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For the Children

THE FIRST HEPATICAS.

"AREN'T they lovely, lovely?" exclaimed Leila, rapturously, gazing at the bank of flowers she and her sorority sister, Julie, had discovered deep in the woods. "Is there any joy quite like that of gathering the early blossoms of spring?" She sank down on the mossy ground and gently plucked a bunch of the tender flowers.

"It's worth walking two miles beyond the end of the car line and scrambling over a high board fence, isn't it, to find such little beauties as these?" said Julie, as she, too, made a bouquet. "Won't the luncheon-table be charming decorated with these sweet things? They are much better than the hothouse flowers we usually have at sorority lunches."

"Of course they will, and they are expecting something novel, for I said we should have a surprise for them."

When at last the girls, with their soft hair blowing round their prettily flushed faces, again scaled the fence, carefully guarding their precious flowers, they were surprised to see in such a lonely place two rather shabbily dressed old people—a frail little woman and a lame man—sitting on a log, gazing disconsolately at the high barrier to the delectable woodland.

With deprecating glances downward at their disheveled clothes, Leila and Julie smiled with bright friendliness at the elderly couple.

"Oh, you have the first hepaticas?" said the lady. "Could you spare me just one? We have come here every spring for years to welcome the early flowers, but this time we find ourselves barred out by this new fence."

"She might have climbed it, but she wouldn't leave me." The pathetic glance that the old man cast upon his crutches as he spoke went straight to Leila's heart, and she hastily replaced the few flowers she had begun to separate from her large bunch, and laid them all in the lady's lap, where Julie's, too, were quickly placed.

"But, my dears, you musn't give me all your posies."

"We wish you to have them," answered Leila. "We had the joy of gathering them, and you must have the pleasure of keeping them as long as they will last."

A moment later Julie said, as she and Leila walked away, "We haven't any wild flowers for the sorority lunch, after all."

"No, we have something better, though, a happy memory, and we can tell the girls about those dear old people," replied Leila. She turned and waved her hand to the two still sitting on the log.

"Deary," said the old man, replacing the hat he had doffed, and bringing his gentle eyes from the girlish figures in the distance to the little woman beside him, "what a taste of spring-time we have had!"—*Youth's Companion*.

* * *

GROWING.

By Annie Isabel Willis.

A little rain, and a little sun,
And a little pearly dew,
And a pushing up and a reaching out,
Then leaves and tendrils all about;
Ah, that's the way the flowers grow,
Don't you know?

A little work, and a little play,
And lots of quiet sleep;
A cheerful heart, and a sunny face,
And lessons learned, and things in place;
Ah, that's the way the children grow,
Don't you know?

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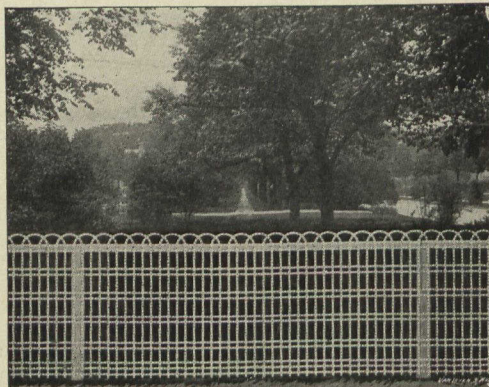
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