

# THE SNOW DROP;

OR,

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### THE LOST BALL.

[TRANSLATED (FOR THE SNOW DROP) FROM THE FRENCH.]

PAUL and VIRGINIA, the children of Mr. Arton, who held a high rank among the lawyers of Paris, were distinguished for the love which they bore each other. They were always together, had the same plays, the same studies, and the same pleasures. Everywhere one might recognize the brother and sister, whether with their parents, or with the servant who always attended them.

Among the many talents which they possessed, they greatly excelled in dancing, and, at all the little parties to which their friends invited them, they were distinguished for their grace and beauty, as well as their amiability.

One day they were invited to a very brilliant fancy ball, which was to be given in the street where they lived, and not far from their house. They were highly delighted, and spent many hours each day in arranging their dress, and practicing their steps. At last, the

long wished for day arrived, when Fate, or, as we should say, Providence, who often deranges the most nicely conceived projects, suddenly interposed. That very day they received the news of the death of a distant relative of Mr. Arton. This, of course, prevented all further thought of the ball, for though he had no claim either to their respect or esteem, yet it was right that in so slight a thing they should conform to the usages of the society.

Virginia felt the disappointment more than her brother, and could not help showing it every moment. Paul, on the contrary, determined not to give way to his feelings, and therefore asked his father's permission to go with his sister and spend the day at his country seat, at a short distance from Paris. He consented, ordered a carriage, and confided them to the care of a trusty domestic. They spent the day very pleasantly among the young people of the village, and took a long walk in the woods of Vincennes, which were not far from the house of Mr. Arton. The evening they passed in the saloon with a large party of their friends, and, at nine o'clock, got into the carriage to return home.

On passing the hotel where the ball took place, they saw the lamps, and heard the sound of the music and the dancers. "We should have been there, now," said Virginia, "if this relative had not died; we might almost think he did it on purpose to deprive us of the ball. What a pretty entrée we should have made together! But we need no longer think of it, my brother."

"That pleasure is reserved for another time, my sister," answered Paul.

As they finished these words they perceived near

the door an old mendicant whose figure was hidden under a large hat, and who appeared to be poor and destitute.

He came and asked help from them in so sad and touching a tone, that Paul, moved with pity, said to his sister: "See what a contrast! Within, they amuse themselves, they dance and are happy, whilst at the door old age is overcome with misery, cold and hunger."

"It gives me much pain to see this poor beggar," replied Virginia.

"Well, my sister, an idea strikes me which may recompense us for the loss of the ball. Let us calculate what it would have cost to appear there, and employ this money to aid and new clothe this poor old man."

"With all my heart," replied Virginia. "To complete our design, we must have had a pair of new slippers and white gloves, you would have required a waistcoat richly embroidered; and I, a shirt of India muslin, with a tunic of crimson velvet; all this would have cost at least forty francs."

"Let us give this to the mendicant, whose supplicating voice draws from us so much pity, he can employ it to clothe himself, and relieve his misery, and, by this means, our money will give us a lasting happiness. Here it is," said Paul, "bestow it with your own hand, and it will give him still more pleasure."

Virginia took the piece of gold and put it into the old man's hand, who pressed hers warmly in token of her gratitude. The brother and sister, happy in performing a good action, enjoined secrecy upon the servant, and returned home, where they found their mother alone, their father being absent on important business.

Some time after Paul and Virginia expressed their regrets at not being present at the ball which went off in the most brilliant and magnificent manner. Mr. Arton told them that to make up for their disappointment he would permit them to give a masked ball at home, to which they could invite all their friends, and appear in the costumes which they so much regretted. This news filled Paul and his sister with joy, and they immediately commenced their preparations, and borrowed forty francs from their mother to make up the sum they had given to the old man.

At last the great day arrived. The company was numerous, and Mrs. Arton, to do the honours of her house, was the only one who did not wear a fancy dress.

After all the guests had arrived, Paul and Virginia entered the room together in the costume they had chosen. Every one was delighted with their loveliness, and the ease and grace with which they danced together; the figures they had learned added still more to the charm.

At the moment that the brother and sister, out of breath, sat down, they in their turn experienced the most agreeable surprise on seeing enter the ball-room a mask under the figure of an old negro overcome with fatigue, who approached them and in most touching language began to express his thanks for the generous help they had granted him.

"What do you wish to say, old man," asked Paul, "I am ignorant as well as my sister;—what help?"

"Oh! I never forget a favour, replied the masked person, seizing the hand of the young girl and raising it to his lips.

"Explain yourself," said Virginia; "Paul is right;

neither he nor I have ever done any thing for you, you certainly deceive yourself."

"Oh! I have good eyes," replied the masked person; "you both met me the other evening, dying with cold and hunger; I asked charity, you immediately gave me a piece of gold, which I will always keep. Oh! always." Finishing these words the unknown drew from his gir6le a gold piece of forty francs, which he kissed and contemplated with great pleasure.

