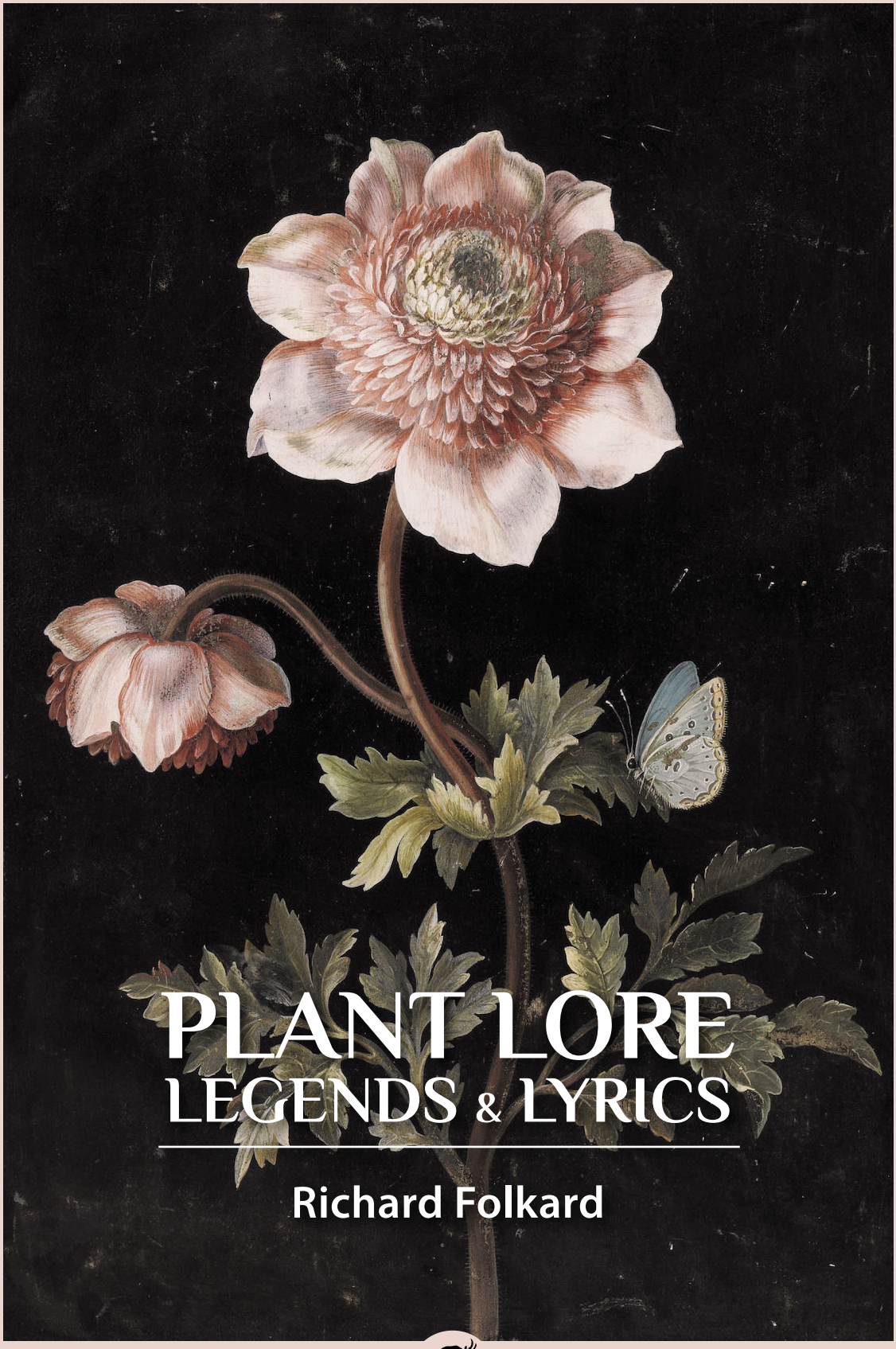

PLANT LORE
LEGENDS & LYRICS

Richard Folkard

VAMzzz PUBLISHING

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from
John Parkinson's "Paradisi in Sole
Paradisus Terrestris."
1656
Qui veut parangonner l'artifice a Nature,
Et nos parcs à l'Eden indiscret il mesure.
Le pas de l'elephant par le pas du ciron,
Et de l'aigle le vol par cil du moucheron.

