

The Young Folk.

FRANK'S PROMISE.

'Papa,' said Frank Stanley, suddenly entering his father's study one fine morning in July, 'John says Prince Charlie has lost a shoe.'

'Well, my boy,' said Colonel Stanley, 'I suppose you can do without your ride for once, can you not?'

'Oh, papa! don't you remember Douglas Harcourt is coming for me at eleven, to take me to his uncle's, Lord Chilton's? His cousins, the Howards, are to be there, and we are invited to lunch-on, and I thought, papa,' continued Frank, 'that, perhaps, just for this once, you'd let me ride Childe Harold. Would you, papa?'

Colonel Stanley looked grave as he replied. 'Really, Frank, I hardly know what to say about it.'

'Do, papa,' cried Frank, eagerly, 'I will be so careful, and you know I have ridden him several times already.'

'Yes, my boy,' said his father, 'but I was with you, and it is a very different thing to trust you on a spirited horse like Childe Harold alone. However, if you will promise me on no account to gallop the horse, I think I might trust you; but remember you must only trot, walk, and canter—if he breaks into a gallop, stop him at once, and walk him quietly.'

'I will, papa, indeed I will. I promise you faithfully, I won't gallop,' and Frank's eager, excited face glowed with delight at being trusted to ride his father's fine thoroughbred.

Old Martin, the coachman, who had taught Frank to ride, shook his head gravely when Frank told him the great news that 'the Childe' was to be saddled for him.

'Look here, Master Frank,' he said, 'don't you let him get the bit between his teeth; if you see him lay his ears back, you'll know he means mischief, so have a care, sir.'

'All right, Martin,' replied Frank. 'Papa has told me not to let him break into a gallop, and I've promised not to.'

At eleven o'clock, Childe Harold was led to the front door, and Frank eagerly watched for his friend Douglas to appear in a turn of the long avenue, or rather sweep, which led to Colonel Stanley's house from the high road.

'The Childe' was indeed a picture! His satin coat of bright bay, with black points, his small ears, and well-set head, betrayed his Arab blood; and he responded to Frank's caresses by a short neigh of pleasure. A few minutes after eleven, Douglas Harcourt cantered up, and, in reply to Frank's invitation to come in, he begged to be excused, as the time was short for their long ride.

'Why, Frank,' he exclaimed, 'where's Prince Charlie? and is your father coming with us?'

'No,' said Frank, feeling very elated, 'I am going to ride 'the Childe' to-day; papa has lent him to me, and springing into the saddle, he waved his cap gaily to his mother, who was at an open window, and trotted off with his friend.

Douglas Harcourt freely expressed his admiration for the noble steed, and hoped Frank would not gallop away, and leave him and his pony 'Trot' behind.

'No, indeed,' said Frank. 'I have promised papa I won't go faster than a canter.'

'Well,' replied Douglas, 'I am not so sure I should like to ride a horse under such conditions. Is your father afraid you will fall off?'

'Not he,' said Frank; 'he knows that I can sit anything; but you know 'the Childe' has a temper, he gets excited when he gallops, and he needs a very firm hand. He might get the bit between his teeth, and bolt.'

'And,' added Douglas, 'he might come down and break his knees, which would be a pity. Your father must have given a large sum for him?'

'Yes,' said Frank. 'Papa gave one hundred and forty guineas for him, and refused two hundred for him last week, when the dealer came to buy our other horse Masaniello.'

Thus chatting, the boys trotted quietly on till they came to a wide stretch of breezy upland, and then they broke into a canter. Childe Harold went splendidly, Frank had him well in hand, and enjoyed the fine pace of the noble animal. The last mile they walked their horses, so that they might be cool on arriving, and after delivering them into the care of Lord Chilton's grooms, the two lads entered the house, and being informed that the ladies and gentlemen were all on the croquet lawn, joined them there. Douglas was a good player, and was soon in the thick of a game with his pretty cousins; while Frank wielded his mallet as well as he could.

