and, like his mother, delights to tempt belated travellers into his abode in “an ominous wood” in Wales.

And in thick shelter of black shades embowered
Excels his mother in her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass
To quench the drouth of Phedrus, which they taste,
(For most do taste through food intemperate thirst).
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were ;
And they, so perfect in their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves as comely as before ;
And all their friends and native home forgot
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.

In this description, clearly based on Homer’s tale and subsequent allegories, we can see one or two further refinements of thought. The men are not turned bodily into beasts; it is their face which is transformed. Fancy is here in harmony with sad fact. Next the men are doubly deceived; being degraded into beasts they know it not but still think they are fairer than before. We have got very far away from Homer’s conception now; but Milton has remodelled the ancient tale into fancies not less beautiful although they carry a more serious meaning to the thoughtful reader. Having seen the various modifications which have been made by poets in writing of the tale of Circe, we can now understand the further import of this picture which I undertook to make clear. It is an expression of this fact—that sensuality is not only sin, but a contemptible mistake. In studying a great picture it is a real pleasure to commit to memory those passages in the poets which explain the painter’s design.

T. G. ROOPER.

The Two Roses.

Translated from the German with the kind permission of the Author,

ERNST VON WILDENBRUCH,

BY EMELINE STEINHAL.

Once near a great city in which many rich and poor people lived, there dwelt a gardener, who possessed a large beautiful rose garden. Roses grew in it of every colour and every kind. The gardener understood his business well, and sold his roses to the people in the city.

Many came and bought—at least the rich people came, for the gardener asked such high prices for his flowers that the poor people could not afford to buy them.

There were two roses blooming in the garden more beautiful than any that had hitherto lived there. The two rose bushes stood in the same bed, so near to one another that when the roses bent their heads they could almost touch.

It thus came about that the roses were mutually pleased, they called each other “thou,” and although not altogether alike in features—one having delicate yellow leaves with a red centre, the other being snow-white from its outer leaf to its heart—and although they belonged to different families, they considered themselves sisters, and trusted one another with all their secrets.

When they did this such a sweet aroma came from their lips that the garden around them was filled with delicious perfume, and their tender cooings were so pretty to witness that the little beetles, who run busily to and fro on the earth, would stand still, lift themselves up, and say, “See, the roses are again telling each other something. I wonder what it can be?”

What the roses were considering was their future. They were so young they had no past to speak about, but the future looked to them like a beautiful dream.

They knew quite well that they were the most beautiful roses in the garden; they saw that every day in the delighted looks of
the gardener; they heard it from the lips of many a customer,
and they felt it every day when the morning-wind swept round
and drove away the night from their little heads, so
that they could see and nod to each other. The whole garden
offered homage to them.
So it came to pass, that, although the two roses were as good,
and as well meaning as roses ought to be, they grew rather
proud, and had great expectations regarding their future fate.
It could only be a king, or a prince, or at any rate a very rich
man, who would buy them and take them to his home. About
man, they loved each other tenderly, and when the
thought came over them the roses would each shed a single
large tear, which, when the daylight appeared, lay like a
glittering drop in their chalices, and that was always pretty to
see. Yes, it was so beautiful that the morning-wind, who passes
over many lands, and who is therefore an authority in floral
beauty, would halt in astonishment before them, make a bow,
and say, "To the truly beautiful every thing lends grace, even
pain." Then the little two sisters would nod to him, and say,
"Oh, you are a nice young man, Mr. Morning-wind. You are
so lively in the early morning" at which the morning-wind
would feel very much flattered, and would tuck his coat tails
under his arms, and fly far away.

So the days went on, and many visitors and customers came
into the garden; but no purchaser was found for the two roses;
it was as though every one felt unconsciously that they were to
be reserved for a brilliant future. But one beautiful summer's
evening a magnificent open carriage drove up to the garden door,
and stopped there. The two roses could see down the garden,
through the iron gateway, and as soon as they saw the carriage
their hearts began to beat as though they felt that some change
was coming to them. And they laid their cheeks together, and
whispered their thoughts to one another. A coachman sat on
the box, and near to him a man-servant, and both had coats
and hats with broad gold bands; and the roses, being unused
to the world, thought, when they saw such splendour on the
box, that these must be the principal people. But a little lady-
bird, who had been in many big houses, and who had even once
sat on the hand of a real Princess, came up to them, and when
he heard what the roses were saying, said to them, "Not so!
Only the servants sit on the box. You must look at the people
inside the carriage." So the roses looked very hard, but they
did not care for the people in the carriage; the lady was not at
all young, and not at all pretty, and the other, a gentleman, had
a huge black beard.

