



**The Message of the Flowers.**

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

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;  
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.

**LESSON NOTES.**

THIRD QUARTER.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF PAUL.

A.D. 58.] LESSON VII. [Aug. 13.

PAUL AT JERUSALEM.

Acts 21. 27-39.] [Memory verses, 30, 31.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.—Phil. 1. 29.

OUTLINE.

1. In the Temple, v. 27-29.
2. In the Street, v. 30-34.
3. In the Castle, v. 35-39.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**

Paul journeyed from Mile-tus to Jerusalem, stopping for rest at Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea. He was received cordially by "the brethren" at Jerusalem. But they told him of slanderous reports which had prejudiced the Christians of Jerusalem against him. As Paul had made a vow they recommended that, together with four Christian Jews who had also made a vow, he should publicly enter the temple and discharge his vow according to the Hebrew ritual. This would restore the confidence of those Christians who were stricter observers of the law, and had been told that Paul had deserted "the ways of Moses."

**EXPLANATIONS.**

"Seven days"—Probably the time required for the presentation of offerings. "Men of Israel"—A popular patriotic cry. "Of Asia"—Jews from Ephesus and other cities. "Teacheth all"—They charged Paul with treason against Moses because he insisted upon the superiority of Jesus. "Polluted... holy place"—Gentiles were not allowed to pass from the "Court of the Gentiles" through the *chel* (the middle wall of partition) into the sacred inclosure, as their presence was considered a profanation. "Doors were shut"—The folds of the "Beautiful Gate," opening from the Women's Court to the Court of the Gentiles. "To kill him"—Seeking a place where bloodshed was permissible. "Castle"—The military barracks of the fortress Antonia. "Borne of the soldiers"—Carried by them to rescue him from the populace. "Speak Greek"—Paul addressed the captain in Greek, which surprised the latter as he supposed him to be an Egyptian. "That Egyptian"—A false prophet, who, in the time of Nero, wished to destroy the Roman government, and having been defeated at the Mount of Olives had taken to flight.

**PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**

How does this lesson show—

1. That enemies of the truth are willing to believe evil of a good man?
2. That pretended zeal for God's cause is sometimes a cloak for crime?
3. That a Christian may be calm in the midst of danger?

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. What did the Jews which were in Asia do when they saw Paul in the temple at Jerusalem? "They laid hands on him." 2. What did the people intend to do with Paul when they drew him out of the temple? "They went about to kill him." 3. Who rescued Paul from the people? "The chief captain." 4. What did Paul ask of the chief captain? "Suffer me to speak unto the people." 5. What did Paul teach Christians concerning persecution? "For unto you it is given," &c.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The wickedness of the unregenerate heart. Verse 36.

**CATECHISM QUESTION.**

How did all things come into being? By the will of God, who created all things and brought all into their present order.

**CHARLIE'S BOOK.**

"MOTHER," said little Charlie, "Will Hardin says his mother writes books." "Does she?" said mother, and then she went on sewing and forgot Charlie, who was trying to stand on his head. "Mother," said Charlie, presently, "is it very hard to write a book?" "I don't know, I'm sure," said mother. "I'm going to write a book," said this small man in petticoats. Just then the door bell rang and Charlie's mother went to see a caller. When she came back her little boy was sitting on her footstool busily writing in a handsome book, but as he

wrote with a slate-pencil, it didn't do the book any harm.

"Now, mother," said her little boy, "I'm done my book."

"No," said his mother, thinking a little while, "you are not near done. God has given you a book to write. I hope it is a big, long one, full of beautiful stories."

"What's the name of my book?" he asked, coming close to her.

"Its name is, 'Charlie's Life;' you can only write one page a day, and you must be very careful not to make any black marks in it by doing ugly things. When you pout and cry, that smears your page, but when you help mother and keep a bright face and don't quarrel with Teddy, that makes a nice fair page, and pretty pictures on it."

"And when will I be done writing that book?" asked Charlie.

"When God sees that your book is long enough," answered mother, "He will send an angel to shut its covers and put a clasp on it until the great day when all our life-books shall be opened and read."

Charlie sat very quiet awhile, and then said, softly, "Dear little Lucy finished writing her book when they put her in the white casket and laid the white roses over her."

"Yes," said his mother, "her life-book was just a little hymn of praise to God; its pages were clean and white, no stains on them."

Charlie looked up and saw two tears fall on mother's work, but they were bright tears, and a bright smile came with them.

**NOT ASHAMED OF HIS PATCH.**

A roon boy was attending school with a large patch on his knee. One of his school-mates nicknamed him "Old Patch."

"Why don't you fight him?" cried the boys. "I'd give it to him."

"Oh!" answered the boy, "you don't suppose I'm ashamed of my patch, do you? For my part I'm thankful for a good mother to keep me out of rags. I honour my patch for her sake, and you can't make me ashamed of it."

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