Paul and Virginia, in surprise, looked at each other without speaking. They then took the old man aside, and tried to recognize him. The unknown could no longer contain himself; his emotion prevented him from disguising his voice and Paul and Virginia recognized their father! Unmasking himself, he clasped his two children to his heart, and acknowledged that, wishing to prove whether they really possessed the good feelings which they expressed, it was he who had presented himself to them in the dress of a beggar, at the door of the hotel.

All the assembly being informed of what had taken place, congratulated Mr. Arton on the proof he had received of his children's goodness. Each then unmasked himself, and hastened to lavish praises and compliments on Paul and Virginia, who overcome with joy, exclaimed, "Oh! we are well repaid for the "Lost Ball."

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"He is a wise man who learns from every one; he is powerful who governs his passions; and he is rich who is content."

## TRIALS OF A FAMILY OF REDBREASTS.

A LADY has furnished me with the following striking instance of maternal affection in a redbreast that had built in some ivy against a wall in a garden at Whitburn, near Sunderland, in April, 1839. The bird was setting upon four eggs when the gardener one day trimmed the ivy so close with his shears as almost to destroy the nest; in consequence of which the eggs were precipitated to the ground. They lay there till observed by the lady shortly afterwards, who was attracted to the spot by the parent bird. It was at first thought that to restore them to the nest would be useless. The attempt however was made; the eggs, which were nearly cold, were picked up, and placed back again in the nest, after it had been repaired and put together again as well as was possible. They had not been returned to their former situation five minutes when the bird came, and again took charge of them, and in two days they were hatched: the infant brood being from that time, of course, objects of daily interest and observation.—Great was the dismay of the lady, some days afterwards, at finding all the little ones upon the ground, stiff and cold, having fallen through a fracture in the patched nest, which was not sufficiently strong to keep together. She took them up, and perceiving a slight movement in one of them carried them into the house, where, partly by the warmth of the hand, and partly by the influence of a fire to which they were held, they all gradually recovered. They were then again placed in the nest, which was further patched with a piece of drugget, fastened into the fracture through which they had fallen. They were doomed, however, to go through

more trials : for it happened some nights after, there was a heavy rain, which so completely soaked the nest, and the druggot which had been placed in it as a lining, that the young ones were found in it the following morning almost drowned, and to appearance lifeless. They were again brought to the fire, and thoroughly dried ; after which they were placed in the empty nest of another bird that was substituted for the old one, and fixed in a currantbush, a few yards from the wall where the ivy was. The young ones, which were half fledged when they got this wetting, still continued to receive the attentions of their parent ; and in due time they were all safely reared, and flew away. It is stated, that it was very curious to observe the familiarity of the old birds during the whole course of these proceedings : they always sat close by, and never seemed the least alarmed at the liberties taken with their progeny.

—*Rev. L. Jenyn's Observation on Natural History.*

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THE CHILD'S THOUGHTS.

“ Were I the sun”—“What then my child ?  
Were you the sun, what then ?”  
“ I would not shine, so warm and mild,  
Upon such wicked men !  
I'd wither up their budding grain  
When just it leaves the earth,  
And they should sow their seed in vain,  
For never, never would I deign  
To warm it into birth.

"But on the harvest of the good,  
 I'd send both heat and dew,  
 Till every young and callow bud  
 To golden fruitage grew.  
 The flowers should spring around his door,  
 Beneath my mellow rays,  
 And if he were despised and poor,  
 I'd fill with richest fruit his store,  
 And bless him all his days.

"Were I the rain"—"What then my child?  
 Were you the rain, what then?"  
 "I ne'er would fall, so warm and mild,  
 Upon such wicked men,  
 I'd flood their fields till not a root  
 Could find a spot to cling—  
 And every young and tender shoot  
 Should float before the careless foot,  
 A drenched and worthless thing."

"Dear child, not so doth God bestow  
 His blessings on mankind;  
 He treats alike both friend and foe—  
*His love is unconfined.*  
 He sends his rain upon the just,  
 And on the unjust too;  
 The wicked in his love may trust,  
 Nor are they from his bounties thrust  
 For all the wrong they do.

"Yet, oh! my child, how keen must be  
 The pain in that man's heart,  
 To whom, with generous hand and free,  
 God doth his gifts impart;  
 Unless he strive, with earnest zeal,  
 To bless the human race,  
 And often at God's feet doth kneel,  
 To thank him for his daily weal,  
 And praise him for his grace!"

## LETTERS TO A SCHOOL-BOY.

NO. IV.

TO WALTER FROM HIS MOTHER.

YOUR letter of the 16th is before me, my beloved boy, and its reception gave us much pleasure, for it was on the whole, more satisfactory than several of those preceding. And since composition is one of the accomplishments you are endeavouring to acquire, I will here caution you against repeating the same word or phrase, unnecessarily often.

You know there are many synonymous words (that is words conveying the same meaning) in the language, and you should endeavour to vary your expressions, while you make choice of the most proper and elegant that occur to you, and, when you have finished, always read over what you have written, that if there occur any errors or repetitions you may correct them.