Three times was the luncheon-bell rung, and yet the fascinating game continued to entrance the players. The consequence was that it was nearly three o'clock before the gay party of young people sat down to lunch.

Lord Chilton, who had not been in the croquet ground, welcomed Frank heartily, told him he had known his father in India, and spoke of him as a good officer and gallant soldier. He insisted on Frank sitting near him at the table, and invited him to take wine

with him. Now Frank was a water-drinker habitually, though he took a little wine now and then. He was very thirsty after his long ride, and longed for a draught of pure cold water more than anything. He looked in vain for water on the table. There was none; all the party were drinking ale or wine, and even his pretty neighbour Clara Howard, quaffed her 'bitter beer' with evident zest.

Frank was ashamed to ask for water as no one else took it, and while he hesitated what to do, his glass was filled with a sparkling amber beverage, which, in desperation, he swallowed hastily. It was horrid, he thought, so stinging and bitter, but he hoped it was not very strong.

Lord Chilton filled Frank's wineglass from his own special bottle of port, and bade the boy drink to the health of his fair neighbour, whose birthday it happened to be. Frank detested port-wine, but Lord Chilton, whose idea of hospitality consisted in pressing his guests to eat and drink almost to excess, insisted on his drinking the whole bumper, and poor Frank was fain to obey. At last Douglas suddenly sprang to his feet, and, looking at his watch, said 'Hallo, Frank, do you know it is past four o'clock, and I have to attend a cricket-match at six. Excuse me, uncle,' turning to Lord Chilton, 'but may I ring and order the horses?' Ringing as he spoke, he gave the order and, in ten minutes Frank was thankful to feel himself once more on Childe Harold, and the cool air fanning his heated face. The beer and wine had increased his thirst, and he longed to get home that he might procure a draught of cold water. He felt in a perfect fever, and really as he cantered quickly on, he scarcely knew what he was doing. Douglas hurried his pony, Trot, in its canter till it broke into a gallop, and rushed past 'the Childe' so suddenly that the horse swerved, and nearly unseated Frank. He recovered his seat, but excited as he was he scarcely noticed how the horse's stride was increasing, and how very near a gallop the pace had become. He only felt the fresh breeze in his face, and enjoyed it.

Suddenly Douglas called out, 'Take care, Frank hold him in! he means mischief'; but Frank heeded not, and in another minute 'the Childe' laid back his ears, took the bit between his teeth, and fairly bolted.

Frank in vain tried to check him, it was far beyond his power, and he was soon miles ahead of Douglas and Trot. Poor Frank! he was sobered now. Thoughts of his promise to his father, of his loving mother, and of his little sister crowded into his mind, and he felt that he should never see them again. He remembered the large gate at the entrance to the carriage-sweep, and wondered if it would, by any change, be open. He raised his heart to God, and prayed to Him to save him from a cruel death. He kept his seat easily, but the pace was so tremendous he could scarcely breathe. At last he saw the gate; it was closed! He knew the horse would try to leap it. Could he keep his seat? He was sure he could not. With one vigorous effort he tried to turn the maddened animal from the road; but it was useless, it rose to the leap, Frank's hands relaxed their grasp of the reins, and he fell backwards. A crash, a sharp pain in his head, and he remembered nothing more.

When Frank recovered his senses he was in his own bed, and he tried to raise his head to look round, but a strange sensation came over him, and he again lost consciousness. His next awakening was at night; his mother sat by his side while a portly nurse was preparing something, which she placed to his lips, and bade him drink; in a few minutes he revived, and his first question was, 'Oh mamma, is Childe Harold hurt?' 'Hush, darling, you must not speak now; to-morrow I will tell you all,' was his mother's gentle answer, and Frank sank into a quiet sleep.

The next day, great was his grief and remorse when he heard that Childe Harold was dead! The poor animal had been so severely injured that Colonel Stanley ordered it should at once be put out of its misery, and it had been shot.

