

**ACCORDING TO SEASON: TALKS
ABOUT THE FLOWERS IN THE
ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE IN
THE WOODS AND FIELDS**

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According to season: talks about the flowers in the order of their appearance in the woods and fields by Frances Theodora Parsons

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FRANCES THEODORA PARSONS

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LIVERWORT
Hepatica triloba



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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

Published, March, 1902

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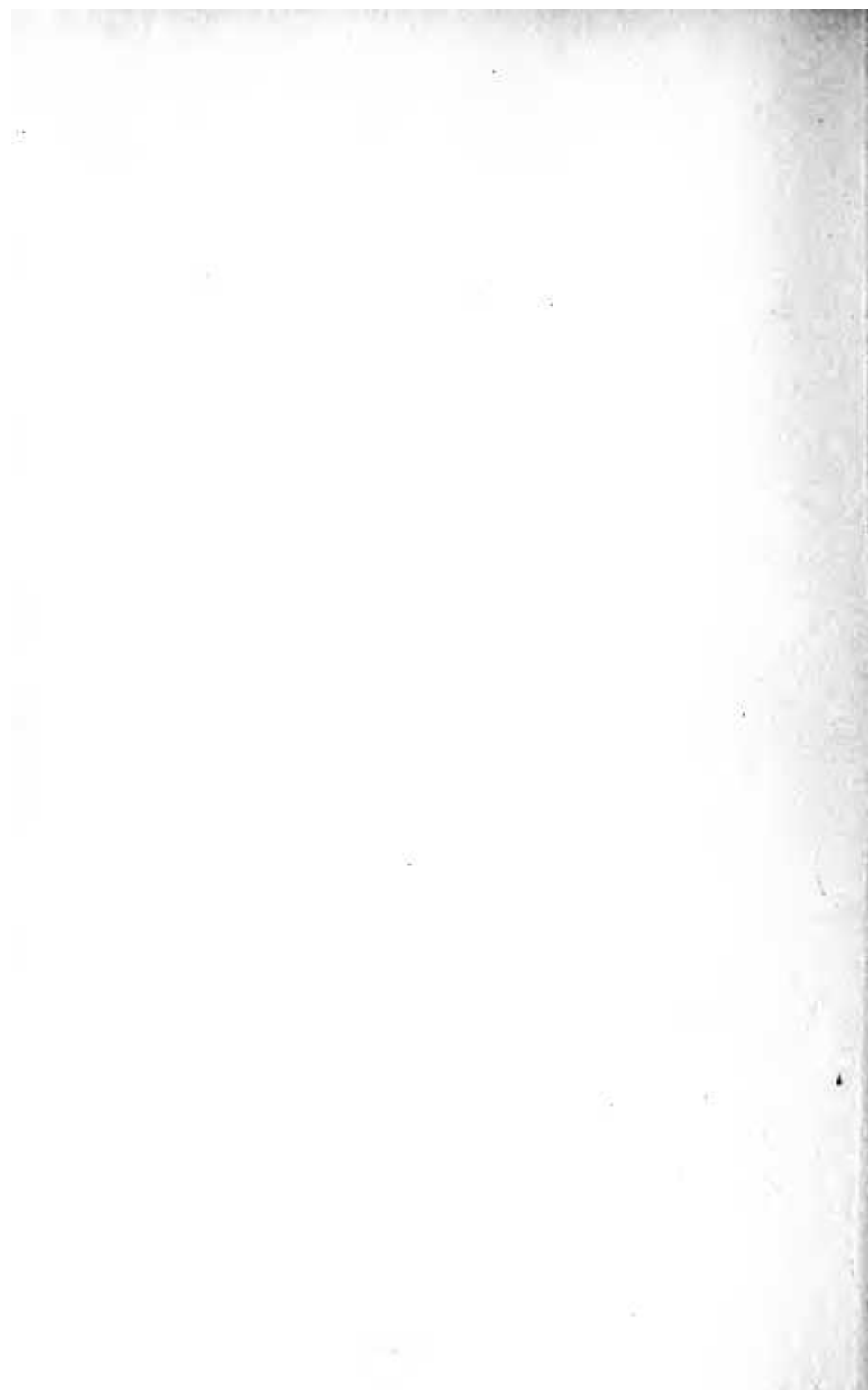
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AN INVOCATION

I

Great mother, now a suppliant I kneel
Where grassy aisles lead to thine altars green
And flower-fragrant ; where thou dost reveal
Thyself in all the majesty serene
Of thy vast motherhood. Alone and long
Have I kept vigil 'neath this pierced roof
'Through which the sunlight flocks the piny floor,
Where tawny thrushes hold themselves aloof
Yet flood the woodland with their golden song,
As though they too were eager to adore.

II

Or else on some gray curve of sandy beach,
Where lace-like waves with soft insistence hide
Their glittering treasures till at last they reach
The weed-strown limits of the swollen tide ;
Where in my face I felt the bitter spray,
And joyed to know the sweet sting of thy kiss ;
And where I caught the salt wind in my teeth
Like some keen lover who is loth to miss
A single charm, there oft entranced I lay
And drew in deep draughts of thy briny breath.

III

Or else perhaps I sought some meadow low
Where deep-fringed orchids reared their feathery spires,
Where lilies nodded by the river slow,
And milkweeds burned in red and orange fires ;

AN INVOCATION

Where bright-winged blackbirds flashed like living coals,
And reed-birds fluted from the swaying grass ;
There shared I in the laden bee's delight,
Quivered to see the dark cloud-shadows pass
Beyond me ; loved and yearned to know the souls
Of bird and bee and flower, of day and night.

IV

And so thy worshipper of many years,
Thy child and servant, who has made no prayer
For self, who in her eager suit reveres
And worships but the more, now craves thy care
For this her child. Endow him with her love
Of all thy creatures ; make him long to know
The meaning of thy moods, that he may win
The later joy that comes when thou dost show
Thine own self to him ; thus his life shall prove
In days to come that all of thine are kin.

V

Let the blue wonder of those dreamy eyes
Grow deeper as they dwell upon that sea
Which yields allegiance to the lofty skies
In rhythmic swells of tidal harmony ;
Their sight be quick for hint of bird or sail
Against the distant reach of boundless blue,
Or for the throbbing radiance of the star,
Or curve of shell, or flower's tender hue,
Thy holy places one by one unvell
Nor will thy child to worship from afar.

VI

Thyself translate the Angelus yon thrush
Hymns from its tree-top at the twilight hour,
And whisper low the secret of the hush
Which thrills the forest with its sacred power.

AN INVOCATION

Make keen his ears for sighing of the trees
And water flowing swift among the stones,
And insects droning through the summer night,
And for those sombre diapason-tones
In which is voiced the anger of the seas
When stirred by Heaven to proclaim their might.

VII

Let him exult in battling with fierce wind,
And joy to breast the breakers swept with foam,
To scale their seething walls, athirst to find
Fresh-hissing steeps beyond. Or if he roam
Where seas of grass surge toward the setting sun
Be beast and bird his brethren. May his sleep
Be sweetest when upon thy tender breast
He lies, where slumber is not yet so deep
But that the slipping hours bring everyone
Dim benedictions to enhance his rest.

VIII

Sweet mother, though I long have worshipped thee,
Finding great peace at each majestic altar,
Knowing my sorrow soothed when at thy knee
I lose my soul in thine,—how oft I falter
Because I know thee not as I would know,
Because I am not great enough to grasp
All of thy mystery; wherefore I pray
That thou wilt teach my darling so to clasp
Thy hidden meanings that at last he grow
To godlike stature and full light of day.