

THE VALE OF BRAMHAM.

Spring smiles again on Bowcliffe wood,
 Around Hope Hall her voice I hear;
 And 'mid the green-robed solitude
 Buds, leaves, and blossoms re-appear:
 Her steps are on the daisied plain,
 In quiet nooks the primrose loves;
 Soft winds and wild-bees bear her train,
 And song-birds follow where she roves.

In yonder vale the College stands,
 Full oft I wandered when a boy,
 Through all its groves and smiling lands,
 In pensive mood and sunny joy:
 Still little do I count the past,
 Since Tempe claim'd the shelter'd vale;
 Or halls of learning shadows cast,
 More dear, than towers or gleaming mail.

Dark ivy still the old house tends,
 And near the brook that ripples by,
 Stretch grounds, where floral treasure blends
 With classic taste, that charm the eye:
 Green are the fields, and fair the flowers,
 Which bloom around the sweet domain;
 And blythe yet tranquil pass the hours,
 Where knowledge strives her sons to train.

The Poets in the days of old,
 Sought out the greenwood's soothing shade,
 And where some playful streamlet roll'd,
 Their glad and tuneful numbers played;
 And names that grace the scroll of fame,
 'Mid rural scenes have found repose,
 And nurs'd in solitude the flame
 Which round the Isles a splendour throws.

In ancient lore, the student's mind,
 Must drink the waters as they rise;
 And strive from Wisdom's tome to find,
 The pathway that shall gain her prize;
 The trophies science grants to man,
 Eclips'd the spoil of lust and war,
 Her vast domain is nature's span,
 Her throne, an atom, or a star.

Within this small horizon's bound,
 Beats wealth untold, in countless veins,
 Where stately timber stands, the ground,
 Coal, iron, stone, and lime contains;

Hoard, that may some day hence assist,
 To build new cities on the waste;
 When Science shall on search insist,
 For man's requirements, use and taste.

I'll trust that hidden in the soil,
 Those priceless beds of ore may be
 Prophetic emblems of the spoil,
 The thoughtful find, great School, in thee;
 And that like them, when raised from earth,
 A future bliss shall knowledge prove,
 And present toil, and honest worth
 Be crown'd by honour, wealth and love.

Nor Cam, nor Isis gild the vale,
 Yet loves a limpid stream to flow,
 Which sings and flirts with every gale,
 That stoops to kiss its pearly brow,
 With nimble pace, it glides away,
 In quest of Wharfe by many a turn.
 Oh! that our lives from day to day,
 Were pure as runs that little burn.

Then peace would flow, as doth its stream,
 And flowers abound, as in the vale,
 Nor would the past seem like a dream,
 Or short as reads some winter's tale.
 A bless'd enjoyment life would prove,
 To all around us, home and friends;
 And Heaven's requiting smile approve
 That virtue, which all price transcends.

Though Winter rob the earth of flowers
 The Spring of nature comes again;
 Not so, alas! our youthful hours,
 For days then lost, we sigh in vain;
 And that which fairy-land should be,
 Or like an Eden undefil'd,
 Becomes a weary waste or sea,
 Where thistles spread, and wrecks are pil'd.

May all who tread these classic halls,
 Like some calm river pass thro' life,
 Be tuneful as its silv'ry falls,
 And free like it from storm and strife,
 Ever as full and gentle seem,
 As guileless as its own soft face,
 And be in heart, and soul, and mien,
 A reflex of its power and grace.

To such, those hills, this much lov'd vale,
 Shall gleam like stars in memory's night,
 Blest sunny spots, that will not fail,
 To gild life's path with hallow'd light

When earthly cares shall knit the brow,
And far from hence their steps may roam,
The halo which surrounds them now,
Shall best recall their College home.

Here nature spreads her varied charms,
And health and incense freight the breeze;
Spring sends her offspring forth in swarms,
Festoons the woods, and paints the leas.
Kind Summer tends the stalwart grain,
That crowns the furrows on the hills,
With teeming bounty strews the plain,
The orchards with profusion fills.

Brown Autumn brings the glad increase,
Which culture to the sower yields,
And far and wide the silv'ry fleece,
Lights up the verdure of the fields;
Even Winter wears a kindly smile,
Though biting winds and frost may come,
Contentment doth the hours beguile,
Where learning's lamp lights up the home.

May peace still bless this favour'd nook,
Where youth in learning's radiance shine,
And wisdom opes the rubied book,
That points to life, and truth divine.
Long may these halls in beauty stand,
Their turrets fearless breast the gale—
Bramham, thy fame spread through the land,
Thy mantle rest on this fair Vale!

A. V.

LINES

ON FIRST HEARING THE CUCKOO THIS SPRING IN
BRAMHAM PARK.

HAIL, Cuckoo, on the wing,
Welcome to thee!
Thou dost glad tidings bring,
Cuckoo, to me.

All my fair childhood flowers
Brighter appear,
Brighter the leafy bowers,
When thee I hear.

Cowslips are glistening
In morning's first beam,
To thy voice listening,
Cuckoo, they seem.

The fair Wood Anemone
Opes its white flowers,
And comes forth to welcome thee
Back to the bowers.

Primroses everywhere
Lift their bright eyes,
Bend o'er them beeches fair
'Neath the blue skies.

Smilingly, smilingly,
All round my feet,
Violets to welcome thee,
Breathe odours sweet.

Gracefully, gracefully,
Bending around,
Bluebells* are greeting thee
From the green ground.

As through the beech-woods fair,
Onward I stray;
Boughs with my waving hair,
Pleasantly play.

Lovingly, bending bright—
Seem they to be,
Like childhood's fingers light,
Sporting with me.

Murmurs the ring-dove sweet
To the bright skies;
Tread we her green retreat,
Startled she flies.

Gem of our groves and dells,
Wood Sorrel † see;
Smile with its "fairy bells,"
Cuckoo, on thee.

Sweet sounds at morn thy lay,
Sweet at fair even;
When send the woodlands gay,
Music to heaven.

Hast thou some charm, sweet bird,
None else has found;
Wakes, where thy voice is heard,
Gladness around?

* The wild Hyacinth, *Hyacinthus non-scriptus*

† There are few walks or shady woods where, in the early Spring, the bright half folded green leaves of this pretty little plant can not be found. Among the Druids its triple leaflets were regarded as a mysterious symbol of a trinity, the full meaning of which was involved in darkness. So too, St. Patrick chose this leaf as a symbol to illustrate the doctrine he sought to teach, and converted many by the apt use of an illustration derived from a plant almost sacred in the eyes of his hearers.—Extract from *Wild Flowers worth Notice*, by Mrs. Lankester.