

ARTHUR

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WREATHS OF FRIENDSHIP:
A GIFT FOR THE YOUNG

Timothy Arthur

**Wreaths of Friendship:
A Gift for the Young**

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Arthur T.

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Содержание

Preface	5
WHAT SHALL WE BUILD?	6
THE TWO COUSINS;	7
A NOBLE ACT	11
THE WORD OF GOD	13
HARSH WORDS AND KIND WORDS	14
THE HERONS AND THE HERRINGS	16
EARLY SPRING FLOWERS	17
TEMPTATION RESISTED	20
EVENING PRAYER	23
STRETCHING THE TRUTH	24
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	25

T. S. Arthur

Wreaths of Friendship: A Gift for the Young

Preface

Young friends—stop a moment. We have set up a sort of turnpike gate here, as you see, between the title-page and the first story in our book, in the shape of a preface, or introduction. "What! do you mean to take toll of us, then?" Why, no—not exactly. But we want to say half a dozen words to you, as you pass along, and to tell you a little about these WREATHS which we have been twining for our friends. So you need not be in quite so great a hurry. Wait a minute.

You have no doubt noticed that it is a very common thing for an author to take up several of the first pages of his book with apologies to his readers. First, perhaps, he apologizes for writing at all; and secondly, for writing so poorly—just as if it was a crime to make a book, for which crime the author must get down on his knees, and humbly beg the public's pardon. We think we shall not take this course, on the whole, for this reason, if for no other—that we do not feel very guilty about what we have done. But as the plan of our book is somewhat new, we have been thinking it would be well enough, in introducing it to you, at least to tell how we came to make it.

We have both of us published a good deal, in one way and another, for young people; and we got a notion—a very pleasant one, certainly, and rather natural, withal, whether well founded or not—that among that class of the public composed of boys and girls, we had a pretty respectable number of friends. Under this impression, we put our heads together, one day, and made up our minds to invite these friends of ours, every one of them, to a kind of festival, and that we would share equally in the pleasure of giving the entertainment. The book, reader, which we have named WREATHS OF FRIENDSHIP, as perhaps you have already guessed, grew out of that plan of ours.

We have not, as you will perceive, indicated the authorship of the tales and sketches, as they appear; and those readers who have any curiosity in this matter, are referred to the index.

We hope the volume will please you. More than this: we hope it will prove to be useful—useful for the future as well as for the present life; and, indeed, if it had not been for this hope, much as we love to entertain our young friends, these Wreaths would never have been twined by our hands.

We have little else to add, except the fondest wishes of our hearts; and, to tell the truth, it was to express to you these kind wishes—to give you something like a hearty shake of the hand—rather than because we had any thing of importance to say in our preface, that we stopped you at the outset.

THE AUTHORS.

WHAT SHALL WE BUILD?

Four children were playing on the sea-shore. They had gathered bright pebbles and beautiful shells, and written their names in the pure, white sand; but at last, tired of their sport, they were about going home, when one of them, as they came to a pile of stones, cried out:

"Oh! let us build a fort; and we will call that ship away out there, an enemy's vessel, and make believe we are firing great cannon balls into her!"

"Yes, yes! let us build a fort," responded Edward, the other lad.

And the two boys—for two were boys and two girls—ran off to the pile of stones, and began removing them to a place near the water.

"Come, Anna and Jane," said they, "come and help us."

"Oh, no. Don't let us build a fort," said Jane.



WHAT SHALL WE BUILD?

"Yes; we will build a fort," returned the boys. "What else can we build? You wouldn't put a house down here upon the water's edge?"

"No; but I'll tell you what we can build, and it will be a great deal better than a fort."

"Well; what can we build?"

"A light-house," said the girls; "and that will be just as much in place on the edge of the sea as a fort. We can call the ship yonder a vessel lost in the darkness, and we will hang out a light and direct her in the true way. Won't that be much better than to call her an enemy, and build a fort to destroy her? See how beautifully she sits upon and glides over the smooth water! Her sails are like the open wings of a bird, and they bear her gracefully along. Would it not be cruel to shoot great balls into her sides, tear her sails to pieces, and kill the men who are on board of her? Oh! I am sure it would make us all happier to save her when in darkness and danger. No, no; let us not build a fort, but a light-house; for it is better to save than to destroy."

The girls spoke with tenderness and enthusiasm, and their words reached the better feelings of their companions.

"Oh, yes," said they; "we will build a light-house, and not a fort." And they did so.

Yes, it is much better to save than to destroy. Think of that, children, and let it go with you through life. Be more earnest to save your friends than to destroy your enemies. And yet, when a real enemy comes, and seeks to do evil, be brave to resist him.

THE TWO COUSINS;

OR, HOW TO ACT WHEN "THINGS GO WRONG."

"There, mother, I knew it would be so. Lucy Wallace has just sent over to tell me she can't walk out in the woods with me. There's no use in my trying to please any body—there's no use in it. I'm an odd sort of a creature, it seems. Nobody loves me. It always was so. Oh, dear! I wish I knew what I had done to make the girls hate me so!"