And pray do not follow the ill example of penmanship that I set you—remember it is easier to form a good habit than to correct a bad one, and your handwriting is not now, certainly, what it should be. You once gave promise of a fair and beautiful hand, which in all professions is a desirable attainment.

I do not expect your aunt C. to pass the remainder of the summer with me, and, although her company would certainly give me pleasure, I am not, as you seem to think, often lonely. Books, work, writing to those I love, walking, driving, seeing my friends and acquaintances, and improving what opportunities I find of being useful in the world, together with private and domestic duties, fill up my time so agreeably and com-

pletely, that it is seldom indeed an hour hangs heavily upon me, though tender thoughts and anxious solicitude for my dear son, mingle with all the occupations and amusements of life, and my last and earliest waking breath ascends in petitioning God that He would bless him, and make him good, that he may be happy.

I read the other day some sweet lines, which pleased me so much that I have copied them for you, my love; I am sure you will like them; and may the advice they contain not be disregarded by you.

“Thou wak’st from happy sleep to play  
With bounding heart, my boy!  
Before thee is a long bright day  
Of summer and of joy.

Thou hast no heavy thought or dream  
To cloud thy fearless eye;  
Long be it thus; life’s early stream  
Should still reflect the sky!

Yet ere the cares of life lie dim  
On the young spirit’s wings—  
Now in thy morn forget not Him,  
From whom each pure thought springs!

So in thy onward vale of tears,  
Where’er thy path may be,  
When strength hath bowed to evil years,  
He will remember thee!”

You intimate that you have almost resolved to go to college, my dear Walter, and ask what we think of it, but you do not acquaint us with the motive that has so suddenly changed your decision. Now every thing depends upon that, and we trust you have been influenced by no puerile consideration in making so

important a choice. I beg you will inform us fully in your next, of the reasons which governed you, and whether you proposed it to your teacher, or he to you? If the former, what opinion he gave of the matter?

I trust you have weighed it well in your own mind, for it is but a very short time since you proposed to return home and commence a mercantile life in one year. But whatever you decide upon, your father is anxious that you should cultivate with diligence the French and Spanish; to the latter language he is particularly partial, and considers both, desirable accomplishments either for a scholar or a merchant.

For my part, however, I am quite afraid your poor head will get terribly confused by studying so many languages at once.—Tell me,—do they ever get mixed in your mind so as to perplex you? Or do they range themselves distinctly in your thoughts! Do you think you could understand Don Quixotte in Spanish, so as to read it with pleasure and tolerable ease?

At all events we shall await your next letter with great impatience, we wish so much to know what has inclined you to complete your education at college, and whether you hope to make a distinguished figure in one of the learned professions. Nothing less than that, could induce me to give you up for four or five years longer, as, indeed, my dear boy, your absence is sometimes very painful to me. But I comfort myself with thinking that our self-denial will procure for you the best fortune a young man can inherit, namely, a good education, good principles, and good habits.

These with a practical observance of the great command to love God with all your heart, and to do to

others as you would have them do to you, will ensure you an honorable position in this life, and endless happiness in the next. And to attain such objects for our beloved son, the sacrifice is cheerfully made.

I cannot tell you with what pleasure I am already looking forward to next Christmas, when I hope again to embrace you, and participate with you the blessings a kind providence has so liberally bestowed upon us. May He restore you in health and safety to the arms of your affectionate

MOTHER.

#### AN EXTRAORDINARY WOMAN.

MISS MARY CHAMBERS, of Nottingham, who died in her 71st year, was a remarkable instance of the wonder-working powers of persevering application under great natural disadvantages. Deprived of sight from the age of two years, she nevertheless was enabled by close study and unremitting efforts to acquire a thorough knowledge of classical literature, being well versed in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, and was also skilled in arithmetic, geography, and the use of the globes. For upwards of thirty years she had conducted a school in Nottingham, and was an inestimable friend to the blind, having taught, gratuitously, very many blind children, and assisted in founding an institution in the town for such, the benefits of which have been gratefully acknowledged by numerous individuals of that afflicted class.

“Laziness grows upon people ; it begins in cobwebs, and ends in iron chains.”

## PERSEVERANCE.

We copy the following from a book for children of not very recent date, which pleased us as a lively instance of animal sagacity, and it may serve to recommend to others the advantages of perseverance.

