

PASSION- FLOWERS

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Passion-flowers by Julia Ward Howe

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JULIA WARD HOWE

**PASSION-
FLOWERS**

PASSION-FLOWERS.

by
Mrs. Stone.

with

Miss Ward.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.

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P O E M S .

S A L U T A T O R Y .

I.

TO THE POETS.

BROTHER and sister poets dear!
Ye of the high, impassioned few,
A pilgrim waits your tender grace,
A wand'ring minstrel would sing with you.

I have not sat at the heaven-spread board,
Nor worn the fillet of glossy bays,
I have but hearkened your song without,
And gone, refreshed, on weary ways.

I was born 'neath a clouded star,
More in shadow than light have grown ;
Loving souls are not like trees
That strongest and stateliest shoot alone.

Comfort me as a child of Art
That Sorrow from her mother stole,
And sent, to cross the threshold of life,
Orphaned in heart, and beggared in soul.

I have sung to lowly hearts
Of their own music, only deeper ;
I have flung through the dusty road
Shining seeds for the unknown reaper.

I have piped at cottage doors
My sweetest measures, merry and sad,
Cheating Toil from his grinding task,
Setting the dancing rustics mad.

Kindly though their greetings were,
They were far from my race or kin ;
But I passed the loftier porch,
Fearing not to be let in.

Better to sit at humble hearths,
Where simple souls confide their all,
Than stand and knock at the groined gate,
To crave — a hearing in the hall.

Oh! ye wingèd ones — shall I stand
A moment in your shining ranks?
Will ye pass me the golden cup?
Only tears can give you thanks.

Without gracious ears to hear,
Languidly flows the tide of song —
Waters, unhelped of bank or brake,
Slowly, sluggishly creep along.

We must measure from mankind,
Know in them our fancies true;
Echo gives us each high-strained sharp,
Teaches us tune the harp anew.

Ere this mystery of Life
Solving, scatter its form to air,
Let me feel that I have lived
In the music of a prayer,