

(crome also music formerly chroma #b, archaic ¼  
(croma; also (rhetoric) speech inoffensive; color intensity  
= a crook **b. 2/28/76** sensation? - white + gray  
(staff) (27) **f. first draft M 3/8/76** (Crocus)

Notes: 4/21/75 Xenophon, ~~night~~ <camp> fires thawing snow

corn underground / "bulb" pits measured → Xenophon  
stem without scales - WS / "Strung" (WS TGV III ii, 78) LLL IV iii 343 / T IV i 108  
sometimes w. mem- ("hour-glass" M.V. I i 25 hourly joys be still / upon you  
branous coat; base <{from above left vertical:} → (I shd not see the sandy hourglass run  
roots at the base But I shd think of shallows + of flats)>  
nourish the young 1 Hear it tease question will {vertical:}  
plant (as in bulbs) 2 the snowdrop come up nodding (7) in color white + the bulbs  
+ at the apex of 3 green in white chrome <crome> asea not formed <formed>/  
of or from the 4 navvies long a <your a> crook tip χρώμασι λευκά ου of  
base bear 5 strung ~~alack~~ <has alack> riches look ο λεπυριώδη scales  
cormels, ultimately 6 ~~en~~ <into> scaleless bulbs ~~now~~ <us a> false all via Theophrastus VII  
forming mature 7 spring <fire> false snowpit measures yellow <hours>  
corms. planted (sative) sandy yellows flames  
crocus. Iris <herb> (gk 8 ~~flame~~ crocus hourglass cloth-of-gold  
rainbow) f. <"look"> stemless {upsidedown (3) & (4):} (6) rhizai = root  
<i.e.> rising from the corm (3) / stalk outer segments white round cf strongula  
lvs. grassy appear tip inner greenish or green / no tube 6 stamen nauš, merchant ships  
pre- with or after flowers; ↑ "nodding" gk. γαλα milk vs makra navis longa . .  
these at ground level milk flwr + ανθος (4) → i.e. warships  
stemless or very galanthus Nivalis stalk 7-12" H lvs 6-8" L  
short stalked, have Common snowdrop ¼" max W flwrs fragrant  
6 segments (petals) {vertical:} ¾ in L inner segments  
+ 3 stamens. Fruit from (5) (gk)<sup>(\*)</sup> λευκόιον partly green outer white  
a capsule ripening white leukoion Jan-April. Also double  
at or below ground ↓ anthers milk flower snowy flowered  
[Gk. name for (saffron) Sativa = Galanthus nivalis  
autumn blooming planted, stillness, calm of wind + wave (2)  
(Crocus sativus) ← cultivated nivalis = <thus?> snowy calm of wind + waves basal lvs  
rarely persists vs. sylvestris round roots στρογγύλα ρίζαις flowers at sta  
species: aurens = wild sative - strongúla rhizais solitary  
Dutch crocus or Evelyn (1) genus Galanthus - solid / flowering stalk 2-3 narrow  
Dutch yellow, bright (\*w) snowdrop ? "little" bulbous herbs Amaryllida/ceae f.  
segments 1½" L; spring  
bloom - vernus -  
common crocus, spring, var. colors segments 1½" L bearded Europe  
culture: planted in warm well drained soil open to first <(false)> spring sun (\*)  
yellow to orange stamens + pistils. c. susianus = cloth-of-gold  
(27) see over bottom of page (crocus) "Hear it tease"  
persist well in lawns: if not mowed before leaves <half-> ripen. Need  
cold in winter

(27) (Crocus) (p 33)  
b. Feb 28/76  
f. 2nd draft M + Tu March 8-9/76  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8



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### Sources

Taylor, *Taylor's Encyclopedia of Gardening*, **Corm, Crocus, Snowdrop (Galanthus)**  
Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants* VII. xiii. 9

*Century Dictionary (CD)*, **chroma, cromia, crome, Galanthus, hour-glass, hourly, sative**  
Onions, *A Shakespeare Glossary*, **strung**  
Liddell & Scott, *A Greek Lexicon*, **γαληνη, στρογγύλος**