PREFACE

HAVING, some few years ago, been associated in the conduct of a journal devoted to horticulture, I amassed for literary purposes much of the material made use of in the present volume. Upon the discontinuance of the journal, I resolved to classify and arrange the plant lore thus accumulated, with a view to its subsequent publication, and I have since been enabled to enrich the collection with much Continental and Indian lore (which I believe is quite unknown to the great majority of English readers) from the vast store to be found in Signor De Gubernatis' volumes on plant tradition, a French edition of which appeared two years ago, under the title of *La Mythologie des Plantes*. To render the present work comprehensive and at the same time easy of reference, I have divided the volume into two sections, the first of which is, in point of fact, a digest of the second; and I have endeavoured to enhance its interest by introducing some few reproductions of curious illustrations pertaining to the subjects treated of. Whilst preferring no claim for anything beyond the exercise of considerable industry, I would state that great care and attention has been paid to the revision of the work, and that as I am both author and printer of my book, I am debarred in that dual capacity from even palliating my mistakes by describing them as "errors of the press." In tendering my acknowledgments to Prof. De Gubernatis and other authors I have consulted on the various branches of my subject, I would draw attention to the annexed list of the principal works to which reference is made in these pages.

RICHARD FOLKARD, Jun.
Cricklewood, *August, 1884*.

PART the First

INTRODUCTION

THE ANALOGY EXISTING between the vegetable and animal worlds, and the resemblances between human and tree life, have been observed by man from the most remote periods of which we have any records. Primitive man, watching the marvellous changes in trees and plants, which accurately marked not only the seasons of the year, but even the periods of time in a day, could not fail to be struck with a feeling of awe at the mysterious invisible power which silently guided such wondrous and incomprehensible operations. Hence it is not astonishing that the early inhabitants of the earth should have invested with supernatural attributes the tree, which in the gloom and chill of Winter stood gaunt, bare, and sterile, but in the early Spring hastened to greet the welcome warmth-giving Sun by investing itself with a brilliant canopy of verdure, and in the scorching heat of Summer afforded a refreshing shade beneath its leafy boughs. So we find these men of old, who had learnt to reverence the mysteries of vegetation, forming conceptions of vast cosmogonic world- or cloud-trees overshadowing the universe; mystically typifying creation and regeneration, and yielding the divine ambrosia or food of immortality, the refreshing and life-inspiring rain, and the mystic fruit which imparted knowledge and wisdom to those who partook of it. So, again, we find these nebulous overspreading world-trees connected with the mysteries of death, and giving shelter to the souls of the departed in the solemn shade of their dense foliage. Looking upon vegetation as symbolical of life and generation, man, in course of time, connected the origin of his species with these shadowy cloud-trees, and hence arose the belief that humankind first sprang from Ash and Oak-trees, or derived their being from Holda, the cloud-goddess who combined in her person the form of a lovely woman

and the trunk of a mighty tree. In after years trees were almost universally regarded either as sentient beings or as constituting the abiding places of spirits whose existence was bound up in the lives of the trees they inhabited. Hence arose the conceptions of Hamadryads, Dryads, Sylvans, Tree-nymphs, Elves, Fairies, and other beneficent spirits who peopled forests and dwelt in individual trees—not only in the Old World, but in the dense woods of North America, where the Mik-amwes, like Puck, has from time immemorial frolicked by moonlight in the forest openings. Hence, also, sprang up the morbid notion of trees being haunted by demons, mischievous imps, ghosts, nats, and evil spirits, whom it was deemed by the ignorant and superstitious necessary to propitiate by sacrifices, offerings, and mysterious rites and dances. Remnants of this superstitious tree-worship are still extant in some European countries. The *Irminsul* of the Germans and the Central Oak of the Druids were of the same family as the *Asherah* of the Semitic nations. In England, this primeval superstition has its descendants in the village maypole bedizened with ribbons and flowers, and the Jack-in-the-Green with its attendant devotees and whirling dancers. The modern Christmas-tree, too, although but slightly known in Germany at the beginning of the present century, is evidently a remnant of the pagan tree-worship; and it is somewhat remarkable that a similar tree is common among the Burmese, who call it the *Padaytha-bin*. This Turanian Christmas-tree is made by the inhabitants of towns, who deck its Bamboo twigs with all sorts of presents, and pile its roots with blankets, cloth, earthenware, and other useful articles. The wealthier classes contribute sometimes a *Ngway Padaytha*, or silver Padaytha, the branches of which are hung with rupees and smaller silver coins wrapped in tinsel or coloured paper. These trees are first carried in procession, and afterwards given to monasteries on the occasion of certain festivals or the funerals of Buddhist monks. They represent the wishing-tree, which, according to Burmese mythology, grows in the Northern Island and heaven of the nats or spirits, where it bears on its fairy branches whatever may be wished for.

