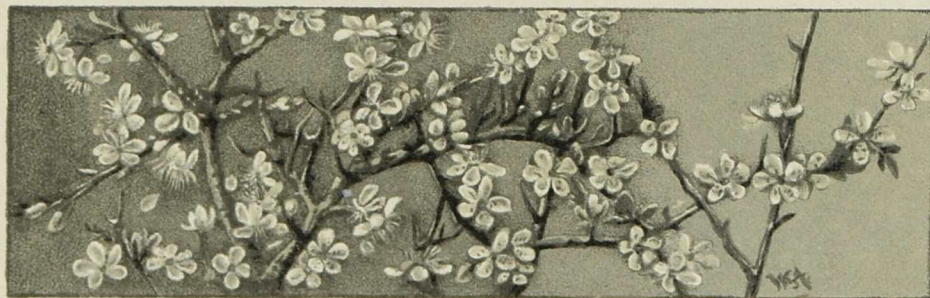
A SONG FOR MARCH.

*A*WAY and away with the breezes
At play with the young budding boughs,
Tossing the plumes of the larches,
Bending the green birchen arches,
Telling the pine trees what March is,
The maddest and gladdest carouse!

Away with the white cloudlets flying
In scattered wreaths over the blue:
Running and romping and chasing,
Sunshine and shadow displacing,
Oh! sweet fairy lover, what racing,
Ere springtime is over, we'll do!

We'll hie to the moss-mantled forest,
And pinch every bud as we pass,
The leaflets will leap out to greet us,
The crocus spring upward to meet us,
The shy little daisies entreat us
To kiss their pink lips thro' the grass.

The hill-sides are breaking in blossom,
The daffodil romps on the lea,
Her kirtlet of gold she is sporting,
While pretty red nettle goes courting;
And "lords" their fair "ladies" escorting
Stand sceptred and stately to see.



The brown lark is trilling and thrilling
In rivers of song from on high ;
The linnets are chirping and cheeping,
The thrushes their love-trysts are keeping,
The wee, woolly lambkins are leaping
For joy that the spring-time is nigh.

It is come! It is here! It is with us,
Born of strong winds and sunshine and strife,
It is here, little sweetheart, embrace me.
It is here, Oh, sweet lover, come chase me,
It is here, and the world is a place we
Will sing in and cling in thro' life.

THEO. GIFT.

THE meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March wind sighs,
He sets the jewel print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes.

TENNYSON.





V.

KISS me, sweetheart, the Spring
is here,
And Love is Lord of you
and me,
The blue-bells beckon each
passing bee,
The wild wood laughs to the
flowered year,
There is no bird in brake or brere
But to his little mate sings he:

“Kiss me, sweetheart, the Spring is here,
And Love is Lord, of you and me!”
The blue sky laughs out sweet and clear,
The missel-thrush upon the tree
Pipes for mere gladness loud and free,
And I go singing to my dear:
“Kiss me, sweetheart, the Spring is here,
And Love is Lord of you and me.”

JOHN PAYNE.

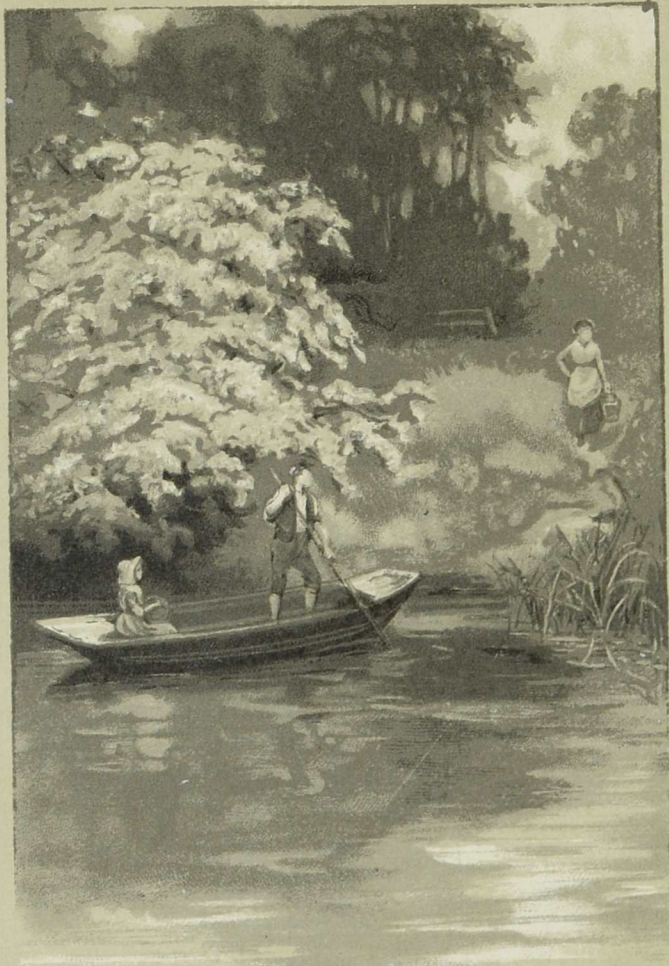
VI.