While the roses were exchanging their opinions, the little
ladybird began again, saying, "Why, you two really don't
understand anything of the world at all; don't you know this
man is the richest banker in the city, and the lady is his wife?
Why should you want rich people to be pretty—that is left for
poor people, who have nothing else?"
The roses were ashamed of their ignorance, and blushed, and
that made them look fairer than ever.
The gentleman and his wife alighted from the carriage, and
behind them came a little dog that had silvery white hair, and
was so round that he could only slowly waddle, all the time
making a melancholy face, and from time to time he gave a
little bark, which sounded as if he were saying, "Go away, get
away!" The gardener stood at the garden door, took his hat off,
and made a deep bow. The gentleman nodded slightly to
him, but the lady passed by him, looking into the air. When
the ladybird saw that, she called out to the roses, "Now you
can learn something; see, rich people must behave as this lady
does; then they understand how to be rich." The roses,
evertheless, felt a little ashamed of their bad taste, for they had
not really liked this behaviour.
The procession swept down the garden walk straight to the
place where the two roses stood, and with every step the lady
took, her silk dress rustled, so that it seemed to say to all nature
around it, "Hush, shh! I am from Paris, I am from Paris."
The gardener followed with his hat in his hand, and pointed
them to right and left, now to this rose-tree, then to that, and
the lady stood from time to time and raised her eye-glass
to her eyes, and when the gardener had spoken so long that
he was red in the face, she slightly opened her lips and said:
"All that is nothing." Then the poor gardener made a long
face, and the little dog barked, as if to say, "Serve you right,
and serve you right," and the husband nodded to the gardener
and said, "You must give my wife the very best."
At last they came to the two roses, who were looking out

Vol. 1.—No. 8.
with great large eyes, and here, for the first time, the lady
stopped of her own accord. She raised her eye-glass and
looked at them.

When they saw the glasses turned on them, they timidly
bowed their heads, and a tremor of shame came over them,
and as they stood with bent heads, they were so lovely that even
the lady could not help being impressed. Then she said, in
order to show her approval, "Well, that possibly might suit
her to a rose a great impertinence. She rejoiced inwardly when
she saw the high price named by the gardener, and when she
saw the sorrowful face of the poor man. But the two little
children pressed closer to their father, and the little boy cried,"Oh, dear, dear father, please buy the beautiful rose"; and the
little girl said, "Only think, father, how pleased mother would
be when you brought the lovely rose home."

Then, for the first time in her life, unkind and naughty
feelings came into the white rose's heart, and she was
angry with the children, and would have liked to sting them
with her thorns. The poor shoemaker, for that was the
man's occupation, looked silently at his children, then wrote
a thing in the sand with his stick, as though making a
calculation, and then, going to the gardener, he said, as
though excusing himself for his temerity, "My wife has been
so ill, but is now a little better, and I wanted to give her a
great pleasure, and because she likes roses—especially white
ones—so much, I thought—"

"But I cannot take less," interrupted the gardener, and the
white rose murmured, "That's right, that's right." The children
looked anxiously at their father, and he drew out his purse and
counted and counted until the white rose trembled in silent
agony from her roots to her head.

Suddenly she felt as though a hailstorm had burst over her
head, and thought she must faint, for she heard the shoemaker
say, "Well, it is a great deal of money, but, all the same, I'll
take the tree."

She threw her arms round her sister's neck, and cried and
shrank back, but her anger and grief only made her look more
beautiful, and the children stood by and clapped their hands.

The gardener received the money, then took the tree out of
the ground, and the white rose felt with a shudder that the poor shoemaker took her in his hands and carried her out of the garden, never more to see her beautiful, happy—ah! so much happier—sister.

The next day, according to orders, the yellow rose was taken to the house of the rich people, and she felt as proud as happy as a young princess. She had every reason to be delighted; the new home to which she had come was very rich and gorgeous. The house was in a suburb where only very rich people lived, and only the richest of the rich lived in this particular street. The streets were so stylish that when a carriage drove through, the horses stepped lightly, so that the peace of the inhabitants was not destroyed, and in the houses there were so many treasures that the air was filled with gold dust, and the sparrows when they flew through the street always came out again with golden tails. Looking through an artistically wrought-iron gate, you saw that before the house, next to the street, was a little garden with yellow gravel. Behind the house lay the real garden, which was very large and roomy. A brick wall surrounded it, so that no one could look in.

This was the new home of the yellow rose, and in a moment, as she entered it, she saw that she had come into a very aristocratic society. In the middle of the garden was a big round lawn, and this was as well cut as the head of a man who goes every day to the hairdresser; round the lawn were beds, and in the beds were flowers of every variety, so that the air sparkled and glowed with their scent and colour.

In the middle of the lawn was a circular bed, and that was the most distinguished place in the whole garden. There stood a little wood of roses—yellow, yellowish, greenish yellow, and reddish yellow roses; and this was the collection of tea roses of which the rich gentleman had spoken the previous evening. Towards this place the gardener, who was carrying the yellow rose, bent his steps.

Then it appeared for the first time that there was something naughty in the heart of the yellow rose, for when she saw how all the flowers in the garden bent their heads to her, and looked at her attentively to see what the new comer to the select bed was like, she felt very vain, and looked at them proudly, thinking to herself, "What are you all compared to me?"