The ancient conception of human trees can be traced in the superstitious endeavours of ignorant peasants to get rid of diseases by transferring them to vicarious trees, or rather to the spirits who are supposed to dwell in them; and it is the same idea that impels simple rustics to bury Elder-sticks and Peach-leaves to which they have imparted warts, &c. The recognised analogy between the life of plants and that of man, and the cherished superstition that trees were the homes of living and sentient spirits, undoubtedly influenced the poets of the ancients in forming their conceptions of heroes and heroines metamorphosed into trees and flowers; and traces of the old

belief are to be found in the custom of planting a tree on the birth of an infant; the tree being thought to symbolise human life in its destiny of growth, production of fruit, and multiplication of its species; and, when fully grown, giving shade, shelter, and protection. This pleasant rite is still extant in our country as well as in Germany, France, Italy, and Russia; and from it has probably arisen a custom now becoming very general of planting a tree to commemorate any special occasion. Nor is the belief confined to the Old World, for Mr. Leland has quite recently told us that he observed near the tent of a North American Indian two small evergreens, which were most carefully tended. On enquiry he found the reason to be that when a child is born, or is yet young, its parent chooses a shrub, which growing as the child grows, will, during the child's absence, or even in after years, indicate by its appearance whether the human counterpart be ill or well, alive or dead. In one of the Quādi Indian stories it is by means of the sympathetic tree that the hero learns his brother's death.

In the middle ages, the old belief in trees possessing intelligence was utilised by the monks, who have embodied the conception in many mediæval legends, wherein trees are represented as bending their boughs and offering their fruits to the Virgin and her Divine Infant. So, again, during the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, trees are said to have opened and concealed the fugitives from Herod's brutal soldiery. Certain trees (notably the Aspen) are reputed to have been accursed and to have shuddered and trembled ever after on account of their connexion with the tragedy of Calvary; while others are said to have undergone a similar doom because they were attainted by the suicide of the traitor Judas Iscariot.

Seeing that the reverence and worship paid to trees by the ignorant and superstitious people was an institution impossible to uproot, the early Christian Church sought to turn it to account, and therefore consecrated old and venerated trees, built shrines beneath their shade, or placed on their trunks crucifixes and images of the Blessed Virgin. Legends connecting trees with holy personages, miracles, and sacred subjects were, in after years, freely disseminated; one of the most remarkable being the marvellous history of the Tree of Adam, in which it is sought to connect the Tree of Paradise with the Tree of Calvary. Evelyn summarises this misty tradition in the following sentence:—"Trees and woods have twice saved the whole world: first, by the Ark, then by the Cross; making full amends for the evil fruit of the tree in Paradise by that which was borne on the tree in Golgotha." In course of time the flowers and plants which the ancients had dedicated to their pagan deities were transferred by the Christian Church to the shrines of the Virgin and sainted personages; this is especially

noticeable in the plants formerly dedicated to Venus and Freyja, which, as being the choicest as well as the most popular, became, in honour of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady's plants. Vast numbers of flowers were in course of time appropriated by the Church, and consecrated to her saints and martyrs—the selection being governed generally by the fact that the flower bloomed on or about the day on which the Church celebrated the saint's feast. These appropriations enabled the Roman Catholics to compile a complete calendar of flowers for every day in the year, in which each flower is dedicated to a particular saint.

