

The Inglenook.

The Bear and the Boy.

About two hundred years ago a powerful nobleman named Leopold was duke of the province of Lorraine. The Duke was very fond of animals.

Among his savage pets was a great bear, whose name was Marco.

Marco was housed in a rough hut in a corner of his royal master's park. He was supplied with the best of food by the keeper of the animals; and on state occasions he was led out by a big iron chain and made to dance for the amusement of Leopold's friends.

Marco was fierce, and when he swung his shaggy head out of the door of his hut and showed his white teeth in an ugly snarl, no one dared to go near him. One blow from his paw would have knocked a man senseless, and those white teeth of his were very sharp.

One cold winter night Marco, having swallowed his supper at a few gulps, shambled back into the farthest corner of his hut and curled himself up to sleep. He was just at the "falling off" point, when he heard a sound at the house door. He started up, and what should he see but a small boy, hopping first on one foot and then on the other, and shivering with the cold!

The boy was a homeless child, who had lost his way in the Duke's forest, and had run into the bear's hut for shelter.

Marco did not know who this newcomer might be, but he was so surprised that he quite forgot to growl.

Then a strange thing happened—so strange that, if this were not a true story, I should not ask you to believe it. The boy ran over to Marco, and, peering into his shaggy face, cried joyfully: "Why, you are the Duke's funny bear that I saw dancing the other day! Won't you be my friend? I need one so much!"

The bear Marco did not understand what the boy said, but he understood the kind hand that stroked his head. That had meant "I love you." Marco had never been loved in all his rough, bearish life—at least, not since the days before he had been caught in the deep forest, a frightened baby, screaming for his mother.

Now a great answering love filled his wild heart. He allowed the little lad to lie down beside him, warmed by his furry coat, and together they slept throughout the night.

In the morning, the boy went away, but came back to his friend in the evening. This happened for several days. Marco shared his food with his visitor, and they became fast cronies.

One day the keeper was surprised to see that Marco left his supper untouched; and, instead of hurrying away to feed the other animals, he stayed to watch the bear.

Marco sat in the door of his hut, patiently waiting for his boy. The keeper offered to take away the food, but he received such a fierce look that he set it down again and hid behind a tree to see what would happen next. In a moment, to his amazement, a child ran up to the bear. The keeper sprang forward to snatch the child out of harm's way: but the boy had already thrown his arms about his faithful friend,

and in a twinkling they finished the waiting supper together.

Duke Leopold was brought to the hut to see this wonderful pair, and the story of the boy and the bear soon spread throughout the land.

Duke Leopold gave orders that the poor child should be brought to his palace to be educated and cared for. The little lad made many friends in his beautiful new home, but I think he never found a dearer one than the bear Marco.

Just a Bit About the Wild Flowers.

BY RAY WILLIAMS.

Before I learned to love flowers intelligently, there were only about five wild ones that I knew by name and could tell when I saw them: the daisy, dandelion, buttercup, violet, trailing arbutus; and all the rest I called weeds. Or, as in the case of the spring flowers, such as the blood-root and the rue and wood anemones and hepaticas, although they bloom, some of them, in April, I always call them "May flowers."

I can now count hundreds of flowers where eight years ago I could only count six. I never have to sit idle now as I used to, as I can go out into the field and wood and see my friends, the flowers. Even now, when I take a long or short ride on the railway or trolley, I am always making a new tour of discovery.

Who does not like to see the dear little wood violet? Perhaps this is the best beloved as well as the best known of the early wild flowers. Whose heart has not been gladdened at one time or another by a glimpse of a fresh green nook in early May "where purple violets lurk, with all the lovely children of the shade?"

It seems as if no other flower were so suggestive of the dawning year, so associated with the days when life was full of promise. Although I believe that more than a hundred species of violets have been recorded, only thirty grow in our country. Of these, perhaps twenty are natives of the Northern states. We have scarcely any sweet-scented ones here, nor have we chosen by the Bonapartes as their emblem.

The bird-foot, *V. padita*, are not like other violets, but have leaves which are divided into linear lobes. The flower is lovely just like velvet. They are very amusing little flowers, as they protect their pollen from the bees and ripen their seeds in the dark.

Some of our most troublesome weeds, such as the thistle, wild carrot, etc., came over from Europe. Oh, but you will say, nobody is carrying seed or weeds from Europe. They have been brought to us in ballast and in loads of grain. Our common wood sorrel came from England and there was a time when it was hardly known in this country.

Is it not surprising that we here in North America are surrounded with a greater variety of flowers than are found in any other part of the globe, yet we don't care for them? They are to many of us nothing but weeds.

How Cowslip Saved Him.

In the highlands of Scotland it is a kindly custom to give names to the cows as well as the other animals. A Scotch lad had three to care for, and they all three had names. The red cow was Cowslip, the dun was Bell, and the black was Meadow-Sweets.

The cows knew their names like three children and would come when called.

"One day," the boy tells us, "I was not with them, but had been given a holiday and gone up on the side of the hill. I climbed until I was so high that I got dazed, and lost my footing upon the rocks, and came tumbling down and snapped my ankle so I could not move.

"It was very lonesome there. It seemed to me that it was hours that I lay there, hitching along among the bracken. I thought how night would come and nobody would know where I was. I could not move for the anguish in my foot. It was no use to call, for there was naught in sight save the crows, skirting against the sky. My heart was fit to break, for I was but a lad and mother looked to me for bread. I thought I would never see home again.

"After awhile I spied a cow beneath, grazing on a slip of turf just between a rift and the hills. She was a good long way below, but I knew her. It was Cowslip!

"I shouted as loud as I could, Cowslip! Cowslip!! When she heard her name, she left off grazing and listened.

"I called again and again. What did she do? She just came toiling up and up—till she reached me. Those hill cattle are rare climbers.

"She made a great ado over me; licked me with her rough, warm tongue, and was as pleased and as pitiful as though I were her own. Then, like a Christian, she set up a moan and moaned—so long and so loud that they heard her in the vale below.

"To hear a cow moaning like that they knew meant that she was in trouble. So they came a searching and seeking. They could see her red and white body though they could not see me. So they found me, and it was Cowslip saved my life."

The "Royal Muskoka."

The opening up of the Highlands of Ontario, Canada, and the beautiful Muskoka Lake region has been a veritable labour of love to the advertising department of the Grand Trunk Railway and the coming summer promises such an influx of American tourists as will amply justify the outlay in hotel accommodation which has been recently made. The "Royal Muskoka," in fact, promises to become to Canada, in summer, what the "Royal Poinciana" is to Florida, in the winter months, the fashionable resort of the continent, where the romantic and the beautiful can be enjoyed with all the luxury and comfort of the most modern hotel life. The "Royal Muskoka" which has been built at a cost of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, very much resembles the architecture of the famous Flagler hotels, soft gray stucco walls, timbered across under its red-tiled roof, with deep, cool verandahs, commanding views of the surrounding lakes and islands. It has accommodation for 400 guests and is the finest summer hotel in Canada. It will be opened on June 16th. For all information as to rates, routes, etc., and illustrated descriptive literature, apply to G. T. Bell, General Passenger and Ticket Agent, Grand Trunk Railway System, Montreal, Canada.