

CORNFLOWERS.

("Tandis que l'étoile inodore.")

[XXXII.]

While bright but scentless azure stars

Be-gem the golden corn,

And spangle with their skyey tint

The furrows not yet shorn;

While still the pure white tufts of May

Ape each a snowy ball,--

Away, ye merry maids, and haste

To gather ere they fall!

Nowhere the sun of Spain outshines

Upon a fairer town

Than Peñafiel, or endows

More richly farming clown;

Nowhere a broader square reflects

Such brilliant mansions, tall,--

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Nowhere a statelier abbey rears

Dome huger o'er a shrine,

Though seek ye from old Rome itself

To even Seville fine.

Here countless pilgrims come to pray

And promenade the Mall,--

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Where glide the girls more joyfully

Than ours who dance at dusk,

With roses white upon their brows,

With waists that scorn the busk?

Mantillas elsewhere hide dull eyes--

Compared with these, how small!

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

A blossom in a city lane,

Alizia was our pride,

And oft the blundering bee, deceived,

Came buzzing to her side--

But, oh! for one that felt the sting,

And found, 'neath honey, gall--

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Young, haughty, from still hotter lands,

A stranger hither came--

Was he a Moor or African,

Or Murcian known to fame?

None knew--least, she--or false or true,

The name by which to call.

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Alizia asked not his degree,

She saw him but as Love,

And through Xarama's vale they strayed,

And tarried in the grove,--

Oh! curses on that fatal eve,

And on that leafy hall!

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

The darkened city breathed no more;

The moon was mantled long,

Till towers thrust the cloudy cloak

Upon the steeples' throng;

The crossway Christ, in ivy draped,

Shrank, grieving, 'neath the pall,--

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

But while, alone, they kept the shade,

The other dark-eyed dears

Were murmuring on the stifling air

Their jealous threats and fears;

Alizia was so blamed, that time,

Unheeded rang the call:

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

Although, above, the hawk describes

The circle round the lark,

It sleeps, unconscious, and our lass

Had eyes but for her spark--

A spark?--a sun! 'Twas Juan, King!

Who wears our coronal,--

Away, ye merry maids, etc.

A love so far above one's state

Ends sadly. Came a black

And guarded palanquin to bear

The girl that ne'er comes back;

By royal writ, some nunnery

Still shields her from us all

Away, ye merry maids, and haste

To gather ere they fall!

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