

**THE LITTLE  
FLOWERS OF SAINT  
FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

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The little flowers of Saint Francis of Assisi by Abby Langdon Alger

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**ABBY LANGDON ALGER**

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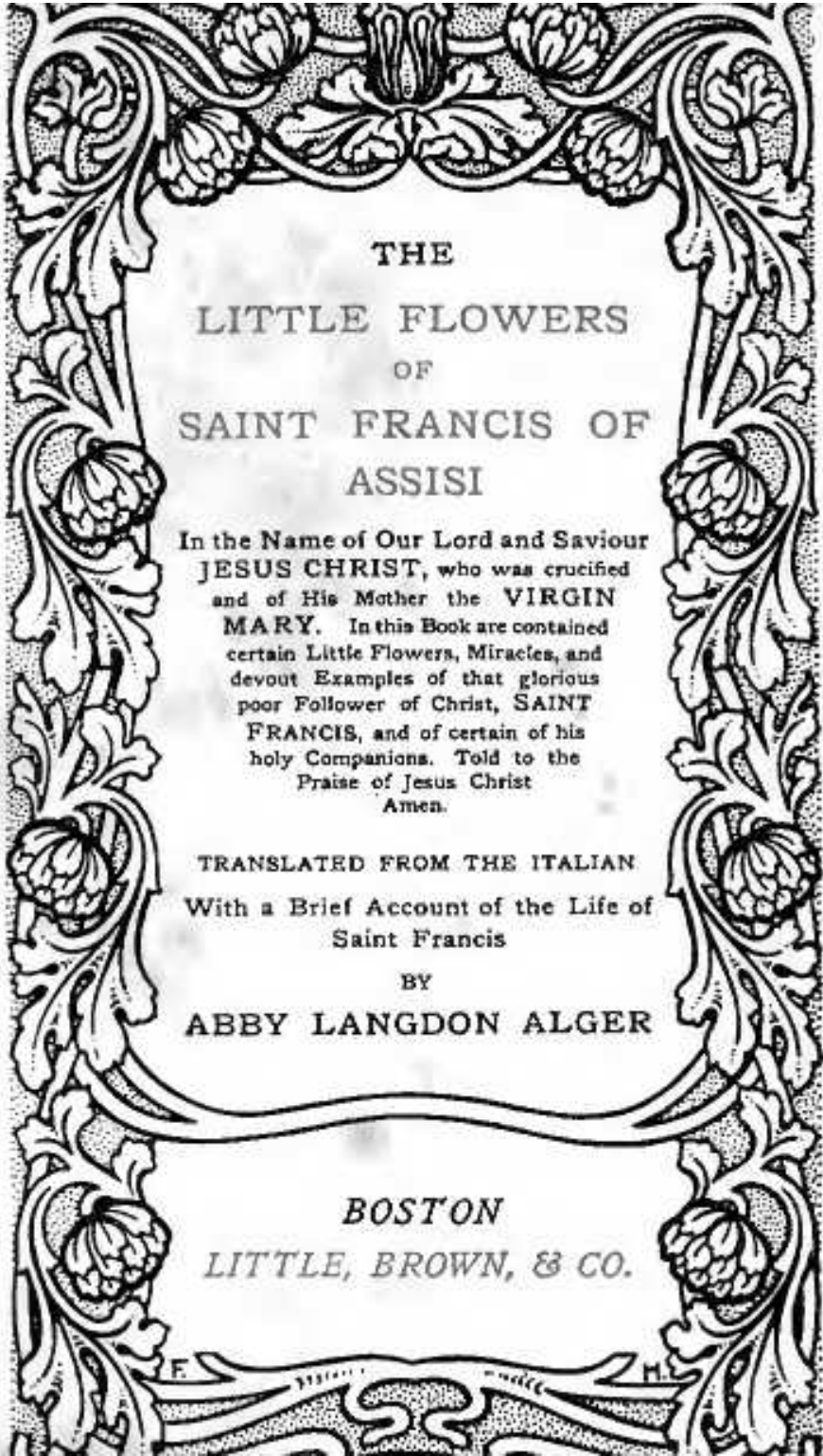
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SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

From the Painting by Alessandro Moretto in the Gallery at Milan.



THE  
LITTLE FLOWERS  
OF  
SAINT FRANCIS OF  
ASSISI

In the Name of Our Lord and Saviour  
JESUS CHRIST, who was crucified  
and of His Mother the VIRGIN  
MARY. In this Book are contained  
certain Little Flowers, Miracles, and  
devout Examples of that glorious  
poor Follower of Christ, SAINT  
FRANCIS, and of certain of his  
holy Companions. Told to the  
Praise of Jesus Christ  
Amen.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN  
With a Brief Account of the Life of  
Saint Francis

BY  
ABBY LANGDON ALGER

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## PREFACE.

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**S**AINTE FRANCIS was born in 1182, in the little town of Assisi, in Umbria, chiefly notable as having given him birth. His mother, Madonna Pica, was of noble race, and his father, Peter Bernardone, that is, Peter the son of Bernard, the family name being Moriconi,—was a rich merchant, who was travelling in France on business at the time Francis was born. Many strange tales are told of the omens attending the little boy's advent into the world. For some time previous, a poor man roamed the streets of Assisi crying aloud, "Peace and prosperity! peace and prosperity!" His mother was ill for many days, nor were her sufferings relieved.

until by the advice of a pilgrim who came that way she was laid on a bed of straw in a stable. Thus began that likeness between the life of Francis and that of Christ, which was continued throughout. Another stranger appeared to act as godfather, and still another took the baby in his arms and, marking his right shoulder with a cross, foretold the victory which he was to win over the Devil. Madonna Pica named her child John, in memory of the beloved disciple; but on his father's return with rich profits, he chose to call him Francis, for the country where he had been so successful.

The boy was taught by the priests of the parish, and learned easily all that was taught him, showing an especial talent for the language of the land from which he took his name. As he grew to manhood he was foremost in the gayeties of the town, winning for himself the sobriquet of the "flower of youth."

Thomas of Celano, a Franciscan

brother, and a dear friend of Francis, describes him thus: "He was of middle stature, rather under than over, with an oval face and full but low forehead, his eyes dark and clear, his hair thick, his eyebrows close, a straight and delicate nose, a voice soft yet keen and fiery; close, equal, and white teeth; lips modest yet subtle; a black beard not thickly grown; a thin neck, square shoulders, short arms, small hands and feet, delicate skin, and little flesh." So elegant was his dress, and so luxurious were his tastes, that his parents often said, "He is more like the son of a prince than like our son." Still, they were proud of his splendor, and grudged him nothing, though his charities were as lavish as his pleasures: no beggar ever asked of him in vain.

When he had reached the age of twenty-four, however, a war broke out between Assisi and Perugia. Francis was taken prisoner, and for a year languished in captivity. Returning