But if the most beautiful flowers and plants were taken under the protection of the Church, and dedicated to the memory of her holiest and most venerated members, so, also, certain trees, plants, and flowers—which, either on account of their noxious properties, or because of some legendary associations, were under a ban—became relegated to the service of the Devil and his minions. Hence we find a large group of plants associated with enchanters, sorcerers, wizards and witches, many of which betray in their nomenclature their Satanic association, and are, even at the present day, regarded suspiciously as ill-omened and unlucky. These are the plants which, in the dark days of witchcraft and superstition, were invested with mysterious and magical properties,—the herbs which were employed by hags and witches in their heathenish incantations, and from which they brewed their potions and hell-broths. Thus Ben Jonson, in his fragment, 'The Sad Shepherd,' makes one of his characters say, when speaking of a witch:—

> "He knows her shifts and haunts,
> And all her wiles and turns. The venom'd plants
> Wherewith she kills! where the sad Mandrake grows,
> Whose groans are dreadful! the dead-numming Nightshade!
> The stupefying Hemlock! Adder's-tongue!
> And Martagan!"

The association of plants with magic, sorcery, and the black art dates from remote times. The blind Norse god Hödr slew Baldr with a twig of Mistletoe. In the battles recorded in the Vedas as being fought by the gods and the demons, the latter employ poisonous and magical herbs which the gods counteract with counter-poisons and health-giving plants. Hermes presented to Ulysses the magical Moly wherewith to nullify the effects of the potions and spells of the enchantress Circe, who was well acquainted with all sorts of magical herbs. The Druids professed to know the secrets of many magical plants which they gathered with mysterious and occult rites. The Vervain, Selago, Mistletoe, Oak, and Rowan were all said by these ancient priests and

lawgivers to be possessed of supernatural properties; and remnants of the old belief in their magical powers are still extant.

In works on the subject of plant lore hitherto published in England, scarcely any reference has been made to the labours in the field of comparative mythology of Max Müller, Grimm, Kuhn, Mannhardt, De Gubernatis, and other eminent scholars, whose erudite and patient investigations have resulted in the accumulation of a vast amount of valuable information respecting the traditions and superstitions connected with the plant kingdom. Mr. Kelly's interesting work on Indo-European Tradition, published some years ago, dealt, among other subjects, with that of plant lore, and drew attention to the analogy existing between the myths and folk-lore of India and Europe relating more especially to plants which were reputed to possess magical properties. Among such plants, peculiar interest attaches to a group which, according to Aryan tradition, sprang from lightning—the embodiment of fire, the great quickening agent: this group embraces the Hazel, the Thorn, the Hindu *Sami*, the Hindu *Palasa*, with its European congener the Rowan, and the Mistletoe: the two last-named plants were, as we have seen, employed in Druidic rites. These trees are considered of good omen and as protectives against sorcery and witchcraft: from all of them wishing-rods (called in German *Wünschelruthen*) and divining-rods have been wont to be fashioned—magical wands with which, in some countries, cattle are still struck to render them prolific, hidden springs are indicated, and mineral wealth is discovered. Such a rod was thought to be the caduceus of the god Hermes, or Mercury, described by Homer as being a rod of prosperity and wealth. All these rods are cut with a forked end, a shape held to be symbolic of lightning and a rude effigy of the human form. It is interesting to note that in the *Rigveda* the human form is expressly attributed to the pieces of Asvattha wood used for kindling the sacred fire—a purpose fulfilled by the Thorn in the chark or instrument employed for producing fire by the Greeks. Another group of plants also connected with fire and lightning comprises the Mandrake (the root of which is forked like the human form), the Fern *Polypodium Filix mas* (which has large pinnate leaves), the Sesame (called in India Thunderbolt-flower), the Spring-wort, and the Luck-flower. The Mandrake and Fern, like King Solomon's *Baharas*, are said to shine at night, and to leap about like a Will-o'the-wisp: indeed, in Thuringia, the Fern is known as *Irrkraut*, or Misleading Herb, and in Franche Comté this herb is spoken of as causing belated travellers to become light-headed or thunder-struck. The Mandrake-root and the Fern-seed have the magical property of granting the desires of their possessors, and in this respect resemble the Sesame and Luck-flower, which at their owners' request will

disclose treasure-caves, open the sides of mountains, clefts of rocks, or strong doors, and in fact render useless all locks, bolts, and bars, at will. The Spring-wort, through the agency of a bird, removes obstacles by means of an explosion caused by the electricity or lightning of which this plant is an embodiment. Akin to these are plants known in our country as Lunary or Moonwort and Unshoe-the-Horse, and called by the Italians *Sferracavallo*—plants which possess the property of unshoeing horses and opening locks. A Russian herb, the *Rasrivtrava*, belongs to the same group: this plant fractures chains and breaks open locks—virtues also claimed for the Vervain (*Eisenkraut*), the Primrose (*Schlüsselblume*), the Fern, and the Hazel. It should be noted of the Mistletoe (which is endowed by nature with branches regularly forked, and has been classified with the lightning-plants), that the Swedes call it "Thunder-besom," and attribute to it the same powers as to the Spring-wort. Like the Fly-Rowan (*Flög-rönn*) and the Asvattha, it is a parasite, and is thought to spring from seeds dropped by birds upon trees. Just as the Druids ascribed peculiar virtues to a Mistletoe produced by this means on an Oak, so do the Hindus especially esteem an Asvattha which has grown in like manner upon a Sami (*Acacia Suma*).