This not very good-natured speech was made by a little girl, whom I shall call Angeline Standish. She was some ten or twelve years old, as near as I can recollect. Perhaps my readers would like to know something about the occasion which called for this speech; but it is a long story, and hardly worth telling. The truth is, when little boys and girls get very angry, or peevish, or fretful, they sometimes blow out a great deal of ill-humor, something after the manner that an overcharged steam boiler lets off steam—with this difference, however, that the steam boiler gets cooler by the operation, while the boy or girl gets more heated. The throat is a poor safety-valve for ill-humor; and it is bad business, this setting the tongue agoing at such a rate, whenever the mercury in one's temper begins to rise toward the boiling point.

As is usual, in such cases, Angeline felt worse after these words had whistled through the escape pipe of her ill-nature, than she did before; and, for want of something else to do, she commenced crying. She was not angry—that is, not altogether so—though the spirit she showed was a pretty good imitation of anger, it must be confessed. She was peevish. Matters had not gone right with her that day. She was crossed in this thing and that thing. Her new hat had not come home from the milliner's, as she expected; one of her frocks had just got badly torn; she had a hard lesson to learn; and I cannot repeat the whole catalogue of her miseries. So she fretted, and stormed, and cried, and felt just as badly as she chose.

Not long after the crying spell was over, and there was a little blue sky in sight, Jeannette Forrest, a cousin of Angeline's, came running into the room, her face all lighted up with smiles, and threw her arms around her cousin's neck, and kissed her. This was no uncommon thing with Jeannette. She had a very happy and a very affectionate disposition. Every body loved her, and she loved every body.

One not acquainted with Angeline, might very naturally suppose that she would return her cousin's embrace. But she did no such thing. Her manner was quite cool and distant. Human nature is a strange compound, is it not?

"Why, cousin," said the light-hearted Jeannette, "what is the matter? You are not well, are you?"

"Yes, well enough," the other replied, rather crustily. Take care, Angeline, there's a cloud coming over your cousin's face. Speak a kind word or two, now. Then the sun will beam out again, brightly as ever. Jeannette was silent for a moment, for she was astonished, and did not know what to make of her cousin's manner. It would have appeared uncivil and rude to most little girls. But the sweet spirit of Jeannette—loving, hoping, trusting—was differently affected. She saw only the brighter side of the picture. So the bee, as she flies merrily from flower to flower, finds a store of honey where others would find only poison.

"Dear Angeline," said her cousin, at length, "I'm sure something is the matter. Tell me what it is, won't you? Oh, I should love to make you happy, if I only knew how!"

Angeline seemed scarcely to hear these words of love. That is strange enough, I hear you say. So it is, perhaps, and it may be stranger still, that she read not the language of love and sympathy that was written so plainly in her cousin's countenance. It is true, though, for all that. She did not say much of any thing to this inquiry—she simply muttered, between her teeth,

"I don't believe any body loves me."

Jeannette was no philosopher. She could not read essays nor preach sermons. Her argument to convince her cousin that there was, at least, one who loved her, was drawn from the heart, rather than from the head. It was very brief, and very much to the point. She burst into tears, and sobbed,

"Don't say so, dear."

Jeannette could not stay long. Her mother had sent her on an errand, and told her she must make haste back. Perhaps it was as well that she could not stay—and perhaps not. Human nature is a strange sort of compound, as I said before; and it may be that the ice which had covered over the streams leading from Angeline's heart would not have melted under the influence even of the warm sun that, for a moment or two, beamed upon them so kindly. For one, however, I should like to know what would have come out of that conversation, if it had been allowed to go on. Jeannette went home, and Angeline was again left to her own reflections, which were any thing but pleasant. It was Saturday afternoon; and, there being no school, she had hoped to be able to ramble in the woods with some of her little companions. But here she was disappointed, too, and this increased her peevishness; though the reason why she could not go was, because she did not learn her lesson in season, and that was her own fault. Toward night, when Mrs Standish had leisure to sit down to her sewing, she called Angeline, and reminded her of the ill-natured spirit she had shown in the early part of the afternoon. The child was rather ashamed of what she had said, it is true; but she tried to excuse her conduct.

"Every thing went wrong to-day, mother," she said; "I couldn't help feeling so. Oh, dear! I don't see how any body can be good, when things go in this way—I mean any body but Jeannette. I wish I was like her. It is easy for her to be good."

"Your cousin has, no doubt, a very different disposition from yours," said the mother. "But it is much easier for you to be always good-natured and happy than you suppose, Angeline."

"I wish I knew how, mother."

"Well, you say things went wrong with you this afternoon. I think I know what some of these things were. They were not so pleasant as they might have been, certainly. They were troublesome. But don't you think the greatest trouble of all was in your own heart?"

"No, ma'am. I was well enough until the things began to go wrong; and then I felt bad, and I couldn't help it."

Mrs Standish laughed, as she said, "So, then, as soon as the things begin to go wrong, you take the liberty to go wrong too. Every thing works well inside, until it is disturbed by something outside?"

"That is it, mother."

