

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. I.

TORONTO, AUGUST 27, 1881.

No. 2.

FLOWERS.

SPAKE 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;
Not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars which they beheld
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 flow

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

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

—LONGFELLOW.

REQUIRED READING, S. S. R. U.

(Sunday-School Reading Union.)

STORIES OF EARLY METHODISTS.

THE MOTHER OF METHODISM.

SUSANNA WESLEY, the mother of John Wesley, was the daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, of London.

A remarkable anecdote is related by Dr. Calamy in reference to the birth of this child. "How many children has Dr. Annesley?" said a friend to Dr. Thomas Manton, who had just consecrated another to the Lord in the ordinance of baptism.

"I believe it is two dozen or a quarter of a hundred," was the ready reply

John Dunton, the eccentric bookseller of London, who married one of them, says: "The reckoning children by dozens is a singular circumstance, an honor to which few persons ever arrive." What a family group was that in which Susanna Wesley spent her earliest years, the youngest of a quarter

of a hundred children belonging to one home and one father! Two only of Mrs. Annesley's children were sons, so far as knowledge is preserved to us of her offspring. Of the daughters the names of five only are preserved. These are said to have excelled in the graces and accomplishments which a finished education could bestow.

Of Susanna it is on record that she was acquainted with Greek and Latin, and had a respectable knowledge of the French language.

Religion seems to have been a principle, not a mere form, with Mrs. Wesley, from very early life. She herself records that she was "early

represented as a very handsome-looking woman, but one who well knew both said, "Beautiful as Miss Annesley appears, she is far from being as beautiful as Mrs. Wesley." Dr. Clarke says that she was both graceful and beautiful. Whatever there might be of personal attraction, there existed in her mind

duties." Such was the lady who became the mother of the Epworth Wesleys.

Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
—*Memorials of the Wesley Family.*

MRS. WESLEY AS A TEACHER.

It was about the year 1689 that Susanna Annesley became the wife of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, when she was in the nineteenth or twentieth year of her age. As their circumstances were narrow and confined, the education of their children fell especially upon Mrs. Wesley, who seems to have possessed every qualification requisite for either a public or private teacher. Her manner was peculiar to herself, and deserves a distinct mention. She has detailed it in a letter to her son John, where speaking of the children, she says

"None of them were taught to read until five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled, and she was more years in learning than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this. The day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, every one's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine to twelve, or from two to five, which were our school hours.

"One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters, and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly, for which I then thought them very dull, but the reason why I thought so was, because the rest learned them so readily, and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the tenth of February, the next day he began to learn, and as soon as he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over, till he could read it off hand without any hesitation, and so on to the second, etc., but he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter following that year, and at Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well, for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learned in his lesson he knew whenever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book; by which means he learned very soon to read an English author well.



FLOWERS.—See Poem.

Wm. B. B.

initiated and instructed in the first principles of the Christian religion," and had before her a "good example in parents, and in several of the family;" and whilst yet young in years, encouraged by the examples she daily saw, she consecrated herself to the Lord.

Her elder sister, Judith, who was painted by Sir Peter Lely, is by him

and heart virtues and adornments of far higher value than any merely external graces. Take for example a rule which she lays down in a letter to one of her sons: "When I was young and too much addicted to childish diversion, I resolved never to spend more time in any matter of mere recreation in one day than I spent in private religious