



THE KING'S GARDEN

E. J. WAGGONER

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL FOR CHILDREN – VOL. 8

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About This Series

IN 1891, E. J. Waggoner was sent from America to England, and took over the publishing of the *Present Truth* periodical. Some time around the end of August 1892, we observe the transition from the previous editor, with a sudden increase in articles from the pen of Waggoner. In some issues, there are up to a dozen articles by him.

This “stream opened up in the desert”¹ was not to stop until the end of 1903, when he returned to America.

Shortly after taking over the periodical work, Waggoner introduced a column for children. His own three children would have been aged about 4, 7, and 10 at that time.

The children’s column took on various names over the next ten years:

- Children’s Corner
- Children’s Page
- Easy Steps for Little Feet
- For Little Ones
- For the Children
- Gospel Primer
- Light for Little Ones
- Little Folks
- Little Ones
- Our Little Ones
- The Children
- The Home

Most of the articles collected for the various volumes that make up “The Everlasting Gospel for Children,” were originally published in the series that these books are named from. In the remaining few cases, I tried to organize them according to their theme, or I placed some articles among pre-existing themes.

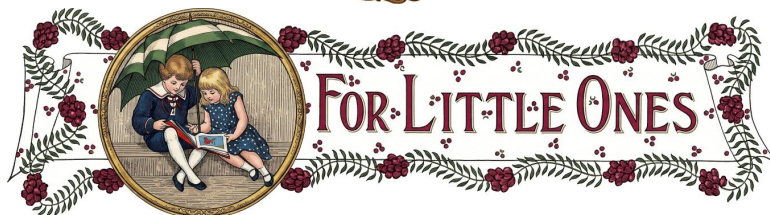
¹ *Isaiah* 35:6.

This particular series, *The King's Garden*, was put together from articles published from 1892 to 1901, that drew spiritual lessons from plant life.

Frank Zimmerman
practicaprophetica.com



THE CHILDREN.



1. About Flowers

Present Truth, March 28, 1895

WE BEGIN to get the lessons that the Lord would teach us in plant life only as we recognize the fact that He is indeed the life of every living thing, and that every flower and every blade of grass is instinct with His own life.

Then the blossoming plant can speak to us of the Father's care, and in watching the unfolding of the springing leaf, and the coloring of the petals, we are brought into the direct presence of the working of the life of God.

How little can be known of this working, in the imperfection of human knowledge, is thus stated by Sir John Lubbock:



The total number of living species of plants may be roughly estimated at 500,000, and there is not one of which we can say that the structure, uses, and life history that are yet fully known to us. Our museums contain large numbers which botanists have not yet had time to describe and name. Even in our own country not a year passes without some additional plant being discovered; as regards the less known regions of the earth, not half the species have yet been collected.

But the fact can be known. God's creative power is working all about us, and by that we may know His power to work in us, to clothe us with the beauty of His holiness, even as the beauty of the Lord's life is manifested in the flower.

The Life Plant

There is a plant in Jamaica called the “life plant,” because it is almost impossible to kill it or any portion of it. When a leaf is cut off and hung up by a string it sends out white, thread-like roots, and begins to grow new leaves. Even when pressed and packed away in a botanist’s herbarium it has been known to outgrow the leaves of the book in which it was placed. The only way to kill it is by the heat of a hot iron or of boiling water.

Ancient Blossoms

The herbarium of the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Gizeh contains specimens of plants several thousand years old. It was the custom to garnish the mummy with leaves and flowers, some of which have preserved their hue to this day. The flowers most frequently met with in the tombs are the lotus (white and blue), wax-like blossoms of the pomegranate, the common red poppy, the crocus, and a chrysanthemum.

Pressed Flowers

The discoloration of flowers when preserved and dried as botanical specimens is said to be due to ammonia in the atmosphere. In order to prevent this action, it has recently been recommended, says *Chambers’s Journal*, to use for pressing absorbent paper which has been baked in a one per cent solution of oxalic acid, and dried. The use of such paper enables specimens to be preserved with their colors unimpaired.

Wild-Flower Air

Of all sweet things, [wrote Jefferies,] there is none so sweet as fresh air—one great flower it is, drawn round about, over, and enclosing us; as if the dome of the sky were a bell-flower, drooping down over us, and the magical essence of it filling all the room of the earth. Sweetest of all things is wild-flower air.²

²Richard Jefferies, *The Open Air*, “Wild Flowers,” 1885.

2. Beautiful Garments

Present Truth, April 21, 1897

Original title: For the Children. Beautiful Garments

HAVE you read what we told you last week, about little children being plants in the Lord's garden? If so, you will remember that it is the light which makes the plants grow strong and bear fruit. Now let us see something else that the light will do for us.

Do you know what it is that gives the flowers all their different colors, and makes them so beautiful? Jesus tells us to...

Matthew 6

²⁸ Consider the lilies,

—and says,

²⁹ I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not *arrayed* like one of these.



Then He says that it is God who *so clothes* the grass of the field. Each little flower of the field has a garment, not made by its own

toiling and spinning, but given to it by its Creator who clothes it with beauty.

Although the flowers look so different one from another, and wear so many beautiful shades and tints of color, yet their garments are all made from exactly the same material. And now can you tell what this is? It is the *light*, the beautiful sunlight, with which each little flower is clothed. The light which looks white to us is made up of all the colors of the rainbow. The flowers, like the rainbow, reflect these different colors, and shows how beautiful the light really is.

Some things swallow up a part of the color, and reflect, or give back, the rest, and it is what they *give back* that gives them their color. Those things which swallow up *all* the light, and do not give back any, are black, like coal. But that which gives back all, and swallows up none, is pure white, like the snow.

This is how the flowers get their colors. Some swallow up all but the red colors, and give that back, like the red rose; some, like the forget-me-not, give back only the blue; and others, like the pure white lily, reflect all the light which shines upon them.

Of course the flowers can reflect these colors only when the light is shining. At night, when the sun goes down and the light is withdrawn, their beautiful garments are put off for a time, until the light returns and clothes them again.

Jesus says,

John 8

¹² I am the Light.

The sun is not the light, but only a light-bearer. It reflects to this world the glory which shines upon it from the face of Jesus Christ, who is the true “Light of the world.” And so the flowers that show the beautiful colors that are in the light, are really revealing to us the beauty of the Lord, and are clothed with His glory.

You will now see that the Book of nature, about which you will perhaps remember that we talked a little while ago, is a great mirror, into which we may look, and...

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ ...behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord.

All the beautiful things with which He has filled the earth, are the reflection of God himself. Many cannot see Him in His works, because sin has put a veil on their hearts and blinded their eyes. But Jesus says,

Matthew 5

⁸ Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they shall *see God*.

Dear children, ask Jesus to cleanse your hearts from all sin, and to open your eyes to see Him in all the things that He has made. Then as you look into His Word and works, the light of His countenance will shine out upon you, and as you reflect or give out this light to others, you too will be clothed with the glory of the Lord,

Psalm 29

² ...the beauty of holiness.



3. The Real Seed

Present Truth, September 22, 1898

Original title: For the Children. The Real Seed

WHERE did all the flowers in your garden come from, and all the fruits that are now piled up in the fruiterers' shops, and hanging on the trees and bushes in orchards and gardens?

Some of you perhaps will say that they grew...

Genesis 2

⁹ ...out of the ground,

—and that is true; but the earth can bring forth only what is first put into it. What do you have to put into the ground to get the sweet peas, nasturtiums, and mignonette, that delight you with their pretty blossoms and sweet fragrance? If you go back to the beginning of them all you will remember the little brown seeds, that you put into the ground in the spring, and watered and watched so eagerly, until the tiny green blades pushed themselves up through the ground, and grew greener and stronger each day, putting forth shoots and leaves and buds, until at last they were covered with blossoms.

But those seeds after all were not the beginning, for they came from other plants which sprang from other seeds, and so we could trace them right back to the real beginning when God said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth.

So we see that...

John 1

¹ In the beginning was *the Word*.

The Word of God was the beginning of everything in the earth. This is just what Jesus tells us when He says,

Luke 8

¹¹ The seed is the Word of God.

We said just now that the earth can only bring forth that which is first put into it, and now you will see that what was put into the earth in the beginning to make it bring forth and bud, was the Word of God. So all that you see springing up out of the earth, grass, flowers, the wheat and grains from which your bread and porridge are made, the nuts and fruits that you enjoy so much,—is the Word of God, put into all these different forms, so that you may see it, handle it, and taste it, and get life and strength from eating it every day.

The same verse in the 1st chapter of the *Gospel of John* which tells us that...

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word,

—says also,

¹ ...the Word was God.

When God said,

Genesis 1

²⁴ Let the earth bring forth,

—it was the life of Jesus going forth into the earth, and springing up in all these different beautiful forms to give pleasure and life to us. So when you eat of any of...

Genesis 4

³ ...the fruits of the ground,

—you are feeding upon the life of Jesus Christ. When you admire the grace and beauty of the flowers, it is the loveliness of Christ that you are delighting in.

All the leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruit that unfold and develop in the plant were wrapped up in the tiny seed that was put into the ground. They are only the showing forth of the riches of the life of God that was in the seed. So you see that the seed is not only the beginning, but also the end of the whole plant, for there

is nothing [unfolded in the end development of the plant, that was not already contained in the seed. The seed of Jesus is to grow]³ in us also, and all the beauty of His life will be seen. We will talk more about this next week.



³PP Editor's note: The bracketed part represents some lines that are missing from the *Pioneer Writings* collection. Unfortunately, all the 1898 editions of *Present Truth* are also missing from *Adventist Archives*. I have reconstructed the approximate thoughts, but these are not Waggoner's exact words.

4. After Its Kind

Present Truth, September 29, 1898

Original title: For the Children. After Its Kind

Mark 4

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.

LET us think for a little while of some more of the lessons of the kingdom that the seed teaches us.

Do you get any flowers in your garden just by wishing they were there? No, you must put in the seed before anything will grow. And then you do not sow any kind of seed that you can get hold of, and expect to get from it the particular flowers that you want. You must sow the right kind of seed, the seed of just the flowers that you want, just where you want them, for everything is sure to spring up...

Genesis 1

¹¹ ...after its kind.

If you should very much want some roses, and should sow poppy seeds, would you get any roses? Oh, no; all your wishes could never make roses grow from weeds, nor from anything but rose trees. You cannot...

Matthew 7

¹⁶ ...gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.

And just so, nothing will grow in your hearts, either good or bad, without seed. Just as you can have in your garden the flowers that you want by putting in the right seed, so you can have your lives just what you wish them to be by having the right kind of seed sown in your hearts. If you want, and I am sure you do, to have the gentleness and kindness of Christ blossom and bring forth fruit in your lives, you must have the good seed of the Word of God sown in your hearts.

When God said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass,

–in that Word He was putting into the ground the seed of all the grass and flowers that have ever sprung up. When He said,

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth...the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind,

–that was the seed of all the fruit that there has ever been in the earth.



He has made you from the dust of the ground, and you are His garden where He plants the seed of His Word, that you may bring forth just what He wishes. When He says to you,

1 John 4

⁴ Little children,...

⁷ ...love one another,

–He is sowing in your hearts the seed of love, from which all loving words and actions will spring forth like sweetest blossoms. And then Jesus says to you,

Ephesians 4

³² Be kind one to another,

–and that is the seed of kindness that He puts into you. He says also,

Ephesians 6

¹ Children, obey your parents,

–and this Word of God is the seed of obedience that He sows in your hearts.

When you sow seed in the earth you do not have to try to make it grow; neither does the earth try to bring it forth, but it springs up of itself because the life of God is in it. Jesus says,

John 6

⁶³ The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life.

Listen, then, to the precious words of Jesus, and so receive them into your hearts as the earth receives the seed, and you will not have to try to love one another, to be kind and obedient and gentle, but these graces of the Spirit of Jesus will spring forth in your lives as naturally as the flowers spring from the seed that you sow in the ground.

But there is something we have not yet spoken of that must be done before the seed is sown. You know that the ground must be dug up and watered and made soft and ready to receive the seed. If it should only lie on the top of the hard ground, or he put just below the surface, it would be lost. In the Parable of the Sower, which you may read in the 4th chapter of *Mark*, Jesus shows how important it is that the ground should be prepared to receive the good seed. It must sink deep into the soft ground, and then it will spring up and bring forth fruit.



So your hearts, which are the garden of the Lord, must be prepared by Him for the seed of the Word which He sows in them. If you ask Him, His Holy Spirit will work in you, and make your heart soft and tender and ready for the good seed.

Do you remember what David said about this good seed?

Psalm 119

¹¹ Your Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against You.



Just as the seed is buried in the soil, so must the Word be hidden in our hearts and kept there. Then we shall be among those of whom Jesus says,

Luke 8

¹⁵ These are they which, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit unto perfection.

1 John 2

⁵ Whoso keeps His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.

5. God's Garden

Present Truth, October 6, 1898

Original title: The Children. God's Garden

John 15

¹ My Father is the Husbandman.

THIS is what Jesus said, and we learned last week that *we* are His garden, or as the Apostle Paul tells us,

1 Corinthians 3 [RV]

⁹ ...you are God's husbandry [margin: "tilled land"].

We have been learning lately about the good seed,—the Word of God,—which He puts into our hearts, that we may bring forth just the blossoms and fruit that He loves to see, in His garden.

But if you have a garden you know that the sowing of the seed is not all that needs to be done in it. You must watch and water it; and besides this you will find springing up some plants that you have not sown, and that you do not want there. These you must pull up, because they are weeds that are not only useless themselves, but they will prevent the good seed from growing properly, and perhaps crowd it out altogether.

Now see how much care the Lord takes of His garden, how carefully and tenderly He watches over us, His "tilled land." He says,

Isaiah 27

³ I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

"Lest any hurt it"! Who is it that is trying to hurt the Lord's garden, and how can he do this? Oh, you know already, it is His great enemy, Satan. He wants to destroy all the Lord's beautiful plants, and change His garden into a waste wilderness, bringing forth nothing but thorns and weeds and poisonous plants.

And see how artfully he is working to do this. Jesus teaches us about it in one of His parables. He says that...

Matthew 13

²⁴ The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field.

²⁵ But...his enemy came and sowed tares...and went his way.

²⁶ But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

²⁷ So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? From whence then has it tares?

²⁸ He said unto them, An enemy has done this.

God in the beginning sowed only good seed in His field,—in this earth, and in the hearts of His children Adam and Eve. The earth brought forth only what was...

Genesis 2

⁹ ...pleasant to the sight and good for food.

And only love and all its pleasant and beautiful fruits appeared in the lives of God's children. But now, alas, the earth brings forth thorns and thistles, and many things not pleasant to the sight nor good for food, but things that will bring death instead of life. And there are hatred and quarreling, and other deadly weeds, growing up where only love should be.

From whence has the Lord's land these tares? The words of Jesus give us the answer,

Matthew 13

²⁸ An enemy has done this.

How he did it, and is still doing it, we will learn next week, and also how the words of Jesus will be at last fulfilled,

Matthew 15

¹³ Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

6. The Enemy

Present Truth, October 13, 1898

Original title: The Children. The Enemy

WE BEGAN to learn last week about the “enemy” who sowed tares—bad seed—in the Lord’s field, where He had put only the good seed of His own Word. Jesus said that this parable in the 13th chapter of *Matthew* is about the kingdom of God, and explained it to His disciples to teach us also, when He said,

Matthew 13

³⁸ The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

³⁹ The enemy that sowed them is the devil.



You all know when and how Satan began to cast his bad seed into the Lord's field. Into the beautiful garden of Eden he came with his heart filled with hatred, to try to destroy the work of God. He began by whispering lies into the ear of Eve, telling her that the Word of God was not true, so that she might let him pluck it from her heart, and put his bad seed in its place.

If only Eve had trusted in God and believed His word, she would have kept it in her heart and been safe. For we learned last week how carefully our Heavenly Father watches over His plants, and keeps them...

Isaiah 27

³ ...night and day,

—lest any hurt them. But, oh, she listened to Satan until she really believed that what he said was true, and so his bad seed got right into her heart, and choked the good seed and destroyed it.

And how quickly this bad seed sprang up and brought forth its bitter fruit of sinful actions, disobedience and shame and sorrow. Instead of...

Matthew 13

³⁸ ...the children of the kingdom,

—which come from the good seed of God's Word, Adam and Eve became...

³⁸ ...the children of the wicked one.

They were just tares or weeds in God's garden, instead of His precious and fruitful plants. And since, as we have learned, every plant must bring forth...

Genesis 1

¹¹ ...after its kind,

—and can only multiply itself, but not bring forth any other kind of plant, all their children must be like themselves,

Matthew 13

³⁸ ...the children of the wicked one.

So the whole world would be filled with weeds. How sad for the Lord to see His beautiful garden that He loved and watched so eagerly bringing forth only weeds. But He did not become discouraged and leave the field to Satan. He says,

Isaiah 46

¹⁰ My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure,

—and,

Isaiah 55

¹¹ My word...shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

No enemy can really hinder the work of the Lord, or keep Him from carrying out His purpose.

God did not pull the weeds out of His garden and destroy them at once; He loved His children so much that He longed to save them. He wanted to put the good seed back into their hearts, and undo all the work of the enemy.

So He gave to the woman in her sorrow the promise of a most precious Seed⁴ that He would plant in His field, through whom they might again become...

Matthew 13

³⁸ ...the children of the kingdom,

—and the whole world be filled with the precious fruit of it. Read the sixteenth verse of the 3rd chapter of *Galatians*,⁵ which will tell you who this precious Seed is, and then we will talk more about this next week.

⁴ *Genesis* 3:15.

⁵ **Galatians 3** ¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your Seed, which is Christ.

7. The Promised Seed

Present Truth, October 20, 1898

Original title: For the Children. The Promised Seed

WHO is the Seed—the precious Seed—that God promised to send into the world to save it from perishing? Have you read the text which tells us, of which we spoke last week?

Galatians 3

¹⁶ ...your Seed, which is *Christ*.

Yes,

John 3

¹⁶ God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Jesus is the Seed that God promised should bruise the serpent's head,⁶ should cast Satan out of this earth⁷ and destroy him,⁸ and make it again God's kingdom where only His own plants should bloom forever.

From the very beginning, when the promise was first made, those who believed it watched eagerly for the coming of the promised Seed. When Cain, the first little baby, was born, and his mother Eve said,

Genesis 4

¹ I have gotten a man from the Lord,

—she earnestly hoped that she held in her arms the One who was to be her Saviour. But, alas, how sadly disappointed she must have been when, as he grew up, his pride and jealousy and hatred of his brother showed all too plainly that he...

1 John 3

¹² ...was of that wicked one.

⁶ *Genesis* 3:15.

⁷ *John* 12:31.

⁸ *Hebrews* 2:14; 1 *John* 3:8.

Instead of the Son of God, they had got a son in their own image; for we learned how they themselves became...

Matthew 13

³⁸ ...the children of the wicked one,

—through receiving his word in the place of the Word of God. Many years passed before the promise of God was fulfilled, and no doubt many a mother, like Eve, longed that the precious Seed might be given to her care. So that His people should not lose hope, God often repeated through His prophets the promise of the Seed. And at last,

Galatians 4 [RV]

⁴ When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman.



You all know the story, how the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, and told her that she should have a son:

Luke 1

³⁵ The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also that holy thing

which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.

Think of the wonder of His love, not only that God should give His only begotten son, but that Jesus, who was...

Philippians 2

⁶ ...in the form of God,

—and had all the riches and glory of heaven, should give it all up for our sakes, and come into this world of sorrow and take the form of sinful man.

You will remember one lesson that we learned from the seed was that each thing must grow “after its kind.”⁹ And so Jesus, the son of God, although He no longer had the form of God, but...

⁷ ...was made in the likeness of men,

—grew up in this earth just as perfect, pure and holy, as He was in heaven. And as...

Luke 2

⁴⁰ The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him,

—His loving mother and those who watched Him knew that He was indeed the Son of God, so God-like was He, so loving, gentle, kind, and obedient.

But oh, it will not do us any good to know that Jesus once came and lived in this earth, unless this precious Seed be sown in *our own hearts*. Jesus, the Word of God...

John 1

¹⁴ ...was made flesh and dwelt among us;

—He lived here as a little child like you, just to show what you may be, what sort of plant you will become, if you let Him,—the Word of God, the good seed,—dwell in your heart.

⁹ Genesis 1:11.

John 1

¹² As many as received Him, to *them* gave He power to *become the sons of God*, even to them that believe on His name.

The Spirit of life, the Spirit of Jesus, is in the precious seed of the Word, just as it is in the seed that is sown in the earth. And so when you listen to the Word of God, and believe it, and receive it into your heart, the power which makes the seed spring up out of the earth, each “after its kind,” will...

Galatians 4

¹⁹ ...form Christ within you,

–and fill you with His pure and holy life, just as naturally as roses grow on rose trees, and apples on apple trees, and grapes on the vine.



8. Hidden Wonders

Present Truth, December 1, 1898

WHEN Professor Huxley was visiting the Highlands of Scotland, one day as he wandered over the moors, he picked up a moss-cup,¹⁰ and began to examine it with his magnifying glass.

A Highland shepherd came near and watched him with interest and curiosity. Mr. Huxley asked the man if he would like to see the moss-cup through the glass.

As he looked, his eyes opened wide with wonder; presently he said,

“Can this be a moss-cup?”

When he was assured that it was, he asked that he might see it again, and then, handing back the glass and the moss-cup, he said,

“O sir, I wish you had never shown it me.”

“Why?” asked Mr. Huxley in surprise.

“Because I do tread upon thousands of them every day of my life,” was his reply.

Now that his eyes were opened to see what had before been hidden from him in this common, familiar object, it had become such a mystery of wonder that the thought of trampling on it seemed almost like sacrilege.

And so it is with every one of the works of God’s hands. The more we think upon them, and seek them out, and examine them, the more we shall realize that He does indeed...

Jeremiah 23

²⁴ ...fill heaven and earth,

¹⁰ PP Editor’s note: This is called “Pixie Cup Lichen,” or “Trumpet Lichen” in our time.

–and,

Isaiah 6

³ ...the whole earth is full of His glory.



9. The Gospel of the Spring

Present Truth, February 2, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring

SOMEONE has said that...

The Book of Nature, like the Holy Word, has four gospels,—the gospel according to the Spring, the gospel according to the Summer, the gospel according to the Autumn, and the Gospel according to the Winter,—each proclaiming the goodness and wisdom and love of God.

There is really only *one Gospel*, the...

Luke 2

¹⁰ ...good tidings of great joy, [that]...

¹¹ ...unto us is born...*a Saviour*, which is Christ the Lord.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell us the same good news of Jesus who...

Matthew 1

²¹ ...shall *save His people* from their sins.

Paul tells us that the Gospel of Christ is...

Romans 1

¹⁶ ...the power of God unto salvation.

And this is just what we may read in all nature. The four seasons,—Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter,—are in different ways all telling us the same Gospel.

Think what “good tidings of great joy” the first spring-time must have brought to Adam and Eve! How sadly they must have watched the fading flowers and falling leaves of autumn, and mourned over their sin which had brought death and desolation over the face of the fair earth.

But at last, at God’s appointed time, a change came. The leafless, and seemingly lifeless trees burst forth afresh into bud and leaf and bloom, the earth was covered again with its flowery car-

pet, and their wondering eyes could see *life*,—now life everywhere springing forth from the deathlike sleep of winter.