"And when the things inside go smoothly, because every thing is smooth outside, you have a very good and happy disposition?"

"Pretty good, I think."

"And so, when there is a hurricane inside, because the wind blows rather more than usual outside, you are cross, and unhappy, and bad enough to make up for being so good before?"

"Yes, ma'am, I am afraid I am, sometimes."

"No, my child, you are wrong, all wrong. If all was right inside, the other things you speak of would not disturb you so, if they should happen to go wrong."

"Why, mother, wouldn't they disturb me at all?"

"They might, occasionally, but not near as much. Do you remember that our clock went wrong last winter?"

"Yes, ma'am; we couldn't tell what time it was, and it used to strike all sorts of ways."

"What do you suppose made the clock act so, Angeline? It goes well enough now, you know."

"I believe Mr Mercer said one of the wheels was out of order."

"That was all. It was not the weather—not because we forgot to wind it up—not because things did not go right in the room. Now, your mind is something like a clock. If it is kept in order, it will run

pretty well, I guess—no matter whether it rains or shines—whether it is winter or summer. Milton says, very beautifully, in his poem called the 'Paradise Lost,'

"The mind is its own place, and of itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.'

"He means by this, that our happiness or unhappiness depends more upon what is within us than it does upon what is without. And he is right. Do you understand, my child?"

"I understand what you mean, but it is not so easy to see how I am to go to work and be good all the time, like cousin Jeannette. I'm not like her, mother, and I never can be like her, I know."

"True, you will always be very unlike your cousin. But I don't know of any thing to hinder your being as good and amiable as she is, for all that."

"Oh, mother! I'd give every thing in the world, if I only knew how!"

"I think you can learn, my child, with much less expense; though, to be sure, you will have to give up some things that perhaps you will find it hard to part with. You will be obliged to give up some of your bad habits."

"That would be easy enough."

"Not so easy as you think, it may be. It is a good deal easier to let a bad habit come in, than it is to turn one out. But 'where there's a will, there's a way,' you know."

"Well, mother, what shall I do? I should like to begin pretty soon, for scarcely any body loves me now,"

"Before you learn much, it might be well to unlearn a little. When any thing goes wrong, as you say, you must, at least, not make it go worse. You must not make every body around you unhappy, if you do feel a little cross and peevish."

"Oh, mother, I can't speak pleasantly when I don't feel so."

"Then, in most cases, you had better not speak at all."

"I never thought of that. I can stop talking, if I try."

"So you can, and you can do more. You can get into the habit of finding 'the south or sunny side of things,' as Jean Paul says, and if you do, you will not be likely to have a snow-storm in your heart very often. Besides, you ought to remember, that all these disappointments and crosses are a part of your education for heaven, and you should endeavor to improve them as such, so that their good effect will not be lost. And another thing, my child: you ought to ask God to assist you in this self-government—to make you his child—to give you a new heart—to teach you to love Christ, and to be like him. Then you will seldom feel cross and fretful, because things go wrong. You will be cheerful and good-natured. You will make others happy—and you will very soon forget the old story, that nobody loves you."

Now, many little boys and girls—possibly some who read this story—would have thought this task too hard. They would have regarded it as a pretty severe penance. Perhaps they would have concluded, after having put all these difficult things into one scale, and the thing to be gained by them into the other, that the reward was not worth so great a sacrifice. So thought not Angeline, however. She began the work in earnest, that very day. She went over to her uncle's, with an unusual amount of sunshine in her countenance, and made it all right with Jeannette. In the evening, she told her little brother James what she intended to do, and invited him to help her; and before they retired to rest that night, they knelt down together and offered up a prayer, that God, for Christ's sake, would help them in governing themselves.

One day—perhaps some six weeks after this—Mrs Standish said, smilingly, to her daughter,

"Well, my dear, does Lucy Wallace love you any better?"

"Oh, mother," said Angeline, as a tear of joy stood in her eye, "every body loves me now!"



A NOBLE ACT.

A NOBLE ACT

"What have you there, boys?" asked Captain Bland.

"A ship," replied one of the lads who were passing the captain's neat cottage.

"A ship! Let me see;" and the captain took the little vessel, and examined it with as much fondness as a child does a pretty toy. "Very fair, indeed; who made it?"

"I did," replied one of the boys.

"You, indeed! Do you mean to be a sailor, Harry?"

"I don't know. I want father to get me into the navy."

"As a midshipman?"

"Yes, sir."

Captain Bland shook his head.

"Better be a farmer, a physician, or a merchant."

"Why so, captain?" asked Harry;

"All these are engaged in the doing of things directly useful to society."

"But I am sure, captain, that those who defend us against our enemies, and protect all who are engaged in commerce from wicked pirates, are doing what is useful to society."

"Their use, my lad," replied Captain Bland, "is certainly a most important one; but we may call it rather negative than positive. The civilian is engaged in building up and sustaining society in doing good, through his active employment, to his fellow-man. But military and naval officers do not produce any thing; they only protect and defend."

