

HEARTSEASE COUNTRY

TO ISABEL SWINBURNE

THE far green westward heavens are bland,
 The far green Wiltshire downs are clear
 As these deep meadows hard at hand :
 The sight knows hardly far from near,
 Nor morning joy from evening cheer.
 In cottage garden-plots their bees
 Find many a fervent flower to seize
 And strain and drain the heart away
 From ripe sweet-williams and sweet-peas
 At every turn on every way.

But gladliest seems one flower to expand
 Its whole sweet heart all round us here ;
 'Tis Heartsease Country, Pansy Land.
 Nor sounds nor savours harsh and drear
 Where engines yell and halt and veer
 Can vex the sense of him who sees
 Ohe flower-plot midway, that for trees
 Has poles, and sheds all grimed or grey
 For bowers like those that take the breeze
 At every turn on every way.

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Content even there they smile and stand,
Sweet thought's heart-easing flowers, nor fear,
With reek and roaring steam though fanned,
Nor shrink nor perish as they peer.

The heart's eye holds not those more dear
That glow between the lanes and leas
Where'er the homeliest hand may please
To bid them blossom as they may
Where light approves and wind agrees
At every turn on every way.

Sister, the word of winds and seas
Endures not as the word of these
Your wayside flowers whose breath would say
How hearts that love may find heart's ease
At every turn on every way.