It is satisfactory to find that, although the Devil has had certain plants allotted to him wherewith to work mischief and destruction through the agency of demons, sorcerers, and witches, there are yet a great number of plants whose special mission it is to thwart Satanic machinations, to protect their owners from the dire effects of witchcraft or the Evil Eye, and to guard them from the perils of thunder and lightning. In our own country, Houseleek and Stonecrop are thought to fulfil this latter function; in Westphalia, the *Donnerkraut* (Orpine) is a thunder protective; in the Tyrol, the Alpine Rose guards the house-roof from lightning; and in the Netherlands, the St. John's Wort, gathered before sunrise, is deemed a protection against thunderstorms. This last plant is especially hateful to evil spirits, and in days gone by was called *Fuga dæmonum*, dispeller of demons. In Russia, a plant, called the *Certagon*, or Devil-chaser, is used to exorcise Satan or his fiends if they torment an afflicted mourner; and in the same country the *Prikrit* is a herb whose peculiar province it is to destroy calumnies with which mischief-makers may seek to interfere with the consummation of lovers' bliss. Other plants induce concord, love, and sympathy, and others again enable the owner to forget sorrow.

Plants connected with dreams and visions have not hitherto received much notice; but, nevertheless, popular belief has attributed to some few—and notably the Elm, the Four-leaved Clover, and the Russian *Son-trava*—the subtle power of procuring

dreams of a prophetic nature. Numerous plants have been thought by the superstitious to portend certain results to the sleeper when forming the subject of his or her dreams. Many examples of this belief will be found scattered through these pages.

The legends attached to flowers may be divided into four classes—the mythological, the ecclesiastical, the historical, and the poetical. For the first-named we are chiefly indebted to Ovid, and to the Jesuit René Rapin, whose Latin poem *De Hortorum Cultura* contains much curious plant lore current in his time. His legends, like those of Ovid, nearly all relate to the transformation by the gods of luckless nymphs and youths into flowers and trees, which have since borne their names. Most of them refer to the blossoms of bulbous plants, which appear in the early Spring; and, as a rule, white flowers are represented as having originated from tears, and pink or red flowers from blushes or blood. The ecclesiastical legends are principally due to the old Catholic monks, who, while tending their flowers in the quietude and seclusion of monastery gardens, doubtless came to associate them with the memory of some favourite saint or martyr, and so allowed their gentle fancy to weave a pious fiction wherewith to perpetuate the memory of the saint in the name of the flower. For many of the historical legends we are also indebted to monastic writers, and they mostly pertain to favourite sons and daughters of the Church. Amongst what we have designated poetical legends must be included the numerous fairy tales in which flowers and plants play a not unimportant part, as well as the stories which connect plants with the doings of Trolls, Elves, Witches, and Demons. Many such legends, both English and foreign, will be found introduced in the following pages.

It has recently become the fashion to explain the origin of myths and legends by a theory which makes of them mere symbols of the phenomena appertaining to the solar system, or metaphors of the four seasons and the different periods in a day's span. Thus we are told that, in the well-known story of the transformation of Daphne into a Laurel-bush, to enable her to escape the importunities of Apollo, we ought not to conceive the idea of the handsome passionate god pursuing a coy nymph until in despair she calls on the water-gods to change her form, but that, on the contrary, we should regard the whole story as simply an allegory implying that "the dawn rushes and trembles through the sky, and fades away at the sudden appearance of the bright sun." So, again, in the myth of Pan and Syrinx (p. 559), in which the Satyr pursues the maiden who is transformed into the Reed from which Pan fashioned his pipes, the meaning intended to be conveyed is, we are told, that the blustering wind bends and breaks the swaying Rushes, through which it rustles and whistles. Prof. De Gubernatis, in his

