

Boys and Girls.

CHARLES LINNAEUS, THE BOTANIST.

"And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying, "Here is a story book
Thy father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,
"Into regions yet untrod,
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

—Longfellow.

Pastor Linné's garden was the most beautiful spot in the little Swedish village of Rashult. It was planted for profit, for the pastor was poor, and was glad to make a little money with his potatoes, and peas, and currant bushes: these plants were pretty enough, but among them grew a wealth of flowers—roses, honeysuckles, tall lilies and shy pansies and many more, blooming as flowers can bloom when tended by one who loves them:

The pastor came pacing down the gravel-walk in his black suit, with cambric ruff at the throat and frills at the wrists. He paused here and there to lift the heavy head of a carnation, or bend back the bough of a rose-tree, looking almost as lovingly upon them as upon the little eight-year-old son who was working diligently in one of the beds.

A heap of plants lay beside the boy, evidently just brought in from the fields; his face was flushed with his efforts, he could hardly stop to look up as his father came near.

"Oh, father!" he cried, "I am so glad you have come! I have found a new sort of hare-bell—not the large kind that grows everywhere." "See!" And this is a—what do you think this is, father?"

The pastor took the plant and looked gravely at it.

"A weed, my son," he said, "a hurtful and useless weed," and he threw the root over the garden hedge into a wet ditch beyond.

"Oh, father, father!" cried the boy, "how could you throw it away? I must find out its name." And he was off like a flash of lightning to look for his treasure.

Pastor Linné walked away to visit his bees. By the time Charles had returned, breathless but triumphant, and clasping the rescued plant tightly in his muddy little hands, his father had made a tour of the garden, and came back with a graver face.

"Charles," he said, "how comes it that there is a wasp's nest in the apple-tree close to my bees?"

Charles hung his head, and blushed scarlet.

"I wanted to be able to watch them," he said.

"And you did not trouble yourself to remember that they would do mischief, and fight with my bees? Have you forgotten how you once brought wild bees into the garden?"

"I am sorry, father."

"And because you chose to grow thistles and weeds in the pretty little garden I gave you on your birthday, weeds of all kinds are springing in my beds."

"I rooted them out when you told me, father."

"Ah, yes, my Charles, you did. But weeds are like sins—they may be taken away, but they leave their traces."

"Father," asked the little boy, "why is it that some plants are only weeds? Did not the good God make them all?"

"Certainly, my son," answered the pastor; "but there is a place for everything, as Solo-

mon tells us, there is a time for everything. And now it is time for your Latin lesson. Are your exercises ready?"

"I am afraid I did not do them all, father."

"And why not? But you need not tell me. When I went into my study I found sheets of dried flowers among your exercise books. Oh, Charles! Charles! how can you ever hope to be a worthy pastor when you neglect your studies, and waste your time in this way?"

"You love flowers, too, father," said Charles.

"Yes, I love them well. But to me they are a pleasure to be enjoyed after work. I mean you to be a pastor like myself, and to that end you must work diligently at your books."

"Oh, father, dear!" said Charles eagerly, "the book of nature is the book I love! Let me study that and learn it by heart!"

"Let you be an idler and a ne'er-do-weel, in fact," said the pastor, turning towards the house. "Now come in at once and let me see you make up for lost time. Do not let me have cause to be sorry that I have allowed you to have a garden of your own."

Charles went in and paid what attention he could to his Latin. But if his body was not free to wander through fields and woods his heart was there, and it was with a great sigh of relief that at last he shut his books, and, without waiting for any supper, snatched up his cap and rushed out. It

would be light till nearly ten—long, happy, summer twilight!

Pastor Linné, or Linnaeus (for he gave his name a Latin form, as was the custom of the time), sent his son Charles to school at ten years old.

"Be diligent, my son," whispered his mother, as she tied his warm fur cap; "be diligent, for you know my heart is set on seeing you a pastor, like your father."

But Charles's own heart was set upon the study of nature, and he found it hard to attend to his lessons in Hebrew and theology. After some months Pastor Linnaeus drove to Mexico.

"Oh, Linné!" said some of the boys, who were playing when he arrived; "he is not here, he is rambling as usual. He never works properly nor plays properly."

"Indeed!" said the pastor; "how does he spend his time?"

"Always messing with plants and beetles," said the boys. "What he sees in the wretched weeds no one knows, but the place is filled with them, and often he is an hour late, or even misses school altogether."

The pastor was sadly vexed. He saw his son, and spoke very seriously to him. Charles promised to amend, and for seven years his father kept him at the grammar school.

Then he went on to the college in the same town, but he was found to be sadly backward in the studies necessary for a



THE PASTOR TOOK THE PLANT.