

The RYERSON
POETRY
CHAP-BOOKS



In My Garden

By

JEAN KILBY RORISON

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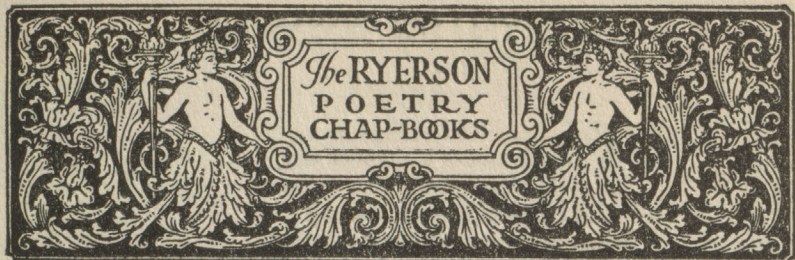
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Mrs. Jean Kilby Rorison, born in Leicester, England, has lived in Vancouver and vicinity for thirty years, and is a good Canadian. Her present home at Caulfields, near Vancouver, is a peculiarly beautiful spot, both by reason of its location facing the sea, and its lovely garden. Mrs. Rorison from childhood has had a flair for dainty verse, and many of her productions have appeared in various American, English, Canadian and Australian publications. One of her poems "A Ballad of Whitby Abbey" received a prize from the Editor of "Poetry" the well-known English magazine, and has been copied widely. All lovers of verse, and especially those who love gardens, will appreciate this little volume.—*Robie L. Reid.*

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IN MY GARDEN

FROM the icy North the winds may blow,
 Bringing with them the frost and snow.
 They may come again, but they will not shatter
 The almond buds, nor stop the chatter
 Of birds in the maple tree.

The South winds whispered to the young New Year,
 "Spring is coming, she is near, she is near,
 Earth from her sleep is waking."
 Freely the sap is beginning to flow;
 The alder trees have a purple glow,
 The daphne flowers are breaking.

In my garden a snowdrop has broken her sheath,
 The good brown soil stirs underneath,
 And Scylla's bells are shaking.
 Blue periwinkle begins to creep,
 From under their leaves shy violets peep,
 While soft and low from a lilac bush,
 I hear the sweet note of a hermit thrush,
 A love-song's in the making!

THE YELLOW JESSAMINE

A Legend

THE Lord God walked in a garden
In the cool of a summer day,
Along its pleasant winding paths
Oft He would wend His way
When the sun sank like a blessing
And the rose in the sky turned grey.

He stood before a climbing vine,
Delicate and light,
Its flowers, half hidden in their leaves,
Were stars of gleaming white,
Whose fragrance ever deepened
At the coming of the night.

“Dear Lord!” a voice was speaking
From a low bush at His feet,
“No flowers have I; my sister blooms
So radiant and sweet.
Grant flowers of any colour, Lord,
To make my life complete.”

With kindly hand He lifted her,
Root and branch and all,
Till all amazed she leaned against
A sheltered southern wall,
Where the last ray of the setting sun
On the shortest day would fall.

Then the Lord said to the trembling bush,
“Thou shalt bring forth thy flowers;
Thou shalt bud and bloom and blossom
Through all the darkest hours,
E'en when the frost is in the ground
And the stormy snow-cloud lowers.”

“When the wintry wind is blowing,
And whiplike is its sting,
Thy little golden starry flowers
A message then will bring.
Thy name, the yellow Jessamine,
The harbinger of Spring.”

FLOWER BELLS

THE snowdrops are out in my garden to-day
"Fair maids of February,"
They say that Spring is on her way,
Clad in green and gold array,
Now, Robin, sing a roundelay
And let your notes be merry.

Spring will bring her floral bells
She'll set them all ding-donging,
The erythronium on the hills,
The gaily dancing daffodils,
The wild blue hyacinth that fills
All English hearts with longing.

Spring in my garden by the sea
Does not shilly-shally.
For soon will come the blossoming time
The sweet o' the year, the golden prime
When hearts attuned may catch the chime
Of lilies of the valley.

Campanula bells, and myriad bells
That joyous Summer rings.
Foxglove bells,—when the moon's pale light
Shines on the tall spears, gleaming white,
Mystic in the scented night,
What glamourie she brings!

When Autumn comes, apace, apace,
And the first frail leaves do fall,
The heather bell, the fairy bell,
Upon the exile casts a spell
For misty moorland, loch, and fell,
The bell loved most of all.