Oh, what hope and joy and courage this must have brought to them. The winter had taught them that...

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death,

—and shown them something of what death is. The spring brought the bright hope of the resurrection from the dead, through the promised Saviour, who has power over death. For it was His life that they could see springing from the dead in all the living things around them.

But for this, the winter would have been death indeed; there never would have been any more leaves on the bare trees, no more fresh flowers springing from the barren ground. So the seeming death of winter, followed by the new life of the spring, teaches us that through the power of the life of Jesus,

Death is hallowed into sleep,
And every grave becomes a bed.¹¹

Now that the winter is passing, and the bright spring-time coming on, ask Jesus to anoint your eyes and open your ears, so that you may see and hear the message of salvation that He is giving you in this glad season.

You may read it in the trees, which have stood through all the winter season, the very image of death. The leaves are the lungs of the tree, through which it breathes. When the leaves are all gone the trees stop breathing; the sap, which is the life-blood of the trees, does not flow any longer, and there is no sign of life remaining. But the trees and plants are not dead, only sleeping and soon they burst forth into life and beauty, all the more fresh and vigorous for their long rest.

¹¹ John Mason Neale, *The Foe Behind, the Deep Before*, 1853.

You may read the Gospel in which in the seeds, which in the early spring-time you bury out of sight in the cold, dark ground, while you wait in hope and confidence that at the right time they will spring up and bloom.

O to awake from death's short sleep
Like the flowers from their wintry grave,
And to rise all-glorious, in the day
When Christ shall come to save.¹²

But you need not wait until Jesus comes, to know the power of His life in you. He wants you to know every day the power of His life to overcome sin, which is *death*, and to fill you with His own righteousness, which is *life*.

You may read this same Gospel also in the pretty moths and gay butterflies that after their long chrysalis sleep through the winter, will soon be flitting about full of joyous life; and in many other things that, we cannot speak of now. But while this short season lasts, learn all you can of the “good tidings” that it brings, and we will try to study together a few chapters of “The Gospel of the Spring.”



¹² Frances Jane Douglass, *For All Thy Love and Goodness*, 1848.

10. Seeds

Present Truth, February 9, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Seeds

THE very first thing that you look for, the first sign that the winter is over and the spring is here,—what is it? Wise king Solomon tells us what he says:

Song of Solomon 2

¹¹ For, lo, the winter is past;

The rain is over and gone;

¹² *The flowers appear on the earth.*

Long ago the Chinese put the same thought into this short and beautiful legend:

The flower opens, and, behold! another year.

First comes the pure and delicate Snowdrop, looking almost like a living snowflake, or as if the mild breath of the spring,

...by some transforming power,

Had changed an icicle into a flower.¹³

This is followed in turn by the Crocus, the Violet, the Hyacinth, the Primrose, and so on all through the year. Those of you who have gardens, and love to watch the sweet things growing there, know that each month brings some new beauties to adorn the British flower garden.

And not in the garden only, but in the woods, in the fields where by and by you will see the red clover, the waving corn and dancing oats, and in the orchards,—think of the richness, as well as the beauty, that is coming out of the earth.

Where does all this beauty and fruitfulness spring from? Perhaps some of you will remember some of the lessons we had together about seeds in the autumn, when we learned that the real seed, from which all other seeds have come, and from which ev-

¹³ Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *The Invitation*, 1773.

everything in the earth is brought forth, is *the Word of God*. For in the beginning God said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass,

—trees, fruit, whose seed is in itself. So all the wonders springing from the ground are the visible Word of God,—God's Word made into forms that we can see and touch.

Your words, you know, express your thoughts; by them you are able to give out the thoughts that come into your mind. The Bible tells us that:

Proverbs 23

⁷ As a man thinks in his heart, *so is he*.

So your words, which tell what you think in your heart, show just what you yourself are.

And it is just so with the words of God. They express His thoughts, and so show us *what He is*. And in all these beautiful forms into which God, by the power of His Word, has put his thoughts, He is making it possible for us to *see Him*, to learn of His nature.

There are a great many different seeds, for there are many, many thousands of different kinds of plants. Think of it! Each tiny seed has wrapped up in it *a thought of God*, and as it springs up and unfolds in leaf and bud and flower and fruit, we may read in it the thoughts of God, and so learn to know and love Him.

Be sure to sow some seeds this spring, if you can have ever so small a piece of ground, or only a window box or flower-pot to put them in. Think as you look at the little seeds before you put them in the earth, of the wonderful, powerful, beautiful life of God that is in them. And as you watch them spring up and grow, and unfold and develop, in these plants which are His visible Word, God himself will talk with you, telling you His thoughts and revealing himself to you.

11. Jesus, the True Seed

Present Truth, February 16, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Jesus, the True Seed

WE WERE talking last week about the seed being multiplied,—how we may get many, many seeds from one. But there is something that we did not speak of then, that must take place before this can be done. Jesus said,

John 12

²⁴ Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth *much fruit*.

Perhaps some of you are studying botany,—plant life. Here, then, is the very first lesson that you need to learn about the plants. The seed must *die* before it can be *multiplied*. It can give birth and life to other plants only by giving up itself, by the sacrifice of its own life.

The new plant that is to spring from the seed is in most seeds only a tiny part of the whole seed. All the rest is for the nourishment of the young plant when it shall awake and spring up. But the seed must die and change before the new plant can spring up and feed upon it.

So you see that the seed really gives up its own life in order to give life. But is it lost? Oh, no: it is *multiplied*. Many plants, bearing many seeds exactly like it, come from it. If it should not die, but keep its life all to itself, it would, as Jesus said, “abide alone,” and at last perish and be lost indeed. But by giving its life, it saves and keeps it.

And now, what is the Gospel message that our Heavenly Father has written for us in all this? Do you remember that the very first Gospel promise ever heard by men said something about *seed*?

When He first promised to give His only begotten Son to save men from the power of Satan, God called Him, the *Seed*. And

many times, when this promise was repeated, Jesus was called by the same name. He is,

“the Seed of the woman;”¹⁴

“the Seed of Abraham;”¹⁵

“the Seed of David.”¹⁶

But except the seed...

John 12

²⁴ ...fall into the ground and die, it abides alone.

If you had the seed of a very rare and choice plant, would you think it too great a treasure to be sown in the ground? No, the more you valued it, the more anxious you would be to sow it, so that it might not “abide alone,” but that you might get many more like it.

And so God did not keep back “His only begotten Son,”¹⁷ but gave Him freely, so that He should not “abide alone,” but that He might...

Hebrews 2

¹⁰ ...bring *many sons* unto glory.

In the place of the one seed that is put in the ground, we get many seeds exactly like it. In the place of the one Son whom He gave, God the Father will at last, when the harvest shall come and all the seed shall be gathered, get many sons, many children, all in His exact image.

The seed dies that it may give life. Jesus died that He might give life to you that you might feed upon His life, and grow into His image, and so be one of the *many* children that through His sacrifice He will bring to glory. He died so that He might not “abide alone,” but that you might abide with Him for ever.

¹⁴ *Genesis* 3:15.

¹⁵ *Galatians* 3:16.

¹⁶ *Romans* 1:3.

¹⁷ *John* 3:16.



12. Flowers

Present Truth, February 23, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Flowers

HOW we love them, and how eagerly we watch for the first blossoms of Spring! Think of the love of God in giving us the flowers. So many of the things that we have talked about together, He has provided to supply some *need* of ours, something that we could not live without, and the air which brings us the breath of life, the sunshine, and the food that He brings for us out of the earth. But have you ever thought that...

God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak tree and the cedar tree,
Without a flower at all.

Our outward life requires them not;
Then wherefore had they birth?
To minister delight to man,
To beautify the earth.¹⁸

Yes, our Heavenly Father, when He prepared a home for His children, did everything that could be done to give them pleasure. He made things...

Genesis 2

⁹ ...pleasant to the sight, [–as well as] good for food.

And think, too, of the delightful odors of so many of the Spring flowers, the sweet breath of the violet, the hyacinth, and the cowslip.

All this God has done on purpose for us His children; for as the great and good poet George Herbert has truly and sweetly sung:

Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight or as our treasure;

¹⁸ Mary Howitt, *The Use of Flowers*, 1837.

The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.¹⁹

It is told of the great naturalist Linnaeus that when he first came to England and saw our common gorse or furze bush in its blaze of yellow flowers, he fell on his knees and thanked God for letting him see such a beautiful sight.

Is not a flower a beautiful gift for one friend to give to another? For not only is it so sweet in itself, but we love it all the more because of the kind thought of the giver; of whom it makes us think every time that we look at it.

Now if you will take each one of the sweet blossoms of Spring as just what it is,—a gift to you from your Heavenly Father, how much sweeter they will be to you than ever before. Then every time you see one you will think of Him who made it with His own hands for you, who painted it with lovely tints of color to please your eyes, and scented it with delicious fragrance for you to smell. Then every flower you see will preach the Gospel to you, for is it not “good news”²⁰ that your Father in Heaven loves and thinks of you so much?

Let me tell you one thing more about the flowers. Not only has God made them for you, but in them He is giving himself to you. The life that the flowers have is God’s own life, their beauty is...

Psalm 90

¹⁷ ...the beauty of the Lord.

When in the beginning God said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth,

² ...the Spirit of God moved...

—upon the earth, and His living Word sprang up from it clothed in all these beautiful forms. God wanted His children to see His

¹⁹ George Herbert, *Man*, 1633.

²⁰ *Proverbs* 25:25; *Isaiah* 40:9, 41:27, 52:7, 61:1; *Nahum* 1:15; *Luke* 2:10.

loveliness, so that they might be attracted to Him and learn to love Him more and more.

Now as you...

Matthew 6

²⁸ Consider the lilies,...how they grow,

–they will teach you how you, too, may grow in grace,²¹ and show forth the beauty of the Lord,²² so that others may see and learn to love Him.²³

It is just by hearing His Word, by letting His Word, which He says is “Spirit and life”²⁴ come in and move upon your heart, and work there as you can now see it working in the earth, making the grass and flowers to spring up from it.²⁵

If you keep the precious and powerful words of God in your heart, this good seed will bring forth in you all the sweet graces of His Spirit,

Galatians 5

²² ...love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance.

Sweet is the opening flower
Which just begins to bloom,
Which every day and every hour
Fresh beauties will assume.

But sweeter that young heart
Where faith and love and peace
Blossom and bloom in every part,
With sweet and varied grace.²⁶

²¹ 2 Peter 3:18.

²² Psalm 9:1.

²³ Psalm 40:3.

²⁴ John 6:63.

²⁵ Isaiah 55:10-11.

²⁶ William Freeman Lloyd, *The Spring*, or “Sweet is the time of spring,” 1850.

13. The Tree of Life

Present Truth, June 15, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. The Tree of Life

WE HAVE talked together often of how everything in nature is teaching us something of the One who made it,—of Jesus the Creator of all things, who lives and reveals himself to us in every one of His works.

I hope you will remember what we learned in the Spring about the seed; that Jesus is the true Seed from which the whole creation springs,²⁷ the beginning of all things, and the end, for everything in the whole creation of God is just the unfolding of His wonderful life. In Him *all fullness dwells*,²⁸ and...

Isaiah 6 [RV, margin]

³ ...the fullness of the whole earth is His glory.²⁹

Now let us see how He is teaching us this lesson in the trees that we now see around us covered with fresh green leaves, and many of them with sweet, fragrant blossoms, the promise of fruit and seed for the harvest.

Think of the thousands of these little leaves, and what it is that keeps them so fresh and green. It is the sap, the lifeblood of the tree, running through the twig upon which they grow, that carries life to them. If you take a leaf from the twig you will find that it will soon lose its fresh green appearance, and wither and dry up.

Suppose, then, that we break off the whole twig; would it and the leaves continue to live? No; for the twig, like the leaf, depends

²⁷ *Colossians* 1:16 [RV].

²⁸ *Colossians* 2:9.

²⁹ From *Present Truth*, January 26, 1899, *The Gospel of Isaiah*, "Saved and Sent": "“The fullness of the whole earth is His glory.” This, as may be seen from the margin of the *Revision*, is the literal rendering of the Hebrew. Wherever in the earth we see fullness, revealing itself in the multiplied forms of life, it is the glory of the Lord.” (EJW)

for its life upon something else, and this life is carried to it through the branch.

But the branch, like the twig, is only *the channel* for the life which flows through it, and it does not have life in itself. Remember what Jesus said about the branches of the vine, and this is just as true of every kind of branch:

John 15

⁴ The branch cannot bear fruit of itself,

—because it has no life of itself.

Every part of the tree depends upon the tree from which it springs for its life, and if separated from the tree is nothing at all, for it soon withers and crumbles into dust. The largest bough as well as the tiniest leaf is nothing if but away from the tree; it depends just as much as the little leaf, on the tree from which it has its beginning, for its life.

The water that the roots suck up from the earth becomes the sap or blood of the tree and circulates all through it, carrying the life of God to every branch and twig and leaf. For we have learned that all the water in the world is God's own life poured out upon it, to give life to all His works.

See, now, what this is teaching us of Jesus, and how we are joined to Him, and depend upon Him for all things. The Word of God teaches us that Jesus is "The Tree of Life." This wonderful Tree of Life fills heaven and earth, and its branches spread out into all God's great universe. Every living thing in the universe is part of this wondrous Tree of Life. Nothing has any life of its own, the life of Jesus flows into all things, giving life and power. As the sap circulates through the tree, His life throughout all the world, and carries life to everything in it.

We take in the life of Jesus in our food, drink it in the water, breathe it in the air, and receive it in the life-giving sunlight. As the leaf and the branch live in the tree and by the life of the tree, so...

Acts 17

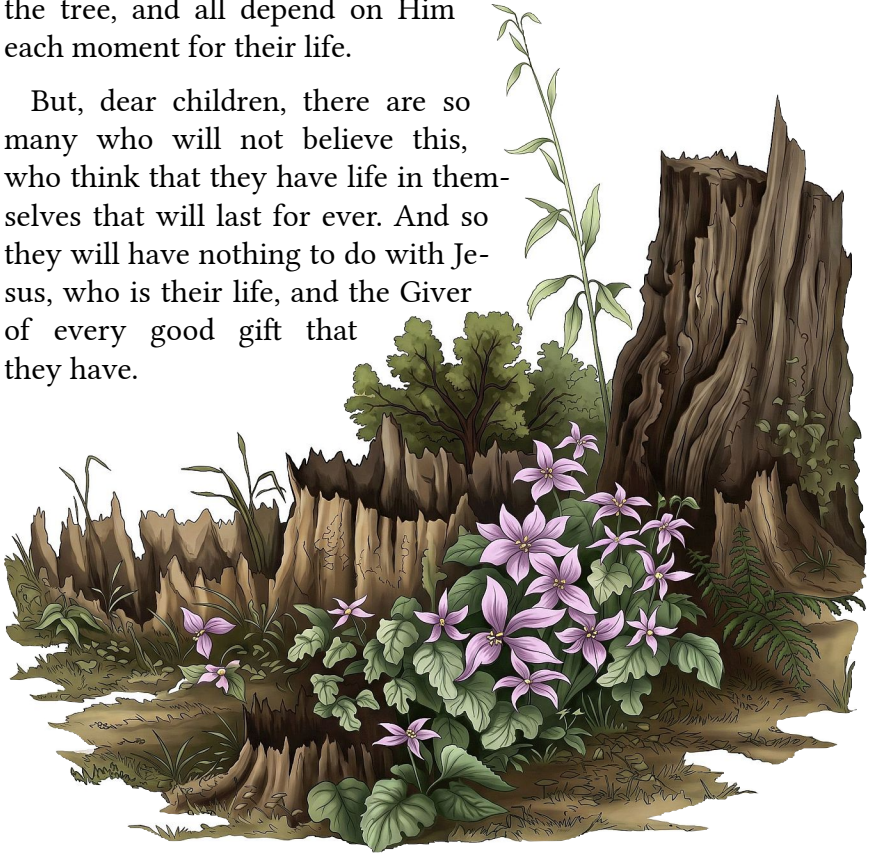
²⁸ In Him we live, and move, and have our being,

—and so does everything that lives and moves, as much the tiny insect and frail blossom, as all the great works of His hands.

That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath, and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe.³⁰

All things spring from Jesus, as the leaves and branches from the tree, and all depend on Him each moment for their life.

But, dear children, there are so many who will not believe this, who think that they have life in themselves that will last for ever. And so they will have nothing to do with Jesus, who is their life, and the Giver of every good gift that they have.



³⁰ William Cullen Bryant, *A Forest Hymn*, 1824.

But what would happen to the leaf, the twig, or the branch, if it refused to be joined to the tree from which it gets its life? It must *perish*, and being good for nothing, be destroyed. And this is just what must happen to all who will not have Jesus to be their life; there is no other life, and so there is nothing for them but death and destruction.

Jesus now gives life to all, to those who do not love Him, as well as to those who do; He makes His sun to shine upon the evil and on the good, and sends rain upon the just and on the unjust.³¹

But when He comes there will be a separation, a cutting off from the Tree of Life of all who will not have Jesus to be their Saviour and their life, and like the withered and dead branches of a tree, these will be destroyed. But all those who love and choose Jesus will abide forever rooted in Him, and bearing precious fruit to His glory.



³¹ *Matthew 5:45.*

14. Lessons from the Trees

Present Truth, June 22, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. Lessons from the Trees

Revelation 22

² And on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bore twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month.

THIS beautiful life-giving tree was in the midst of the garden that God first gave to man for his home. You will remember why He took it away from him after he sinned;

Genesis 3

²² ...lest he should put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.

Yet there were left in the earth many other trees,

Genesis 2

⁹ ...pleasant to the sight, and good for food,

—and all of these also were to give life to man. The trees and the vines give forth in fruit the life that God is giving to them, that through them He may give His life to us. In all the fruits of the earth God is giving us His own life.

Think again of what we learned last week,—how the life of God, which He sends upon the earth in the showers with which He waters it, is drawn up through the roots of the tree, and carried to every part of it, running through every branch and twig and leaf.

This life of which the trees are full, has been lately shown in the sweet blossoms with which many of them have been covered. Perhaps you have seen in the orchards the beautiful clusters of pink and white apple blossoms, the little cherry blossoms, and other flowers that have beautified the trees and filled the air with fragrance. Now these are all falling, for they are not the end but only the beginning of the giving forth of the tree's life for the benefit of God's other creatures.

First the trees blossom, and then they unblossom;
And then there is a left but a little green ball
That will biggen and brighten and sweeten and ripen,
And bounce in the basket, an apple, next fall.³²

If you remember our Spring lessons about the flowers, the bees, and the butterflies, and how these are used by God to cause the “fertilization” of the plants, or to make them fruitful, you know that the pretty blossoms that so much delight our senses, and the honey that is found in them, are really only an attraction for these insects, so that the pollen, the flower dust which the seeds need to make them fruitful, shall be carried from one blossom to another.

For some of the plants the wind does this work of carrying the yellow pollen dust to fertilize the ripening seeds, but such plants have small colorless and scentless blossoms, that we should hardly call flowers at all.

So you can see that in all this sweetness and beauty, the real object is *fruit*. In it all we see the working of the same Word of life that multiplies the birds,

Psalm 104

¹² ...that sing among the branches,

—and makes them bring forth their young ones every Spring season. For the same Word said also in the beginning:

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth...the fruit tree *yielding fruit* after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth.

Read *Matthew* 21:18-20, and see what became of the fig tree upon which Jesus found no fruit, “but leaves only.” See also what He says in *John* 15 about unfruitful branches:

John 15

² Every branch that bears not fruit He takes away,

³² Frances Allen.

⁶ ...and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

The fruit tree or grape vine that bears no fruit is good for nothing, fit only to be destroyed.



Did you know, dear little ones, that you are little trees that Jesus has planted in His garden, and that He wants you to bear fruit that shall give life to others? Of all who are His we are told...

Isaiah 61

³ ...that they might be called *trees of righteousness*, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

All “trees of righteousness” are trees of *life*, because righteousness is life,³³ just as sin is death. In the 1st *Psalm* we read of the one who loves the Lord and walks in His way, that:

Psalms 1

³ He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his *fruit* in his season.

Jesus wants you to be so filled with the Spirit of life that, like the trees, you will give out the sweetness of it in life-giving fruit,

Philippians 1

¹¹ ...the fruits of righteousness,

Ephesians 5

⁹ ...the fruits of the Spirit,

—of which we read:

Galatians 5

²² The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

²³ Meekness, temperance.

Jesus has promised to give the Holy Spirit, which brings forth all these lovely fruits,

Matthew 7

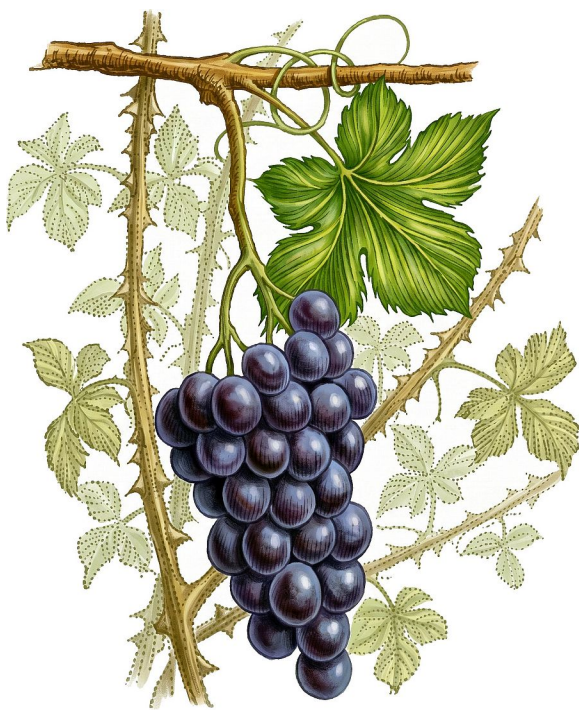
¹¹ ...to them that ask Him.

Ask Him for it, dear children, and believe that He gives it to you, for His promise cannot fail.

Let His Holy Spirit fill you with good fruits, that through your love and gentleness, your joy and peace, your longsuffering and patience, those around you may taste the sweetness of the Lord’s

³³ *Galatians* 3:21.

life, may see that He is good, and learn to love and trust Him for themselves.



15. Good and Bad Fruit

Present Truth, June 29, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. Lessons from the Trees

ALL of you, dear children, are little trees that God has planted in His garden. You know that all trees are not alike, but we can tell the nature of the tree by the kind of fruit that it bears.

Matthew 12

³³ The tree is known by its *fruit*.

Jesus says,

John 15

⁶ He that abides in me, and I in Him, the same brings forth *much fruit*.

This fruit is shown in the life; if we abide in Jesus, His life will be in us and we shall live as He did when He was upon the earth himself. So,

1 John 2

⁶ He that says he abides in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.

If there is a tree in the orchard that you do not know the name of you will watch to see what kind of fruit grows on it, and then you will know. If it is an apple tree, it ought to have apples on it, and at the right time of year it will, if it is a good tree.

Matthew 7

¹⁶ You shall know them by their fruits, Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?

¹⁷ Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit.

¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them.

