

A WILD ROSE.

IT was only a faded flower. Only a wild rose and a leaf, crushed, faded, and dry, that slipped from the half-turned page and fell upon the floor. And yet how quickly and how tenderly he stooped down and picked it up. Why did he do it? He could hardly have told himself, unless it was because he dropped it—that was all.

Sunday afternoon, and such a lovely one. Truly it was yet Winter, for but yesterday there was snow in the air and a cold, boisterous wind seeking entrance at the door. But to-day all was changed. And as he sat in his study, with the window thrown wide open and the warm sun shining thro', it surely seemed to him that it must be Spring. And he half expected to hear the song of a robin, or catch the fragrant odor of the trailing arbutus. But the birds were in the Southland and the flowers still asleep, the springtime far away. And yet how warm the sun shone! The air, how quiet and serene! Everything so hushed and still! Perhaps, yes it must be, that the boisterous wintry elements had hushed themselves in fear lest they awaken nature from her sleep and pleasant dreams.

Yea, what a pleasant day withal, and yet so sad and lonely too. He was tempted to go outdoors to find companionship. But the harsh voices of a flock of crows flying past deterred him, and he turned to his much loved books to find expression for his pent-up feelings and sympathy with his mood.

Picking up a volume of quotations and opening the book at random, he read a bit of prose now here, a bit of verse now there—perhaps a line, perhaps a page of what he almost knew by heart. And yet each line was so full of hidden meaning and suggestion, that in