“ In a remote field stood a large tulip tree, apparently of a century’s growth, and one of the most gigantic of this species of tree. It looked like the father of the surrounding forest. A single tree of huge dimensions, standing alone, is a sublime object. On the top of the tree, for years, an old eagle, commonly called the Fishing Eagle, had built her nest every year, and unmolested raised her young. What is remarkable, this tree stood full ten miles from the sea shore. It had long been known as the “ Old Eagle Tree.” On a warm sunny day, the workmen were hoeing corn in an adjoining field. At a certain hour of the day, the old eagle was known to set off for the sea-side, to gather food for her young. As she this day returned with a large fish in her claws, the workmen surrounded the tree, and by yelling and hooting, and throwing stones, so scared the poor bird, that she dropped the fish, and they carried it off in triumph. The men soon dispersed; but Joseph sat down under a bush near by to watch, and to bestow unavailing pity. The bird soon returned without food. The eaglets at once set up a cry for food, so shrill, so clear, and so clamorous, that the boy was greatly moved. The parent bird seemed to try to soothe them; but their appetites were too keen, and it was all in vain. She then perched herself on a limb near them, and looked down into the nest with a look that seemed to say, “ I know not what to do next.”

But her indecision was momentary; again she poised herself, uttered one or two sharp notes, as if telling them to "lie still," balanced her body, spread her wings, and was away again for the sea. Joseph now determined to see the result. His eyes followed her, till she grew small, smaller, a mere speck in the sky; and then disappeared. She was gone nearly two hours, about double her usual time for a voyage; when she again returned on a slow, weary wing, flying uncommonly low, in order to have a heavier atmosphere to sustain her, with another fish in her talons. On nearing the field, she made a circuit around it to see if her enemies were again there. Finding the coast clear, she once more reached her tree, drooping, faint and weary, and evidently nearly exhausted. Again the eaglets set up their cry, which was soon hushed by the distribution of a dinner such as—save the cooking—a king might admire. "Glorious bird," cried the boy in extasy, and aloud, "what a spirit! others can sing more sweetly—others can scream more loudly,—but what other bird, when persecuted and robbed—when weary—when discouraged—when so far from the sea, would do what thou hast done! I will learn a lesson from thee to-day. I will never forget hereafter, that when the spirit is determined it can do almost anything. Others would have drooped the head, and mourned over the cruelty of man; and sighed over the wants of the nestlings; but thou, by at once recovering the loss, hast forgotten all. I will learn of thee, noble bird! I will remember this. I will set my mark high. I will try to do something, and to be something in the world; *and I will never yield to discouragements.*"

## THE DYING CHILD.

Dearest mother, God is calling  
For his worn and weary child;  
Long I've lain His message waiting,  
Now I hear it sweet and mild.

Mother dearest, do not mourn me,  
Hush thy sobs, and weepings vain,  
Calm and still, and happy am I,  
Now I'm free from scorching pain.

And I hear such kindly voices,  
Loving faces too I see  
All around me, gently hovering,  
Waiting it would seem for me.

How I long to gather near them,  
To be one among that throng,  
Joining their far swelling anthem,  
With my weak and feeble song.

Mother dear, I go to Jesus,  
Him who said to children "come!"  
He himself his child is beckoning  
To that fair and glorious home.

And I pant in joy to meet Him,  
Round his form to hover near;  
Here my heart would cease its beatings  
Here my soul would know no fear.

Mother dearest, gaze not on me  
With that sad and mournful eye;  
Prisoner long in restless bondage,  
Now my spirit yearns to fly.

Hark! again I hear the message,  
Mother dear, thy weeping cease;  
Now my soul shall burst its fetters,  
And my spirit be at peace.

## THE YOUNG MATHEMATICIAN.

BY MRS. GILMAN.

Laura Sinclair was an intelligent girl, studiously devoted to all her lessons except arithmetic.

"Oh! mother," she would exclaim, "this is arithmetic day—how I hate it!"

"My daughter, do not make use of such expressions," said the mother. "Nothing is wanting but attention and perseverance, to make that study as agreeable as any other. If you pass over a rule carelessly and say you understand it, from want of energy to learn it, you will continue ignorant of important principles. I speak with feeling on this subject, for when I went to school a fine arithmetician shared the same desk with me, and whenever I was perplexed by a difficult sum, instead of applying to my teacher for an explanation, I asked Amelia to do it for me. The consequence is, that even now I am obliged to refer to others in the most trifling calculations. I expect much assistance from your perseverance, dear Laura," continued she, affectionately, taking her hand.

Laura's eyes looked a good resolution, and she commenced the next day putting it in practice. Instead of being angry because she could not understand her figures, she tried to clear her brow to understand them better, and her tutor was surprised to find her mind rapidly opening to comprehend the most difficult rules. She now felt the pleasure of self-conquest, besides the enjoyment of her mother's approbation, and for many years steadily gave herself up to the several branches of mathematics.

Laura was the eldest of three children, who had been born to the luxuries of wealth. Mr. Sinclair was a merchant of great respectability, but in the height of his supposed riches, one of those failures took place which often occur in commercial transactions, and his affairs became suddenly involved. A nervous temperament and a delicate constitution, were sadly wrought on by this misfortune. Mr. Sinclair's mind, perplexed and harassed, seemed sinking under the weight of anxiety. Laura was at this period sixteen years of age; her mind was clear and vigorous, and seemed ready, like a young fawn, for its bound.

