

**THE LANGUAGE OF  
FLOWERS; OR, FLORAL  
EMBLEMS OF THOUGHTS,  
FEELINGS AND SENTIMENTS**

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The Language of Flowers; Or, Floral Emblems of Thoughts, Feelings and Sentiments by Robert Tyas

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**ROBERT TYAS**

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*The Rose — The Myrtle — The Ivy*

THE  
LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS;

OR,

FLORAL EMBLEMS

OF

THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND SENTIMENTS.

"How oft doth an emblem-bud silently tell  
What language could never speak half so well!"  
*Romance of Nature.*

BY

ROBERT TYAS, M.A., LL.D., F.R.B.S.,

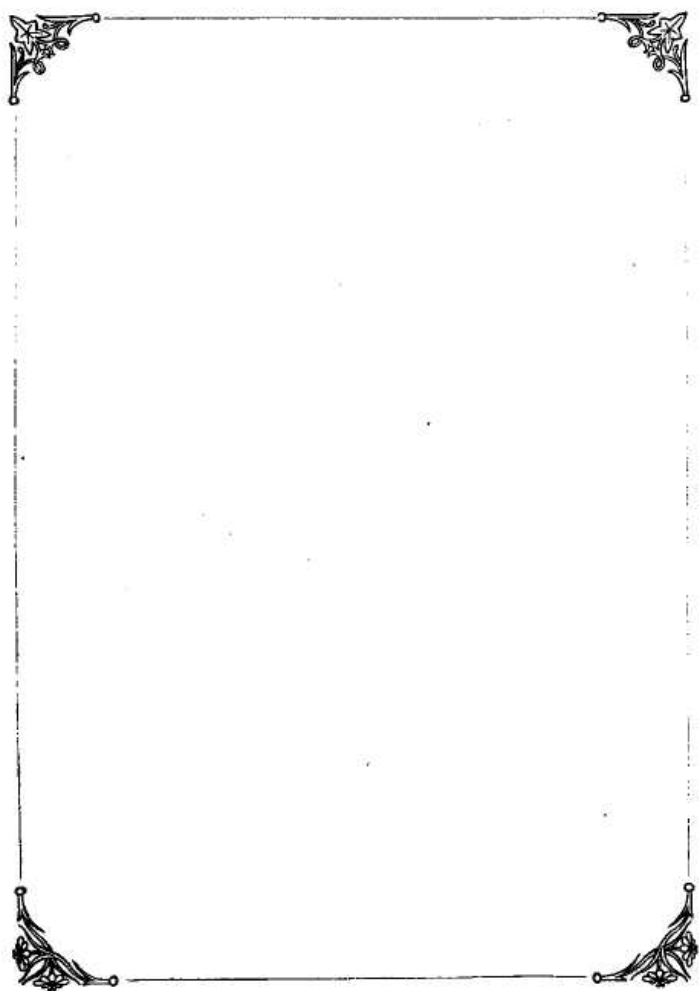
AUTHOR OF "FAVOURITE FIELD FLOWERS;" "FLOWERS FROM THE HOLY LAND," ETC.

With Twelve Coloured Groups of Flowers.



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## INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

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BEFORE the different languages which are now common among men were developed, various animate and inanimate objects were made use of instead of words, for the purpose of giving expression to thoughts. Animals, birds, and flowers were emblems of individuals and their characteristics; and though sometimes erroneously assigned, they are yet very generally adopted.

Lions and foxes, eagles and hawks, and an almost endless number of quadrupeds and fowls of the air, have been thus applied and are still; yet, since most of us are little familiar with beasts and birds of prey, in these days of high civilization, it is natural that we should make choice of objects which are mixed up with our daily life, when we desire to give expression to our opinions or feelings by means of symbols rather than words.

In the vegetable kingdom we find objects most suitable for this purpose. We live in the midst of trees, and flowering







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plants and shrubs. We are daily surrounded by the denizens of the conservatory, the favourites of the flower-garden, or the native beauties of our fields. Many of these are associated in our minds with seasons of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain. Many of us have, laid up in some hidden spot, dried specimens of one flower or another, which was gathered by, or presented to us at a time of unusual happiness, or on an occasion of intense grief. These dried specimens are now and then looked upon, and they take us back into the past, and they help us in a remarkable degree to revive all the little incidents, pleasant or painful, connected with the time when we first became possessed of them.



Associations such as these give a charm to the Language of Flowers, and have tended to make it popular—in short, to render it universal in its adoption. It is, indeed, of no modern origin. It existed long before the oft-lamented days of chivalry, when faithful and reverential affection for the comparatively secluded lady could hardly be made known in any other way than by emblems, which were, it may be, of ambiguous import. Antique books are full of emblems formed by the grouping of flowers. From an ancient Romance we learn that a wreath of Roses was quite a treasure for lovers; and we read that a fair prisoner, Oriana by name, not having the opportunity of speaking or writing to her lover, informed him of her captivity by throwing to him from a lofty tower a Rose bathed in her tears. It is



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asserted that the Chinese possess an alphabet made up of figures of plants and roots. The rocks of Egypt are marked with representations of vegetables foreign to that country, which tell us of the conquests achieved by its ancient inhabitants.

The Language of Flowers is indeed as old as the hills; yet it never can become old, for every Spring reproduces its characters anew. We have a succession, year by year, of those emblems which, sufficiently distinct in the expression of our thoughts and feelings, are still characterised by a degree of ambiguity, which renders them singularly well suited to our use, at that particular period of life when our thoughts and our feelings are more commonly marked by changeableness and uncertainty; when the word uttered one moment is often regretted the next; when the polite attention which an admiring and impulsive youth pays to an attractive fair one, in the excitement of a pleasure party, is not unfrequently productive to him of regret and self-reproach; when a tender-hearted girl, having apparently encouraged the attentions of an intelligent but fortuneless youth, is annoyed at the recollection of her weakness. The innocent and pure sensations which induce that mutual regard between the opposite sexes in their youthfulness, are indeed well expressed by flowers. The mischievous little god, who is supposed to amuse himself by inflicting painful wounds on the youthful heart, is ever represented with wings, as



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emblematical of his fleeting and inconstant character, and with a fillet over his eyes, as indicating the uncertainty with which he aims his darts; as also symbolical of that blindness with which all mankind are proverbially said to be stricken, when they yield, without submitting to the guidance of reason, to the influence of his fatal inspiration. It is also the characteristic of such an inspiration to despise love bestowed ere sought for, and to account it worthless. It looks for difficulty in conquest, regarding the fair one who will not easily be won as only worth the winning.

In such a contest for victory, a half-avowal of reciprocal affection is more charming than an absolute acknowledgment; and the yielding up of a flower or a bouquet has made one far happier than the far-fetched expressions of a most tender note. The art of love-making is, with women, the art of self-defence; the more scrupulous and delicate they are, the more worthy are they of the homage rendered to them. Madame de Maintenon, who is said to have subdued the most inconstant of kings, revealed the secret of her power, when she said, "I never send him away content, never without hope."

Genuine affection knows neither trickery nor calculation. Simplicity and sincerity are its strength. That alone paves the way for a holy union, for a happy marriage. Without it all would languish and perish. A heart filled with indifference has never known what exalted devotion is. It