valuable work *La Mythologie des Plantes*, gives a number of clever explanations of old legends and myths, in accordance with the "Solar" theory, which are certainly ingenious, if somewhat monotonous. Let us take, as an example, the German story of the Watcher of the Road, which appears at page 326. In this tale a lovely princess, abandoned for a rival by her attractive husband, pines away, and at last desiring to die if only she can be sure of going somewhere where she may always watch for him, is transformed into the wayside Endive or Succory. Here is the Professor's explanation:—"Does not the fatal rival of the young princess, who cries herself to death on account of her dazzling husband's desertion, and who even in death desires still to gaze on him, symbolise the humid night, which every evening allures the sun to her arms, and thus keeps him from the love of his bride, who awakens every day with the sun, just as does the flower of the Succory?" These scientific elucidations of myths, however dexterous and poetical they may be, do not appear to us applicable to plant legends, whose chief charm lies in their simplicity and appositeness; nor can we imagine why Aryan or other story-tellers should be deemed so destitute of inventive powers as to be obliged to limit all their tales to the description of celestial phenomena. In the Vedas, trees, flowers, and herbs are invoked to cause love, avert evil and danger, and neutralise spells and curses. The ancients must, therefore, have had an exalted idea of their nature and properties, and hence it is not surprising that they should have dedicated them to their deities, and that these deities should have employed them for supernatural purposes. Thus Indra conquered Vritra and slew demons by means of the Soma; Hermes presented the all-potent Moly to Ulysses; and Medea taught Jason how to use certain enchanted herbs; just as, later in the world's history, Druids exorcised evil spirits with Mistletoe and Vervain, and sorcerers and wise women used St. John's Wort and other plants to ward off demons and thunderbolts. The ancients evidently regarded their gods and goddesses as very human, and therefore it would seem unnecessary and unjust so to alter their tales about them as to explain away their obvious meaning.

Flowers are the companions of man throughout his life—his attendants to his last resting place. They are, as Mr. Ruskin says, precious always "to the child and the girl, the peasant and the manufacturing operative, to the grisette and the nun, the lover and the monk." Nature, in scattering them over the earth's surface, would seem to have designed to cheer and refresh its inhabitants by their varied colouring and fragrance, and to elevate them by their wondrous beauty and delicacy; from them, as old Parkinson truly wrote, "we may draw matter at all times, not onely to magnifie the Creator that hath given them such diversities of forms, sents, and colours, that

the most cunning workman cannot imitate, ... but many good instructions also to our selves; that as many herbs and flowers, with their fragrant sweet smels do comfort and as it were revive the spirits, and perfume a whole house, even so such men as live vertuously, labouring to do good, and profit the Church, God, and the common wealth by their pains or pen, do as it were send forth a pleasing savour of sweet instructions." The poet Wordsworth reminds us that

> "God made the flowers to beautify
> The earth, and cheer man's careful mood;
> And he is happiest who hath power
> To gather wisdom from a flower,
> And wake his heart in every hour
> To pleasant gratitude."

In these pages will be found many details as to the use of these beauteous gems of Nature, both by the ancient races of the world and by the people of our own generation; their adaptation to the Church's ceremonial and to popular festivals; their use as portents, symbols, and emblems; and their employment as an adornment of the graves of loved ones. Much more could have been written, had space permitted, regarding their value to the architect and the herald. The Acanthus, Lotus, Trefoil, Lily, Vine, Ivy, Pomegranate, Oak, Palm, Acacia, and many other plants have been reproduced as ornaments by the sculptor, and it is a matter of tradition that to the majestic aspect of an avenue of trees we owe the lengthy aisle and fretted vault of the Gothic order of architecture. In the field of heraldry it is noticeable that many nations, families, and individuals have, in addition to their heraldic badges, adopted plants as special symbols, the circumstances of their adoption forming the groundwork of a vast number of legends: a glance at the index will show that some of these are to be discovered in the present work. Many towns and villages owe their names to trees or plants; and not a few English families have taken their surnames from members of the vegetable kingdom. In Scotland, the name of Frazer is derived from the Strawberry-leaves (*fraises*) borne on the family shield of arms, and the Gowans and Primroses also owe their names to plants. The Highland clans are all distinguished by the floral badge or *Suieachantas* which is worn in the bonnet. For the most part the plants adopted for these badges are evergreens; and it is said that the deciduous Oak which was selected by the Stuarts was looked upon as a portent of evil to the royal house.