DRAW close the curtains, and shut out
The young year's gleam and glitter;
The resurrection-life of Spring
To me brings no fresh blossoming;
I'm weary of the flowers about,
And of the sparrows' twitter.

I want to dream—I want to see
Once more the smooth slow river,
The narrow path she used to tread,
The gold light on her little head,
The white fire of the hawthorn tree—
But I shall see them never!

Only in dreams the boat I steer
Among the tufted rushes;
I see the flowering meadow grass,
That thrills with love to feel her pass
Only in dreams I seem to hear
Those unforgotten thrushes.





Dreaming, I sometimes see her stand,
Her hand held out, and making
The sweet unreal so vivid seem,
I only know it is a dream
When I reach out to take her hand
And find no hand for taking.

So once she stood—and I, too weak
To dare to say “I love her!”
I dropped her hand, and took the oar,
And rowed her to the further shore;
I had my chance, and did not speak,
And chances now are over!—

The room grows very dark—yet no—
The sky is bright above me,
This is the boat—the hawthorn tree
Is showering blossoms down on me—
And she is here—as long ago—
And she has learned to love me!

E. NESBIT.



VII.

*A*FTER April, when May follows
And the white-throat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dew drops—at the bent sprays edge—
That's the wise thrush he sings each song twice over:
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!

ROBERT BROWNING.

VIII.

The dry leaves
Are lifted by the grass, and so I know
That Nature from her delicate ear hath caught
The dropping of the velvet foot of spring.