One cold autumnal evening, the children with their wild gambols were playing around the room, while Mr. Sinclair sat leaning his head upon his hand over a table covered with papers. Mrs. Sinclair was busily employed in sewing, and Laura, with her fingers between the pages of a book, sat gazing at her father. "Those children distract me," said Mr. Sinclair, in a sharp accent.

"Hush Robert; come here, Margaret," said Mrs. Sinclair gently; and she took one on her lap, and the other by her knee, and whispering to them a little story, calmed them to sleepiness, and then put them to bed.

When Mrs. Sinclair had left the room, Laura laid down her book and stood by her father.

"Don't disturb me, child," said he roughly; "my head aches." Then recollecting himself, he took her hand and continued, "do not feel hurt, my dear; my mind is perplexed by these complicated accounts."

"Father," said Laura, with a smile, "I think I can help you if you will let me try."

"You! my love," exclaimed her father; "why, these papers would puzzle a wiser head than yours."

"I do not wish to boast, father," said Laura, modestly, "but my teacher said today—" Laura hesitated.

"Well, what did he say?" asked Mr. Sinclair encouragingly.

"He said," answered Laura, blushing deeply, "that I was a quicker accountant than most men of business; and I do believe, father," continued she, earnestly, "that if you were to explain your papers to me, I could help you."

Mr. Sinclair smiled incredulously, but unwilling to check his daughter's wish for usefulness, he made some remarks and opened his ledger. Insensibly he found himself entering with her into the labyrinth of numbers. Mrs. Sinclair came in on tip-toe, and seated herself softly at the table to sew. The accounts became more and more complicated, but Mr. Sinclair seemed to gain energy under the clear quick eye of his child; her unexpected sympathy inspired him with new powers. Hour after hour passed away, and his spirits rose at every chime of the clock.

"Wife," said he suddenly, "if this girl gives me aid like this, I shall be in a new world to-morrow."

"My beloved child," said Mrs. Sinclair, pressing Laura's fresh cheek to her own.

Twelve o'clock struck before Laura left her father, when she commended herself to God and slept profoundly. The next morning, after seeking His blessing, she repaired to Mr. Sinclair, and sat by him, day after day, until his books were faithfully balanced.

"Father," said she, "you have tried me and find me worth something; let me keep your books until you can afford a responsible clerk, and give me a little salary to buy shells for my cabinet."

Mr. Sinclair accepted the proposition. Laura's cabinet increased in beauty, and the finished female hand-writing in his books and papers, was a subject of interest and curiosity to his mercantile friends.

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## LETTER FROM MARY TO HER BROTHER FRANK.

Boston, 25th June.

MY DEAR FRANK,—Do you remember how sad I felt last summer when you left me to go away on that long journey with uncle ——? and you told me then that my turn would come next. Well, a whole year nearly has past away—what a short year it has been!—and here am I, so far from home, in this beautiful city! I can hardly believe it—and how I do wish you were with me, dear Frank!

I have seen so many strange things, and enjoyed so much, that I really don't know where to begin to tell you about them; but as you crossed the beautiful Lake Champlain yourself, and were some time at Burlington, and saw everything worth seeing there, you may just step into the stage-coach with me, at that place, and we will travel along together on the road to Montpelier. Up hill and down hill! what glorious mountains, and what rich valleys, watered by sparkling streams, and adorned with neat farm-houses and pretty villages! They reminded me of some of

the stories of fairy-land, which we used to read together; and at every turn of the road, the scene shifted so suddenly, that I could almost fancy it was done by some magic wand!

But the most wonderful thing I saw, dear Frank, was the railroad, which is now making along this route, and it is worth a journey out here, just to see such an immense piece of work going on. I have heard people talk about the great labour and expense of making a railroad, but I could never have imagined what it was without looking at it, as I have now done. Why, our railroad to St. Johns over those level prairies, which papa says was a great work for Canada, and that to Lachine, too, seems like a child's play compared with this one, carried hundreds of miles through such mountains and over such valleys. You know a railroad is always made as straight as it can be through the country, to shorten the distance; but the old stage road winds along for convenience; so as we travelled on, every little while we would come across this railroad, filling up by our side, or crossing our path, and curious enough it was to see the men at work on it. Sometimes, when our road wound round the foot of a high mountain, we would see them high above us, digging out the solid rock, which they had blasted with gunpowder, and thus formed a pathway for the cars, hemmed in on each side, perhaps, by a mountain wall, rising many hundred feet in height. It was wonderful to see the huge fragments of rock scattered about—it seemed as if the Titans, which we used to learn about in our school mythology, had been at war again. In some places the road was hewn on the side of a mountain, and then you might look down

into the deep chasm and valleys so far beneath you, that the cattle feeding in them looked like the little dwarfed animals of a fairy-tale. Again, you would see the road passing over a tremendous ravine—it made one dizzy to look down into such a depth—and it is wonderful what a quantity of broken rock was brought from those excavated mountains to fill up the road to a proper level, and then huge quantities of sand were brought from the near hill-sides to cover it in preparation for the rails being laid.