"But if they did not protect and defend, captain, evil men would destroy society. It would be of no use for the civilian to endeavor to build up, if there were none to fight against the enemies of the state."

"Very true, my lad. The brave defender of his country cannot be dispensed with, and we give him all honor. Still, the use of defence and protection is not so high as the use of building up and sustaining. The thorn that wounds the hand stretched forth to pluck the flower, is not so much esteemed, nor of so much worth, as the blossom it was meant to guard. Still, the thorn performs a great use. Precisely a similar use does the soldier or naval officer perform to society; and it will be for you, my lad, to decide as to which position you would rather fill."

"I never thought of that, captain," said one of the lads. "But I can see clearly how it is. And yet I think those men who risk their lives for us in war, deserve great honor. They leave their homes, and remain away, sometimes for years, deprived of all the comforts and blessings that civilians enjoy, suffering frequently great hardships, and risking their lives to defend their country from her enemies."

"It is all as you say," replied Captain Bland; "and they do, indeed, deserve great honor. Their calling is one that exposes them to imminent peril, and requires them to make many sacrifices; and they encounter not this peril and sacrifice for their own good, but for the good of others. Their lives do not pass so evenly as do the lives of men who spend their days in the peaceful pursuits of business, art, or literature; and we could hardly wonder if they lost some of the gentler attributes of the human heart. In some cases, this is so; but in very many cases the reverse is true. We find the man who goes fearlessly into battle, and there, in defence of his country, deals death and destruction unsparingly upon her enemies, acting, when occasion offers, from the most humane sentiments, and jeopardizing his life to save the life of a single individual. Let me relate to you a true story in illustration of what I say.

"When the unhappy war that has been waged by our troops in Mexico broke out, a lieutenant in the navy, who had a quiet berth at Washington, felt it to be his duty to go to the scene of strife, and therefore asked to be ordered to the Gulf of Mexico. His request was complied with, and he

received orders to go on board the steamer Mississippi, Commodore Perry, then about to sail from Norfolk to Vera Cruz.

"Soon after the Mississippi arrived out, and before the city and castle were taken, a terrible 'norther' sprung up, and destroyed much shipping in the harbor. One vessel, on which were a number of passengers, was thrown high upon a reef, and when morning broke, the heavy sea was making a clear breach through her. She lay about a mile from the Mississippi, and it soon became known on board the steamer, that a mother and her infant were in the wreck, and that unless succor came speedily, they would perish. The lieutenant of whom I speak, immediately ordered out a boat's crew, and although the sea was rolling tremendously, and the 'norther' still blowing a hurricane, started to the rescue. Right in the teeth of the wind were the men compelled to pull their boat, and so slowly did they progress, that it took over two hours to gain the wreck.

"At one time, they actually gave out, and the oars lay inactive in their hands. At this crisis, the brave but humane officer, pointing with one hand to the fortress of San Juan de Ulloa, upon which a fire had already commenced, and with the other to the wreck, exclaimed, with noble enthusiasm,

"Pull away, men! I would rather save the life of that woman and her child, than have the honor of taking the castle!"

"Struck by the noble, unselfish, and truly humane feelings of their officer, the crew bent with new vigor to their oars. In a little while the wreck was gained, and the brave lieutenant had the pleasure of receiving into his arms the almost inanimate form of the woman, who had been lashed to the deck, and over whom the waves had been beating, at intervals, all night.

"In writing home to his friends, after the excitement of the adventure was over, the officer spoke of the moment when he rescued that mother and child from the wreck as the proudest of his life.

"Afterward he took part in the bombardment of Vera Cruz, and had command, in turn, of the naval battery, where he faithfully and energetically performed his duty as an officer in the service of his country. He was among the first of those who entered the captured city; but pain, not pleasure, filled his mind, as he looked around, and saw death and destruction on every hand. Victory had perched upon our banners; the arms of our country had been successful; the officer had bravely contributed his part in the work; but he frankly owns that he experienced far more delight in saving the woman he had borne from the wreck, than he could have felt had he been the commander of the army that reduced the city.

"Wherever duty calls, my lads," concluded the captain, "you will find that brave officer. He will never shrink from the post of danger, if his country have need of him; nor will he ever be deaf to the appeal of humanity; but so long as he is a true man, just so long will he delight more in saving than in destroying."

THE WORD OF GOD

Henry, what book is that you have in your hand?"

"It is the Bible, mother,"

"Oh, no, it cannot be, surely!"

"Why, yes it is—see!"

"And my little boy to treat so roughly the book containing God's holy word!"

Henry's face grew serious.

"Oh, I forgot!" he said, and went and laid the good book carefully away.

"Try and not forget again, my son. If you treat this book so lightly now, you may, when you become a man, as lightly esteem its holy truths; and then you could never live in heaven with the angels. No one goes to heaven who does not love and reverence the Word of God, which is holy in every jot and tittle."

HARSH WORDS AND KIND WORDS

William Baker, and his brother Thomas and sister Ellen, were playing on the green lawn in front of their mother's door, when a lad named Henry Green came along the road, and seeing the children enjoying themselves, opened the gate and came in. He was rather an ill-natured boy, and generally took more pleasure in teasing and annoying others, than in being happy with them. When William saw him coming in through the gate, he called to him and said, in a harsh way,

"You may just clear out, Henry Green, and go about your business! We don't want you here."