If we are rooted in Jesus by faith, believing in and loving Him, we shall draw His sweet life into us continually, and give it out in

good fruit. But God's Word tells us of another root, the root from which those bad trees spring that bring forth evil fruit. Satan is this deadly root, the one from whom comes all the bad fruit that is found in the lives of the people in this world.

Very early in the history of the world we find these two kinds of fruits growing here. Look at the first two brothers who ever lived in this earth, and see what kind of fruit they bore.



Almost the first thing that we learn of Cain, the first-born son of Adam, is that he was jealous of his brother Abel. And this feeling of jealousy that he let Satan put into his heart, was the bad seed that brought forth the hatred that led him to kill Abel.

Envy, hatred, murder,—you will find these all mentioned in the list of bad fruits given in the 5th chapter of *Galatians*, contrasted with the good sweet fruits of the Spirit of Jesus of which we learned last week. Then what sort of a tree was Cain? From what root did he come? You will find the answer in the 3rd chapter of the 1st *Epistle of John*:

1 John 3

¹⁰ In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his brother.

¹¹ For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that you should love one another.

¹² Not as Cain, *who was of that wicked one*, and slew his brother.

Of all such trees, which are of the wicked one, and so can bring forth only the bad fruit that comes from this root, we are told what the end will be:

Malachi 4

¹ For behold the day comes that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither *root* nor *branch*.

Satan, the root, and his followers the branches, will be destroyed, and only those who abide in Jesus and bear good fruit will remain.

But of Abel, the brother of Cain, we are told that “by *faith*” he offered unto God an acceptable sacrifice.³⁴ Faith, you will remember is one of the good fruits of the Spirit, and the one which brings to us all the other fruits: love, joy, peace, gentleness, and goodness. For it is faith which brings Christ Jesus to dwell in our hearts,³⁵ so that His life may flow out in all these good fruits.

These two, Cain and Abel, were brothers, living in the same home, having the same teaching from their father, and the same blessings from God. Yet one became a bad tree bearing evil fruit, while the other was a good tree bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

Have you noticed how the life-giving sunlight shines on every part of the land, and how the gentle, refreshing rain falls all over the earth on all the trees and bushes and plants. Yet some will

³⁴ *Hebrews* 11:4.

³⁵ *Ephesians* 3:17.

bring forth only thorns and thistles, briers and poison berries, while others will bear beautiful, fragrant blossoms and good useful fruit.

And it is just so in the Lord's garden where His human trees are planted. His gentle, loving, tender Spirit comes to each one, pleading with all, seeking an entrance into their hearts and drawing them to God. Those who yield to His movings, and open their hearts to His movings, and open their hearts to His sweet influence, He will fill with good fruits, just as the rain and the sunshine load the trees with fruitfulness.

But those to whom He comes in vain, who harden their hearts by refusing to let Him in, will bring forth only thorns and briers and bad fruits,

Hebrews 6

⁸ ...whose end is to be burned.

Dear children, which will you be? You may choose now if, you will let the Spirit of Jesus fill you with His life and make you a good tree that brings forth only good fruit, or if you will grieve Him away, and quench the sweet sunshine of His presence, and so bear no fruit to His glory.

I would not be a fruitless tree
With foliage o'er and o'er,
On which the Master's eye might find
But leaves and nothing more.
On which the Master's curse might fall
And wither root and branch and all.

I would not be a fruitless branch
Of Christ, who is the Vine,
And cast abroad my deadly shade
Where sunlight ought to shine,—
The which the Husbandman must spurn
And cast into the fire to burn.

I would not be a barren ground,
Refusing aught to yield
But choking thistles, thorns and tares,
A bad and worthless field,
From which the Lord would turn away
And leave it ever waste to lay.³⁶



³⁶ Rev. Wm. Appel, *What I Would Not Be*.

16. The Work of the Leaves

Present Truth, September 21, 1899

Original title: Little Folks. The Work of the Leaves

NOW the green leaves for whose first appearance we watched so eagerly in the Spring, are already falling from the trees; and making a soft rustling carpet over the ground. Some that are still upon the trees show by their bright garments that they are preparing to leave. Their work, which can only be done in their green dresses, is now over, and they put on their holiday clothing for a little while before they leave us altogether.

Have you ever wondered why the leaves fall off as they do in the Autumn, and the trees are left standing so bare all through the Winter? It is because the work of the trees is over for the year; they do not work at all in the Winter, but go to sleep and rest all through the cold weather.

As most of the work of the tree is done by the leaves, these busy little hands are not needed any more. When the work is over, they dropped away, and helped to nourish the ground and prepare it for another Summer's work.



Perhaps you never thought of the leaves as the *hands* of the tree. In a beautiful figure of speech which the prophet Isaiah uses, he says,

Isaiah 55

¹² ...all the trees of the field shall clap their hands;

—and in this he seems to refer to the movement and the sound that the leaves make when they are stirred by the breeze.

But what about the work that these little hands have to do? You did not know they are so busy, for their work is done so quietly;

and yet every green thing upon the earth, even every little blade of grass, is busily working all through the sunny day.

One very important work that the leaves do is to prepare the food that the tree or plant needs. The raw food is sucked up from the earth by the roots, and carried by the sap into the leaves, and until it is there prepared and changed and cooked at the sun fire, it cannot be used by the plant for food to build itself up, and store in grain or fruit, according to the nature of the plant.

For besides its own growth, there is something else for the plant to do before its year's work is over, and for this it is preparing all the time. Even the beautiful blossoms which have pleased us so much during the summer, are only a part of this preparation. It must *multiply* in obedience to the command of God.

Every plant must obey the Word which said:

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb *yielding seed*, and fruit tree bearing fruit after its kind, *wherein is the seed* thereof.

The seed, as you know, is formed in the flower, but the flower depends upon the green leaf to prepare all the food it needs to produce the tiny baby plant, and store the seed with nourishment which will last until it can put forth green leaves of its own to do this work for it.

Remember now what God said to man about these plants bearing seed and fruit, which He commanded the earth to bring forth,

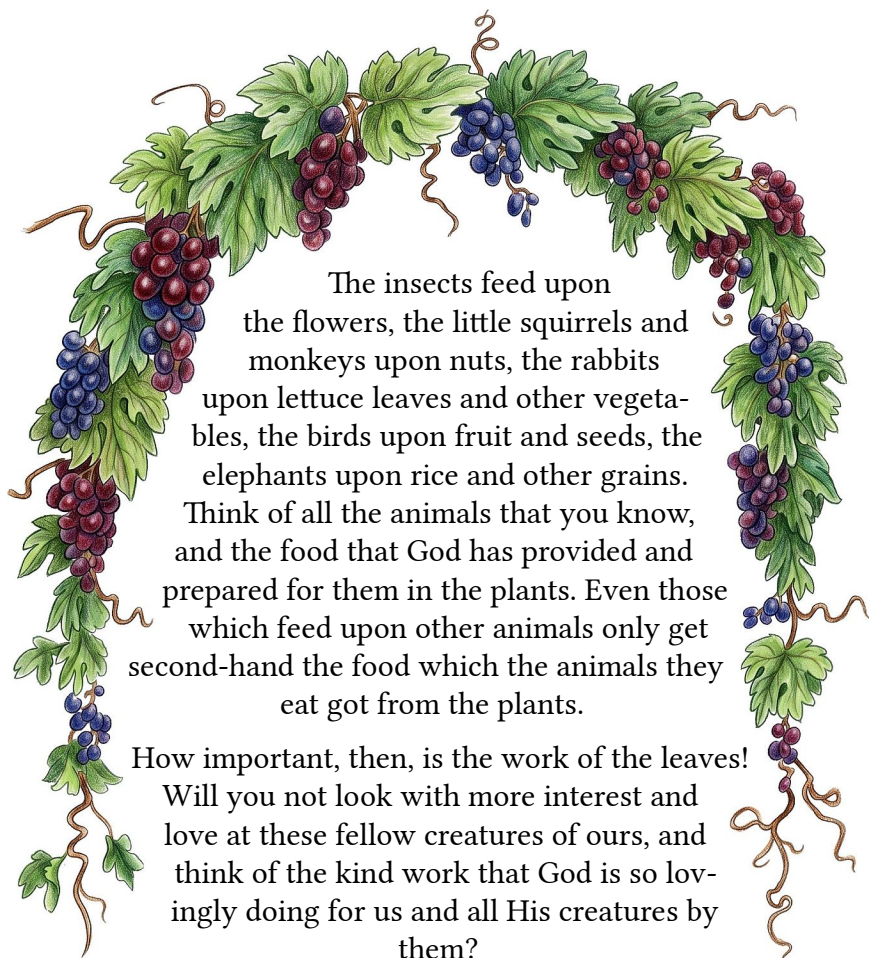
²⁹ To you it shall be for meat.

For whom, then, are the green leaves working? Not for the plants on which to grow only, but for *you*,—to prepare a store of food for you which shall last until another season brings a fresh supply. This is what the green leaves of the fruit trees, the nut trees, and the waving fields of green corn, have been busy doing all through the Summer. And all this is the fulfilling of the Word

of God,—the working out of what was in His mind when He created every green thing upon the earth.

Not only for us, but the whole animal creation, the plants prepare the food that is needed, and there is no other source of supply for any living creature. For to the animals God said,

³⁰ I have given you every green herb for meat.



Next week we hope to tell you more about this work.

17. The Breathing of the Leaves

Present Truth, September 28, 1899

Original title: For Little Ones. The Work of the Leaves

WE WERE talking last week of the wonderful work of the green leaves,—how in them the food that the roots draw up out of the earth is cooked by the sun and prepared for the use of the plants. But the plants and trees need other food besides what they get out of the earth, and this the busy little leaves gather and prepare for them.

You will wonder perhaps what this food can be, for you do not see them feeding, nor anything for them to feed upon. Yet the leaves are covered with tiny little mouths, which are generally open all day when the weather is favorable, and through them they take in a supply of food *out of the air*.

Plants cannot take “solid food,” it has to be all dissolved for them. What the roots take from the earth is dissolved in water, and passes through them in what we call the sap; what the leaves take from the air is also dissolved, and is in the form of gas or vapor.

You have learned about the poisonous carbonic acid gas which we breathe out into the air. The oxygen that is in the pure air when it is taken into our bodies, passes into our blood, and burns up the carbon that a great deal of our food is made up of. The carbon uniting in this way with the oxygen, makes what is called carbonic acid gas, which passes out of our bodies through our lungs into the air.

If we had to breathe this gas over and over, and could not get a fresh supply of pure air, we should die. But see how wonderfully and beautifully God is working to purify the air and prepare more food for us.

This gas which is so poisonous to us, is the very thing that the plants need for their food. It is drawn through the little mouths that we spoke of, and by the help of the sunlight the carbon and

oxygen are separated again. The oxygen is given out into the air for us to breathe, and the plants keep the carbon and form it into food for us again.

Some plants make the food that they take from earth and air into grains for our use,—corn, rice, oats, barley; others into beans and peas; some into vegetables such as potatoes and turnips; some into fruits and nuts. Some build it into hard wood that is so useful for making our houses and furniture and fuel. And perhaps you know that coal,—so necessary to those who live in cold climates like this is in the winter,—is *pure carbon*, which the leaves of the tree have taken from the air in the way that we told you of.

Think of other useful things that we get from the plants,—oil, cork, India-rubber, cotton and flax for making our clothing, and many other things.

At night the green leaves shut their little mouths and sleep as you do. The plants do not feed at night, but even then they are not quite idle. Like you they breathe and grow, using up the food that they have gathered and prepared during the day.

Remember whose breath it is that the plants breathe,—the same breath that is breathed into you, the breath of God. And the life that they have is just the same life as yours,—the life of Jesus. It is He who is doing all these wonderful things for us through the plants which He has commanded the earth to bring forth. It is His wisdom working in them that guides them in all their work, and His love which in them is ministering to the needs of all His creatures.

Are you wondering how we are going to get pure air through the winter months when the fields and trees are bare? God has thought of this too, and provided for it. He blows the poisoned air away from us to places where there are many plants needing it to feed on, and He blows back to us the air that they have purified. Think of this when the strong, cold winds of winter are blowing about you,—how through them God is providing you with sweet,

pure, life-giving air, and carrying away what would be harmful to you.



Christian gets Leaves from the Tree of Life
(A Scene from Pilgrim's Progress)

18. Some Carnivorous Plants

Present Truth, October 5, 1899

Original title: Children's Corner. Some Carnivorous Plants

HOW is it that the birds, the insects, the fish, many animals, and even many people, now feed upon other living creatures, instead of only upon the plants which God said should be their food? Perhaps what we told you last week about the plants has brought this question into your minds.

It is because the curse that came upon the earth through man's sin has had an effect upon the whole creation, and changed and perverted the nature that God gave to His creatures in the beginning.

It is still the life of God that is seen in all things. This is shown in the wisdom and skill that the animals have, in their tender love for their little ones and often in their kindness to one another when in difficulty or trouble.

But God's will is not now "done on earth as it is in heaven,"³⁷ and as it will be when God makes the earth new and fills it with new creatures. For then, He says,

Isaiah 65

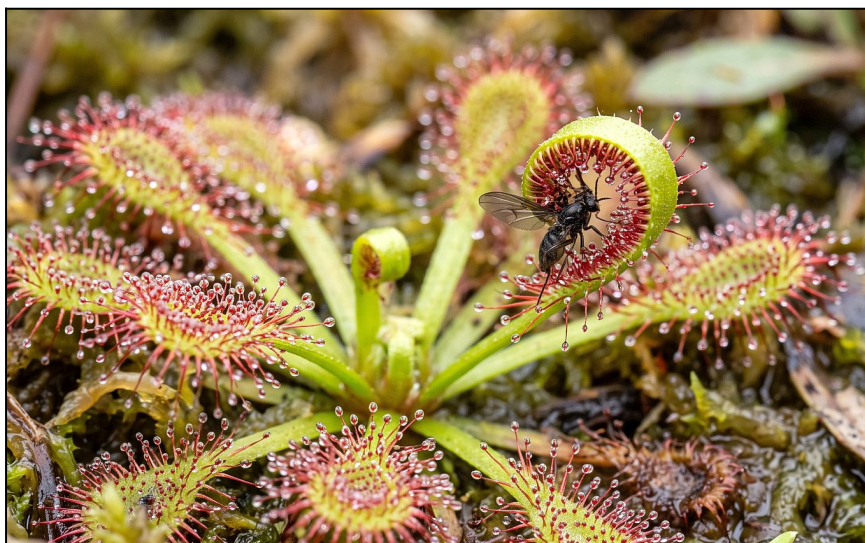
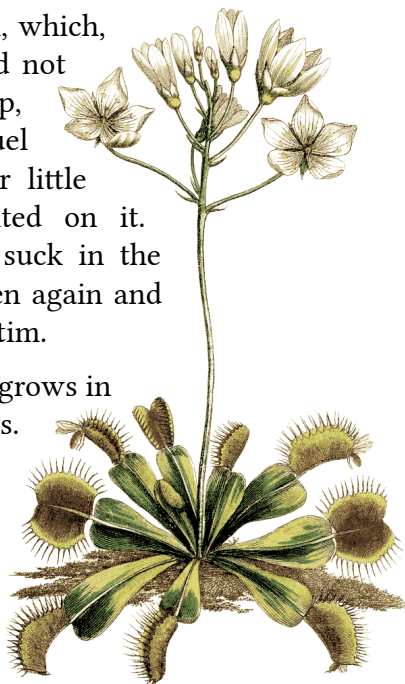
²⁵ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain.

But we are not now going to talk about the animals. We want to tell you about some *plants* that have such an unnatural and perverted appetite that they are not content with the good food that God has provided in the earth for their roots to suck up, and in the air for their leaves to absorb in the way we told you of last week. These are called "carnivorous plants" just as the animals that feed upon the flesh of others are called "carnivorous animals."

³⁷ *Matthew* 6:10.

Here is a picture of one of them, which, is called “Venus’s Fly-trap.” I need not tell you why it is called a fly-trap, for you will see how the cruel prickly leaves fold over the poor little unsuspecting fly that has alighted on it. Crushing it to death, the leaves suck in the juices from its body, and then open again and seeming innocence for another victim.

There is also the Sundew, which grows in this country in soft, marshy places. Its leaves are covered with stiff hairs, at the end of which are little drops of sweet moisture that attract insects to come and feed. But like the fly-trap this is only a snare, for the insect soon becomes entangled in the hairs, of the leaves which fold over and feed upon it.



These plants do not use these things for their food, any more than we ourselves need to feed upon animals; for God has provided abundant nourishment for them in just the way that He meant them to take it, which we may be sure is the very best way for them. They thrive when they are not able to get any of the living food that they crave, for they can draw up food from the earth just as other plants can.



You may have heard too of the “pitcher plant.” The end of each of its long green leaves is shaped like a pitcher and filled with sweet, intoxicating juice. Ants, flies and all kinds of insects come to this plant attracted by the contents of the pitcher. But, like people who drink intoxicating liquors, they soon lose their senses, and become the prey of the deceitful plant that has lured them to their death only that it may feast upon their bodies.

When man sinned, God said to him,

Genesis 3

¹⁷ Cursed is the ground for your sake.

Since the ground itself is cursed, every thing that comes from it, which includes everything that lives on it, bears more or less of the curse. It is much more plainly seen in some things than in others, but it rests upon all, and all things must be redeemed and made new before the plan and purpose of God can be carried out in the earth.

In the beginning God said to man,

Genesis 2

¹⁶ Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat.

But now there are many trees and plants which bring death instead of life to those who eat of them or even breathe their deadly odors. Perhaps we will tell you about some of these another time.

The promise we spoke of,

Isaiah 65

²⁵ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain,

—takes in not only men and animals, but the plants also. Then they will again give out nothing but life; their murderous tendencies will be taken sway, and only God's pure, unpervverted life of love will be seen in all things.



19. A Looking Glass

Present Truth, April 19, 1900

Original title: For Little Ones. A Looking Glass

The Bluebell

There is a story I have heard—
A poet learned it from a bird,
And kept its music, every word—

A story of a dim ravine,
O'er which the towering tree-tops lean,
With one blue rift of sky between;

And there two thousand years ago,
A little flower, as white as snow,
Swayed in the silence to and fro.

Day after day with longing eye,
The floweret watched the narrow sky,
And fleecy clouds that floated by.

And through the darkness, night by night,
One gleaming star would climb the height,
And cheer the lonely floweret's sight.

Thus, watching the blue heavens afar,
And the rising of its favorite star,
A slow change came—but not to mar;

For softly o'er its petals white
There crept a blueness like the light
Of skies upon a summer night;

And in its chalice, I am told,
The bonny bell was found to hold
A tiny star that gleamed like gold.

Now, little people, sweet and true,
I find a lesson here for you,

Writ in the floweret's bell of blue:

The patient child whose watchful eye
Strives after all things pure and high,
Shall take their image by and by.

—*Selected*

HAVE you read the story of the bluebell in the verses on this page? And do you clearly see the lesson that is hidden in them? This is, of course, only a fable; yet it is true that the bluebell, now beginning to spread its sweet blue carpet in the woods, and make them look like a reflection of the blue heavens spangled with tiny, twinkling stars,—this little flower, like every other, is a mirror, and all its beauty is only reflected glory.

Do not the flowers, then, have any beauty of their own? and where does all this reflected glory come from? you will perhaps wonder. All the beauty of the earth is the reflection of Him who made it, of Jesus Christ, the Creator.

You may know that all the colors of the flowers, or of anything else, is the reflection of light. We cannot see the beautiful colors hidden in the light, until the objects upon which it shines reflect them to us, and reveal the hidden loveliness.

This work the flowers do: as the sun shines upon them and clothes them with beautiful garments of light, they show forth the praises of the light by reflecting the lovely colors hidden in its rays.

But remember now and always,—think of it every time you see the bright sunshine, or its reflection in the loveliness with which it clothes the earth,—what this light is and where it comes from. It is...

2 Corinthians 4

⁶ ...the glory of God [shining from] the face of Jesus Christ...

—who is...

John 8 [also 9:5]

¹² ...the Light of the world.

So the glory and beauty of all His works really shows us something of the beauty of His face.



Jesus is the great central Light that lights up the sun, moon and stars. These, like His other works, are only mirrors, which declare His glory by reflecting it. They let their light so shine, bringing life and blessing in their beams, that we may be led to glorify the great Source of light for whose streams of blessing they are the channels.

In a certain cathedral there is a dome covered with beautiful paintings, the work of a celebrated artist. All who visit the cathedral are anxious to get a good view of these pictures, but the height and shape of the dome make this almost impossible.

This difficulty has been overcome by fixing on the ground beneath the dome, a mirror which perfectly reflects all parts of it. Thus all who wish to do so are able to make a thorough examination without any trouble.

Do you remember what God said to Moses in answer to his petition,

Exodus 33

¹⁸ I beseech You, show me your glory?

²⁰ You can not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live.

He is so great and so high, we so sinful and so low, that we cannot look up and see His face; and if we could do so, we could not endure the sight of His great glory. But,

Though the eye of sinful man His glory may not see...³⁸

—in all its fullness, yet He has come down to our low estate, and made it possible for us to see Him. He has made a mirror, wherein we may...

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ ...behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord,

—and by beholding be so changed into His image and purified, that at last we may be able really to “see His face,” as He has promised.³⁹

In his *Hymn of Heavenly Beauty* which some day you may read for yourself, the poet Spenser, speaking of this mirror, says:

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent
Him to behold, is on His works to look,
Which He has made in beauty excellent.

His works show us not only His beauty, but also His love, His wisdom, and His might.

Those unto unto all He daily does display,
And show himself in the image of His grace,
As in a looking glass, through which He may
Be seen of all His creatures, vile and base,

³⁸Reginald Heber, *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!*, 1826.

³⁹*Revelation 22:4.*

That were unable else to see His face,
His glorious face, that glisters else so bright,
That th'angels selves cannot endure the sight.

So you see that the bluebell is a tiny mirror, though not of the blue sky and the bright stars, but of Him who made and shines in them. In each little blossom we may see something of His beauty, wisdom, love, and power.

Will you not thank God that He has placed right at your feet, and all around you wherever you look, the mirror in which you may see Him so easily if you will? And not only so, but remember that *you* are yourself one of His works, created like all the rest to declare His glory by reflecting His image.

Behold Him in the looking glass He has given you, learn of Him as His grace and truth were fully revealed in the life of Jesus Christ on earth, and as they are reflected in the lives of all who love Him. Let your heart be turned ever to Him as the flower to the sun, and let the light of His Holy Word shine into it.

Then the bright shining of His glory upon you will clothe you with His beauty, and imprint His image upon you, which will mark you as His own child. Then,

Matthew 5

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Cecil Frances Alexander, *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, 1848.

20. Flowers and Butterflies

Present Truth, May 3, 1900

Original title: For Little Ones. Flowers and Butterflies

Little Caterpillar

A Caterpillar on the ground
Is creeping, creeping all around,
'Tis spinning now a little nest,
That it may find a place to rest.
Dear caterpillar, we'll say, "Good-by,"
Till you come out a butterfly.

Oh, there it is! Oh, see it fly!
A lovely, lovely butterfly.
It spreads its wings so dazzling bright,
And seeks the joyous air and light;
'Tis sipping honey from the flowers.
Dear little butterfly, you're ours.

—*Songs and Games*

ALL things in this earth that God has made belong to you, the flowers, trees, bees, butterflies, birds, fishes and animals. He has given them all to the children of men.