It is true that her pride fell a little, and she was embarrassed, when she arrived in the middle of the lawn and was planted there, for all the tea-roses looked upon the new comer with curiosity. She felt as if the looks pierced her inmost heart, and at the same time she heard a buzzing and hissing of many anxiously-whispering voices, which almost deafened her.

It was quite natural that the whisperings and hissings should be about her, and there and here, out of the multitude of voices, a word would strike her ear.

"Another one! did you think we had too much room?"

"Quite the reverse; it's getting much too crowded."

"I really should like to know what our worthy mistress is thinking of?"

"We were evidently no longer pretty enough—hi! hi!"

"Have you seen the new-comer?"

"Yes, yes; she is just passable."

The yellow rose, who had kept her eyes on the ground, now dropped a curtsey, and raised her glowing face. She then saw close by, a few old rose-matrons, who nodded to her in a friendly and compassionate manner, just like an old Court lady who nods to a poor little débâline stepping shyly for the first time on the slippery floor of the Court. But she saw at once that the rose-matrons were very beautiful, and so were all the roses about her; and she felt that she was no more the only one of her kind, but that she now stood with many of her equals.

What gave the roses a very stately appearance were little wooden tablets which each wore round her neck, and on these were written the name of each rose, her descent, and the place of her birth.

What wonderful tales they told. There were roses who had come from China; others from Japan; again, others from the East Indies; and one even from the Island of Bourbon. Yes, the society she found herself in was truly very distinguished.

The gardener soon returned with the little tablet that was to belong to the yellow rose, and while he was hanging it round her neck the hissing and chattering ceased, while all the roses stretched out their necks to see who the new comer was and where she came from. Scarcely had the gardener left them when the babel broke out again, only louder and more spiteful than before. It was quite true that they saw from the tablet
that she belonged to a good family, and had pure rose blood; but that was self-understood, or she would not have been admitted at all; but her birthplace—her birthplace! "Born in this place," was written on her tablet, and one can imagine how agitated the roses from China and Japan, the East Indies, and the Island of Bourbon were. It passed from one to the other like wild fire. "Only think of it, she comes from here, only from this place."

One of the proud rose-matrons nodded to her compassionately and said, "You poor child, you must have had a very joyless youth; you cannot have had many friends!"

"Oh, yes!" answered the yellow rose, quickly; "I had a friend, a white rose, with whom I grew up."

The rose-matron pulled a face, and said in the most shocked tone, "But, my dear child, a white rose?" and it sounded as though she would like to say "Don't speak so loud; you make yourself ridiculous."

A second rose-matron pretended not to have heard, and said in a loud voice, "You were friendly with a white rose? Really with a white rose?"

The poor yellow rose began to feel very small as she heard the whisper spreading—"A white rose has been her friend!"—for she had not known before how dreadful that was. The first rose-matron came to her again, and said, "My dear child, I really cannot believe it. A white rose is nothing for you. She is much too common."

The yellow rose was overcome with shame that she had so little understood the ways of the world, and that she had hitherto so under-rated herself. She was quite confused, and said with a trembling voice, "Well, it was perhaps a little too much to say we were friends."

"Yes, I thought so," said the rose-matron; "the person probably clung to you, and you were too good-natured to shake her off."

When the yellow rose saw all eyes turned on her, her courage forsought her, and she said very softly: "Well, yes, that was it."

Scarcely had she said it when her heart felt very heavy, and she hung her head, and heard nothing, and saw nothing that went on around, but cried silently to herself.

(To be continued.)

The Month of Blossoms.

By Dr. J. E. Taylor, F.L.S., F.G.S., &c., Editor of "Science Gossip."

At last summer is upon us. Organic nature is nearing her highest-pitched note. Our country walks naturally shorten themselves, as regards distance, for there is so much more to hear and see and understand. All the members of our native flora and fauna are disporting themselves. You would hardly think most of the sweet birds that are singing from every green tree are quite as much African as English—if not more. In May nature holds her annual Eisteddfodd. It is an avian singing competition—ranging from the melancholy but liquid flow of song from the nightingale to the "cheeky" chirrup of the sparrow. Shut your eyes and open your ears the first sunny morning in mid-May you find yourself in the country. Myriads of bird voices blend in the wide-spread "Hallelujah Chorus."

The low of feeding cattle in the meadows comes in as diapason. Even the distant watch-dog's echoing call drops in the harmonious universal gamut of sound. Life is nearly at flood-tide, but still flowing in. May is not a month for pessimists. The latter are at their best in November, for gloom and fog are their natural environments.

The migratory singing birds have nearly all arrived on our English shores. Even thus early, some are leaving us, for the British islands are like an ornithological railway station—some passengers constantly arriving, others departing. Thus the snipe (Scopolaria gallinago) and field-fare leave us in May; the lesser whitethroat, lesser redpoll, turtle dove, and wryneck have arrived to take their places.

The one natural history fact, above all others, we have to