But Henry did not in the least regard what William said. He came directly forward, and joined in the sport as freely as if he had been invited instead of repulsed. In a little while he began to pull Ellen about rudely, and to push Thomas, so as nearly to throw them down upon the grass.

"Go home, Henry Green! Nobody sent for you! Nobody wants you here!" said William Baker, in quite an angry tone.

It was of no use, however. William might as well have spoken to the wind. His words were entirely unheeded by Henry, whose conduct became ruder and more offensive.

Mrs Baker, who sat at the window, saw and heard all that was passing. As soon as she could catch the eye of her excited son, she beckoned him to come to her, which he promptly did.

"Try kind words on him," she said; "you will find them more powerful than harsh words. You spoke very harshly to Henry when he came in, and I was sorry to hear it."

"It won't do any good, mother. He's a rude, bad boy, and I wish he would stay at home. Won't you make him go home?"

"First go and speak to him in a gentler way than you did just now. Try to subdue him with kindness."

William felt that he had been wrong in letting his angry feelings express themselves in angry words. So he left his mother and went down upon the lawn, where Henry was amusing himself by trying to trip the children with a long stick, as they ran about on the green.

"Henry," he said, cheerfully and pleasantly, "if you were fishing in the river, and I were to come and throw stones in where your line fell, and scare away all the fish, would you like it?"

"No, I should not," the lad replied.

"It wouldn't be kind in me?"

"No, of course it wouldn't."

"Well, now, Henry," William tried to smile and to speak very pleasantly, "we are playing here and trying to enjoy ourselves. Is it right for you to come and interrupt us by tripping our feet, pulling us about, and pushing us down? I am sure you will not think so if you reflect a moment. So don't do it any more, Henry."

"No, I will not," replied Henry, promptly. "I am sorry that I disturbed you. I didn't think what I was doing. And now I remember, father told me not to stay, and I must run home."

So Henry Green went quickly away, and the children were left to enjoy themselves.

"Didn't I tell you that kind words were more powerful than harsh words, William?" said his mother, after Henry had gone away; "when we speak harshly to our fellows, we arouse their angry feelings, and then evil spirits have power over them; but when we speak kindly, we affect them with gentleness, and good spirits flow into this latter state, and excite in them better thoughts and intentions. How quickly Henry changed, when you changed your manner and the character of your language. Do not forget this, my son. Do not forget, that kind words have double the power of harsh ones."



THE HERONS AND THE HERRINGS.

THE HERONS AND THE HERRINGS

A FABLE

A Heron once came—I can scarcely tell why—
To the court of his cousins, the fishes,
With despatches, so heavy he scarcely could fly,
And his bosom brimfull of good wishes.

He wished the poor Herrings no harm, he said,
Though there seemed to be cause for suspicion;
His government wished to convert them, instead,
And this was the end of his mission.

The Herrings replied, and were civil enough,
Though a little inclined to be witty:
"We know we are heathenish, savage, and rough,
And are greatly obliged for your pity.

"But your plan of conversion we beg to decline,
With all due respect for your nation;
No doubt it would tend to exalt and refine,
Yet we fear it would check respiration."

The Heron returned to his peers in disdain,
And told how their love was requited.
"Poor creatures!" they said, "shall we let them remain
So ignorant, blind, and benighted?"

Then soon on a crusade of love and good-will
The Herons in council decided;
And they flew, every one that could boast a long bill,
To the beach where the Herrings resided.

So the tribe were soon converts from ocean to air,
Though liking not much the diversion,
And wishing at least they had time to prepare
For so novel a mode of conversion.

A sensible child will discover with ease
The point of the tale I've related—
A blockhead could not, let me say what I please—
Then why need my MORAL be stated?

EARLY SPRING FLOWERS

Of all the amusements of my childhood, I can think of none which I loved so much as rambling in the woods and meadows among the flowers. What a rich treat it used to be, just after the earth had thrown aside its white mantle, and begun to be clothed in its summer dress, to get permission to spend a whole Saturday afternoon in the woods with my brother and sister. Oh, how delighted we all were, when we found the first wild flowers of spring! Let me see. What flowers show their pretty faces the earliest? Do you remember, young friend? Perhaps you have always lived in the city, and have never made their acquaintance. But if you have ever seen them, blushing in their native haunts, I am sure you must remember how they look, and what their names are. I cannot see how any body can forget them, they are so beautiful and lovely.