Xenophon, *The Persian Expedition* IV. 5  
Shakespeare, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* III. ii. 78-79  
*Love's Labour's Lost* IV. iii. 342-342  
*The Merchant of Venice* I. i. 25  
*The Tempest* IV. i. 108

line 1: **Hear it tease question will**  
 line 2: **the snowdrop come up nodding**  
 line 3: **green in white crome asea**  
 line 4: **navvies long a crook tip**  
 line 5: **strung alack riches look o**  
 line 6: **into scaleless bulbs a false**  
 line 7: **spring snowpits measure hours sative**  
 line 8: **crocus furnace sandy yellows cloth-of-gold**

Feb 28-Mar 8/9 1976

for JSB 3/21/76

{Johann Sebastian Bach, born 21 March 1685 O.S.}

Title:

Taylor, **Crocus**. A genus of perhaps 80 species of very popular garden plants of the iris family, ranging from the Mediterranean region to southwestern Asia. They are apparently stemless plants arising from a corm (the crocus “bulb” of the shops). Leaves narrow or grass-like, appearing before, or with, or after the flowers. Flowers blooming very early in spring or in autumn, but the plant commonly called autumn crocus belongs to the genus *Colchicum*. *Crocus* flowers are produced at the ground level, are stemless or very short-stalked, and have 6 segments and 3 stamens. Fruit a capsule, ripening at or below ground level. (*Crocus* is the Greek name of the saffron, *Crocus sativus*.) {...}

CROCUS CULTURE. Possibly none of the smaller spring bulbs will make a braver show than crocus if one remembers to plant them in a warm, well-drained soil where the first spring sun will make them open wide their brilliant flowers, accented by showy yellow-to-orange stamens and pistils.

{See preceding poem, #26 “Tulip,” lines 5-6}

line 1: **Hear it tease question will**

line 2: **the snowdrop come up nodding**

Taylor, **Snowdrop**. Pretty little spring-blooming bulbous herb, comprising the genus **Galanthus** (ga-lan'thus) of the family Amaryllidaceae, all Eurasian, and 3 of the 10 known species cult. for their handsome, very early bloom. They have small bulbs, a solid flowering stalk, and only 2-3 narrow, basal leaves. Flowers solitary at the end of the stalk, usually nodding, the outer segments white, the inner green or greenish, without a tube. Stamens 6. Fruit a 3-valved capsule. (*Galanthus* is from the Greek for milk and flower, in allusion to the white bloom.)

SNOWDROP CULTURE. {...} Snowdrops should be planted in hundreds or thousands to make an effective display. If happy they increase freely and may be left undisturbed for years to form large, close colonies. {...} They may be combined with winter aconites, chionodoxas, snowflakes, *Scilla sibirica*, the early *Crocus* species, *Hyacinthus azureus*, and Christmas roses.

line 3: **green in white crome asea**

See Taylor line 2.

Theophrastus VII. xiii. 9: There are also several kinds of plants of the same class as purse-tassels . . . {corrupt text} such as snowdrop {λευκόϊον, *leukoion*} star-flower *opition kyix*, and to a certain extent Barbary nut. These belong to this class only in having round roots {στρογγύλα ρίζαις, *strongyla rhizais*}; for in colour they are white, and the bulbs are not formed of scales {χρώμασι λευκά

καὶ οὐ λεπυριώδη, *chrōmasi leuka dai ou lepyriōdē* (*chrōmasi leuka kai ou lepyriōdē, chromasi leuka dai ou lepyriode*).

**crome asea** < χρώμασι, *chrōmasi*

See CD, **crome** line 4.

CD, **chroma**, *n.* [L., < Gr. χρῶμα: see *chromatic*.] **1.** In *music*: (a) In Greek music, a modification of the usual diatonic scale. (b) The sign by which a note is raised or lowered a semi-tone; a sharp, ♯, or a flat, *b*. (c†) An eighth-note or quaver, ♪. See *croma*. (d) A semitone or half-step, whether large or small. See *semi-tone*.—**2.** In *rhet.*, a figure of speech which consists in speaking so as not to offend the hearer. *Crabb*.—**3.** The degree of departure of a color-sensation from that of white or gray; the intensity of distinctive hue; color-intensity.