N. P. WILLIS.

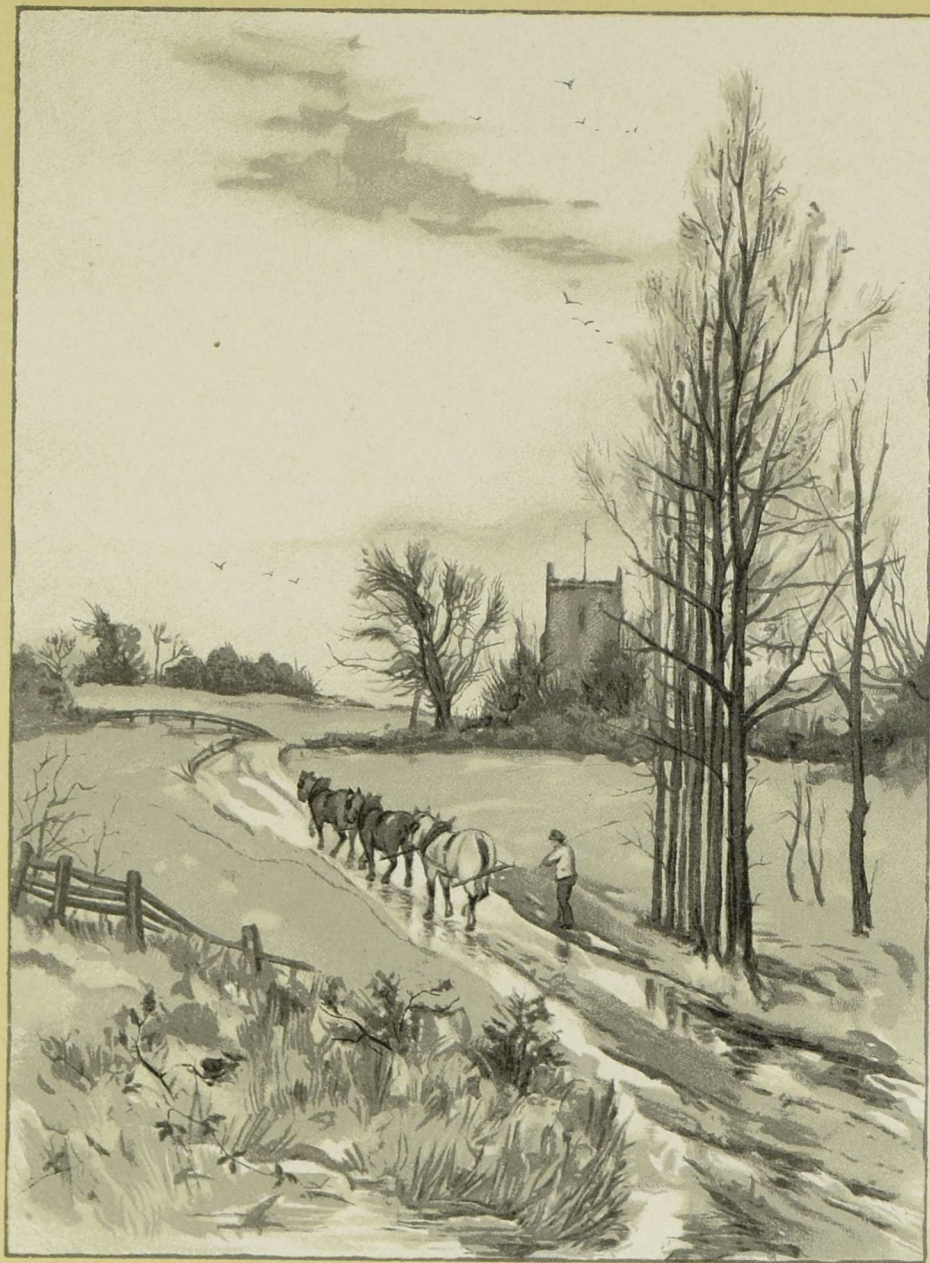


IX.

*T*HE small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

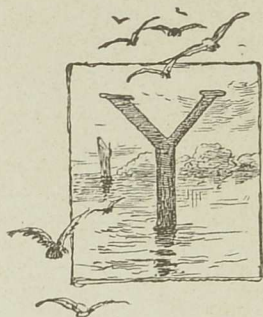
Like an army defeated,
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The plough-boy is whooping—anon—anon:
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

WORDSWORTH.



The rain is over and gone.

X.



OU are far away oh my heart's delight
From this sad old sea-girt place,
Yet the livelong day and the deathlong night
For ever I see your face.

And you, when the winds are fresh and strong,
And your ship sails fast and free,
And the waves are high, and the darkness long,
Is mine the face that you see?