One of the earliest flowers of spring, and one which grew in the woods only a few rods from my father's door, near the stream that turned my miniature water-wheels, is the *Trailing Arbutus*. Often you may find this plant unfolding its delicate blossoms before the snow has left the ground. That, in our northern latitudes, is usually among the first flowers in blossom. Soon after she appears, you may see one and perhaps two different species of the *Anemone*. One, especially—the *Anemone Thalictroides*, as it used to be called in botany, though it is now the *Thalictrum Anemonoides*, I believe—is among the fairest of all these flowers of spring. She has a blossom as white as snow. The *Anemone Nemrosa* is almost as fair, too, though not quite, I think. You can sometimes see them both smiling side by side, early in the month of May, nodding gracefully at each other, and smiling as if they were very happy. It does not require much imagination to fancy they are conversing together; and, indeed, I would quite as soon believe that flowers could talk, as I would believe those stories about the fairies that children hear sometimes.

There is another beautiful flower which makes her appearance very early—the *Spring Beauty*, or *Claytonia Virginica*. She is usually found in the same locations with the *Anemone*. Then there is the *Liver Leaf*. Did you ever find that, little girl? Very possibly you have not taken a ramble early enough in the spring to see her. She makes her visit frequently in the latter part of April, and she does not stay long. But after her flower has faded and fallen, there may be seen a few deeply notched and curious leaves, to mark the spot where she bloomed so sweetly.

The *Blood Root*, too, will make her visit, and go away again, if you delay your ramble in the woods till the first of May. The blossom of the *Blood Root* is a very delicate white. Hundreds of exotic flowers are cultivated in our gardens, and very much admired, that are not half so pretty as this. The leaves that appear before the plant is in blossom, are oval, a little like those of the *Adder's Tongue*, which is in flower somewhat later, and like those of one species of the *Solomon's Seal*—the *Convallaria Bifolia*. But when the flower of the *Blood Root* appears, you see quite a different kind of leaf, so that even close observers of wild flowers are sometimes deceived, and think that their early leaves belong to some other plant.

Every body who has been at all familiar with the forest and meadows in the spring, knows the *Violet*. There are a good many sisters in this charming family, but none, perhaps, in our latitude, that are more beautiful than the *Viola Rotundifolia*, or *Yellow Violet*, with roundish leaves, lying close to the ground. The *Blue Violet*, too, appears soon after, and is perhaps equally pretty. I recollect distinctly where it used to grow near the little brook that ran through our meadow—a brook that many a time has served to turn my water-wheel. Oh, those days of miniature water-wheels, and kites, and wind-mills! how happy they were, and how I love to think of them now! By the way, have you ever read Miss Gould's poetical fable about the little child and the *Blue Violet*? I must recite a stanza or two of this poem, I think. The child speaks to the *Violet*, and says,

"Violet, violet, sparkling with dew,

Down in the meadow land, wild where you grew,
How did you come by the beautiful blue
 With which your soft petals unfold?
And how do you hold up your tender young head,
Where rude, sweeping winds rush along o'er your bed,
And dark, gloomy clouds, ranging over you, shed
 Their waters, so heavy and cold?

"No one has nursed you, or watched you an hour,
Or found you a place in the garden or bower;
And they cannot yield me so lovely a flower,
 As here I have found at my feet!

"Speak, my sweet violet, answer and tell,
How you have grown up and flourished so well,
And look so contented, where lonely you dwell,
 And we thus by accident meet?"

Then the Violet answers, and tells the child why it is so contented, and how it is able to hold up its head, and where its pretty blue petals come from. But I will not recite the remainder of the poem, for I am sure my readers do not need to be told who made the flowers, and who taught them to bloom so sweetly in their wild haunts.

The early flowers of spring! I loved them fondly when a child; but now I am a man, I love them still more. Shall I tell you why, dear child? There is something sad in the reason, and yet it is not all sadness. I had a sister—I *had* a sister. Ah! that tells the tale. I have no sister now! The dearest companion of my early rambles among the flowers—herself the fairest and sweetest of them all—has fallen before the scythe of Death. She has gone now to a world of perpetual spring, and the flowers she loved so well are blooming over her grave. She faded away in the early spring, and we laid her to rest where her mother had long been sleeping. By the side of the streamlet where we used to play in the sunny days of childhood, and where the Dandelion grew, and the Butter-cup, and the Violet—there is now the form of her I tenderly loved.

But my strain is sad—too sad. I will sing, and be cheerful.

Alas! how soon
The things of earth we love most fondly perish!
Why died the flower our hearts had learned to cherish?
 Why, ere 'twas noon?

I cannot tell—
But though the grave be that loved sister's dwelling,
And though my heart e'en now with grief is swelling,
 I know 'tis well.

'Tis well with the—
'Tis well with thee, thou lone and silent sleeper!
'Tis well, though thou hast left me here a weeper
 Awhile to be.

'Tis well for me—

'Tis well; my home, since thou art gone, is dearer—
The grave is welcome, if it bring me nearer
To heaven and thee.

I'll not repine—
No, blest one; thou art happier than thy brother:
I'll think of thee, as with thy angel-mother,
Sweet sister mine.

Still would I share
Thy love, and meet thee where the flowers are springing,
Where the wild bird his joyous note is singing—
Come to me there.

Oh! come again,
At the still hour, the holy hour of even,
Ere one pale star has gemmed the vault of heaven;
Come to me then.



TEMPTATION RESISTED.