Hundreds of poor Irish emigrants were laboring at this work, and as we saw them emptying their little loads of sand, they seemed to us like ants, busied on an ant hill, each carrying a grain of sand to build up its habitation. Papa said the comparison was a good one; and it showed us that untiring industry and perseverance could not fail to accomplish the most difficult undertakings.

The railroad is complete all the way from Montpelier to Boston, so we left the stage at the former place and took the cars. We passed through a beautiful country, and saw many pretty places; stopped a moment at Lowell, the great manufacturing place that you have heard so much about, but I will tell you more of it some other time, as we are going some day to visit it. Boston looked to me like a great over-grown city—it is so large compared with Montreal—and the fine streets and houses quite dazzled me; but we only stopped there to take another conveyance, and went directly to our kind friends at ——. Fancy us now, dear Frank, domesticated here for a time, and enjoying ourselves to our heart's content. I wish you were here to share our pleasure, and enjoy the novelties that attract our attention.

As you are a dear lover of flowers, I must tell you of the treat I enjoyed yesterday in visiting the annual exhibition of roses, at the Horticultural Rooms in Boston. Aunt H. kindly took me there; and such a magnificent display of this queen of flowers, I am sure could nowhere else be gathered together. As we stood at the door to receive admission tickets, the most delicious perfume was wafted to us; and as we ascended a flight of stairs leading to the exhibition room, the fragrance became almost overpowering. Now, imagine yourself standing at the entrance of a large apartment, filled with roses, and I will try to arrange them, so that you may have some distinct impression of the beautiful sight. In the centre of the room was a very long table, which seemed like one flush of roses; they were tastefully arranged, row above row, gradually narrowing on all sides, to the top, which was just broad enough to hold beautiful bouquets of all the garden flowers of the season, and many choice exotics; all these, remember, were of the finest kinds, cultivated with such care, that their size and colour were magnificent, and there was also a great variety of seedlings. But the roses, which I told you looked like a perfect bed, were of every hue, from pure white to darkest crimson, and on examination you found that this bed of roses, rising up like a pyramid, was composed of separate bunches, each kind tied together, and labelled; and the ends were inserted in small glass bottles filled with water, placed on the stand, and so thick together that nothing but the flowers could be seen, till you looked amongst them. It was a charming sight, I can tell you—I wished so much you were there to see it.

Besides this long table, there were quantities of roses disposed about the room, fancifully arranged on small tables, in baskets, &c., and amongst the finest kinds were many moss roses, with their lovely buds, both white and several shades of red. I never saw the white moss-rose before, and I do not think it is so handsome as the red. This was the third day of the exhibition, and the prize roses were withdrawn. I was so sorry not to see them. There were also some splendid dahlias exhibited. I wondered to see them so early in blossom, but aunt H. told me they were forced in green-houses, as were also many others of our garden flowers, particularly some very large verbenas. At one end of the room were a good many handsome exotic plants; and there were several curious air plants, the oddest looking things I ever saw, with such singular flowers, and some of them very pretty. The plants grew in pots filled with brick and charcoal, broken and mixed together, without any earth, and they required no other nourishment or moisture—the air was enough for them.

And now, dear Frank, I must tell you of another part of the exhibition, which, as you are a boy, you may perhaps like better than the flowers. On one side of this large room, the most delicious-looking fruits that you can imagine were exhibited. Such quantities of grapes and peaches—only fancy, grapes and peaches in June! I never saw so many grapes together in any place before, nor such fine ones. Why, some of the bunches, I am sure, were almost as large as those which the Israelites found in the land of Canaan, and which took two men to carry on a stick between them. There were both foreign and native grapes, the purple muscatel, the malaga, sweet water, &c., all in such fine order—one

was called the cannon-ball—such a big bunch! and the single grapes weighed an ounce each—so it was labelled. Then the peaches—how tempting they looked, with their soft downy cheeks, such a rich red and yellow, and what a delicious smell they had! These fruits were, of course, grown under glasses; and so were the oranges and lemons, which looked as fine as the imported ones; and there were figs, too, but not a great many. But there were quantities of strawberries, more kinds than I ever dreamed of—and I dare not mention the size of some of them—cherries, too, and some apples of last year's growth.

But I shall tire you out, dear Frank, if I keep on telling you all that I saw, and my letter is already longer perhaps than you will have patience to read. So I shall not add any more at present, but write again when I have any thing worth telling you. I hope soon to hear from you, for it seems a long time since I left home, though I have enjoyed myself so much. So please give my love to all, not forgetting the kitten and pet birds; and believe me, dear Frank, your affectionate sister,

MARY.

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GENTLE WORDS.

It is not much the world can give,  
 With all its subtle art,  
 And gold or gems are not the things  
 To satisfy the heart;  
 But oh! if those who cluster round  
 The altar and the hearth,  
 Have gentle words and loving smiles,  
 How beautiful is earth!