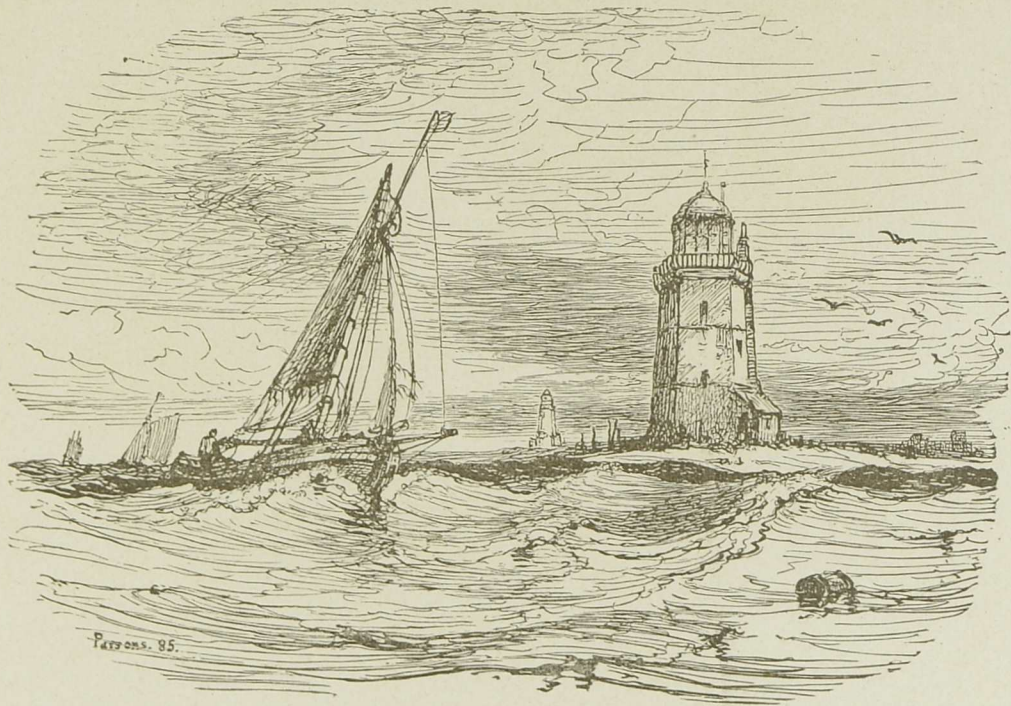
Did the little foolish troubles we knew
Have power to alter your love?
Why, my heart was a sea of love for you
And those were the waves thereof!

A passing breeze may have swept the sea,
Or a passing doubt my heart;
But the doubt was no more a part of me,
Than the breeze of the sea is part.

Oh wind be kind to the sails unfurled
—White sails on the whiter foam—
Blow straight from the outer edge of the world
And bring him me safely home!

Through the harbour mouth where the gray gull flies
To the town at the foot of the hill;
For the time is long till I look in his eyes
To see if he loves me still.

E. NESBIT.



APRIL
Showers.



G. H. Thompson

APRIL SHOWERS.

“ *I HATE* the sky when it’s blue” she said.
“ And I’m glad that it’s raining now ;
And I’m tired of the green leaves over head,
And the orchard’s tinted snow ;
And I hate the birds—and the gold sunlight,
And all that is fair to see,
What business has Spring to be sweet and bright
When he has quarrelled with me ? ”

She leaned to the trunk of the apple tree,
And watched how the rain fell fast ;
And her tears fell quickly and bitterly
As she thought of the happy past.
Yet see—the sunshine has broken through
Which the clouds tried in vain to hide ;
And her smile breaks out, and the skies are blue
And her lover is by her side !

“ And how glad we are that the rain is done
And the sun shines fresh and strong !
A burst of sunshine we two have won
That shall last our whole life long !
So laugh green leaves and blossoms fair,
Sing out all you woodland throng,
Ere the fruits are ripe and the fields are bare
You shall sing us our marriage song ! ”

E. NESBIT.



The sweet
spring days

with whitening hedges and
uncrumpling fern.

XII.

*U*NDER the thorn tree laugh and lie,
Up on the thorn tree sing and swing!
There 'll be Springs a many as years go by,
But never again this self same Spring.

Children a many as time goes on
May play where the thorn tree shadows the ground;
But never a day of a childhood gone
Will come again while the world goes round.

Youth will be, though our youth go by;
Life will last though our lives be done;
Love will live though our love should die;
And the strife go on though our rest be won.

E. NESBIT.



XIII.

G *LAD* is the task of hoeing the wheat,
And wondering who the bread shall eat!
Perhaps some poet with bay-crowned brow
May eat of the wheat we are hoeing now!
Perhaps it may go to make firm and strong
The arm of the hero to slay the wrong!
It will do its work, and we help it to spring,
Though others may work at the harvesting.

Glad is the task of helping to birth
The blessed fruits of the bounteous earth;
And glad the task of helping to raise
The present's fruit for the coming days!
Sow good—and tend it with steadfast care
And beyond all dreams shall the fruit be fair!
What matter—you helped the fruits to bring—
If you fall asleep ere the harvesting?

E. NESBIT.



SPRING (HOEING YOUNG WHEAT.)

