

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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The Message of the Flowers.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

Spoke full well, in language quaint and olden,
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars, they are, wherein we read our history,
As astrologers and seers of old;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars which they behold.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in those stars above,
But not less in the bright flowerets under us,
Stands the revelation of his love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Written all over this great world of ours;
Making evident our own creation,
In these stars of earth—these golden flowers.

And the poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same, universal being,
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.

Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves, with soft and silver lining,
Buds that open only to decay:

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues,
Flaunting gaily in the golden light;
Large desires, with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes blossoming at night!

These in flowers and men are more than seeming,
Workings are they of the self-same powers,
Which the poet, in no idle dreaming,
Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us spring is born;
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn.

Not alone in spring's armorial bearing,
And in summer's green emblazoned field,
But in arms of brave old autumn's wearing,
In the centre of his brazen shield;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain-top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of Nature stoop to drink;

Not alone in her vast dome of glory,
Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,
On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers,
Speaking of the past unto the present,
Tell us of the ancient games of flowers;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection,
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

THE BOY WITH A KODAK.

John and his sister Flora were sitting on the grass in the front yard, playing jackstones. It seemed impossible for

John, getting very much in earnest.

"Come, hand it over. It's my turn." But Flora only shook her head defiantly and put her hand behind her. "You're a cheat—that's what you are!" exclaimed John, angrily.

At this Flora raised her hand and struck her brother on the arm. He resented it by making an ugly grimace. Snap, snap, went the box in the stranger boy's hand.

Both turned in wondering surprise. "What makes that thing do that? What is it, anyhow?" John demanded.

"I'll tell you to-morrow," said the tall boy, and stepping over the fence he walked quickly away.

He would have laughed outright had it not been a photograph of himself. The deep frown and the distorted features were anything but pleasant to look upon. He felt deeply chagrined and humbled.

"You see, I took you yesterday when you were fighting," explained the boy leaning against the fence. "You fight a great deal, don't you? I have tried several times to take you from my window across the street, but failed. Kodaks are getting to be quite common playthings nowadays. We shall have to tidy up our manners, for there's no knowing when we are going to be photographed. I have a stack of pictures of people who little dream that I have photographed them in all their moods and tempers. It's a fine way to study human nature. You may keep those pictures," and so saying he walked away.

John and Flora looked at each other in shamefaced silence. One could not exult over the other. The defeat was for both of them.

"Say, Flora," said John at length, "let's don't fight any more."

"I won't if you won't," answered Flora, who stood regarding her picture with decided ill-favour.

Ever after that day, when they felt that they were getting angry, the remembrance of the picture which their sister had tacked up in each room caused them to change their tactics instantly—Caroline Mosher, in *The Advance*.



A TOBACCO EVIL.

But avast smoking in boyhood! Yes, it has a tendency to stop the growth. How can it be otherwise when we consider the effects of tobacco on the system, especially the nervous, arterial and venous portion thereof? In the novice, tobacco speedily produces swimming of the head, damp perspiration, a nausea, with vomiting worse than sea-sickness, pallor of face, debility of the heart, even to fainting and relaxation of the muscles.

Once a man belonging to my ship dislocated his shoulder while boat-cruising. I had no chloroform, and, muscular though I was I failed to overcome the action of the sailor's muscles and reduce the dislocation.

"Do you smoke?" I asked. Happily he did not, though most sailors do. I had a pipe lit and handed to him. In three minutes' time the muscles were flaccid enough, and the ball of the humerus went into the socket with little exertion on my part. I plied my poor, pale patient for a time, however.

Now, if tobacco has this power over nerve and heart action even in a strong, hardy sailor, does it not prove that it must interfere with the nutrition of the body of a half-grown sapling of a boy? Be

wise in time, therefore, and do not learn a habit that tends to injure you, simply because you think it manly.

Manly, indeed! Why, a boy never looks more like a monkey than when he is smoking. Take the pale-faced city youth, stick a pipe in his mouth, and let him ride past you on a bicycle in the cat-on-the-garden-wall style, and you will heave a sigh.

"No doubt of it," you will say. "Darwin is right about the descent of man."

Descent of some men, perhaps, I should add.—An Old Salt.

these two children to play together for any length of time without having—what their big sister named—their "differences." Across the street stood a large hotel, always well filled during the summer months with people who came to enjoy the sweet country air, and tan themselves on the lakes until their faces looked like mulattoes.

John looked up and saw a tall boy coming across the street. In his hand he carried a curious-looking box. He coolly stepped over the low iron fence that surrounded the yard, and seated himself on the grass a few feet from them. He did not seem inclined to talk, so the game proceeded the same as if he had not been there. Flora was tossing the jackstones when John exclaimed, "There! that's a miss."

"Well, it wasn't but a little one," said Flora, holding it away from his outstretched hand.

"A miss is a miss, big or little," said

"Queer chap, isn't he?" said John, looking after him uneasily.

Next day, when they were playing in the yard, they saw the tall boy again crossing the street, but this time he had some cards in his hands.

"Here, sis," said he, holding one toward Flora. She took it curiously, gazed at it in blank amazement, then her face flamed with shame and mortification.

There she was, photographed, her clenched fist raised, and in the act of striking her brother, while on her face was a most unbecoming expression of rage and revenge. Never before had she seen herself in a passion. Her mirror always reflected her face when in a complacent mood, which at such times was not uncomely. She had no idea it could become thus transformed.

John stood silently looking at it over her shoulder. The tall boy then handed the other card to John.

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The late General Jonbert lived quietly but well and in a far more civilized fashion than President Kruger. His house and family surroundings were distinctly European. He owned a bathroom with a fixed bath-tub, the first of its kind in Pretoria, and probably to this day the only one in a Boer house.