**buttercups.**

**From The suns babies by Edith Howes.
Age Rating 2 to 4.**

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**It was not at all a pretty spot, this swampy bit of roadside. A coarse grass was the only thing that grew on it, for its soil was always wet and spongy. Its neighbours despised it. "If you grew pink-tipped daisies and pretty white bells like mine," said the Hill, "the children would love you." "Or if you grew red and white clover like mine," said the Field, "they would love you." "Or if you grew wild roses like mine," said the Hedge, "they would love you." But the swampy ground could grow neither daisies nor bells nor clover nor wild roses. It lay there, ugly and useless and sad. One day a bird dropped a clinging seed from its feet as it passed; that was the beginning of the wonderful change that came to the despised piece of ground. The tiny seed sank into the soft wet earth, sprouted, and grew. Soon it was a well-grown plant, with beautiful broad leaves. It stretched its soft green stems over the ground, rooted afresh on this side and on that, and spread and spread and spread. How quickly the white roots grew! The damp soil suited them perfectly. "This is a splendid growing place," they said.**

**"You dear things!" said the Ground. "How pleased I am that you have come! I will do my very best for you." The summer and the winter passed, and spring came. From the new plants little round buds pushed up their heads. They grew fast, and opened out into golden flowers. "Buttercups! Buttercups!" shouted the children. They ran down the hill to where the new flowers shone in the morning sun. How lovely these golden flowers were! How their polished petals glittered! They looked like fairy-cups in the children's hands. The swampy ground has never been sad since, for now it is always beautiful, and the children love it. Year after year they watch the little buds unfold; then they fill their hands and pinafores with the golden buttercups, and carry them home as treasures to be loved and prized above all other flowers.**