

**SPEEDWELL**

In the race of the flowers that's run due,

As the HARTSTONGUE pants at the well

And the HOUNDSTONGUE laps the SUNDEW.

Here's VENUS'-COMBE for MAIDENHAIR:

While KING-CUPS drink BELLA-DONNA,

Glad in purple and gold so fair,

Though the DEADLY NIGHTSHADE'S upon her.

Behold LONDON PRIDE robed & crowned,

Ushered in by the GOLDEN ROD,

While a floral crowd press around,

Just to win from her crest a nod.

The FOXGLOVES are already on.

Not only in pairs but dozens;

They've come out to see all the fun,

With sisters and aunts and cousins.

The STITCHWORK looked up with a sigh  
At BATCHELOR'S BUTTONS unsewn:

Single Daisies were not in her eye,  
For the grass was just newly mown.

The HORSE-TAIL, 'scaped from WOLFE'S CLAW,  
Rides off with a LADIES' LAGES.

The FRIAR'S-COWL hides a doctor of law,  
And the BISHOP'S-WEED covers his grace's

The SNAPDRAGON opened his jaw,  
But, at sight of Scotch THISTLE, turned pale:

He'd too many points of the law  
For a dragon without a scale.

Little JENNY-CREEPER lay low,  
Till happy thoughts made her gladder;  
How to rise in the world she'd know,  
So she climbed up JACOB'S LADDER

SWEET WILLIAM with MARYGOLD  
Seek HEARTSEASE in the close box-border.

Where, starched in their ruff's stiff fold,  
DUTCH DAHLIAS prim, keep order.

NARCISSUS bends over the brook,  
Intent upon DAFFA-DOWN-DILLY:

While EYEBRIGHT observes from her nook,  
And wonders he could be so silly.

A LANCE FOR A LAD 'gainst KING'S SPEAR.  
When the BUGLE sounds for the play

A LADIES MANTLE flaunting there  
Is the banner that leads the fray.

KNIGHT'S SPUR to the LADIES BOWER  
To seek for the LADIES SLIPPER.

'Twas lost in the wood in a summer shower  
When the CLOWN'S WORT tried to trip her.

TOAD-FLAX is spun for BUTTER-AND-EGGS

On a LADIES' CUSHION sits THRIFT  
She never wastes, or steals, or begs,  
But she can't give poor RAGWORT a lift.

QUEEN OF THE MEADS is MEADOWSWEET,

In the realm of grasses wide:

But not in all her court you meet

The turbaned TURK'S HEAD in his pride.

Fair BETHLEHEM' STAR shineth bright,

In a lowly place, as of old,

And through the green gloom glows the light

Of ST. JOHN'S-WORT--a nimbus of gold.

But the hours of the sun swift glide,

And the flowers with them are speeding.

Though LOVE-IN-A-MIST may hide.

When Time's in the garden weeding.

There's TRAVELLER'S JOY

To entwine,

At our journey's end for greeting,

We can talk over SOPS-IN-WINE,

And drink to our next merry meeting.