

*The Coronet*

WHEN for the thorns with which I long, too long,  
With many a piercing wound,  
My Saviour's head have crowned,  
I seek with garlands to redress that wrong,—  
Through every garden, every mead,  
I gather flowers (my fruits are only flowers),  
Dismantling all the fragrant towers  
That once adorned my shepherdess's head :  
And now, when I have summed up all my store,  
Thinking (so I my self deceive)  
So rich a chaplet thence to weave  
As never yet the King of Glory wore,  
Alas ! I find the Serpent old,  
That, twining in his speckled breast,  
About the flowers disguised, does fold  
With wreaths of fame and interest.  
Ah, foolish man, that wouldst debase with them,  
And mortal glory, Heaven's diadem !  
But thou who only couldst the Serpent tame,  
Either his slippery knots at once untie,  
And disentangle all his winding snare,  
Or shatter too with him my curious frame,  
And let these wither—so that he may die—  
Though set with skill, and chosen out with care ;  
That they, while thou on both their spoils dost tread,  
May crown Thy feet, that could not crown Thy head.