Do you not feel a special interest in that which is your own? Do you not want to learn all you can about it, and to understand it?

When you know that every living thing in the earth was given to the human family by the One who made it, you will look at all things with the same loving interest that Adam had when God brought all the animals before him, and he gave to each its name.

The names that he gave showed that he understood the nature and habits of the animals, for each name told the truth about the creature to which it was given.

There are many things that people now learn that will not be of any use to them in the Kingdom of God, the new earth. But the

knowledge of God's works is something that we shall never have to leave behind us. These will be our study and our delight in the world to come, and so they may and should be here and now.

The names that men now give to God's works are not like the names that Adam gave, something that will tell at once their nature and characteristics. They are often long and hard, and must be translated before we can understand them at all. And very often they are the names of the men who first noticed or made a special study of them, and serve rather to keep them in remembrance than to reveal the truth of God's works.

But if we learn all we can about the things themselves, so that we know them and recognize them wherever we see them, we need not be troubled about remembering their hard, scientific names, for these will be left behind, and each creature will have its own new name again. This will be the restoration of the name first given to it by Adam, for...

Genesis 2

¹⁹ ...whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

This beautiful spring season, when everything is awaking to new life,—is a good time to notice and consider the wonderful works of God.

We have been speaking lately about the flowers and plants, and how they are all...



Voices from the silent sod,
Speaking of the perfect God.⁴¹

Watch the flowers, and “consider the lilies,...*how they grow*,”⁴² how they put forth the beautiful blossoms containing the need by which they are multiplied and continue to grow.

This will lead you to study also the insects that you see among the flowers, without whose help their seed could not ripen and bring forth new plants. For the insects help the flowers by carrying the pollen or flower dust from one plant to another. In helping the flowers they are helping themselves too, for they live on the sweet honey hidden in the blossoms.

One of the first that you will notice is the beautiful butterfly, as lovely and delicate as the blossoms themselves, and like them “speaking of the perfect God.” There is the same life,—the life of God,—in plant and butterfly, and in many things it reveals itself in the same way. We will notice a few things in which flowers and butterflies are alike.

The first that you will think of is their beauty. More beautiful than “Solomon in all his glory”⁴³ the butterflies are arrayed like the lilies of the field; not in a garment put on from the outside, but in that which is the outward form and expression of the life of God within.

God meant all His children to be clothed in this way; not as we now clothe ourselves, with a garment that *hides*, put on from the outside, but with a garment that *reveals* the beauty of the inner life, the beauty of His own character shining forth from within.

Psalm 90

¹⁷ Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.

This is how it will be with all who find a home in the new earth of which we have been speaking. God’s glory will shine forth

⁴¹ Eliza Brightwen, *Wild Nature Won by Kindness*.

⁴² *Matthew* 6:28.

⁴³ *Matthew* 6:29.

from them and clothe them with brightness and beauty. So if you want to live there, and be clothed with His beauty, you must now let Him change you by His Holy Spirit into the beauty of His own character.

There is another way in which the butterfly is like a flower. You would little think that from a hard brown seed or a rough bulb could come the lovely blossom of the lily or hyacinth, the delicate beauty of the sweet pea, or the lovely odor of the violet or mignonette.

Neither would you think, to look at a chrysalis or cocoon, of the beautiful winged butterfly hidden there, waiting for the time of its unfolding.

Both flower and butterfly teach us a lesson of hope—the hope of the resurrection of the dead through the life of Jesus Christ. But notice that all the hope of the future glory is *in* the seed, and *in* the chrysalis. For all the beauty of both blossom and butterfly is only the *unfolding* of what was hidden in seed and chrysalis.

So God's Word tells us that...

Colossians 1

²⁷ Christ in you [is] the hope of glory.

Christ must be in the hearts of all who will rise to show that glory and beauty in His kingdom. All will be but the *unfolding* of Christ in them, now received into the heart by faith.

Let the flowers and the butterflies often remind you of these things, and pray that Christ may be formed within you so that you may now show to those around you His love and grace, and when He comes may be clothed with His glory and beauty to show it forth in His kingdom for ever.

Jesus, your blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;

Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed
With joy shall I lift up my head.⁴⁴



⁴⁴ John Wesley, *The Lord Our Righteousness*, (translated from Zinzendorf, 1739).

21. Among the Flowers

Present Truth, June 14, 1900

Original title: For the Children. Among the Flowers

THIS is a very pleasant place to be, is it not? We all love to see the flowers, and to be right in their midst, where we can delight in their beauty and sweet scent. But we must not end with enjoying them merely, for they are all beautiful pages in God's great lesson book.

And every hedgerow blossom that does grow,
And every little brown bird that does sing,
Has something greater than itself, and bears
*A living word to every living thing.*⁴⁵

You would not learn your lessons very well, would you, if you spent all your time admiring the book that they were written in, however attractive it might be? The lessons printed in the book are the principal thing, and the pictures that ornament it are only to help you in learning them.

And so it is in God's book. Jesus is the Great Teacher, and He has beautiful ways of teaching His beautiful lessons.

Job 36

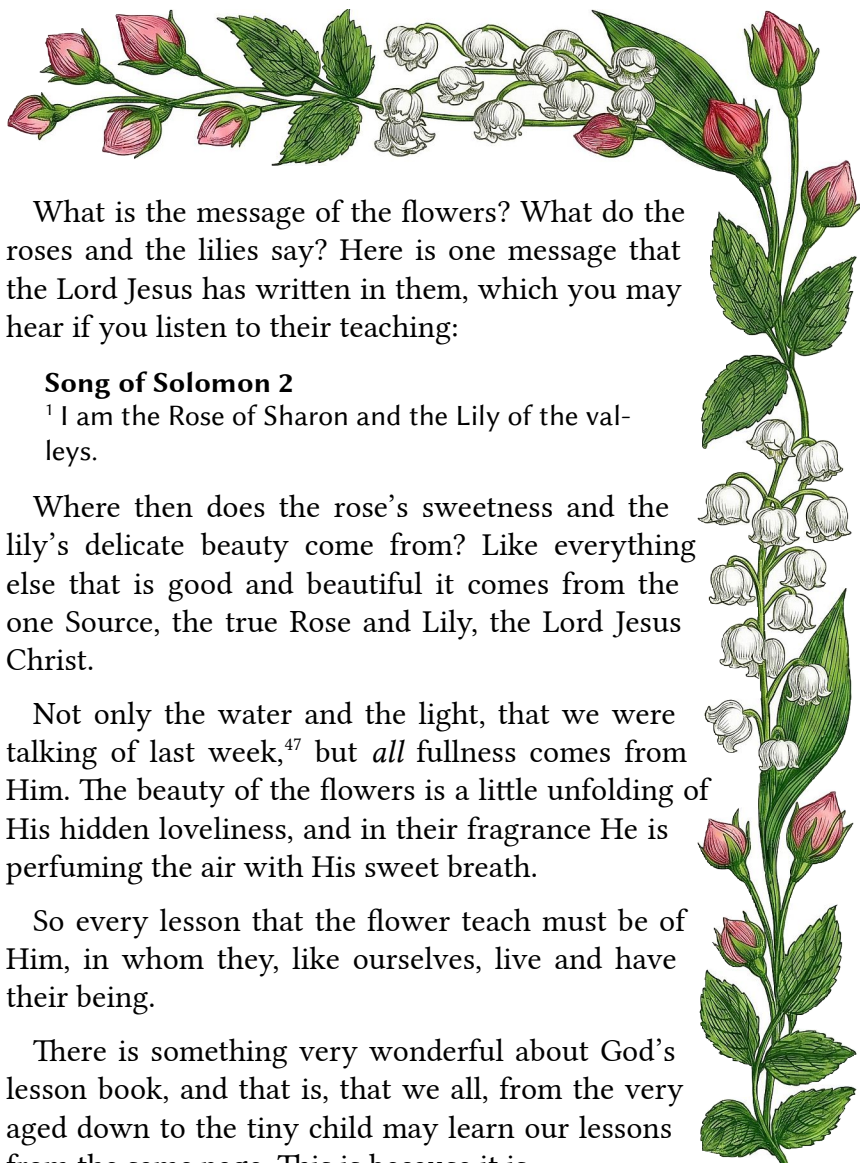
²² Who teaches like Him?

We are now right in the midst of "blossom time." The hawthorn, laburnum, and lilac are giving place to the honeysuckle and wild roses, and then all declare His "living Word to every living thing." In the gardens are the roses, the pinks and many other blossoms, among which:

A little monitor presents her page
Of choice instruction, with her snowy bells,
The Lily of the Vale.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Richard Realf, *The Word*.

⁴⁶ Emily Dickinson, *A Little Madness in the Spring*.



What is the message of the flowers? What do the roses and the lilies say? Here is one message that the Lord Jesus has written in them, which you may hear if you listen to their teaching:

Song of Solomon 2

¹ I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valleys.

Where then does the rose's sweetness and the lily's delicate beauty come from? Like everything else that is good and beautiful it comes from the one Source, the true Rose and Lily, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only the water and the light, that we were talking of last week,⁴⁷ but *all* fullness comes from Him. The beauty of the flowers is a little unfolding of His hidden loveliness, and in their fragrance He is perfuming the air with His sweet breath.

So every lesson that the flower teach must be of Him, in whom they, like ourselves, live and have their being.

There is something very wonderful about God's lesson book, and that is, that we all, from the very aged down to the tiny child may learn our lessons from the same page. This is because it is...

A living word to every living thing.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ PP Editor's note: The article Waggoner is referring to is "Water Turned into Wine," from *Present Truth*, June 7, 1900. It can be found in the collection, *Bible Lessons* (The Everlasting Gospel for Children, Vol. 3).

⁴⁸ Richard Realf, *The Word*.

In the little flower God speaks to the infant attracted by its bright colors, but the same blossom carries a message to those of all ages who have “ears to hear.”⁴⁹ And as we grow, the lesson grows, and we still keep learning, never ending, never reaching the place where we can say that the lesson is learned and the page can be turned; for the thoughts of God unfolding in the flowers can never be fathomed.

Here is something for you to think of, that before we can understand *one thing* perfectly, even the simplest of the works of God, we must know *everything*. So if we could thoroughly understand one little flower, there would be nothing more for us to learn at all.

The more we know of one thing, the better we can understand everything. Some such thoughts as these must have been in the mind of the poet Tennyson, when he said to the little flower that he held in his hand:

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.⁵⁰

That is, he would know everything. But this perfect knowledge belongs to God only, so there will always be something for us to learn about the least of God’s works, if we live through the ages of eternity.

What a wonderful message, then, what a depth of meaning, is in the simplest wayside flowers. And since there is *no end* to what we may learn from them, the sooner we begin the better, for the more we shall be able to learn.

⁴⁹ *Matthew* 11:15, 13:9, 43; *Mark* 4:9, 23, 7:16; *Luke* 8:8, 14:35.

⁵⁰ Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Flower in the Crannied Wall*, 1863.

So if you have not already begun to read in God's book of nature, begin at once; but be sure that you begin right, with Jesus, who is the "Beginning and the Ending"⁵¹ of the whole creation of God.



⁵¹ *Revelation 1:8.*

22. Lessons from the Flowers

Present Truth, June 21, 1900

Original title: For the Children. Lessons from the Flowers

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God has written in the stars above;
But not less in the bright flowerets under us,
Stands the revelation of His love.

LAST WEEK we spent a little time together “among the flowers,” and this week we will speak of a few of the simple lessons that they teach us. “God is Love;” and so whatever reveals God to us brings a message of love. And this is what the flowers teach us in many ways. One of the first things that they teach us is that the Creator likes to have things beautiful. Everything in the Garden that God planted was...

Genesis 2

⁹ ...pleasant to the sight.

Eden means “delight”; and this shows us that God delights in what is beautiful.

When the Garden was complete, He rested and was refreshed by the perfect beauty of His new creation.

Psalms 149

⁴ The Lord *takes pleasure* in His people; He *will beautify* the meek with salvation.

All the beauty of creation is the revealing of the beautiful life of Jesus that is in all His works. He is “*altogether lovely*,”⁵² and so whatever reveals Him must be beautiful.

Their Beauty

The beauty of the flowers is not an outward decoration, something that can be put on for special occasions, or worn only when someone is looking. It belongs to the life, and is a part of the flower itself, and not a mask to hide its defects. So it is always

⁵² *Song of Solomon* 5:16.

there, whether anyone looks or not. The hidden rose is as beautiful as that which grows in the full view of every passer-by.

The God of beauty wants to train His children to love what is beautiful, so He has “spread beauty round us everywhere;”⁵³ and He says,

Philippians 4

⁸ Whatsoever things are lovely,...think on these things.

One great reason for this to that “by beholding we become changed.”⁵⁴ So we must train our eyes to see what is beautiful, and our minds to think upon it, remembering always that...

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 96:

The beauty of all created things is but a gleam from the shining of God’s glory.

As we learn to see His image in it all, the reflection of His lovely face, we shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory. Then the Lord will take pleasure in us, and be refreshed by beholding His own perfect beauty reflected in us.

Their Fragrance

There is much that we may learn, too, from the *fragrance* of the flowers. This, like their beauty, is a part of their life, and not something put on, like we put scent on our handkerchiefs and clothing. It comes from within, and they breathe it out continually because it is their very nature.

And so it is when Jesus, the sweet “Rose of Sharon and Lily of the Valley,”⁵⁵ abides in the hearts of His children, the fragrance of His life will make His presence known to all.

As some rare perfume in a vase of clay
Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,

⁵³ James Ashcroft Noble, *A Hymn of Beauty*, 1886.

⁵⁴ A paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 3:8, often phrased this way in the writings of Ellen White, e.g., *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 355; *The Great Controversy*, p. 555; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 91, 459; *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 85.

⁵⁵ *Song of Solomon* 2:1.

So when You dwell in a mortal soul
All Heaven's own sweetness seem around it thrown.⁵⁶

As we “consider the lilies,...how they grow,”⁵⁷ we may learn how, like them, to become beautiful, and sweet by having the life of Jesus unfolding in us unhindered. He says:

Hosea 14

⁵ I will be the dew unto Israel; He shall grow as the lily.

You know that God wants us, as we see His works, to learn His ways. All things that He has made, and in which He is still working, are to teach us of His ways of doing things. And a beautiful lesson of love and courtesy the flowers teach: that is, not to be content with doing only what we think the *necessary* things; but to do everything in the very best and sweetest manner possible, in the way that will give the greatest pleasure to everybody: for...

God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small;
The oak tree and the cedar tree,
*Without a flower at all.*⁵⁸

Take, for instance, the apple tree, the cherry tree, and other fruit tree in whose spring beauty we have lately taken so much pleasure. Think of the exquisite fragrance of the orange blossom and other flowering plants through which God hands us our food. See how in doing this He has so accompanied the gift with “an odor of a sweet smell;”⁵⁹ and so much that it is...

Genesis 2

⁹ ...pleasant to the sight.

A Royal Way

Is not this a beautiful, royal way of doing things? This is Love's

⁵⁶ Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Abide in Me, O Lord*, 1855.

⁵⁷ *Matthew* 6:28.

⁵⁸ Mary Howitt, *The Use of Flowers*, 1837.

⁵⁹ *Philippians* 4:18.

way, and “the royal law,”⁶⁰ the law of love, written in the heart is the only thing that can make us like our Heavenly Father in this. As we are the children of the great King of glory, He wants us to learn His own royal, kingly way of doing things, so that from seeing our good works, men will...

Matthew 5

¹⁶ ...glorify our Father which is in Heaven.

Not only to the obedient and thankful is He kind, but He is equally good to all. He makes His sun to shine, sends His rain and gives His flowers for just and unjust, even for the unthankful and the evil.

As we dwell in His house to behold His beauty, as we enquire in His great temple⁶¹ of nature to learn His ways, His Spirit will come upon us and make us like Him.

Shall we not learn from Him to do everything in the loveliest way that we can? Shall we not, by inviting Him into our hearts; let love make beautiful our simplest actions, kindness shed its sweet fragrance over in our words and deeds, and learn to do our most for the pleasure and happiness of all with whom we have any dealings?

For O how God must love us,
And this poor world of ours,
To spread blue skies above us,
And deck the earth with flowers.⁶²



⁶⁰ James 2:8.

⁶¹ Psalm 27:4.

⁶² Mary Xavier, *How Dearly God Must Love Us*.

23. In the Country

Present Truth, July 19, 1900

Original title: Children's Corner. In the Country

ARE you glad to shut up your school books, and put your slates away for a season, now that the summer holidays have come again? No doubt you are looking forward to happy weeks of freedom in the country or at the seaside; or if you be obliged to stay in the city, to long, pleasant days in the parks.

But although you will be out of your usual school-room for a time, remember that you are not, and never will be as long as you live, out of school. Each day brings its lessons, wherever you may be, and by them the Great Teacher is preparing you, if you will learn them, for the deeper lessons which you may learn by and by in His kingdom. For if you should live there for ever, you will always have something new to learn.

I hope you are so fortunate as to be able to say this summer, like the little girl in our picture, "My school-room lies on the meadow wide," for this is a beautiful place to learn much of the wisdom of God through seeing His ways of working in nature.

Let us think of a few of the things that will be your teachers there, of whom you may enquire the way



of the Lord by looking into the secrets of their life. For in each thing that God has created by His Word, His wonderful, deep thoughts are unfolding before our eyes, so that we may read them and learn to know Him.

Do you not see, then, that in the study of nature,—the works of God,—we are holding communion with our Heavenly Father, the Great Creator whose life and thoughts are revealed in them all?

The first thing you notice in the meadow is the grass,—the grass of the field. Gather as many different kinds as you can find, and see how God has clothed it with beauty. Think what it is that makes each blade and spear of grass grow and develop, “each after its kind.” It is the Word of power that God spoke to the earth in the beginning,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass.

Remembering this, you will see the powerful Word of God at work in the frail grass, forcing it up from the hard ground, and clothing the land with this beautiful soft green carpet.

Perhaps you will then be reminded of one of the reasons why God makes the grass to grow. We read it in the 104th *Psalm*, written perhaps by the shepherd youth David, as he watched his own flocks peacefully feeding:

Psalm 104

¹⁴ He makes grass to grow for the cattle.

This brings us to something else very often to be seen in the meadow: the cows and sheep grazing on the fresh green grass that God has made to grow especially for them. Here is a lesson of His loving-kindness, who...

Psalm 145

¹⁶ ...satisfies the desire of every living thing.

For of all that He has created we read in the same Psalm:

Psalm 104

²⁷ These wait all upon You, that You may give them their meat in due season.

²⁸ That You give them they gather; You open your hand, they are filled with good.

There is much that you may learn from the cows and calves, the sheep and lambs, the horses and colts, asses and foals, that you are likely to find in the meadow at different times.

Job 12

⁷ Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you.

And the great lesson that they all teach is that...

⁹ ...the hand of the Lord has wrought this.

Like the sun, moon and stars, these living, breathing, beautiful creatures are always proclaiming to those who will hear,

The hand that made us is Divine.⁶³

If you begin to look up in your Bibles all the passages that speak of the different animals that God has made, you will, I think, be surprised to find how much their Maker has told us about them in His Word.

The first lesson teaches their likeness to the grass of which we have been speaking, for they are formed by the same Word from the dust of the same ground. God who said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass,

—said also,

Genesis 1 [RV]

²⁴ Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind.

⁶³ Joseph Addison, *The Spacious Firmament on High*, 1712.



So you see that there is a relationship between the cattle, and the grass upon which they feed; they are only different forms of the same Word of life, wherein we may learn different lessons of the Creator's wisdom, love and power. They both came from one place,—the dust,—and when the life that holds them in their different forms departs, they mingle together again in the same dust.

As the cattle feed upon the grass, the life that is in it passes into them and shows itself in other ways than in the grass. See what you can learn from each of the ways of God of His wisdom shown in their wonderful workmanship. His tenderness in their love and care for their little ones, the fullness and joy of His life in the fresh young animals of all kinds.

Then there are the flowers among the grass, on whose bright petals you may read sweet lessons of the love of Him who placed them there for you. And in these same beautiful blossoms there are wonderful secrets of wisdom hidden, like the honey, to be...

Psalm 111

² ...sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

Perhaps if you carefully watch the bees, butterflies, and other insects at work among the flowers, you may find out some of the secrets,—wonderful links in the great chain of life,—and another time we may tell you more about them.

24. In the Meadow

Present Truth, August 2, 1900

Original title: For Little Ones. In the Meadow

The Busy Bee's Advice

Busy bee! busy bee! where have you been?
Into a garden, where roses I've seen.
Busy bee! busy bee! what did you there?
Honey I found, and I gathered a share.

Busy bee! busy bee! come now and play;
Plenty of honey you've gathered today.
Not yet; I'll carry this home to my queen,
'Tis the best honey that ever was seen.

Busy bee! busy bee! what will you do,
If yellow honey is stolen from you?
Then I'll fly off, and I'll gather some more;
In the bright garden there still is full store.

But do you never fret, busy bee, say?
Just the same work you do every day!
Why should I fret, when 'tis better to sing?
Fretting will never a happiness bring.

—Selected

HAVE you ever carefully watched the busy bee at his summer day's work? If not, do so this year, and see how many interesting facts you can find out for yourselves. You will most likely notice many things that you will not understand, but you can enquire and find out the meaning of much that he is doing.

Of course you know what is the bees' object in their work among the flowers,—the search for honey and "bee-bread" for the little ones in the hive is probably all that they think of. They seem to be possessed by an absorbing desire for work, as though all

they lived for was to fill the wax comb that is being built by the workers at home.



Those who keep bees for the purpose of selling the honey now provide ready-made comb, which they empty as soon as the bees have filled it. The bees then patiently set to work to fill it over again, thinking perhaps what a fine store they are gathering for use during the winter, when all the flowers will have faded.

Of course the bee-keepers see that they have plenty, but they sell all that the bees do not need. As so much of the bees' time is saved by having the comb made for them, they can spend more time out among the flowers gathering honey.

But this work of the bees among the flowers has a meaning and purpose of which they know nothing. They are being used by God to make the flowers grow to beautify the earth. They are unconscious gardeners working in the Lord's garden. For from each

flower that they visit they carry away a little yellow dust which you may have seen sticking to them. Perhaps some of you know Miss Ingelow's pretty lines:

O velvet Bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold.⁶⁴

This gold-dust is very valuable to the flowers, for without it all their seeds would be useless. Then what good does the bee do by carrying it away, do you say?

If you watch him closely you will see that when he visits the neat flower he dusts some of it off as he delves into the heart of the flower to take his toll of sweet honey. He leaves the dust in payment for what he carries away, and it is of much more value to the flower. It falls upon the ripening seeds, and makes them fertile and able to bring forth fresh plants and flowers to feed the next generation of bees. So the bee is working for the interests of his own race, after all, is he not, as well as for the good of the flower.

Notice the colors of the flowers that the bees visit, and now that you know what he is doing among them, you will no doubt be glad to see that he likes the same colors and scents that we do. A naturalist who has made a special study of this says that bees visit mostly the red, white, blue and yellow flowers. The color and the fragrance are the guides that attract them, and so the most beautiful blossoms with the strongest scent are sure to be visited and fertilized, and thus the "survival of the fittest" is provided for.

You see then that the colors, the scent, and the sweetness of the blossoms each has its object, and is a part of the wonderful plan through which the Word of God is working to fulfill itself, and to cause the earth still to bring forth as He commanded it in the beginning.