CD, **croma**, *n.* [< It. *croma*, M L. *chroma*: see *chroma*.] In *music*, an eighth note, or quaver. Also *crome*, and formerly *chroma*.

line 4: **navvies long a crook tip**

See Theophrastus line 3, στρογγύλα, *strongyla*

Liddell & Scott, **στρογγύλος** {*strongylos*}, η, ον, (στράγγω) *round, rounded*; στρογγύλη ναῦς *a merchant ship, from its round shape*, opp. to the long ship of war (μακρὰ ναῦς), Lat. *navis longa*.

**navvies long a** < *navis longa*

Taylor, **Crocus** {see title above} > **G. nivalis** {> Snowy; i.e., white}. Common snowdrop.

CD, **crome**<sup>2</sup> {see line 3}, *n.* [E. dial., also *crombe, croom*; < ME. *crome, crombe, croombe*, a hook, crook, < AS. *crumb*, bent: see *crump*<sup>1</sup>, of which *crome*<sup>2</sup> is ult. a doublet.] A hook; a crook; a staff with a hooked end; specifically, a sort of rake with a long handle used in pulling weed, etc., out of the water. [Prov. Eng.]

line 5: **strung alack riches look o**

See Theophrastus line 3

**strung alack riches** < στρογγύλα ρίζαις (*strongyla rhizais*)

**look o / into** < λευκόϊον (*leukoion*)

Onions, **strung**: furnished with strings Gent. III. ii. 78, LLL. IV. iii. 343.

Shakespeare, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* III. ii. 78-79:

*Proteus*. For Orpheus' lute was strung with poets' sinews,  
Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,

Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost* IV. iii. 342-342:

*Berowne*. Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical  
As bright Apollo's lute strung with his hair;

line 6: **into scaleless bulbs a false**

Taylor, {see title} **Corm**. A solid, bulb-like, underground stem, resembling a bulb, without its scales, but sometimes with a membranous coat. Typical examples are the corms of crocus and gladiolus. Corms are often called solid bulbs or bulbo-tubers. They bear roots at the base and nourish the young plant, just as in bulbs, and from the base or apex of them arise young *cormels*, which are commonly detached, and grown along as propagating material, ultimately forming mature corms.

See Theophrastus line 3.

See LZ notes above on “false spring” meaning early spring.

line 7: **spring snowpits measure hours sative**

Xenophon, *The Persian Expedition* Bk IV, chap. 5: When the fires were made, great pits were formed reaching down to the ground as the snow melted. This gave one a chance of measuring the depth of the snow.

*CD, hour-glass, n. and a. I. n. 1.* An instrument for measuring time, consisting of a glass vessel constricted to a narrow passage in the middle, through which a quantity of sand, or sometimes of mercury, runs from the upper part in to the lower in exactly an hour.

I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,

But I should think of shallows and flats.

*Shak., M. of V, i. 1.*

*CD, hourly, a. {...}* Happening or done every hour; occurring hour by hour; continuing from hour to hour; hence, frequent; often repeated.

Honour, riches, marriage-blessing,

Long continuance, and increasing,

Hourly joys be still upon you!

*Shak., Tempest, iv. 1 (song).*

See Taylor title for *Crocus sativus*.

*CD, sative, a.* [=Sp. Pg. It. *sativo*, < L. *sativus*, that is sown or planted, < *serere*, pp. *satus*, sow, plant: see *sation*.] Sown, as in a garden.

Preferring the domestick or *sative* for the fuller growth.

*Evelyn, Sylva, II. ii. § 4.*

line 8: **crocus furnace sandy yellows cloth-of-gold**

See *CD, hour-glass*, Shakespeare quotation line 7.

Taylor, **Crocus** {see title} > **C. susianus**. Cloth-of-gold. Spring-blooming, the flowers orange-yellow, but brownish outside, the segments about 1¼ in. long, Crimea.