'Oh, papa,' said Frank, 'can you ever forgive me? I can never forgive myself to think that I should have caused you such pain, and,' he added, as he brushed away the tears which had filled his eyes on hearing of the poor horse's fate, 'I will never again touch wine or beer. I seemed to lose my senses after I mounted to come home, and it was all because I was such a miserable coward, I was afraid of being laughed at if I asked for water; but God helping me, I will never again touch that which made me break my promise to my father.'

'God bless you, my boy,' said Colonel Stanley, 'I trust you will never in future lack courage to do what is right, and if any time temptation is strong, think of Childe Harold; and if the remembrance of his fate strengthens you in the right, and enables you to resist the evil, the poor horse will not have been sacrificed in vain.'

No man was ever cast down with the injuries of fortune, unless he had before suffered himself to be deceived by her favours.

Selections.

SPRING WILD FLOWERS.

In the spring the wild flowers are a wonder and a new delight. When the hard earth softens beneath the warmth of air and moisture,—

"When the cool aspen-fingers of the rain
Feel for the eyelids of the earth in spring."

and innumerable buds of white, and blue, and yellow stealthily appear along the woodsides, and open their petals to the mild warmth and light—all the mystery of creation is enacted over again, and we welcome these small newcomers as ambassadors from an unknown land. It is then that they quicken the poetic fancy; and accordingly we find spring flowers more than any others adorning the poetic page. We must except perhaps the rose; and oddly enough, the poets seem determined to make that a spring flower also. In the very opening of "The Seasons," Thompson, who ought to have known better, makes this blunder:

Come, gentle spring, ethereal mildness, come.
And from the bosom of you dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend."

But we may look on this invocation as a bit of a decorative picture into which the roses are introduced symbolically. When Thompson does come to draw out a catalogue of spring flowers, he does so quite accurately. We find

"The snowdrop and the crocus first;
The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue—"

The sweet violet is perhaps the best beloved of all. It is more homely than the snowdrop or the primrose, for it blooms anywhere along the roadsides, and it has the advantage of its gracious perfume, peculiar to it of all the violet tribe. It has always been an especial favorite of the poets, too. When Perdita wishes that she "had some flowers of the spring" to make a garland whilal, she does not fail to include the

"Violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes;"

while she hints that there is a touch of melancholy about the

"Pale primrose,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phoebus in his strength."

Even the joyous Herrick calls them "whimp'ring younglings," asks them why they weep;

Is it for want of sleep,
Or childish lullaby,
Or that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?

There is no room for the sad primrose in the rhymes of the jolly Autolycus, when he sings of the daffodils coming "in the the sweet of the year." When there is a happy light-someness in the poet's lines the primrose is left out in the cold.

When daisies pied and violets blue,
And lady's-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight!"—

the primrose is supposed to have died in the solitary woods. The violet, on the other hand, has always been invested with tender human associations. It is the robin redbreast of the wild flowers, and has ever a kindly, homely welcome. More than any other flower, too, it has always been considered typical of the finer graces of girlhood—modesty, sweetness and shyness. Everybody is familiar with Wordsworth's verse:

"A violet by a mossy stone,
Half-hidden from the eye;
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky;"

but the opening lines of William Habington's "Description of Castara," (published in 1634.) which embody the same simile, are less known:

"Like the violet, which, alone,
Prosper in some happy shade,
My Castara lives unknown,
To no looser eye betrayed."

This flowerlike modesty and retirement of a maiden, Tannahill introduces into his picture of "The Lass o' Arranteenie," in lines of singular sweetness; but here the flower is the rose:

"Yon mossy rosebud down the hove,
Just opening fresh and bonny,
Blinks sweetly 'neath the hazel-bough,
And 'a scarcely seen by ony."

Your true lover of wild flowers is likely to object that the moss-rose is exclusively a garden product, and could by no chance be found "opening fresh and bonny" beneath a hazel-bough. Sometimes, it is true, the small violet has been endowed with the sentimental languor which ought properly to belong to the primrose, and we think without just cause, for the bright little clusters of violets that dot our meadows are pre-eminently blithe and cheerful.