But this is only a little glimpse into the wonders that are taking place all about us in everything that we can see.

⁶⁴Jean Ingelow, *Seven Times One*.

Psalms 111

² The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

Solomon tells us how he sought out and found some of the wisdom which made him such a wise king and counselor. He says:

Ecclesiastes 7

²⁵ I applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things.

You may get some seed from one of the flowers in your garden, and keep it until the spring, and plant it, but find that the flowers which come from it are quite a different color from the one that produced the seed. You will most likely already guess why this is.

The pollen or dust brought by the bee from another plant had given to the seed the characteristics of the flower from which it was brought. Sometimes the new flowers may be a mixture of both colors, the color of the plant that bears the seed, and also of the one that fertilizes it.

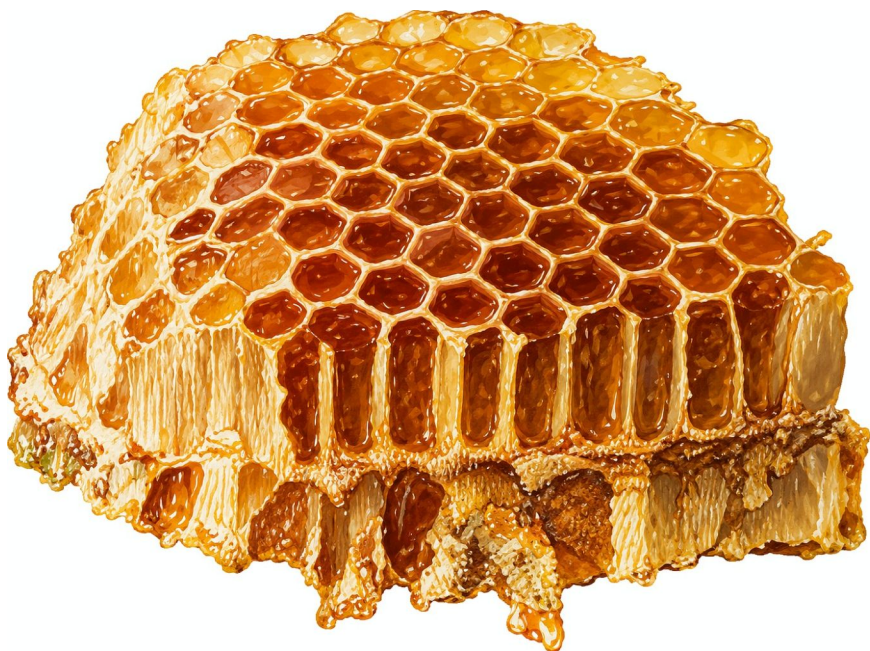
In this the flowers are like the little children, who may resemble either father or mother, or both parents. For the seeds are the babies of the plants, which are cradled in the ground until the strength of the life in them makes them grow and push themselves up from their earthy covering into the light.

You will see many butterflies too in the meadow. Suppose instead of chasing them, and trying to grasp them, and spoiling their beautiful, delicate wings with your clumsy little fingers, you should watch them carefully and see what you can learn.

Did you ever see one with its long tongue dipped down into the deep cup of a honey-laden flower? When it is satisfied and draws it out, you will wonder whatever it is going to do with it, and wherever it can keep it, until you see it beautifully curled up like the spring of a watch and packed safely away in its case.

But the butterfly is not so busy as the bee, for it does not store any honey, and it is such a dainty, airy creature, that it needs very

little food. In its former state as a caterpillar it fed all the time, and we might think, to see how little it eats, that it then laid in a store of food to last all its butterfly life. The butterfly usually lives only a short time, and its chief work seems to be to provide for the increase of its race by laying a great number of eggs. How beautifully and faithfully it does this work you can see by the description given on this page.⁶⁵



⁶⁵ See the Appendix: *A Word for the Caterpillar*.

25. The Slave-Making Ants

Present Truth, August 2, 1900

Original title: A Lesson from Nature

IT IS A LAW of nature,—that is, it is one of the laws of God,—that all our powers should grow by *exercise*. By using the little strength, the little knowledge, the little talent that we have, we increase our store. By giving out all the we have, we gain more, and not by saving and keeping. The more that we do, the more we use the powers that God has given us, the more we shall find ourselves able to do.

But if we try to save our strength by not doing anything for ourselves or others, we shall lose even that which we have. You remember how clearly Jesus taught this lesson, in the Parable of the Talents. The one who used all he had, gained much more, while the foolish servant who buried his Lord's gift in order to keep it safely, had it taken away from him.⁶⁶

In many ways God is teaching us this lesson in all nature. See if you can read it in this little true story of the slave-making ants.

One day, in the year 1804, a famous naturalist beheld a large body of ants march rapidly over the ground in an unbroken column. Their behavior was most military, and there was no straggling. Presently they came to an ant mound, where another species of ants lived. Some of these ants were on guard, and, on seeing the enemy approach, messengers were sent to the interior of the mound to call the rest out. In a minute a great battle was on, which ended in the victory of the attacking party. The conquered ones retreated to the bottom of their nest, while the conquerors followed in after, and presently each returned with a baby ant in its mouth. These ants were brought up as slaves, as was later discovered by the same naturalist.

After awhile the masters became so dependent upon the slaves for everything, they could do nothing for themselves except fight

⁶⁶ *Matthew* 25:14-30.



other ants. They lost their teeth; they forgot how to build; they neglected their young, leaving the slaves ants to care for them; they even lost the power of feeding themselves, and when, by

way of experiment, a few were placed by themselves, where there was lots of food, but no slaves to give it to them, they died, every one of them, from hunger.

Once a man took a few of this species and kept them by themselves for a couple of days, and then, just as they seemed about to die, he gave them one slave ant. Working all alone, this fellow built a nice home, washed and cared for the baby ants, and fed the older ones, who were about dead from hunger.

Which were the real slaves, and which was the master?



[PP Editor's note: There was another article in the Children's series for this week's periodical (August 2, 1900), titled "The Color of Fruits." It was authored by Lucas A. Reed, a man who seemed to grasp some of the light coming from the 1888 message. I have included it in the Appendix.]

26. The King's Garden – Part I

Present Truth, May 23, 1901

Original title: For Little Ones. The King's Garden

Mark 4

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

²⁷ And should sleep, and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how.

DID you ever cast any seed into the ground, and wait for the tiny green shoots to “spring and grow up”? If you have never done it before, be sure that you do it if possible this spring. If you have no garden you can sow enough seed in a box of earth or a flower pot, to teach you many valuable lessons of the kingdom of God. For Jesus said:

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.

In our talks about the children of Israel,⁶⁷ we have learned that it is we who are God's kingdom; for...

Luke 17

²¹ ...behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

So as the seed is cast into the ground, and as it springs and grows up, we may learn from it about ourselves, and the work that God, the great Husbandman, or Gardener, is doing in our hearts by the grace of His Holy Spirit. For...

1 Corinthians 3

⁹ You are God's husbandry,

–His tillage, or land where He sows His seed. How eagerly He watches for the tender blade that marks the first upspringing of

⁶⁷ PP Editor's note: From January 10 to December 12, 1901, Waggoner wrote a series on the Israelites, from the call of Moses to the crossing of the Jordan. These are the lessons he is referring to. They are included in another collection, *Old Testament Stories for Little Ones* (“The Everlasting Gospel for Children, Vol. 2”).

His grace, yet how patiently He waits for the great, glad harvest day, when all the fruits of His toil and sacrifice will be safely garnered.

Are you not glad that you may be a little corner in the King's garden? You love the beautiful sweet-swelling flowers that are beginning to appear on the earth now that...

Song of Solomon 2

¹² ...the time of the singing of birds in come [again],

–do you not? So does the King take pleasure in His garden, and the buds and blossoms of grace that grow there in the fresh springtime of youth are very precious, a delight and comfort to Him.

But you know that none of the beautiful flowers that you see, not even the field daisies or buttercups, no, not even a tiny blade of grass, could come out of the earth, if they were not first *put into it*. There must be seed cast into the ground, if anything is to spring up and grow.

Could the earth produce of itself violets and primroses, may blossoms and lilac, corn and fruit, or anything else? No; all that it can do is to *bring forth* what has been put into it, wrapped in the tiny seeds that are out into the ground. These beautiful things do indeed spring out of the dust of the ground, but all that the garden can do is to...

Isaiah 61

¹¹ ...cause *the things that are sown in it* to spring forth.

When I told you that you are a little corner in the King's Garden, did you think how very different you are from the little plot of ground that you call your garden? Yes, but listen:

Genesis 2

⁷ And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.

And unto Adam He said,

Genesis 3

¹⁹ Dust you are.

The very name that God gave to man—Adam, meaning earth—was to keep us always mindful that we are only dust, with no more power in ourselves than the dust of the ground under our feet. If God should take away the breath of His life from us,

Job 34

¹⁵ All flesh should perish together, and man should turn again unto dust.

And so you see that since we are only dust, we cannot bring forth any good thing from ourselves, any more than the dust of the ground can. Nothing beautiful can grow in the King's Garden, except that which comes from the seed that He sows there.

Mark 4

²⁶ So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.

What is the seed that God sows in His Garden, His kingdom? You will perhaps be surprised when I tell you that it is the very same that He has sown in the ground to make it bring forth grass, flowers, and trees. Now you are thinking of the little brown flower seeds, of the golden grains of wheat, and of the different seeds that you have sown, and you are saying,

“How can this be? How can such seeds as them be sown in my heart?”

But do you know that the real seed, that from which all these seeds that you can see have come, is something that you have not seen?

Luke 8

¹¹ The seed is the Word of God,

—and God first cast this seed into the ground when He said,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb,...the fruit tree,...the seed.

Read all about it in the first chapter of your Bible.

And it is this same seed—the Word of God—that He sows in the hearts of His children on earth. So when He took Israel for His Kingdom, you remember that He sowed in their hearts the good seed of His precious Word, which He spoke to them from Mount Sinai, with a voice that shook the earth.

When we want to have a beautiful garden, we are very careful about the seed that we put into it. We plan just what we want to grow there, and then make sure of getting the seed of the very thing that we wish for. We know that we are sure to reap just what we sow, if the ground is good, and the seed is kept there.

Now God is very particular about His Garden; He wants in it only the choicest and sweetest plants, and He wants all the fruits of the Spirit to be brought forth in each “little plot of hallowed ground.” So He provides good seed that will, if it is received into good ground, and kept there, cause it to bring forth just what He wants. And this seed is His own Word.

From God himself comes forth all things in earth and air and sky. They are formed in His thought, and wrapped up in His Word, as the plant is enfolded in the seed. That seed of the Word went forth into the earth in the beginning when God spoke to the ground and commanded it to bring forth grass and trees. And the earth received the Word, and that which had been in the thought of God, sprang forth and beautified the ground.

You would like, would you not, to be able to speak to the ground in your own little garden, and then see your own thoughts springing up all over the ground,—to have all the lovely flowers that you could think of springing out of the earth in obedience to your word?

But let me tell you that you can do something much better than this: In the seed that He has provided, you can take the living Word that God himself has spoken so the earth, and you can put that into the ground, and then as it springs and grows up, you can watch *the thoughts of God unfolding*. Ah, how much more wonderful, how much more beautiful and glorious, are His thoughts than ours!

Isaiah 55

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my...thoughts than your thoughts.

The seed, you know, is the baby plant of the one from which it comes, or rather, it contains the plant that is to be, wrapped up in its close folds. When this is put into the ground, it grows after the kind of the plant from which it came.

Now God wants His children to be just like himself, and His garden on earth to be an exact copy of the one above. So He plants seeds from His own Divine nature to bring forth “each after its kind” in the earthly garden, the human heart.

Remember that we are made “partakers of His Divine nature” by the “exceeding great and precious promises”⁶⁸ that He gives us in His law, and you will see that each one of His commandments is a Divine seed from the heart of God which He puts into our hearts to fill us with the beauty and fragrance of His own holy character. In each one is wrapped up the thought of God, which He desires to see unfolding in our lives.

As the Children of Israel were encamped for some time at Mount Sinai, while Moses went up into the mountain to meet with God, we can spend a few weeks in learning more about these precious seeds, and the beautiful flowers and fruit that spring from them.

⁶⁸ 2 Peter 1:4.

27. Wild Flowers

Present Truth, May 23, 1901

Matthew 19

¹⁷ There is none good but One, that is, God.

SO EVERY good thing, every good thought, every kind word, every loving deed, all that is good in this world, must come from Him, who alone is good. And yet there are so many millions who have never even heard the name of the one true God. They have never heard His precious Word, which contains the good seed from which all good things alone can come. How then is it with these? Is there no good thing in them? Are they altogether evil?

No; for among these heathen peoples we find many good things. They love their little children; they are kind to animals; show hospitality to strangers; they reverence the aged; and among them are those who in many ways are an example which might well be copied by some who call themselves Christians.

And yet, you say, the good seed of God's Word has not been sown in their hearts. How then can they bring forth these good fruits?

Did you ever see flowers growing where no one had taken the trouble to sow any seed? What about the buttercups and daisies, the primroses and violets, the bluebells and forget-me-nots, that you have picked by the handful, perhaps this very springtime? "Wild flowers," you call them. Who sowed them? who planted them? No one; yet they grew, and why? It is because...

Psalms 33

⁵ ...the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord;

—because when He spoke to the earth saying,

Genesis 1

¹¹ Let the earth bring forth,

–that Word of power stored the earth with seed which, even now, in spite of the curse upon all the land, still springs up and grows wherever it has a chance.



And even so it is with the heart of man.

Luke 8

¹¹ The seed is the Word of God,

–but...

John 1

¹⁴ The Word was made flesh.

Because Jesus Christ, the Word, has come to dwell in human flesh, His Spirit...

⁹ ...lights every man that comes into the world,

–and there are the seeds of good in every human heart. So wherever we see any good thing in any man or woman or child, it springs from this holy seed, even in those who have never heard His name.

This is what the Apostle Paul meant when he said that when the heathen nations who do not know God,

Romans 2

¹⁴ ...do by nature the things contained in the law,...

¹⁵ [These] show the work of the law written in their hearts.

But it is only the Spirit of Jesus that can write His law in the heart, and so His Spirit is working with all men everywhere, and every good impulse comes from Him. Some blossoms and fruits of His grace are seen even in the wild, uncultivated gardens of the hearts of those who know Him not.

The story is told of the great King Cyrus of Persia, that he had a garden of which he was very fond, and to which he devoted a great deal of care and attention. He loved to walk in it and watch all that was going on among the flowers, to see how each one grew and flourished. The people wondered at the pleasure that he took in his beautiful garden, but he said:

“I take so much interest in my garden because I have planted every plant and sown every seed in it.”

This is why God loves His garden. Nothing will He allow to remain there that He has not planted himself. Jesus said,

Matthew 15

¹³ Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

28. The King's Garden – Part II

Present Truth, May 30, 1901

Original title: For the Children. The King's Garden

ALL of you would, I feel sure, if I should ask you which you think the sweetest and loveliest of all the fair flowers, agree with me in giving the crown of honor to “sweet Queen Rose.”

We might almost say that all that is beautiful in flower life, meets in this crowning wonder, which seals up the sum, “perfect in beauty.”⁶⁹

- The purity of the lily, and the snowdrop;
- the fullness of the peony and the hyacinth;
- the perfect shape and delicate molding of the lilac and the Egyptian lily;
- the exquisite colors and shading of the sweet pea, the petunia, and the pansy;
- the richness of the gladiola and the geranium;
- the precious fragrance of the violet, the wallflower, and the mignonette;



—all the virtues which distinguish the different flowers, we find combined, bound up, and sealed, in this “perfection of beauty,”⁷⁰ which stands as the type of all.

Now we are going to talk about that flower in the King's Garden which He calls “the bond of perfectness,”⁷¹ and so we have taken the rose as the fit emblem of it. Can you tell what it is?

⁶⁹ *Ezekiel* 28:12.

⁷⁰ *Psalm* 50:2; *Lamentations* 2:15.

⁷¹ *Colossians* 3:14.

Do you remember that we said last week that each of the commandments of God is a divine seed from the Father's own heart, which He plants in the heart gardens of His children, to bring forth the fragrant flowers of His own lovely character? But there is one word that sums up all the commandments, and has in it the grace of every one of them. It is *Love*;

Galatians 5

¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; You shall *love*.

And so God says that...

Colossians 3

¹⁴ ...[Love] is the bond of perfectness.

As the Rose, the emblem of perfection, is the Queen of the flowers, so Love, "the bond of perfectness," reigns in the King's garden, and gathers up and seals within itself the graces of all the fair flowers that bloom there.

Each commandment, as we shall see when we come to look at them more closely, contains some special grace of God, that it may be unfolded and revealed in the hearts of man. But in love, the crowning grace, or rather the summing up of all the graces, "all the fullness of God"⁷² shines forth, for...

1 John 4

⁸ God is Love.

The Rose seems to us the summing up of all that is beautiful in nature; and Christ, who is "the One altogether lovely,"⁷³ calls himself,

Song of Solomon 2

¹ ...the Rose of Sharon.

Since God is Love, and the seeds of all that is fair in His garden come from His own heart, they must all spring from Love, and

⁷² *Ephesians* 3:19.

⁷³ *Song of Solomon* 5:16.

show to us its different characteristics.

You know that there are different *families* of plants, and the plants belonging to each family are known by their likeness to each other in some particular. Now the family name of all the plants in the King's Garden is Love, from which they all spring.

As we walk in the Garden, and examine the flowers, we shall find many different ones,—Worship, Holiness, Obedience, Faithfulness, Kindness, Purity, are the names of some of them. But we shall know by their fragrance that they all belong to the one family of Love. For it is Love that is the life of every virtue; it is this that breathes its sweet odor over the whole Garden, and makes of each flower a censer in which holy incense is offered to the King. This fragrance is not something put on from outside, as we might sprinkle scent on an artificial flower; it is the life of Love within, breathing itself out.

Do you think that the King would be pleased with worship, if such there could be, that did not spring from Love? Do you think He would accept the forced obedience of fear, or the gifts of self-interest? No; the King wants no scentless flowers in His Garden for the sake of appearances, but such only as breathe out the sweet fragrance of Love.

But when Worship is the expression and offering of Love; when Obedience is Love hastening to fulfill His lightest wish; when Kindness is Love pouring out its treasures in His service,—this is...

Philippians 4

¹⁸ ...an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

And so in its fragrance, as in its beauty, the Rose is a fit symbol of the Love of God, which He plants in the hearts of His children, to be the glory and sweetness of the King's Garden.

The fragrance of the Rose cannot be separated from its petals; it keeps its sweetness, even in death. To the one who crushes and

bruises it, it but yields a sweeter fragrance, even as Christ, the Rose of Sharon, showed the full strength of His love when...

Isaiah 53

¹⁰ ...it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.

Then Love poured itself out, a willing offering, that we might receive it into our hearts, and so be able to offer to God the sweet incense of loving service that would be acceptable to Him.

So each of the King's Gardens may be to Him...

2 Corinthians 2

¹⁵ ...a sweet savor of Christ,

—His beloved Son who said:

Psalms 40

⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God; yes, your law is within my heart,

—that law which is summed up in the one word, Love.

May the sweet Rose of Sharon which in His heavenly courts...

Unfolds its heartsome bloom,
And fills the air of heaven
With ravishing perfume,

—bloom also in each “little corner” of the King's Garden on earth, until it shall shed its fragrance over all the wide world.

Oh! to behold it blossom,
While by its fragrance fann'd,
Where glory—glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Ann Ross Cousin, *Last Words* (A Poem inspired by the letters and last words of Samuel Rutherford), 1857.



29. The Snowdrop

Present Truth, June 6, 1901

Original title: For the Children. The King's Garden

The Beauty of Holiness

BEHOLD the first flower of the year, cheering messenger of hope, brave little Snowdrop! The first to break its icy prison, to come forth out of the house of bondage, how full of promise are its pure blossoms, and what assurance it brings of all that are to follow it, till the earth shall again be full of the glory of the Lord, as it is seen in the flowers.

And in all this the pure Snowdrop to a perfect picture of the first flower that blooms in the King's Garden. You know already what that Garden is, and that your own heart is a "small corner" in it. We have learned also what the seed is,—“the Word of God.” And now we shall talk a little while about the first seed that God plants there, from which comes the first sweet flower as the pledge of all that are to follow it.

Exodus 20

² I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ *You shall have no other gods before me.*

When Jesus was asked,

Mark 12

²⁸ Which is the first commandment in the law?

He answered:

Mark 12

²⁹ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.

So when God says to us, “You shall have no other gods before me,” this is a promise that with all our heart, mind, strength, and soul, we shall love and serve Him only.

But when our whole heart is thus given up to God, when we hear and believe this word that He speaks to us, and so receive it as precious seed into our hearts, then the sweet flower of *Holiness* will spring up from it. Oh, how this will please the King as He walks in His Garden; for it will be a pledge to Him of all the other fair flowers that in time He will see growing there.

Holiness means simply, *being whole*. So when our whole heart, our whole being, is given to God, then we shall...

Psalm 96 [also 29:2]

⁹ Worship the Lord *in the beauty of Holiness*.

But this can be only through the power of His own Word,

Exodus 20

³ You shall have no other gods before me,

—for this is the seed of Holiness, and without it our heart gardens can no more bring forth the flowers of Holiness than the dust of the ground could bring forth snowdrops if no seed had ever been planted there. It is the Word of God that makes the flowers grow in the ground, and it is His Word that makes the flowers of His grace grow in our hearts.

The House of Bondage

The Snowdrop is the first of earth’s flowers to show us the mighty power of that Word, and its grace, and purity, and beauty. From the hard cold ground it springs, showing the power of God to bring life from the dead, to bring us “out of the house of bondage,” in spite of every obstacle.

To show us the power of the seed that God plants in our hearts when He says, “You shall have no other gods before me,” He reminds us that He is the One who brings us “out of the house of bondage.” Do you know what this house of bondage is? Jesus died to...

Hebrews 2

¹⁵ ...deliver them who through *fear of death* were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Sin is what brings the fear of death, so it is sin that brings us into the house of bondage, and at last imprisons us in the grave.

Do you know that each one of us must at last become like that which we love and worship? There is no God but One, for...

Isaiah 40 [Psalm 96:5]

¹⁷ All the gods of the nations are *nothing*.

What then must all those become who worship anyone or anything but the one true God? *Nothing*. And this is just what God says of them:

2 Kings 17

¹⁵ They followed vanity and became vain,

–which means. They followed nothing and they came to nothing.

Whate’er thou lovest, man,
That, too, become thou must:
God, if thou lovest God,
Dust, if thou lovest dust.⁷⁵

God’s Word tells us that the whole creation is in bondage, made “subject to vanity;”⁷⁶ that is, it is all ready to vanish away, to disappear, and come to nothing. And all this is because man has chosen to have other gods beside the Lord. He has put himself under

⁷⁵ Angelus Silesius (Johann Scheffler), *The Cherubic Pilgrim*.

⁷⁶ *Romans* 8:20-21.

the power of Satan, which is “the power of death,”⁷⁷ the power to destroy, and to make things vanish away.

This is what it is to be in the house of bondage, “the bondage of corruption”⁷⁸ it is called. And it is the power of Holiness that alone can, set us free,—the power of God which is able to make us whole again, and keep us so for ever. This is to be brought out of bondage into...