## THE BUCKWHEAT.

BY HANS C. ANDERSON.

IF, after a thunder-storm, you go into a field where buckwheat is growing, you will sometimes see that it looks quite black and singed—just as if a stream of flame had passed over it; and then the farmer says, “The lightning has done this.”

But how is it that the lightning does it? I will tell you what the sparrow told me, and the sparrow heard it from an old willow-tree that stood in a field of buckwheat, and is still standing there. It is a large and quite venerable willow, but old and wrinkled, and is cleft from top to bottom; and out of the clefts grow blackberry-bushes and grass. The tree bends forward, and the branches almost reach the ground—it looks like long green hair hanging down. In all the fields around grain was growing; rye, buckwheat, and oats—yes, beautiful oats that look, when ripe, like a whole sea of little golden canaries sitting on a bough. The grain stood there in such blessed fulness; and the heavier it was, the lower it bowed in pious humility.

A field of buckwheat was there too, and it lay just before the old willow-tree. But the buckwheat bowed not down as did the other grain; stiff and proud, there it stood.

“I am quite as rich as the ear of corn,” it said, “and besides I am much more beautiful; my flowers are as lovely as the blossom of the apple-tree; it is quite a pleasure to look at me! Did you ever see any thing more splendid than we are, old willow-tree?”

And the willow nodded, as though he would say, “Yes, certainly I have.”

But the buckwheat was puffed up with pride, and said: "The stupid tree! he is so old that grass is growing over his hody!"

Now, a dreadful thunder-storm drew near; all the flowers of the field folded their leaves, or bowed their heads, while the tempest passed; but the buckwheat in his pride stood quite erect.

"Bow thy head as we do," said the flowers.

"I shall do no such thing," said the buckwheat.

"Bow thy head as we do," said the corn; "the spirit of the storm is about to rush by. He hath wings which reach from the clouds unto the earth; he will dash thee down before thou hast time to implore him to be merciful!"

"No, I will not bend," said the buckwheat.

"Close thy flowers and bend down thy leaves," said the old willow-tree. "Look not into the glare of the lightning when the cloud bursts; men, even, dare not do that, for in the lightning one seeth into God's own heaven, and *that* sight is enough to dazzle even man; how would it fare with us, mere plants of the earth, if we dared to do it? We are much less!"

"So much less!" said the buckwheat; "now just for that I *will* gaze into God's own heaven!" and he did so in his pride and presumption. It was as if the whole world was in fire and flame, so terribly did it lighten.

Later, when the storm was over, there stood the flowers and the corn in the calm pure air, refreshed by the rain; but the buckwheat was burned by the lightning as black as a coal; it lay a dead useless plant upon the field; and the old willow moved its branches in the wind, and large drops fell from the green leaves, as though the tree wept. And the sparrows asked:

“What are you weeping for? It is so beautiful here! Look how the sun is shining; look how the clouds are sailing on! Do you not smell the fragrance of the flowers and of the bushes? What are you weeping for; then, you old willow-tree?”

And the willow told them of the pride and presumption of the buckwheat, and of the punishment that is sure to follow. I, who relate the story, heard it from the sparrows; they told it me one evening when I begged for a fairy-tale.

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#### WILD ANIMALS IN THE OLDEN TIME.

IN Gloucestershire and Hampshire, red deer were as common in 1700 as they are now among the Grampian Hills. On one occasion, Queen Anne, on her way to Portsmouth, saw a herd of no less than 500. The wild bull, and its white mane, was still to be found wandering in a few of the southern forests. The badger made his dark and tortuous hole on the side of every hill where the copse-wood grew thick. The wild cats were frequently heard by night wailing round the lodges of the rangers of Whittlebury and Needwood. The yellow breasted marten was still pursued in Cranbourne Chase for his fur, reputed inferior only to that of the sable. Fen eagles, measuring more than nine feet between the extremities of the wings, preyed on fish along the coast of Norfolk. On all the downs, from the British Channel to Yorkshire, huge bustards strayed in troops of fifty or sixty, and were often hunted with greyhounds. The marshes of Cambridge and Lincoln were covered during

some months of every year by immense clouds of cranes. Some of these races the progress of civilization has extirpated; of others, the numbers are so much diminished that men crowd to gaze at a specimen as at a Bengal tiger or a polar bear.—*Macaulay's History.*

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### THE PRINCE AND THE PEASANT GIRL.

THERE was in the Mountains of Styria a post-house isolated and quiet. It was in harvest time, and all the servants were in the field. The Post-Master, an old man suffering from the gout, and a stable boy alone remained at home. In the room where the stove was, the postmaster's daughter, a charming and robust girl of the Alpine valleys, was working at her needle. All at once a travelling carriage with four horses was heard approaching; recognising the livery, the old man trembled, and cried out, "The Archduke John! the Archduke John! and all my hands are out!" "The Archduke John! and he cannot be kept waiting," returned the young girl, "I will go with him!" And without giving her father time to add a syllable, she rushed hastily to her room. Whilst the stable boy and the postillion from the last station were getting ready the change of horses, the young girl puts on a pretty costume of a postilion, which had served her as a disguise at the *fêtes* of the preceding carnival; she then mounted the saddle, took hold of the whip and reins, and rolled the Archduke in his carriage merrily along.