TEMPTATION RESISTED

Charles Murray left home, with his books in his satchel, for school. Before starting, he kissed his little sister, and patted Juno on the head, and as he went singing away, he felt as happy as any little boy could wish to feel. Charles was a good-tempered lad, but he had the fault common to a great many boys, that of being tempted and enticed by others to do things which he knew to be contrary to the wishes of his parents. Such acts never made him feel any happier; for the fear that his disobedience would be found out, and the consciousness of having done wrong, were far from being pleasant companions.

On the present occasion, as he walked briskly in the direction of the school, he repeated over his lessons in his mind, and was intent upon having them so perfect as to be able to repeat every word. He had gone nearly half the distance, and was still thinking over his lessons, when he stopped suddenly, as a voice called out,

"Halloo, Charley!"

Turning in the direction from which the voice came, he saw Archy Benton, with his school basket in his hand; but he was going from, instead of in the direction of the school.

"Where are you going, Archy?" asked Charles, calling out to him.

"Into the woods, for chestnuts."

"Ain't you going to school, to-day?"

"No, indeed. There was a sharp frost last night, and Uncle John says the wind will rattle down the chestnuts like hail."

"Did your father say you might go?"

"No, indeed. I asked him, but he said I couldn't go until Saturday. But the hogs are in the woods, and will eat the chestnuts all up, before Saturday. So I am going to-day. Come, go along, won't you? It is such a fine day, and the ground will be covered with chestnuts. We can get home at the usual time, and no one will suspect that we were not at school."

"I should like to go, very well," said Charley; "but I know father will be greatly displeased, if he finds it out, and I am afraid he will get to know it, in some way."

"How could he get to know it? Isn't he at his store all the time?"

"But he might think to ask me if I was at school. And I never will tell a lie."

"You could say yes, and not tell a lie, either," returned Archy. "You were at school yesterday."

"No, I couldn't. A lie, father says, is in the intent to deceive. He would, of course, mean to ask whether I was at school to-day, and if I said yes, I would tell a lie."

"It isn't so clear to me that you would. At any rate, I don't see such great harm in a little fib. It doesn't hurt any body."

"Father says a falsehood hurts a boy a great deal more than he thinks for. And one day he showed me in the Bible where liars were classed with murderers, and other wicked spirits, in hell. I can't tell a lie, Archy."

"There won't be any need of your doing so," urged Archy; "for I am sure he will never think to ask you about it. Why should he?"

"I don't know. But whenever I have been doing any thing wrong, he is sure to begin to question me, and lead me on until I betray the secret of my fault."

"Never mind. Come and go with me. It is such a fine day. We shan't have another like it. It will rain on Saturday, I'll bet any thing. So come along, now, and let us have a day in the woods, while we can."

Charles was very strongly tempted. When he thought of the confinement of school, and then of the freedom of a day in the woods, he felt much inclined to go with Archy.

"Come along," said Archy, as Charles stood balancing the matter in his mind. And he took hold of his arm, and drew him in a direction opposite from the school. "Come! you are just the boy I want. I was thinking about you the moment before I saw you."

The temptation to Charles was very strong. "I don't believe I will be found out," he said to himself; "and it is such a pleasant day to go into the woods!"

Still he held back, and thought of his father's displeasure if he should discover that he had played the truant. The word "truant," that he repeated mentally, decided the matter in his mind, and he exclaimed, in a loud and decided voice, as he dragged away from the hand of Archy, that had still retained its hold on his arm, "I've never played truant yet, and I don't think I ever will. Father says he never played truant when he was a boy; and I'd like to say the same thing when I get to be a man."

"Nonsense, Charley! come, go with me," urged Archy.

But Charles Murray's mind was made up not to play the truant. So he started off for school, saying, as he did so—

"No, I can't go, Archy; and if I were you, I would wait until Saturday. You will enjoy it so much better when you have your fathers consent. It always takes away more than half the pleasure of any enjoyment to think that it is obtained at the cost of disobedience. Come! go to school with me now, and I will go into the woods with you on Saturday."

"No, I can't wait until Saturday. I'm sure it will rain by that time; and if it don't, the hogs will eat up every nut that has fallen before that time."

"There'll be plenty left on the trees, if they do. It's as fine sport to knock them down as to pick them up."

But Archy's purpose was settled, and nothing that Charles Murray could say had any influence with him. So the boys parted, the one for his school, and the other for a stolen holiday in the woods.

The moment Charles was alone again, he felt no longer any desire to go with Archy. He had successfully resisted the temptation, and the allurements were gone. But even for listening to temptation he had some small punishment, for he was late to school by nearly ten minutes, and had not his lessons as perfect as usual, for which the teacher felt called upon to reprimand him. But this was soon forgotten; and he was so good a boy through the whole day, and studied all his lessons so diligently, that when evening came, the teacher, who had not forgotten the reprimand, said to him:

"You have been the best boy in the school to-day, Charles. To-morrow morning try and come in time, and be sure that your lessons are all well committed to memory."