Romans 8

²¹ ...the glorious liberty of the children of God.

When the cold, dreary winter comes, earth’s beauty fades and disappears. Its bright flowers, and the leaves that clothed the trees, where are they? *Vanished*. Bound in the bosom of the earth, all its hopes lie buried, seemingly perished.

And thus it would be indeed and for ever, but for Him who has conquered death by overcoming sin. Because He “did no sin,”⁷⁹ it was not possible for the grave to hold Him in the “bondage of corruption.”

So Jesus has the power to bring the whole creation out of “the house of bondage,”⁸⁰ “the bondage of corruption,” and make everything whole again. And of the power of His Holiness, the pure Snowdrop, the first flower to cast off the shackles of the tomb, is a sweet and fit emblem.

The Holy Seed

In the King’s Garden everything beautiful vanished away because of sin. But Jesus Christ, the Word, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, that the holy seed might again be sown in the hearts of the children of men. Even when all things are dead, and the ground is hard and bare, the power of His holiness can loose the bonds and bring new, pure life from the dead.

⁷⁷ Hebrews 2:14.

⁷⁸ Romans 8:21.

⁷⁹ 1 Peter 2:22.

⁸⁰ Exodus 20:2.

God says,

Isaiah 1

¹⁸ Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

And He tells us what it is that is to make this wondrous change.

John 15

³ You are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you.

That Word which drops gently upon our hearts like the snow and the rain to cleanse us, is also the seed which will take beautiful form in the pure, snowy blossoms of Holiness that it brings forth.

To everyone of you, dear children, God is saying,

Psalms 81

⁸ ...if you will hearken unto me,

⁹ There shall no strange god be in you, neither shall you worship any strange god.

In these words He shows us that all we have to do is to listen to His voice, when He says,

Exodus 20

³ You shall have no other gods before me,

—and then He will keep away every strange plant out of His garden, and root out all the weeds of sin, and everything that He has not planted himself. Those things will all fade away, just as the fig tree withered at the Word of Christ.

The great ugly weed of *self* tries to fill up all the space in the garden, and it has such showy blossoms that we are sometimes deceived into thinking it is a very fine plant. But O, when we see...

Song of Solomon 5

¹⁰ ...the Chiefest among ten thousand,

¹⁶ ...[the One] altogether lovely,

—all our love for self will disappear, and this ugly weed will shrink and wither away as we say,

Galatians 2

²⁰ Not I, but Christ.

And in its place the sweet innocent Snowdrops,—pure worship of the one true God with all the heart and mind and soul and strength—shall fill the Garden with “the beauty of Holiness” for the pleasure of the King, and to show forth His praises.

God shall be first in everything;
No other gods before Him;
Creator and Redeemer King,
‘Tis pleasure to adore Him.

First when with rosy morn I wake,
His power mine eyes unsealing;
First when His bounteous gifts I take,—
His Father’s love revealing.⁸¹



⁸¹ F. E. Belden, *God Shall Be First*.

30. The Legend of the Snowdrop

Present Truth, June 6, 1901

Original title: The Snowdrop

DID you ever hear the legend of the snowdrop? It is only a fable, but fables, you know, are often like the chaff which contains the wheat, or the shell which holds the nut,—useful and good in their place as a means of preserving the seed, but quite worthless in themselves, when they have served this purpose. So let us see if we can find the seed of truth in the snowdrop's story, and then we can keep that, and throw away the shell.



Long ago, in the first winter that ever cast its gloom over the fair face of the world, stripping the trees, withering the flowers with its icy breath, hushing the songs of the birds, and casting all nature into a deathlike sleep, the snow was falling silently upon the ground, covering all that remained of beauty in its thick mantle. Eve was greatly distressed at this strange sight, and as she watched what seemed to be the destruction of all she loved in nature, she wept bitter tears.

God looked with loving pity upon His sorrowing child, and sent an angel to comfort her with a message of hope. So the angel spread his wings and sped earthward with the falling snow.

“Why do you weep?” he said tenderly to the weeping woman.

“I weep,” she answered, “because the earth is bare and desolate, and nothing beautiful remains. Where are all the flowers that I loved so well? Tell me, if you can, if I shall ever see them more.”

The angel smiled as he called her attention to the falling snow.

“See, Eve,” he said, showing her its purity and perfect beauty of

form, "is not this beautiful? so white, so pure, so gentle! This is the covering which your heavenly Father in His great love spreads over the cold earth."

Then he comforted her with the promise of the flowers' return, when all nature should wake up again, refreshed by its long sleep.

But seeing the tears still shining in her eyes, he caught one of the beautiful falling snowflakes, and his touch transformed it into a lovely blossom, as light and pure as the snow. This he gave to Eve as a pledge of the return of all the flowers, each in its own season.

"This is an earnest, Eve, to thee,"
The glorious angel said,
"That sun and summer soon shall be;
And though the leaves seem dead,
Yet once again the smiling spring
With wooing winds shall swiftly bring
New life to every sleeping thing;
Until they wake and make the scene
Look fresh again and gaily green."

And as he ascended heavenward, Eve saw that where his feet had rested upon the earth, a cluster of the same sweet blossoms were springing from the cold ground.

In weeping Eve we see humanity sorrowing over its lost hopes,—all things lost through sin. But in the gentle snowflakes, falling "silently, like the footsteps of angels," we have God's messengers, telling of a future gladness. The word *angel* you know means simply "messenger," and every little snowflake comes to earth with a message from God, a message of hope and comfort for those who mourn. While it falls like a winding sheet over the seemingly dead earth, it is itself the prophecy of the glad resurrection of all things.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God has written in the stars above;
But not less in the bright flowerets under us

Stands the revelation of His love,⁸²

—says the poet, and this is true. But not alone in the stars of the sky and flowers of the earth are God's messages written. The beautiful star-lilies of the air are also His white-winged messengers, which tell His truth and reveal His love, when the bright flowerets have faded, and the stars of the sky are hidden. For the icy breath of winter, which makes the fields and gardens bare, freezes the drops of water into shapes of exquisite loveliness, upon each of which is written the very message of the flowers,

Matthew 5

⁴⁸ Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

And besides this precept, which is itself the promise that we shall be brought back to the lost perfection of Eden, the snow bears also the bright message of the coming spring, the promise of the springing forth again of the vanished flowers.

Isaiah 55

¹⁰ For...the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
and...waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud.

So you see it is no fable that the snowflakes are turned into flowers. In sending the snow, God is really raining down from heaven a fresh supply of blossoms, of which the flower-like shape of each little snowflake is a prophecy.

And the sweet, pure snowdrop, which comes before the snows of winter are past, is the first fulfillment of this prophecy and promise. It seems as though God has made it so like the snow that we can see its relationship, and recognize it as a transformed snowflake. Thus the snowdrop is to us an emblem of the resurrection, of the restoration to purity and holiness, and the bringing back through God's Gift sent down from Heaven, His own pure and perfect Son, the Holy Child Jesus,—of everything of which sin has robbed us.

⁸² Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *An April Day*, 1825.

31. Forget-Me-Not

Present Truth, June 13, 1901

Original title: For the Children. The King's Garden. Forget-Me-Not

HERE is the little flower that is sure to follow the snowdrop, and bloom with it in the King's Garden,—sweet Forget-me-not, emblem of faithfulness. Do you remember the seed from which comes “the beauty of holiness,” of which the snowdrop teaches us?

Exodus 20

³ You shall have no other gods before me.

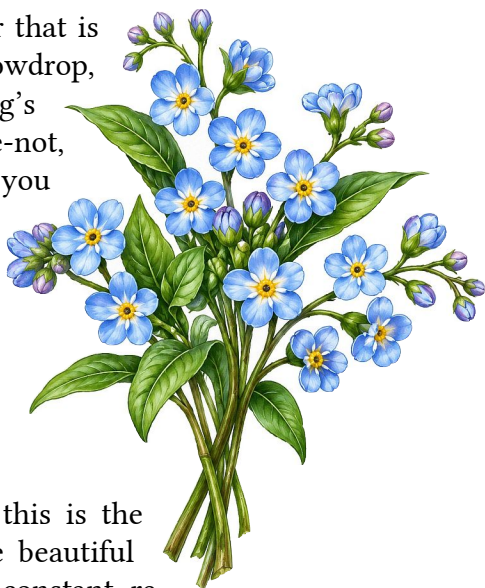
The Word which follows this is the seed from which comes the beautiful flower of Faithfulness and constant remembrance of God.

⁴ You shall not make unto yourself any graven image, nor any likeness of anything...

⁵ You shall not bow down yourself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.

You know that people who love each other often give love-tokens one to another to keep the loved one constantly in mind. Have you not given little keepsakes to your friends? something that they were to keep for your sake, and the sight of which was to remind them constantly of you, so that no one else should take your place in their heart. Perhaps the best thing, and the one most often given, is a likeness, an image of the loved one.

Now God wants to have and to keep always our whole hearts. He says He is “a jealous God.” He knows what a sad thing it would be for us if we should choose to have any other God beside



Him, so He to jealous, for our sake, to keep our whole hearts to himself.

And so that we may be constantly reminded of Him, He gives us for a keepsake and love-token a wonderful mirror, into which we may look and see the reflection of His glory and beauty. We cannot have an image of God; He is infinite, and it is not possible that His perfections can ever be fully known. But in this mirror we can catch gleams from the shining of His glory, we can behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and thus we may get some of...

2 Corinthians 4

⁶ ...the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, [as it shines from] the face of Jesus Christ.

Are you not glad that you have such a mirror in which you may see something of the King in His beauty? Perhaps you did not know that He had given you this, and so you have never used it for the purpose of seeing Him. Is that so? Then let me tell you at once what it is, so that you may begin now to use it to make you acquainted with Him.

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent
Him to behold is *on His works to look*,
Which He has made in beauty excellent,
And in the same, as in a brazen book,
To read enregistered in every nook
His goodness, which His beauty does declare;
For all that's good is beautiful and fair.

These unto all He daily does display,
And show himself in the image of His grace,
As in a looking-glass, through which He may
Be seen of all His creatures, vile and base,
That are unable else to see His face,
His glorious face, which glisters else so bright,
That the Angels' selves cannot endure His sight.⁸³

⁸³ Spenser's *Hymn of Heavenly Beauty*.

Do you want to see the King in His beauty? You could not now bear the sight of His full glory, but all of it that you can endure is reflected in the works of His great creation. There you may see His glory in the heavens, His smile in the glad sunshine, His power in the ocean and the mountains, His wisdom, beauty and faithfulness, His eternal power and Godhead, in all the things that He has made.

The mirror is not now so bright and clear as in the beginning when God first gave it to mankind, for sin has dimmed it, and clouded our eyes. Yet even now in it you may “behold your God,”⁸⁴ and so learn to know Him more and more, as you see Him by faith more and more clearly. And at last the veil that hides Him will be altogether withdrawn, and...

Isaiah 33

¹⁷ Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty.

Who could look into the mirror, and at the glory of the Lord, and then make an image, and worship the works of his own hands, the likeness of something that he had seen? Not one. It is only when people look at all these things without seeing the glory of God reflected in them, that they begin to worship the things themselves, and make images of them.

There is something that always goes before the making of images that can be seen, and what that is Paul tells us in these words:

Romans 1

²¹ When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became *vain in their imaginations*.

It was because of this that they...

²³ ...changed the glory of the incorruptible God *into an image* made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

⁸⁴ *Isaiah 40:9.*

The image must always be in the mind, before it is made so that it can be seen. But ah, how many there are who set up an image in the mind and heart, though these “vain imaginations” never take outward shape! Yet they are bowed down to and worshiped, just as much as the gods that the more ignorant heathen make.

But when we really see God, we shall love Him with our whole heart and mind. There is no room for any images in the King’s Garden, for it is all to be filled with the reflection of His own loveliness.

Once the ark of God was carried into the house of Dagon, the graven image that the Philistines worshiped. Inside the ark were the tables of stone on which these words were written:

Exodus 20

³ You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ You shall not make unto yourself any graven image.

And before the power of this Word of God, Dagon fell down from his high place, and crumbled to pieces.

So when that same Word comes into our hearts, not on tables of stone, but as a living seed, a precious promise of God, with power to work out its own fulfillment in us, all vain imaginations will be cast down and rooted out, and the Lord alone will have the whole heart garden, and everything in it shall be but the reflection of His glorious beauty.

And among His fair flowers the faithful little Forget-me-not, will bloom. In this sweet little flower; as in every other, God’s voice is speaking to you. He from whom all its beauty comes is, calling to you to keep Him always in remembrance, saying,

“Forget-me-not!”

Then is it not a precious little keep sake from the Lord, to keep Him in your mind?

And when this sweet flower of faithfulness to the one true God blooms ever in the King’s Garden, keeping out every “vain imagi-

nation,” through it the King’s voice will be heard by those who see it there, and they, too will be reminded of their Creator as He calls to them through you,

“Forget-me-not!”



32. The Bluebell

Present Truth, June 20, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden

HAS not the bluebell a sweet story? Though the poem on the next page is but a fable, yet it teaches what should be, and is, the true story of the flowers in the King's Garden. For each little "King's Garden" on earth is a tiny bit of heaven, where the brightness and beauty of Jesus, "the Bright and Morning Star,"⁸⁵ is reflected.

And this brings us to the next seed which the King plants in His garden—the seed of reverence and adoration, which brings forth the perfect flower of a faultless character.

Remember as you read this third commandment, that each command of the King is a seed sown in His Garden, the hearts of His children; for "the seed is the Word of God."⁸⁶

Exodus 20

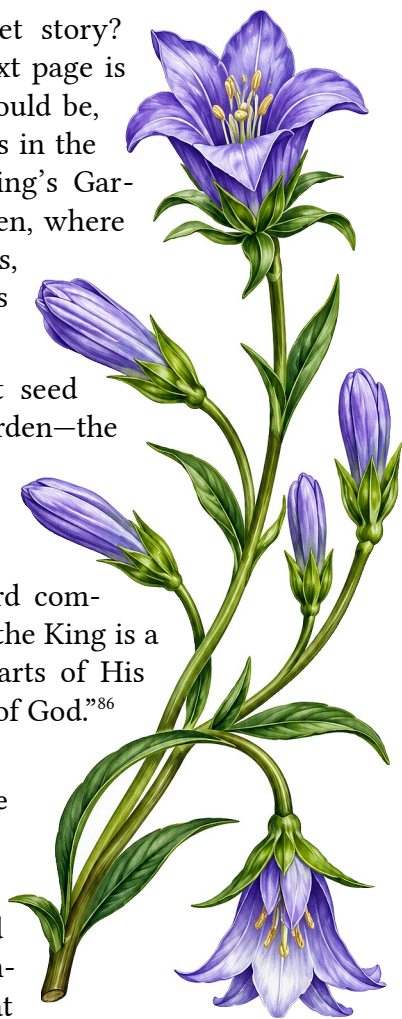
⁷ You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Read this carefully, and you will see that it, like the first and second commandments, is a promise. It is our Father's promise that we shall not take His name *in vain*.

What is it that marks one as the child of his earthly parents? It is the likeness that he bears to them. Their image is stamped upon

⁸⁵ Revelation 22:16.

⁸⁶ Luke 8:11.



him, and becomes more and more plain as he grows, causing him to be recognized as their child. Their name is written upon his face, their voices are heard in his tones, and their character is seen in his actions.

It is *vain* indeed for us to take upon us the name of the King as a mere outward sign, to call ourselves by His name—Christians—if the flowers that grow in our heart gardens do not reflect His beautiful image, and breathe out His sweet fragrance.

But here is the King's own precious promise that we shall not take His name *in vain*, or, for nothing. So if we let this Word come as seed into our hearts, it will, as it springs and grows up, write His name upon us in living characters that all may read. Then we shall be among the happy and glorious company that John saw standing upon Mount Zion,

Revelation 14

¹ ...having the Father's name written in their foreheads.

And the bluebell's little story teaches us how this is brought about. How did the bluebell get its soft, clear blue color, and the reflection of the glorious star in its bosom? It was by looking and loving. The beauty of the blue sky, and the radiance of the lovely star, attracted its gaze ever upward, and the more it looked, the more it loved. The love thus awakened and increased made it want to keep on looking, and the more it loved the more it looked. It looked and loved, and loved and looked.

Whate'er thou lovest, man,
That, too, become thou must.

So the lowly little flower lost itself,—its own characteristics,—in love for the blue heavens and the bright star which shone above it, ever in its sight, till at last it became but a little mirror in which they were reflected.

Notice how the beautiful flowers that grow in the King's Garden follow each other as naturally as the flowers of spring. Each one seems to be the result of the one going before it, until the full

glory of the summer pours forth its sweetness in tender homage to the King.

First come the pure Snowdrops of holiness, which must be followed by the faithful Forget-me-nots. For to be holy is to...

Matthew 22

³⁷ ...love the Lord your God with all your heart,...and with all your mind;

–but when all the heart and mind is given to God it is impossible to forget Him. He must be ever in the thoughts, and no image or likeness of anything else, no “vain imaginations,” can take His place in the heart.

But we cannot give our whole heart and mind to the Lord and think constantly of Him, without being filled with adoration and loving worship of His matchless beauty. How, then, could we speak lightly of that...

Deuteronomy 28

⁵⁸ ...Glorious and fearful Name, the Lord your God?

How could we take it thoughtlessly upon our lips *in vain*, for no purpose?

As we look into that wonderful mirror we told you of last week, and got glimpses of His glory, as we learn of Him through the sweet story of His life that He has given us in His Word, we shall reverence and worship Him as “the One altogether lovely.”⁸⁷ The more we look, the more we shall love, and the more we love the more we shall look. And what will be the result? Let the bluebell tell us?

The patient child whose watchful eye
Striven after all things pure and high,
Shall take their image by and by.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Song of Solomon* 5:16.

⁸⁸ Excerpt of a poem, “The Bluebell,” from *McGuffey’s Fifth Eclectic Reader*, 1879.

By beholding we become changed. So our constantly looking to Jesus will write His name upon us, and we shall grow into His image, as the lovely flowers grow.

In the second commandment God tells us that we are not to have any image or likeness of anything to take His place. And then in the third He promises that we shall bear His own perfect image, telling His name by our faultless characters.

You know that the beauty of this world all comes through the sun. It is this that paints the flowers with lovely colors, and gilds everything with the glory that God has put upon it. And this is to teach us that all the beauty in the King's Garden comes from the glorious face of "the Sun of Righteousness,"⁸⁹ and is the reflection of His own beauty, the revealing of His image, the spelling out of His name.

As the bright sun looks down from the heavens, shining into all the corners of the earth, that it may beautify and glorify everything with its own brightness; so the true Sun, the light of all the worlds, sheds abroad throughout the whole earth the boundless love of God, to stamp His Divine image upon all who will turn their faces towards Him, and look unto Jesus.

Every child can tell what is the last part of the third commandment; but perhaps you have not seen the beautiful promise that is in it.

Exodus 20

⁷ ...the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain.

You know what *guilt* is, do you not? It is the stain of sin. Now of all those who have the Father's name written in their foreheads, we are told that...

Revelation 14

⁵ In their mouth was found no guile, for they are *without fault* before the throne of God.

⁸⁹ *Malachi 4:2.*

So when God says that we shall not take His name in vain, He is promising to make us *guiltless*, “without fault.” He will “hold him guiltless” who does not take His name in vain, for His own perfect likeness will be seen in all such.

Yes; by looking unto Jesus, all our faults will be lost; they will disappear, and His graces will take their place, as the star was imaged in the bluebell’s chalice.

Then is not this a wonderful seed,

Exodus 20

⁷ You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain?

Is it all that is needed to fill the King’s Garden with grace and glory. For you will notice this about these seeds: each one has within it that which will produce all the graces that grow in the King’s Garden. You cannot separate them, for they are one, as we have already seen and can all be summed up in one word, *Love*, which is the seed of all.



33. The Heart's-Ease

Present Truth, June 27, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden

YOU all know this pretty little flower, do you not? Very likely you have gathered in the fields the tiny Heart's-Ease, or wild Pansy, with its smiling face; and of course you all know well its larger and more beautiful sister, the garden Pansy.



Do you know what this name means? It is from the French, *pensée*, meaning *thought*. And this is a good name to put with the other while we think over together some *Thoughts* that give Heart's-Ease,—ease or rest of heart.

We found out that each little seed contains a thought of God. His Word is the seed through which He puts His thoughts into the garden of our hearts. We have already talked of three of these wonderful seeds, and the beautiful plants that come from them;

and it is in the fourth that we find the seed of Heart's-Ease or Rest.

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the rest day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God: in it you shall not do any work,...

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the rest day, and hallowed it.

Everlasting Rest

Do you know what it is to be so very tired that you long to rest? You would never have known what this feeling of weariness is if sin had not come into the world, bringing...

...death, and all our woe.⁹⁰

For when God made men He “caused him to rest”⁹¹ in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had plenty of work to do, and yet they had rest all the time that they were doing it, and so they were never tired. Was not this a happy state to be in?

The word Sabbath means *rest*, and so to keep the Sabbath of the Lord is to keep *God's rest*. And this every one may do, for God has given it to all. He made the Sabbath, which is His rest, for man, and He tells every one to keep it.

But God “faints not, neither is weary.”⁹² So to really have the rest of the Lord is to be like He tells us those will be who wait on Him:

Isaiah 40

³¹ They shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.

⁹⁰ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*.

⁹¹ *Isaiah* 63:14.

⁹² *Isaiah* 40:28.

In giving us the Sabbath, the King is putting into His Garden the seed of His own everlasting rest, so that the flower of perfect Heart's-Ease may grow there.

Everlasting Strength

Now let us see what it is that causes God to rest, and then we shall understand better how we may keep His rest.

Do you know that it is *strength* that gives rest? When one gets weary it is because he has “gone beyond his strength,” as we say. You know you can run and play and work for a while without feeling tired, especially if you do not keep it up too long at a time. Your strength is *renewed*—that means that you get a fresh supply of it,—and so you feel at rest and at ease, even while you are working or playing. But when you keep on too long, and your strength is all used up, how tired and heavy you feel, and how tender and sore your muscles are!

Then you have to wait awhile, until you get rested,—that is, until you get a fresh supply of strength in your body. But the true rest that the Lord gives is to keep us from ever feeling tired in mind or body, and it will, if you keep it, bring us back to the happy state of Adam and Eve in Eden, so that we shall never need to *stop* and rest, because we shall be resting all the time.

Isaiah 40

³¹ They that wait upon the Lord shall *renew their strength*...

—just as soon as it is used up, and it is because of this that...

³¹ ...they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.

Now do you see why it is that God never faints or grows weary? It is because...

Isaiah 26

⁴ ...in the Lord Jehovah is *everlasting strength*.

It is because of His everlasting strength that He has everlasting rest, and to able to give it; and the way that He gives us His rest, is by giving us His strength.

God tells us to look at all the things that He has made, in which we may see “His eternal power,”⁹³—His everlasting strength,—and then we shall understand that...

Isaiah 40

²⁸ ...the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary.

So when God puts the seed of His rest into His Garden, He is putting there His own everlasting strength, for this alone can give true rest. He does not tell us to keep our own sabbath, or rest, but...

Exodus 20

¹⁰ ...the sabbath [rest] of the Lord your God.