The erudite Thomas Stanley, writing in 1651, says:

"The Violet, by her foot oppressed,
Doth from that touch, enanor'd rise;
But losing straight what made her blest,
Hangs down her head, looks pale, and dies."

We should like to know how often that poetic figure of the flowers, looking after a maiden who has just passed over them has been used. The light tread of a girl's foot is so prettily conveyed by the notion that the grass just bends and rises again, that nearly every poet has employed the image in more or less of ac-

tual truth; although we find Mr. Tennyson when Maud's lover sings of his darling, that

Her feet have touched the meadows,
And left the daisies rosy."

And not only does Maud tinge the tips of the daisies, but her feet leave footprints of violets:

"From the meadow your walks have left so sweet,
That whenever a March wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes."

Maud, however, with her full-brown English grace and her pert ways, is more of a rose than a violet. She is the "queen-rose of the rose-bud garden of girls;" it is a rose she sends as her messenger, and her lover is to meet her at night among the roses, while he cries:

"Rosy is the west,
Rosy is the south;
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth."

Which reminds one of Lovelace's—

"See! rosy is her bow,
Her floor is all thy flower:
Her bed a rosy nest,
By a bed of roses preat."

To return to wild flowers. Their number is not large, and the flowers themselves are not the most prominent or beautiful of wild blooms; but they gain, as we have already hinted, a wonderfully heightened interest by their charm of novelty—by the appearance just at the time when the winds begin to bring suggestions of summer. The world grows greener, the sun grows brighter and we are led to look forward to the happier time which is fuller of flowers—when the oxeyes whiten the meadows, and the spear-mint begins to scent the marshes, when the wild roses are red and white on the uplands, and

"The lady laburnum shakes
Her treacherous tresses of gold."

All this, we know, is coming; and in the meanwhile, when "the roving spirit of the wind blows spring abroad," we have the thrill of anticipation, and the delight of the new warmth and freshness in the air.

"In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head:
Life flows afresh! and young-ev'd health exalts
The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase. Pure serenity space
Induces thought and contemplation still.
By swift degrees the love of nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last sublim'd
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world!"

"O'd-fashioned poetry, but choicely good," to quote Master Izaak Walton; "I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age."—*Home Journal*.

HEALTH HABITS OF YOUNG MEN.

A very curious and interesting table might be made by a thoughtful physiologist and hygienist, showing each person where his strength goes; and I am not sure that a young man could do a better service for himself than to seek the counsel of some wise physiologist, tell him frankly all his habits, and have such a table prepared, not only to guard him against excess, but to show him his weak places, and to point out where he will be most likely to fail. Some of these tables would, no doubt, read very much as follows:—

Spent in digesting a big dinner, which the body did not need, sufficient force to raise thirty tons of matter one foot.

Spent in getting over the effects of several drinks of wine and brandy, force sufficient to raise 20 tons one foot.

Spent in smoking six cigars, force sufficient to raise 10 tons one foot.

Spent in keeping awake all night at a spree, force sufficient to raise 20 tons one foot.

Spent in breathing bad air, force sufficient to raise 15 tons one foot.

Spent in cheating a neighbor out of \$30 in a business transaction, force sufficient to raise 15 tons one foot.

Spent in hesitation, doubt, and uncertainty, force sufficient to raise five tons one foot.

Total—120 tons one foot.

L-ft for practical and useful labor, only enough to raise fifty five tons one foot, or to do less than one-third of the day's work.

Sometimes there would be a draft on the original capital, of considerable force, so there would not be enough left to keep the body warm, or the food well digested, or the muscles plump and full, or the hearing acute, or the eyes keen and bright, or the brain thoughtful and active.

Very often a single debauch would use up the entire available power of the whole system for a whole week or month.

There is no end to the multitudinous ways in which we not only spend our working capital, but draw on the original stock, that ought never to be touched, and the result is: imperfect lives, rickety bodies, much physical suffering and premature decay, with all the ends of life unaccomplished. How sad is all this! How terrible to be born into the world and leave it without adding something to its wealth, its virtue, and its progress.—*Herald of Health*.