AT EVENTIDE

THE afterglow is fading in the West,
The mountains lose their rosy-purple light,
With healing hands now comes the quiet night
Folding the earth close to her ample breast.
Lord of all loveliness! grant this request:
When I am old and grey, that my delight
In beauty fail not, nor my joy take flight
Until I lay me down for my last rest.

Sunset and dawn, blue skies, a foam-flecked sea,
The Orient clouds and verdant Spring's wild flowers,
The shadows glinting through a leafy tree,
The scent of clover after Summer showers;
Through these have I come very near to Thee,
My help and comfort in my darkest hours.



JOY

JOY is an airy little sprite,
Made for solace and delight,
Shrinking from all hapless plight.
When I did to her complain
Of the constancy of Pain,
Then the pretty, winsome thing
Flew away on drooping wing.

The wild plum is in blossom now,
A bird is singing on a bough,
Earth is so fair, so young and gay,
How can care live on such a day?
Oh, Robin boy, sing on, sing on,
The Winter's past, the rain is gone,
Now pipe your song with merry glee,
For Joy has come again to me!

THE EGOIST

Robin is piping in the arbutus tree,
"Listen to me! Oh, listen to me!"
The sky is blue as the eggs in the nest
Prest close and warm to the mother-bird's breast.
"Fiddle-de-dee! Oh, fiddle-de-dee!"
She calls to him impatiently,
"An egoist, Robin, you always will be,
Come down and sit on these eggs for me."



NIGHT

SLOWLY the hours passed on
Why could not I sleep?
Out in the darkness I went:
Then I knew
It was Beauty that called me.
Very still and silent
Lay the earth,
Waiting in quiet expectation
The birth of a new day.
The waning moon,
A silver crescent,
Hung in the sable sky,
Venus, the Morning Star,
Was very near,
Shining as if from the moon
She had borrowed
All her radiance.
My soul went up to her,
Caught in the star-drift—
Then I knew why I could not sleep.

SUNSET

THE Sun is setting and a red-glow fleece
Of tiny clouds is spread across the Bay:
In shining splendour dies another day,
And like a blessing falls a quiet peace.
Here in this garden fair comes sweet release
From that great throng that passes on its way,
The noisy laugh, the faces grave or gay,
The rush and roar that never seem to cease.

Now soon upon the ocean silently
Twilight will steal, and there will be no trace
Of the tender beauty of this afterglow.
Around, above us all is mystery,
Yet still we seem to see God face to face
And Faith's star rises when the sun sinks low.



A LEAF HAS FALLEN

A LEAF has fallen!
All in the golden August weather
Before the bloom is on the heather
A leaf has fallen;
While we, so long a-thirsty, drink
Of the cup of joy, full to the brink,
A leaf has fallen.
Oh heart of mine, do you remember
That soon, oh soon, will come December?
A leaf has fallen.



Lord! I cannot find Thee!
I cried in my despair;
When the moon shone in my garden
I saw Him walking there.

BLUEBELLS

WHERE the steep pathway leads,
Past the tall rustling reeds
By the arbutus trees, down to the sea,
Where the rock roses grow
Still frail blue harebells blow,
There they still linger though shorn of their glee.

Do they remember, now
It is November, how
Gaily they danced through the long sunny hours?
They came with the daffodil
Our longing hearts to fill,
First in the vanguard of shy summer flowers.

Brave fragile airy things,
Light as a fairy's wings,
Soon, soon the cold blast their beauty will quell.
Sweet flower that brings to me
Thoughts of my ain countree,
Faces I ne'er shall see, bonnie Bluebell.



MY GARDEN

I KNOW if I travelled the whole World round
I should never find peace
Like the peace that is found
In my garden, for here 'tis by green hedges bound.

L'ENVOI

THE swollen clouds have held their sullen sway
On shore forlorn and desolate grey sea;
The dreary rain has rained unceasingly.
Now as the sun sets wide across the Bay
A golden band foretells a fairer day.
Like a great scroll unrolling silently
The clouds become a fretted canopy,
Purple and rose upon the sombre grey.

So be my passing when my day is done;
With clouds up-gathered may a tranquil sun
Set on my life, with all its joy and sorrow.
May love be near me, like this glowing light,
To speed my soul upon its lonely flight,
Foreteller of a fairer, brighter morrow.

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