But the only way that we can have and keep God’s rest, is to have God’s strength, and so He says that we may be...

Colossians 1

¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power.

Then we shall enter into His glorious rest.

The Sabbath as His Memorial

To teach us to know His power so that we may rest in Him, God has given us the Sabbath as His memorial, to keep in our minds the wonderful works of the Creator.

Exodus 20

¹¹ In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day,

—because His works were finished.

⁹³ *Romans 1:20.*

The “Song for the Sabbath Day,”⁹⁴ shows that the Sabbath day is for us to remember and praise the great Creator, and think upon His mighty works.

Psalm 92

⁵ O Lord, how great are your works,
And your thoughts are *very deep*.

In all the works of God we see His great, deep, almighty thoughts unfolding all about us. We may read His thoughts, see into His mind, and learn to know Him and rest in Him.

One cannot rest on anything that is weak or unsound. Could you rest on a chair, or on your bed, if you were all the time afraid that it might give way and let you down?

Sometimes we see a little boy or girl trying to carry a younger brother or sister not much smaller than themselves. But although they bravely do their best, the little one in their arms does not look very happy or peaceful. It is afraid all the time of being let fall; it is not *resting*. But let the father come along and gather it in his strong, loving arms, and see the look of peace and trust that comes into the little one’s face. It is resting in its father’s arms, because it knows that he is strong.

So before we can rest in God, we must know that He is strong. Because of this He tells us:

Isaiah 40

²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these [the sun, moon, and stars], that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is *strong in power*; not one fails.

We are to look up and see the glorious sun, the silver moon, and the bright stars,—some of which are suns many times larger than our sun,—we are to think of Him whose great power made them all, and who still, by the greatness of His might, holds them up in the heavens and keeps them all from falling.

⁹⁴ *Psalm 92.*

Then we shall know something of the strength by which He gathers the lambs with His arm, and carries them in His bosom. Can you not, dear little ones, who are His little lambs, rest safely and sweetly in the bosom of Him who holds up the world, and the sun, moon, and stars? Can you not drop all your burdens, and let Him carry them and you also? for He says,

Matthew 11

²⁸ Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Amen

In the beginning, God said of everything that He wished to have in the earth, “Let it be so,” and “it was so.” But sin, we have found, causes all these beautiful things to vanish away, and would have changed the earth into a desolate waste, but for one thing. What is that?

It is the Cross of Jesus Christ; for this is the power by which God again creates all things new. It is through the Cross that He gives out new life to all things. It is this alone which renews the strength of the whole creation of God.

And so Jesus says that He is “the Amen,”⁹⁵ and that...

2 Corinthians 1

²⁰ ...all the promises of God in Him are yea and amen.

You know what this word means, for you say it and hear it very often. “So be it,” or “Let it be so.” It means, It shall be so because God has said so.

So to all that God said in the beginning when He made the world and all things in it, the Cross of Christ is saying, “Amen, it shall be so.” It was because of this that God rested on that first Sabbath day of time, although He knew how all His beautiful and perfect work would be marred by sin. He knew the power of the Cross of Jesus Christ to bring all things back to the beauty and

⁹⁵ *Revelation 3:14.*

perfection of the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve first rested there,

Genesis 1

³¹ And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.

He knew the power of the Cross to make sinful people new creatures, pure and sinless as Adam and Eve first came from His hand.

So, do you see, dear children, that it is only through the Cross of Jesus Christ, through the gift of His life for you, that this beautiful flower of Heart's-Ease can still bloom in the King's Garden? And as He sees it there, in the hearts of all who truly keep His Sabbath,—His rest,—it is a sweet reminder of His beloved Son, who gave His life to save His creatures from perishing,

2 Corinthians 2

¹⁵ ...a sweet savor of Christ.

As the King walks in His Garden on the Sabbath, as of old He walked in Eden, He still rests and is refreshed, as He sees the new creation rising through the Cross of Jesus Christ. For the Sabbath is the token, the pledge, to Him as well as to us, of the complete restoration of that fair world, that most beautiful Garden, in which the King first rested. He says,

Ezekiel 20

²⁰ Hallow My Sabbaths, for they shall be a sign between me and you.

So when you have “the flower called Heart's-Ease in your bosom,” you have there the King's pledge of love that you shall be made perfect, and shall have a home with Him for ever in that beautiful new earth, when He shall make...

Isaiah 51

³ ...her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord.

Then never more will you faint or grow weary, but you will have the perfect rest that God gave to Adam when He first caused him to rest in Eden.

Then, dear children, let the sweet faces of the little pansies ever bring to your mind *thoughts* of the great power and love of Him who has poured out His own life to redeem you, and has given you...

...rest by His sorrow, and life by His death.⁹⁶



⁹⁶ John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*.

34. Everlasting Flowers

Present Truth, July 4, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden

PERHAPS you may have seen the shining bunches of these pretty, old-fashioned flowers in vases on the mantel-piece, especially in country houses, where they are kept through the winter because they do not fade, like ordinary blossoms. It is because of this that they are called “everlasting flowers”!

Of course they do not last for ever, for all that is in the world passes away, “and the grace of the fashion of it perishes.” But all the flowers in the King’s Garden are everlasting flowers, because they come from...

1 Peter 1

²³ ...incorruptible seed, [even] the Word of God which lives and abides for ever.

Last week we spoke of the beautiful land where God will give His people everlasting rest. And now we will see what it is that will give us long life in that beautiful land.

Exodus 20

¹² Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

There is in this Word of God the fifth seed that He puts into His Garden—the seed of *everlasting life*. The Apostle Paul quoted this commandment, and showed one way in which it is fulfilled. He said,

Colossians 3

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in the Lord.

We are to obey our parents, because to disobey them would be to disobey and dishonor our Heavenly Father, who has placed us in their homes, under their care.



“Everlasting” Flowers (straw flowers)

Adam was “the son of God,”⁹⁷ and every child of Adam is the child of God, though many are prodigal sons, disobedient children. Adam disobeyed his Heavenly Father. This was sin, for...

1 John 3

⁴ ...sin is the transgression of the law.

All sin is disobedience of God, and all disobedience of God is sin. You know that this was what cut short Adam’s life, and prevented him from living for ever in the beautiful world God had given him. For...

Romans 5

¹² By one man sin entered into the world, and *death* by *sin*.

But the results of his sin did not end with himself, for...

¹⁹ By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners,

¹² ...and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

If this were the end of the story, we could have no hope of long life in God’s beautiful earth. But no; it is only the beginning; and the very commandment that we are talking of promises us this long life, so we know there is hope that we may yet obtain it by His exceeding great and precious promise.⁹⁸ So let us read the rest of the story, and see how we may be brought back to obey and honor our Heavenly Father,—to “glorify God and enjoy Him for ever.”

¹⁹ For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.

Who is this One, whose perfect obedience has power to undo the evil effects of the sin of the first man, and bring back his family to obedience and life? It is the One Man—the Man Christ Jesus. Just as we were made sinners, born sinful, through the disobedience of Adam, even as we may be made righteous, born

⁹⁷ *Luke* 3:38.

⁹⁸ *2 Peter* 1:4.

again God's obedient children, through the obedience of Jesus. For...

Galatians 4

⁶ Because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.

The Spirit of Jesus is the Spirit of perfect obedience and honor of His Heavenly Father, for He said,

John 8

²⁹ I do always those things that please Him.

Then would you always honor your Heavenly Father by perfect obedience to your earthly parents, and by never doing anything displeasing to them or to Him? Here you see the way, the only way in which this can be done. *Jesus* is the way. *You* cannot please and honor God, but *He* can and always does. So you must have His sweet Spirit of obedience in your heart, through being born again of Him, if you are to be among the many who are “made righteous” by His obedience.⁹⁹ But what about the long life?¹⁰⁰ Does not death reign over all alike, whether obedient or disobedient? No; for as sin—disobedience—brought death, even so righteousness—obedience—brings back to the children of men their lost life.

1 Corinthians 15

²¹ For as by one man came death, by Man came also the resurrection from the dead.

Because Jesus always did the will of His Father, death could not reign over Him. He reigned over death, and arose from the tomb, the forerunner of all who shall be made righteous by His obedience.

Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes!

⁹⁹ *Romans* 5:19.

¹⁰⁰ *Exodus* 20:12.

He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
And He lives for ever with His saints to reign.¹⁰¹

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁵ O grave, where is your victory?

Because of the glorious victory that Jesus has won over sin and death, God says to all who will let Him make them obedient like himself:

Ezekiel 37 [RV]

¹² Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

¹⁴ And I will put my Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land.

So our days will be long in the land which the Lord our God gives us, only through the resurrection from the dead, which has been made possible for as through the obedience of Jesus, the beloved Son of God.

Oh, may He sow this precious seed in your heart gardens, dear children (and He will if you will only listen to His voice) that it may break the power of sin and death over you. Then you will see that lovely land into which He will bring all whom He ransoms from the grave, and your days will be long in it—how long? even for ever.

Beautiful Zion, built above,
Beautiful city that I love,
Beautiful gates of pearly white,
Beautiful temple, God its light.

Beautiful trees for ever there,
Beautiful fruit they always bear,
Beautiful rivers gliding by,
Beautiful fountains, never dry,—

¹⁰¹ Robert Lowry, *Christ Arose*, 1874.

Beautiful light without the sun,
Beautiful day revolving on,
Beautiful worlds on worlds untold,
Beautiful streets of shining gold,—

Beautiful crowns on every brow,
Beautiful palms the conquerors show,
Beautiful robes the ransomed wear,
Beautiful all who enter there.

Beautiful throne of God, the Lamb,
Beautiful seats at His right hand,
Beautiful rest,—all wanderings cease,—
Beautiful home of perfect peace.¹⁰²

Have you ever thought that everything you do is either an honor or dishonor to your parents? You bear their name, and people will judge of them by what they see in you.

If you are naughty, rude, and disobedient, they will think your parents have neglected to train you properly, and that perhaps your bad behavior is a copy of what they are in their own homes. So they will think much less of them, because you have dishonored them.

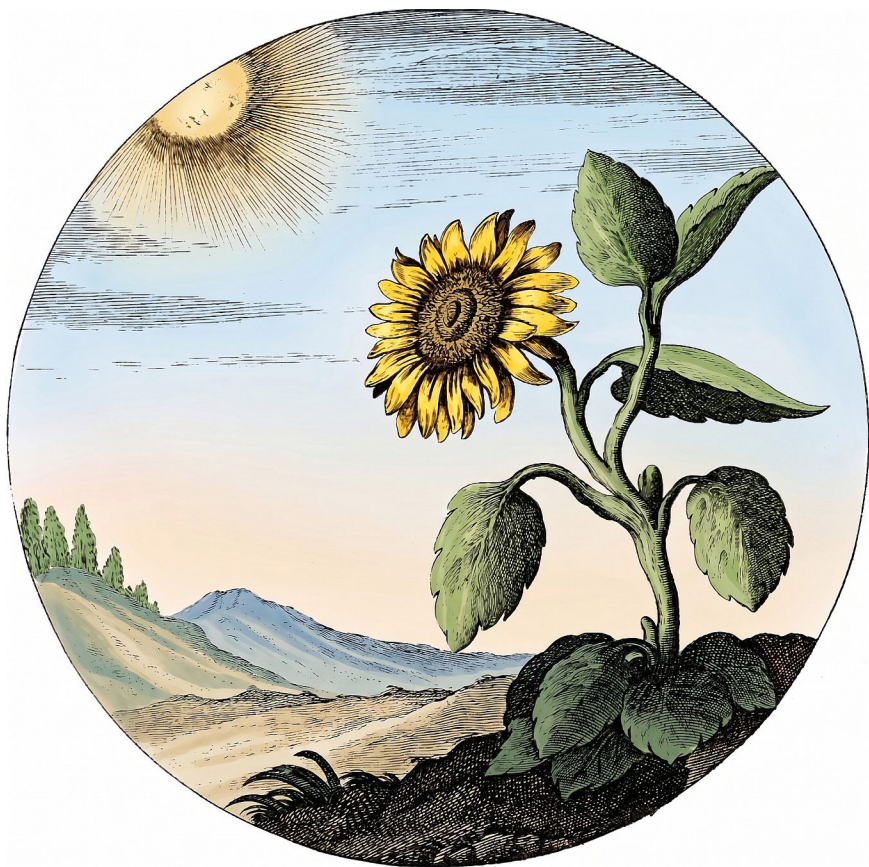
But if you are obedient, gentle, kind, and obliging, they will think that you have a good father and mother, and your parents will be honored because of you.

Do you remember our talk two weeks ago about the Father's name? When God puts His name upon us, He sows it in our hearts in seed from His own nature, that grows in His Garden His own beautiful character. But sometimes people take His name when they are not like Him in character. He says that His holy name is blasphemed because of these, for people who do not know Him judge of Him by what they see in them.

¹⁰² George Gill, *Beautiful City*, 1850.

What a dreadful thing to so dishonor our Heavenly Father as to cause His glorious and fearful Name to be blasphemed!

But in His fifth commandment He gives us a safeguard against this. His Word of power speaks to us, bidding us honor Him. So let this Word sink as good seed into your heart garden, that the fragrant flower of perfect obedience to Him in all things may bring forth its everlasting blossoms to His honor.





Love-Lies-Bleeding

35. The Love-Lies-Bleeding

Present Truth, July 11, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden. Self-sacrifice

THIS is a peculiar flower, is it not? But many of you will recognize this at once as the plant that we call "Love-Lies-Bleeding." Do you think that a strange plant to grow in the King's Garden? We have taken it to stand for the beautiful flower that grows from the seed of the Word,

Exodus 20

¹³ You shall not kill.

You think it a very dreadful thing to take the life of another, and so it is. But Jesus said that to be angry with another without cause is the same as to take his life.¹⁰³

1 John 3

¹⁵ Whosoever hates his brother, is a murderer.

What was it that caused the first murder? It was anger and hatred. Cain was angry with Abel, and that led him to kill his only brother. He did not mean to do it, for he did not know what death was; he had never seen a human being cold and still, with the breath gone from the body, and the heart-beat stopped.

You see, then, that Cain's sin was in being angry, and hating his brother; for the taking of Abel's life was an accident which happened because of his anger.

Think of this, when any bitter feelings of anger or hatred towards anyone rise up in your hearts. Think of the dreadful sin of murder, and of the words of God that...

1 John 3

¹⁵ Whosoever hates his brother, is a murderer,

—and ask Him to root out this bad weed from your heart garden, and make the sweet flowers of love to bloom there instead.

¹⁰³ *Matthew 5:21-22.*

Matthew 5

⁴⁴ Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

This is what God tells us to do, and then He adds,

⁴⁵ That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

In sending the sunshine and the rain, God is giving out His own life to us. But we have learned already that He can only give life to sinners through His Cross. God does not take our lives because we are sinners and enemies, but He gives up His own life to save us. He pours out His own life-blood upon the Cross to reconcile us to Him, to make us His friends instead of His enemies.

Think of the Cross of Jesus Christ, but how Love lay bleeding upon it to save His enemies, and there you will learn the meaning of this commandment,

Exodus 20

¹³ You shall not kill.

You will learn what it is to be a true child of your Heavenly Father; for...

1 John 4

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

And,

1 John 3

¹⁶ Hereby we perceive the love of God: because He laid down His life for us.

So as we are to love one another *as He has loved us*,¹⁰⁴

¹⁶ ...we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren.

¹⁰⁴ *John* 13:34; 15:12.

This does not always mean that we should die for them, but that we should live for others. We should give up our lives to serve others, doing all the good we can to all the people we can,—not to our friends only, and those who love us, but even to those who hate and are unkind to us.

Romans 12

²⁰ If your enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink.

Thus you may...

²¹ ...overcome evil with good,

—and turn your enemies into friends. Read the story of Elisha and his enemies on the next page, and you will see how he did this.¹⁰⁵

Acts 10

³⁸ [Jesus] went about doing good.

His life was laid down long before He died on Calvary. From the beginning of the world He had been giving His life, that all His creatures might have life. And He can give His life to sinful beings, as are all in this world, only through His own death.

How different is God's way from the way of this world! Men fight and kill their enemies, and think that they do no wrong, or even that they are doing good and serving God. But God does not take the life of His enemies; He gives His own life to save them.

You must have noticed on the flags of Great Britain, the figure of the Cross, many times repeated. This is used as an ensign when the armies of England do battle with their enemies. Do not be deceived by this form, but always remember that the Cross of Jesus stands for life *laid down* for enemies. If we truly follow it, it will not lead us to kill, but to seek to save the lives of others, even though it be by the giving of our own.

¹⁰⁵ PP Editor's note: The article is titled "Conquered by Kindness," and can be found in the collection, *Gospel Lessons in the Old Testament*. The scripture that covers this story is *2 Kings* 6:8-23.

John 15

¹³ Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Romans 5

⁸ But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

¹⁰ When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.

You have heard of the “Crusades,” the Wars of the Cross, as they were called, which lasted for many years, and in which much blood was shed, and many lives were lost. But these wars had really nothing to do with the Cross of Jesus, for when the Son of God goes forth to war, all the blood that He sheds is His own, which He pours out to save His enemies.

This lovely and wonderful flower of Love and self-sacrifice grows not in the gardens of this world. It is of heavenly growth, and is found only in the King’s Garden. The seed of it comes from the King’s own heart of love, and...

1 John 4

⁸ He that loves not, knows not God; for God is love.

When God says to us,

Exodus 20

¹³ You shall not kill,

—He is sowing in our hearts the precious seed of His own loving self-sacrifice, that by His grace given to us we may be willing to lay down our lives to save the lives of others. May this seed grow and flourish in your hearts, that your lives may glorify the King by revealing His goodness.

36. The Lily

Present Truth, July 18, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden

A little monitor presents her page
Of choice instruction with her snowy bells—
The Lily of the Vale.

WHAT is the message of the Lily? You will all be able to tell at once, for the lily has ever been the emblem of *purity*. So the snowy bells of the valley lily ring out the message. Be pure.

The red rose says, Be sweet!
The lily says, Be pure!

Jesus is both...

Song of Solomon 2

¹ ...the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys.

All the sweetness and the purity of the flowers come from Him who made them. He is the sweetness of the Rose, and the purity of the Lily. If you keep this always in mind, you cannot look at any of His works without learning something of Him.

The fair lily of purity is always to be found in the King's Garden. The seed of it is in the Eighth Commandment:

Exodus 20

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery.

Do you know what is the purest thing in the world? Perhaps you will say, "The snow." But snow can be soiled, as you have



doubtless seen it, and then it is no longer beautiful. But there is something so pure that it cannot be defiled,—so pure that it purifies whatever comes in contact with it. It is *light*.

And do you know that the white-robed lily wears a garment of light? It reflects the beautiful, bright, pure rays that shine upon it, and this is what clothes it with its white garment.

Some of the lovely-colored flowers we have talked about show us the beauty of the light, but the lily shows us its purity. But remember that the light is the reflection of the glory of the Lord. So we may say: Some of the flowers show us a little of the beauty of the Lord, but the lily shows us something of His purity.

When Jesus, the Lily of the Valley, appeared to a few of His disciples in the dazzling splendor of His perfect purity,

Matthew 17

² ...His raiment was white as the light,

Mark 9

³ ...so as no fuller on earth can white them.

These things teach us how we may obey the lily's message, "Be pure." It is by turning to the light, by living in the light, letting the light of God's face shine upon us, and reflecting it.

God tells us in His Word that He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin.¹⁰⁶ Yet He says,

John 6

³⁷ Him that comes unto me, I will in no wise cast out.

So when we obey His call and come to Him, He will...

Show His reconciling face,
Shine away our sin and shame,¹⁰⁷

—and we shall be purified by His presence.

¹⁰⁶ *Habakkuk* 1:13.

¹⁰⁷ John Newton, *Safely Through Another Week*, 1774.

If you have been in places where flax is grown for making linen, you have no doubt seen fields spread all over with linen thread put out in the sunshine to bleach, that is to be made white. If a white garment becomes stained or discolored, it is put into the sunshine to whiten.

So if you would have the stains and marks of sin taken away, and be made pure in heart, come in prayer to God, and look up into the face of Jesus, who is the Light of the world, and He will make you clean and white.

1 John 1

⁷ If we walk in the light,...the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

Matthew 6

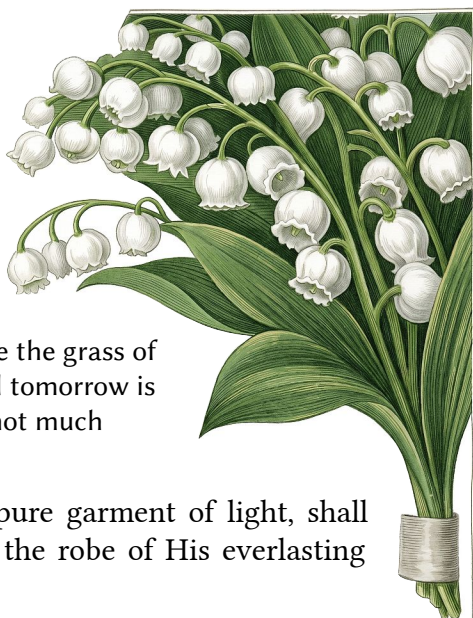
²⁸ Consider the lilies,...how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin:

²⁹ And yet say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you?

He who gives the lily its pure garment of light, shall much more clothe you with the robe of His everlasting righteousness and purity.

No matter what your surroundings may be, *you* may be pure in heart. Did you ever see a beautiful white water lily floating on a slimy, stagnant pool of water? And did you read the message that Jesus has written for you upon its petals? It is that even in this dark world of sin, you may grow in beauty, in purity, showing the grace and glory of Jesus to all who look upon you.



Dr. T. L. Cuyler tells about visiting a coal mine; and he found growing at the mouth of the mine some beautiful white flowers, but alas! they were covered with the black dust of the place. He spoke of it regretfully to one of the miners, who took one of the flowers and shook it slightly. At once the dirt slipped off, and left the beautiful petals glistening white.

“You see,” said the miner, “this flower has the power to live in the midst of dirt without ever getting dirty.”

So the Christian can live in an evil world without being contaminated.

Think of the childhood of Jesus in His home in Nazareth. He “knew no sin,”¹⁰⁸ but lived a life of perfect purity “unspotted from the world,”¹⁰⁹ in a place where nearly all the people were of very bad character. When Philip told Nathanael about Jesus of *Nazareth*, Nathanael said with astonishment:

John 1

⁴⁶ Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see!

And when he went he found the fairest and purest lily that ever grew in this world.

Now the King wants the lilies of purity to bloom in His Garden, so that anyone who does not believe that He has the power to make and keep us pure, can *come and see*. This is a greater miracle than a pure white water lily growing on a dark, slimy, muddy pool. The light that God sheds from heaven, over this dark world, can purify all who will come to it, and clothe them with grace and beauty.

Maiden with the meek brown eyes,
In whose orb the shadow lies,
Like the dusk in evening skies;

¹⁰⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:21.

¹⁰⁹ James 1:27.

Bear a lily in your hand,
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.¹¹⁰

It may be that you have read these lines before, and wondered what was their meaning. The lily in the hand represents purity of heart, by virtue of which we can gain an entrance wherever we will.

You know what it was that closed the gates of Eden, and shut man out from the Garden where he walked and talked with God. It was sin, *impurity*. But when this is taken away by...