Charles felt very light and cheerful as he went running, skipping, and singing homeward. His day had been well spent, and happiness was his reward. When he came in sight of home, there was no dread of meeting his father and mother, such as he would have felt if he had played the truant. Every thing looked bright and pleasant, and when Juno came bounding out to meet him, he couldn't help hugging the favorite dog in the joy he felt at seeing her.

When Charles met his mother, she looked at him with a more earnest and affectionate gaze than usual. And then the boy noticed that her countenance became serious.

"Ain't you well, mother?" asked Charles.

"Yes, my dear, I am very well," she replied; "but I saw something an hour ago which has made me feel sad. Archy Benton was brought home from the woods this afternoon, where he had gone for chestnuts, instead of going to school, as he should have done, dreadfully hurt. He had fallen from a tree. Both his arms are broken, and the doctor fears that he has received some inward injury that may cause his death."

Charles turned pale, when his mother said this.

"Boys rarely get hurt, except when they are acting disobediently, or doing some harm to others," remarked Mrs Murray. "If Archy had gone to school, this dreadful accident would not have happened. His father told him that he might go for chestnuts on Saturday, and if he had waited until then, I am

sure he might have gone into the woods and received no harm, for all who do right are protected from evil."

"He tried to persuade me to go with him," said Charles, "and I was strongly tempted to do so. But I resisted the temptation, and have felt glad about it ever since."

Mrs Murray took her son's hand, and pressing it hard, said, with much feeling,

"How rejoiced I am that you were able to resist his persuasions to do wrong. Even if you had not been hurt yourself, the injury received by Archy would have discovered to us that you were with him, and then how unhappy your father and I would have been I cannot tell. And you would have been unhappy, too. Ah! my son, there is only one true course for all of us, and that is, to do right. Every deviation from this path brings trouble. An act of a moment may make us wretched for days, weeks, months, or perhaps years. It will be a long, long time before Archy is free from pain of body or mind—it may be that he will never recover. Think how miserable his parents must feel; and all because of this single act of disobedience."

We cannot say how often Charles said to himself, that evening and the next day, when he thought of Archy, "Oh, how glad I am that I did not go with him!"

When Saturday came, the father and mother of Charles Murray gave him permission to go into the woods for chestnuts. Two or three other boys, who were his school companions, likewise received liberty to go; and they joined Charles, and altogether made a pleasant party. It did not rain, nor had the hogs eaten up all the nuts, for the lads found plenty under the tall old trees, and in a few hours filled their bags and baskets. Charles said, when he came home, that he had never enjoyed himself better, and was so glad that he had not been tempted to go with Archy Benton.

It was a lesson he never afterward forgot. If he was tempted to do what he knew was wrong, he thought of Archy's day in the woods, and the tempter instantly left him. The boy who had been so badly hurt, did not die, as the doctor feared; but he suffered great pain, and was ill for a long time.



EVENING PRAYER.

EVENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father! Through the day,
Have we wandered from thy way?
Have our thoughts to error turned?
Has within us evil burned?

Heavenly Father! Oh, remove
Evil thoughts and evil love!
Give us truth our minds to fill;
Give us strength to do thy will.

Often we are led astray
From the true and righteous way;
But, we humbly pray to thee,
From the tempter keep us free.

Heavenly Father! While we sleep,
Angel watchers round us keep.
When the morning breaks, may we,
Better, wiser children be.



STRETCHING THE TRUTH.

STRETCHING THE TRUTH

It is a very bad habit, this stretching the truth, as one does a piece of India rubber; and the worst of it is, that when any body forms the habit, there is no telling how much it will grow upon him.

There is Jack Weaver, for instance. He is a sailor all over, to be sure—an "old salt," as he would call himself. But that does not confer upon him any license to spin such yarns as he does, to his young shipmates on the forward deck. He has cruised half a dozen years after whales, in the Pacific ocean, and, of course, has seen some sights that are worth speaking of. But that is no reason why he should fill the head of that young fellow sitting on a coil of rope with a hundred cock-and-bull stories, that have scarcely a word of truth in them, from beginning to end. Why, he don't pretend to tell stories without stretching the truth.

I know some boys, too, who seem to find it very difficult to relate any incident as it took place. They are so much in the habit of stretching the truth, in fact, that those who are acquainted with them seldom believe more than half of one of their stories. These boys, however, have not the slightest intention, when they are pulling out a foot into a yard, of doing any thing wrong. Very possibly they think they are telling a pretty straight story. Habits are strong, you know—especially bad habits. Just look at Selden Mason, one of the best-natured boys I ever saw, and who has not got an enemy among all his school-mates; it is wonderful what a truth-stretcher he has got to be. Every boy shakes his head, when he hears a great story, and says it sounds like one of Selden's yarns. And yet he is so particular and minute in relating any thing, sometimes, that one who did not know him would not suspect him of treating the truth so badly. His apparent sincerity reminds me of an anecdote related of another boy, who had this habit worse than Selden has, I should think. The boy remarked that his father once killed ninety-nine crows at a single shot! He was asked why he did not say a hundred, and have done with it. The fellow was indignant. "Do you think I would tell a lie for one crow?" said he!

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