The love of human kind for flowers would seem to be shared by many members of the feathered tribe. Poets have sung of the passion of the Nightingale for the Rose and of the fondness of the Bird of Paradise for the dazzling blooms of the Tropics: the

especial liking, however, of one of this race—the *Amblyornis inornata*—for flowers is worthy of record, inasmuch as this bird-gardener not only erects for itself a bower, but surrounds it with a mossy sward, on which it continually deposits fresh flowers and fruit of brilliant hue, so arranged as to form an elegant *parterre*.

We have reached our limit, and can only just notice the old traditions relating to the sympathies and antipathies of plants. The Jesuit Kircher describes the hatred existing between Hemlock and Rue, Reeds and Fern, and Cyclamen and Cabbages as so intense, that one of them cannot live on the same ground with the other. The Walnut, it is believed, dislikes the Oak, the Rowan the Juniper, the White-thorn the Black-thorn; and there is said to be a mutual aversion between Rosemary, Lavender, the Bay-tree, Thyme, and Marjoram. On the other hand, the Rose is reported to love the Onion and Garlic, and to put forth its sweetest blooms when in propinquity to those plants; and a bond of fellowship is fabled to exist between a Fig-tree and Rue. Lord Bacon, noticing these traditionary sympathies and antipathies, explains them as simply the outcome of the nature of the plants, and his philosophy is not difficult to be understood by intelligent observers, for, as St. Anthony truly said, the great book of Nature, which contains but three leaves—the Heavens, the Earth, and the Sea—is open for all men alike.

CHAPTER I.

The World-Trees of the Ancients

The Scandinavian Ash—The Hindu World-Tree—The World-Tree of the Buddhists—The Iranian World-Tree—The Assyrian Sacred Tree—The Mother Tree of the Greeks, Romans, and Teutons

It is a proof of the solemnity with which, from the very earliest times, man has invested trees, and of the reverence with which he has ever regarded them, that they are found figuring prominently in the mythology of almost every nation; and despite the fact that in some instances these ancient myths reach us, after the lapse of ages, in distorted and grotesque forms, they would seem to be worthy of preservation, if only as curiosities in plant lore. In some cases the myth relates to a mystic cloud-tree which supplies the gods with immortal fruit; in others to a tree which imparts to mankind wisdom and knowledge; in others to a tree which is the source and fountain of all life; and in others, again, to the actual descent of mankind from anthropological or parent trees. In one cosmogony—that of the Iranians—the first human pair are represented as having grown up as a single tree, the fingers or twigs of each one being folded over the other's ears, till the time came when, ripe for separation, they became two sentient beings, and were infused by Ormuzd with distinct human souls.But besides these trees, which in some form or other benefit and populate the earth, there are to be found in ancient myths records of illimitable trees that existed in space whilst yet the elements of creation were chaotic, and whose branches overshadowed the universe. One of the mythical accounts of the creation of the world represents a vast cosmogonic tree rearing its enormous bulk from the midst of an ocean before the formation of the earth had taken place; and this conception, it may be remarked, is in consonance with a Vedic tradition that plants were created three ages before the gods. In India the idea of a primordial cosmogonic tree, vast as the world itself, and the generator thereof, is very

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Along with Fraser's *Golden Bough* and the studies of Wilhelm Mannhardt, W.R.S. Ralston and Charles Godfrey Leland, Richard Folkard's *Plant Lore, Legends & Lyrics* ranks among the most important European classics on folklore. First published in 1884 and personally presented by the author to Queen Victoria, it has not been matched since.

VAMzzz Publishing presents this carefully revised, illustrated edition, complete with the three special indexes as present in the original version – which are usually missing from later publications, but offer an important extra to the reader.

The scope of this detailed study is vast. It ranges from plant symbolism to the World Tree theme to the practical use of herbs in witchcraft for flying ointments and spells. Much of the book deals with the spirits of trees and plants, including various types of fairies, fauns, satyrs, dryads and hamadryads. Sacred plants and ceremonies are described, as well as the symbolism of plants in funeral customs and plants attributed to the Devil and the Black Arts. Tables are included and a special – nearly 200 pages – Plant Encyclopedia fills the second part of the book. This book is a must read whether you are a plant lover, folklorists, herbalist, wiccan or occultist.

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