

M. E. M., "The flowers of February" (The Dublin University Magazine)

Présentation de l'œuvre

Cet article, signé [M. E. M.](#) et paru en février 1853 dans [The Dublin University Magazine](#), mêle **vulgarisation botanique, étude sur le folklore végétal et poésie**. L'inventaire des diverses fleurs de saison est en effet ponctué de nombreuses citations de poèmes anglais, italiens ou français.

Citation

L'auteur cite en français – avec en note la [traduction de Maunde](#) – le passage du chant 3 de *L'Homme des champs* dans lequel Delille évoque la pervenche.

The trailing **Periwinkle** is just now showing its blue convolvulus-like flowers. Its botanic name, *vinca*, is from *vinculum*, a band or tie; because its long, flexible stems are applicable for ligatures; and were, in old times, used to bind round limbs affected by the cramp; to cure which it was thought to have some virtue. From its suitability to form bands was derived an ancient superstition, that the leaves of the plant eaten together by man and wife would occasion mutual love. With the Italians, who call it "Fior dei morti," or flower of the dead, it is funereal, and is made into garlands to carry at the obsequies of young children. It is (perhaps we should say was) funereal also among the Irish peasantry. We have seen it growing in great luxuriance in some lonely rural church-yards, belonging to ruined churches, in the county of Waterford. Anciently it was believed to be used by sorcerers in their incantations, to bind the limbs of the corpses they exhumed; hence it was called "the sorcerer's violet." In France it has become an emblem of friendly recollection, with the appellation of "Herbe aux souvenirs," or plant of remembrance; because it reminded Rosseau [*sic*], after a lapse of thirty years, of his friend, Madame de Warens, with whom it had been a favourite, and affected him so deeply that he shed tears upon finding it. De Lille, in his rural poem, "L'Homme des Champs," alludes to Rosseau's long search for the wild flower (called in French, *pervenche*) which is so common in England.

"Quand la pervenche, en nos champs ignorée,
Offre à Rosseau sa fleur si long-tems désirée:
'La pervenche! grand dieu! la pervenche!' —soudain
Il la couve des yeux [*sic*]; il y porte la main,

Saisit sa douce proie; avec moins de tendresse
L'amant voit, reconnoit, adore sa maitresse.” *
— *Canto* iii.

* Thus translated by Mr. Maunde:—

“The pervanche thus, with us that never grew,
Its long sought blossom gave to Rosseau's view;
He marks the treasure with an eager glance:
'Good heavens! the pervanche!' and his hands advance,
Sudden to seize the prey: not more delight
Feels the fond lover at his mistress' sight¹.”

Vers concernés : [chant 3, vers 439-444](#).

Liens externes

Accès à la numérisation du texte : [HathiTrust](#).

Auteur de la page — [Hugues Marchal](#) 2018/09/10 20:03

¹ M. E. M., “The flowers of February”, *The Dublin University Magazine, a literary and political Journal*, vol. XLI, janvier-juin 1853, p. 190-191.

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