The eyes of the Archduke were not long in settling themselves on his natty postillion. Her supple and

slender figure, her well rounded shoulders, her little waist enclosed in a scarlet uniform, astonished the Prince, who guessed with whom he had to do; and when he had engaged her in conversation the softness of her voice betrayed her.

"But you're a girl!" said the Archduke.

To which, in great alarm, she muttered in reply: "There was no one else at my father's house when you arrived, and your Imperial Highness could not be kept waiting!"

John of Austria reassured the pretty child, whom he found as intelligent as she was good-looking; and when the moment of separation came, he said to her, "Since you have made yourself a man for my sake, it is right that I should make a woman of you again."

The young girl liked nothing better; but to become the wife of an Archduke, it was necessary to obtain the permission of the Emperor Francis. This was not an easy matter. Great was the wonder of the Court, when it learned what was called the romantic madness of John of Austria. It was believed that the Prince was in joke, but he was in earnest, so much so that the Emperor finished by yielding to the instances of his brother, and consenting to his marriage.

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### THE FADED ROSE.

When Emma gave this blushing rose,  
Last summer's smiling morn,  
Some gentle whisper seemed to say,  
"Beware! it has a thorn."

Yet I received the fragile flower,  
 My bouquet to adorn,  
 And placed it nearest to my heart,  
 Regardless of the thorn.

But when its tints had changed their hue,  
 And all its bloom was gone,  
 Ah! then I found, alas! too true,  
 The rose had left a thorn.

"Such," I exclaimed, "is fleeting bliss,  
 Scarce known before 'tis gone;  
 Its bloom is transient as the rose,  
 But memory feels the thorn."

E. S. G.

#### HUMANITY OF THE BEAR.

THE canton of Berne, which has a bear in its arms, assisted the Duke of Lorraine against the Duke of Burgundy, and in commemoration of this circumstance he and his successors kept a bear in the court of the palace. The bear of Duke Leopold was called Marco, and in 1709 a half-frozen Savoyard boy took refuge from the intense cold in Marco's den. The bear, instead of hurting, took the boy in his paws, pressed him to his bosom, and thus kept him warm until morning, when he let him go in quest of his daily subsistence. Night after night the boy returned to the den, when Marco not only received him kindly, but divided with him a portion of his food. One evening, the keeper having brought the animal his food later than usual, it roared terribly, and its eyes sparkled with rage. The keeper ascertained the cause of the animal's ferocity to be the child, who lay sleep-

ing upon his bosom, during whose sleep it never touched its food. Leopold and his courtiers informed of the extraordinary occurrence, hastened to witness the spectacle. Upon their arrival the boy awoke, when the bear caressed him, and pushed forward its food that he might partake of it. The Duke was so moved by the spectacle that he took the boy into his service, allotting to him the peculiar office of attending to his patron the bear.

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## A RIDDLE.

"MINNA," said Ferdinand, her elder brother, "guess what little house it is I am thinking about, and you shall have the whole mountain which surrounds it for your own?"

"A little house inside of a mountain, and I may have the mountain for my own?" asked Minna, wondering.

"Yes, the mountain is as yellow as gold, and tastes deliciously; and inside of it is a house which has very delicate walls, as thin and transparent as a sheet of the finest letter paper," said Ferdinand, laughing; "and in the house, Minna, are six or eight little dark brown people, always sitting up straight, without stirring or making any noise. But they feed themselves, and grow larger and stronger, and so does the mountain, which shuts them in so closely, that the air can scarcely get inside."

"You are a plague," said Minna, a little vexed; "you want to make a fool of me, with your paper house, and your little dark brown people."

"No, indeed," said Ferdinand; "now think, Minna, think a little; it is well worth the trouble, and you can have nothing in the world without taking some pains."

With these words, he threw something on the table, which looked so very bright and gold-yellow that it made Minna's mouth water, and her quick little mind guessed the riddle.

What was it? If no one can guess as well as Minna, we will tell them in the next number of the *Snow Drop*.

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#### FROM THE EDITORS' CHAIR.

We were not disappointed in our hope of hearing from some of our agreeable correspondents during their midsummer holidays, and we return our warm thanks to "Mary" for the lively and interesting letter given in this number.

We think it will be read with pleasure by many of our young readers, and if it will induce some of them to follow so good an example, and contribute something as amusing to our pages, it will be a good exercise for them, and a most acceptable offering to us.

Owing to some circumstances which cannot be explained, we have not so many original articles in this number as usual; but we have made many interesting selections, which, we hope, will be new and welcome to our youthful readers.

The answer to the first riddle in our last is—a *glove*. To the second—the letter *R*.