Revelation 1

⁵ ...Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

—then again we may come into His holy presence, which brings back Eden to earth and makes heaven below. For Eden means *de-light*; and...

Psalms 16

¹¹ ...in His presence is fullness of joy.

Matthew 5

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

They shall see Him now by faith, and as He reveals himself, in all His works, and at last they shall...

Revelation 22

¹⁴ ...enter in through the gates into the city.

There is a city bright,
Closed are its gates to sin,
Naught that defileth
Can ever enter in.¹¹¹

The glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof, and:

¹¹⁰ Longfellow, *Maidenhood*.

¹¹¹ Mary Ann S. Deck, *There Is a City Bright*.

The sons of ignorance and night
May dwell in the eternal *light*
Through the eternal *love*.¹¹²

In a poem of Milton's which some day you may read, he tells of a pure-hearted maiden who, when in danger was delivered by a guardian angel. As the angel ascends heavenward again, he says:

Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free;
She shall teach you how to rise
Higher than the starry skies;
And if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.¹¹³



¹¹² Thomas Binney, *Eternal Light! Eternal Light!*

¹¹³ John Milton, *Comus*, 1634.

37. Honesty

Present Truth, July 25, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden

HONESTY is the name given to the plant in our picture. The seed-case is very pretty, and looks something like a pearl or silver coin. Bunches of these are sometimes used to ornament rooms.



We have chosen this plant because of its name, to stand for the flower of Honesty which springs from the seed of the eighth commandment:

Exodus 20

¹⁵ You shall not steal.

Everyone, even a very little child, knows that it is wrong to steal,—to take something that belongs to someone else. This is because God has put the seeds of His truth into the heart of every little child that is born. He writes His law in the members of our bodies, and so even the heathen who have never heard His name, know that they ought not to take that which is not theirs.

God gave to Adam and Eve the whole world, and everything in it except one tree, which He told them not even to touch. You think they ought to have been very happy and contented with a world full of beautiful things, and so they were for a time.

Then Eve began to long for the one thing that God had not given them. She looked at the forbidden tree, touched it, and at last...

Genesis 3

⁶ ...took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

They broke the law that God had written in their members, and they thought that they had gained a great deal. But, do you know that one...

John 3

²⁷ ...can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.

We may try to get what God has not given to us, but this is the surest way to lose it altogether.

All that God sees is for our good, He will give us when the right time comes; for...

Matthew 6

³² ...your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.

So let us trust in Him, and then we shall never want to steal,—to get by dishonesty what He has not given to us. We may seem to grasp and hold it for a time, but...

Romans 6

²³ ...the wages of sin is *death*,

—and that means the loss of *everything*. Listen to the advice which Paul gave to young Timothy:

1 Timothy 6

⁶ Godliness with contentment is great gain.

⁷ For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

⁸ And having food and raiment; let us be therewith content.

⁹ But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare.

There are other ways of stealing, besides putting forth our hands, as Eve did, and taking for ourselves what is not ours. Did you ever hear Shakespeare's lines:

Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis some thing, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.¹¹⁴

Proverbs 22

¹ A good name, [God's Word tells us,] is rather to be chosen than great riches,

—so if by our words we steal away the good name of another, we are doing him a greater injury than if we took his money or any of his goods.

We can also steal the *time* of others, by giving them unnecessary work to do for us. When you are careless or untidy in your habits, or when you need constant watching in order to be kept at your work or lessons, you are stealing the time of your busy

¹¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, Act 3, Scene 3, 1603.

mothers, and older brothers and sisters, and robbing others of the work that they might be doing for them.

The Bible tells of those who “rob God.”¹¹⁵ Perhaps you do not know how we can do this. God has kept for himself one-tenth of all that He gives to man. He leaves it to us to give Him back a faithful tithe—a tenth part—of all that He gives us. So if we do not pay Him that which He plainly tells us is His own, what are we doing? Robbing God.

He says that those who thus rob Him are “cursed with a curse,”¹¹⁶ but those who bring Him all the tithes will not have room to receive the great blessing that He will give them. Would you not rather have nine parts with God’s blessing, than to keep all ten parts and have a curse instead?

Besides the tithe, God has kept for himself one of the seven days of the week. This—the Sabbath—He calls...

Isaiah 58

¹³ ...*my* holy day.

Then if we use this day for our own work or pleasure, are we not robbing God of His holy time? But God says to us,

Exodus 20

¹⁵ You shall not steal,

—and His Word is Spirit and life, able to fulfill itself, and to keep us from doing anything that He tells us not to do. So when He says, “You shall not steal,” there is the same power in that Word as when He said,

Genesis 1

³ Let there be light, and there was light.

His precious Word of power will keep out of our hearts every seed of the evil weeds of dishonesty, and fill them with the sweet, fresh flowers of honesty and perfect truth.

¹¹⁵ *Malachi* 3:8.

¹¹⁶ *Malachi* 3:9.

38. Sincerity

Present Truth, August 1, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden. Sincerity

The Lilac

The sun shone warm, and the lilac said,
"I must hurry and get my table spread;
For if I am slow, and dinner is late,
My friends, the bees, will have to wait."

So delicate lavender grass she brought,
And the daintiest china ever bought,
Purple tinted and all complete:
And she filled each cup with honey sweet.

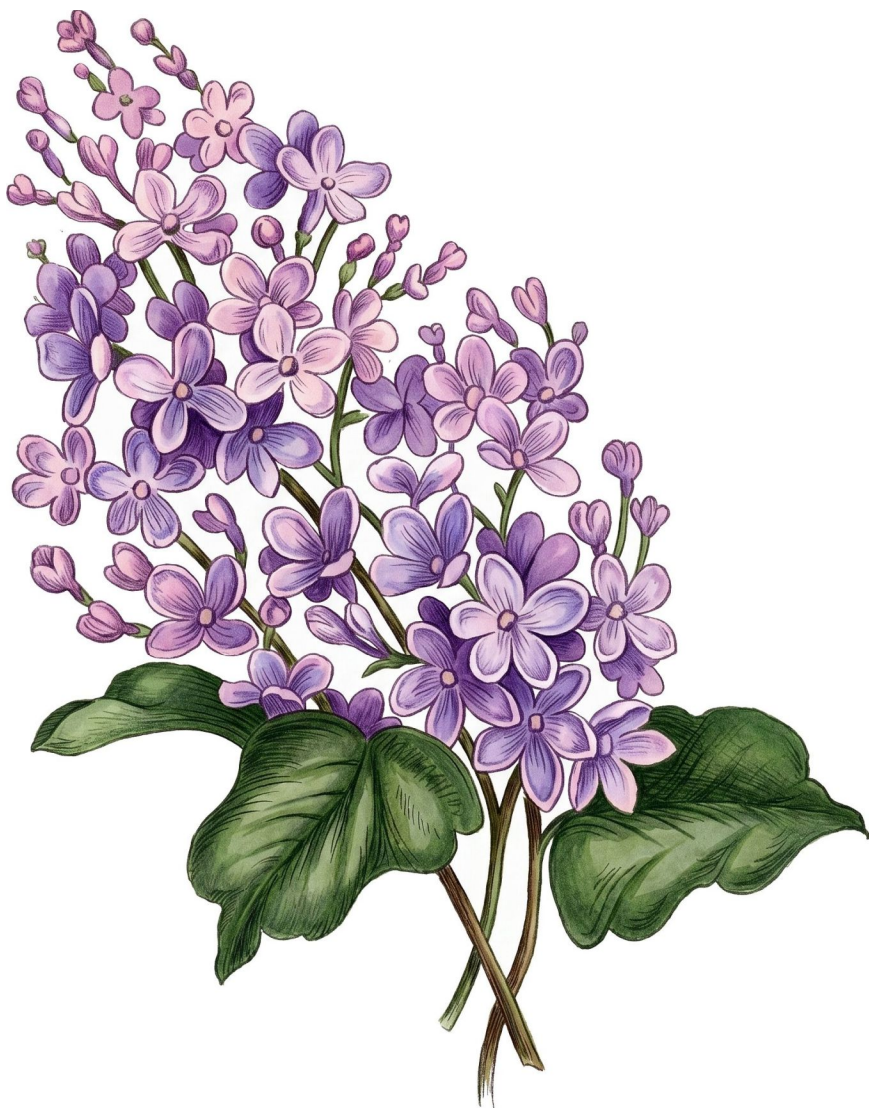
"Dinner is ready!" the spring wind cried,
And from hive and hiding, far and wide,
While the lilac laughed to see them come,
The little brown-jacketed bees came—hum-m!

They sipped the syrup from every cell,
They nibbled at toffee and caramel;
Then, without being asked, they all buzzed: "We
Shall be very happy to stay to tea."

—Clara Doty Bates

BUT lately some of the trees in the gardens and parks were covered with sweet-scented lilac blossoms. You saw them; were they not beautiful? Where are they? Gone, you say. Yes; their frail beauty has faded, but are they altogether gone? No; they have left something behind them; they have left *an impression* on your mind and heart.

For every humble hedgerow flower that blows,
And every little brown bird that does sing,
Has something greater than itself, and bears
A living Word to every living thing.



Someone once said:

“I am a part of all that I have seen,”

—meaning that his character had been formed by all the things that he had ever seen, so that a part of all that he had over looked upon still existed in him. The truth of this should make us all very careful what, and above all, *how* we see.

Matthew 5

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for *they* shall see *God*,

—who is revealed in all the things He has made. Then the impressions made upon our minds by all His works will be sweet and holy. The American poet, Whittier, after watching a glorious sunset until it faded, put this thought into the following beautiful verse:

But beauty seen is never lost,
God's colors all are fast;
The glory of this sunset heaven
Into my soul has passed.¹¹⁷

The lilac had a message. Did you read it? What did it say to *you*? You remember the beautiful shape of the spray, and how it was made up, not of one large blossom, but of many small delicately-formed ones. The beauty of the whole spray depended upon the perfection of every one of those tiny flowers. In this the lilac teaches a lesson of truth and faithfulness. It tells that it is the little acts and words of our daily lives that make or mar the beauty of a perfect character.

Psalms 51

⁶ Behold You desire truth in the inward parts,

—David said; and when truth is in the heart, every word will be true, and every act will be sincere. To make things appear to be what they are not, is to “bear false witness.” So we may sum up the message of the lilac in the words of the Ninth Commandment:

Exodus 20

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness.

This is the seed which fills the King's Garden with the flowers of sincerity and truth.

Did you notice that the lilac had frequent visitors? The bees love it; you know why. It is because its tiny blossoms are full of

¹¹⁷ John Greenleaf Whittier, *Sunset on the Bearcamp*, 1843.

sweet, pure honey; it is a storehouse from which they can gather rich supplies to fill the combs in their hives.

Psalm 119

¹⁰³ How sweet are your words unto my taste!

Psalm 19

¹⁰ Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb,

—sang the Psalmist; and he told what it was that made God’s Word so sweet to his taste.

Psalm 119

¹⁴⁰ Your Word is very pure, therefore your servant loves it.

It was the perfect purity—the truthfulness of God’s Word, that made it sweeter than honey to him. So in the pure honey that fills its dainty cups, the lilac is teaching us the same sweet lesson of sincerity.

Do you know what God says of those who have lying lips that bear false witness,—those who do not speak the truth?

Romans 3

¹³ The poison of asps is under their lips.

Think how we dread the poisonous bite of the deadly serpent. You would not like such poison to be found under your tongue, would you? Then ask Jesus, who is “the Truth,”¹¹⁸ to dwell in your heart; then you will have the truth that God desires in the inward parts, to fill your mouth with sweet words.

Matthew 12

³⁴ For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

When we were talking of the lilies, we found that their message is, “Be pure.” The message of the lilac is, “Be sincere.” Do you know the meaning of this word? It is from two Latin words which mean, “without wax.”

¹¹⁸ *John* 14:6.

It is thought by some that the word came to have its present meaning because it was used to describe honey that was perfectly pure. When it had been prepared and strained until it was entirely clear and free from the wax in which the bees had stored it, it was *sincere*, “without wax,” nothing but honey.

So the word has come to be used to describe anything that is pure and true, and just what it appears to be—that which does not “bear false witness.” Would you not like this word to be a true description of you?

It is the life working in the tree that fills the lilac cups with honey. And it is the same Life—the life of Jesus—that brings forth the flowers of truth in the King’s Garden, and fills them with the honey of sincerity. No fair appearance, while deadly poison lurks within, bears false witness in the King’s Garden, but the sincere sweetness of Jesus fills all the beautiful blossoms with the honey of truth.

Psalm 12

⁶ The words of the Lord are pure words:

As silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

There is no “false witness” in His Word. It...

Psalm 119

¹⁶⁰ ...is true from the beginning...

—to the end, as pure as silver or gold many times purified. And “the law of truth”¹¹⁹ is in the lips of His children, so that...

Revelation 14

⁵ ...in their mouth was found no guile.

May you be among that happy company, for...

Proverbs 12

²² A lying tongue is an abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are His delight.

¹¹⁹ *Malachi 2:6.*

39. Lessons from the Bees

Present Truth, August 1, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. Lessons from the Bees

NOW the bees are busy gathering honey while the sun shines and the flowers bloom. God has spread a rich feast for them in more beautiful dishes and cups than were ever made by the hands of the most skillful workman to adorn the king's table.

God might have made the earth bring forth,
Without a flower at all.¹²⁰

He might have fed the bees without the lovely colors and scents which give us so much pleasure, and which must surely add sweetness to their feast and their work. Like all the rest of God's creatures,

Psalm 104

²⁸ That You give them, they gather;

You open your hand; they are satisfied with good.

God does not put the honey in their mouths or in their hives, but He teaches them where to find it, how to gather it from the flowers, and how to make the perfect little six-sided cells of the comb in which to store it for use in the winter when the earth will not bring it forth.

Watch the bees at work, and notice the flowers that they visit,—the sweet-scented and pretty-colored ones. Suppose that in a beautiful, sweet-smelling flower, the bee should find no honey, but poison instead. Then that flower would be bearing “false witness,”¹²¹ showing fair colors to lure living creatures to their destruction.

There is a plant called the Pitcher Plant that does something very much like this. It has a long, pitcher-shaped cup, which it fills with a sweet, intoxicating fluid. This is a snare to the insects,

¹²⁰ Mary Howitt, *The Use of Flowers*, 1837.

¹²¹ *Exodus* 20:16.

which crowd into it, and drink until they are too dazed to escape. Then the cruel plant closes over them, and sucks their life blood. That plant is a false witness. Its fair form, and the attractive liquid within it, invite the insects to come in and feast and get new life; but they find death instead. See how like this, is the picture God has given up in His Word of the one who does not speak the truth:

Psalm 5

⁹ There is no faithfulness in their mouth;
Their inward part is very wickedness;
Their throat is an open sepulchre;
They flatter with their tongue.

Sometimes people flatter others in the hope of gaining something from them. Sometimes they speak fair words, but mischief is in their heart. There are false witnesses, seeking their own welfare at the expense of others, instead of, like the sweet flowers, attracting others by their loveliness, so that they may feed them and do them good.

There are some insects that feed on carrion-decaying matter. These flies are attracted by the most unpleasant smells, to the place where they will find what they most like. For them some pale flowers give forth a sickly odor to draw them.

But these the bee passes by. It loves purity and sweetness, and the most pleasant odors attract it to the place where these are to be found. Little children should be like the bee, attracted to those things that are pure and lovely, abstaining from all appearance of evil.

What teaches the bee where to find honey, so that it does not make a mistake and draw deadly poison instead from some plants which contain it? It is the same thing that teaches the birds to fly South in the winter, and brings them home again in the spring, the same thing that teaches the flowers to put forth their lovely petals, that “inspires their balmy odors,” and fills them with honey—the Spirit of God, which is the life and inspiration of all

things that live and move. He guides the bee to the flower, just as He directs the bird in its flight over the pathless ocean.



It is the Spirit of God alone that can guide you in the right way, keep you from evil, and lead you into all truth. The Bible speaks of those who...

Romans 2

¹⁸ ...approve the things that are more excellent, [because they are] instructed out of the law.

The life of God is the law of the bee and the flower, and instructs each to grow and to go in the way that He would have it. And this same law of His life will keep you also in His way, if you will only let Him guide you. Then He will teach you to...

Philippians 1

¹⁰ ...approve the things that are excellent: that you may *be sincere*.

40. The Perfect Fruit

Present Truth, August 8, 1901

Original title: Our Little Ones. The King's Garden. The Perfect Fruit

A man there was (though some did count him mad),
The more he gave away, the more he had.

DID you ever hear of such a man? John Bunyan tells about him in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. This man had learned the secret of true riches:

Exodus 20

¹⁷ You shall not covet.

To “covet” is to desire to have things that belong to others, and to grasp and try to keep to ourselves what we already have. We have found that Love is the summing up of the law of God. God is love; and, so the law of God is the law of love. Love is the beginning and the end of the law. The first commandment, Jesus said, is...

Matthew 22

³⁷ You shall love.

Colossians 3

¹⁴ [Love is] the bond of perfectness.

But,

1 Corinthians 13

⁵ Love seeks not her own;

–love does not covet the things of others, nor even seek to keep that which is its own. Love gives all,

John 3

¹⁶ God so loved...that He *gave*.

Galatians 2

²⁰ The Son of God...loved me, and gave himself for me.

So the tenth commandment, “You shall not covet,”¹²² is but the first in another form: “You shall love,” for it is love alone that can keep us from coveting.

This commandment is plainly written for us in God’s great Book of Nature. You may read it in the garden in every plant that grows. For that plant would not be there if some other plant had not given away something precious—the seed from which it was springing.

Do you think that the beautiful flowers in the garden are put forth by the plant for its own adornment? It is not so; they are a part of a wonderful scheme of love.

Last week we told you that the bright colors and the scent of the flowers attract the bees to gather the honey that is in them. But all these things, the beauty, the perfume, and the honey are love-lures, for the purpose of perfecting the needs which the plant has set apart to be given away. For in gathering the honey the wings and legs of the insects become powdered with pollen—the yellow, fertilizing dust of the flower. This they carry with them and leave in the heart of the next flower that they visit, and it is this that perfects the seeds and makes them fruitful.

So the beauty of the flowers is not for its own sake, it is all for use,—to help the plant to produce and give away precious seeds which shall make the earth beautiful in coming years. The flower does not covet anything for itself; all its work is for others.

The law of God’s life is written in His Book of Nature, the law of love, which “seeks not her own.”¹²³ So in all nature we may read the commandment, “You shall not covet,”¹²⁴ for love shows itself in *giving*; this is the law of life.

Living is giving; giving is living,
All things would die if only receiving,

¹²² *Exodus* 20:17.

¹²³ *1 Corinthians* 13:5.

¹²⁴ *Exodus* 20:17.

Give!

This is the law of love by which we live.¹²⁵

Satan was the first to break this law of love. He coveted the riches and glory that belonged to Christ.¹²⁶ This was the glory of the self-sacrificing love that was always giving itself out for others.

The crowning glory of the plant, the beautiful flower, comes through its self-sacrifice,—its gift of life contained in the precious seed that it gives away.

And all the glory of Christ, “The Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys,”¹²⁷ was not for His own sake, but for others. All things that He received from God He took not for himself, but that He might give them forth to all the creatures that His hands had made.

But Satan sought for his own glory and honor the high place that Christ alone could fill. In seeking to grasp it, he lost all that he had before, and was cast out of heaven.

Jesus coveted nothing for himself, but freely gave up all that He had so that we might share it.

2 Corinthians 8

⁹ Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.

Philippians 2 [margin]

⁴ Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be desired to be equal with God,

⁷ But *emptied himself*, and took upon Him the form of a servant.

¹²⁵ F. E. Belden, *Living Is Giving*.

¹²⁶ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

¹²⁷ *Song of Solomon* 2:1.

In this He was fulfilling the law of love, the commandment “You shall not covet.”¹²⁸ But this is the secret of wealth, and the one who has it in his heart has all riches, for the more we give away the more we have.

Philippians 2

⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name.

Proverbs 11

²⁴ There is that scatters, and yet increases; and there is that withholds more than is meet, and it tends to poverty.

Perhaps you have learned already that the way to get plenty of flowers in the garden is to pick and give away as many as you can. Have you not noticed but the more they are picked, the more they grow? This is another way in which the same lesson of love — “You shall not covet” — is written for us in the Book of Nature.

We have had many talks together about the King’s Garden, and the flowers that bloom there from the precious seed of the Word that He sows in it. And the lesson which this last commandment teaches us is how the Garden may be kept ever fresh and green, and full of lovely flowers, sweet perfumes, and pure honey. It is by *giving*.

Every flower blooms for the sake of the seed within it, which is set apart to be given away. And every flower that grows in the King’s Garden has within it a seed that is to be dropped into the heart garden of another.

Does the flower of love shed forth its fragrance in your heart? Its attractiveness is to draw others, that, they may receive from it seed that shall cause the same flower to spring up in their hearts, making them lovely and loving.

The bright flowers of joy are to scatter their seeds over the barren ground of joyless lives, to make the wilderness like Eden—the Garden of Delight.

¹²⁸ *Exodus 20:17.*



When the Forget-Me-Nots that grow in the heart gardens of His children, please the King by their continual incense of grateful remembrance, it is that others also may be made happy by being reminded of Him who made them, and who still loves and cares for them. Then their hearts shall bring forth the same tokens, and they too shall sing:

Psalm 103

² Bless the Lord, O my soul.

And forget not all His benefits!

Thus it is with every one of the fair flowers that beautify the King's Garden. The seed multiplies by being sown, and there will be no end to the beauty and the brightness and sweetness that shall gladden the lives of others from the seed which grows in your heart, for the pleasure and praise of the King.

Do not be afraid to give away what God gives to you, for...

Isaiah 58

¹⁰ If you draw out your soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul...

¹¹ ...you shall be *like a watered garden*, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Immortal Love, forever full,
Forever flowing free,
Forever shared, forever whole,
A never-ebbing sea.¹²⁹



¹²⁹ John Greenleaf Whittier, *Immortal Love, Forever Full*, 1866.

41. The Story of a Garden

Present Truth, June 12, 1902

Once on a time, in a garden fair,
Beasts of the field and birds of the air
Lived together in peace and love,
Green grass beneath them, blue skies above;
The eagle and dove perched side by side;
Nor did the Lamb from the lion hide,
While a kind master rule over all;
They loved him an answer to his call.
 'Twas a beautiful time
 Of brotherhood,
When all were happy
 And all were good.

But sorrow came to that garden fair,
And shattered the peace of the dwellers there;
The master, a rebel to his King,
Was driven forth from its sheltering,
And beast and bird grew wild with fear,
And dared not come to their master near,
Where he sat forlorn outside the gate,
Stripped of his glory and desolate.
 Now none were happy,
 He was not good.
And heavy clouds
 O'er the garden brood.

Said the Lion—"I'll go to the forest dim,
As far as I can, away from him."
Said the Lamb—"I will hide in the deepest shade,
My heart is quaking and sore afraid."
Said the gallant Horse as he tossed his Mane,—
"I will gallop from him to the far-off plain."
And the dark-eyed deer from his hand that fed
Of yore, now trembled and from him fled;
While the birds soared up and flew like the wind,
As if peril were following close behind.

All the creatures went hurrying past,
Each one dreading to be the last.
 'Twas a sorrowful time;
 Fear had entered there
And driven all peace
 From the garden fair.

HOW glad and thankful we may be that this is not the end of the story of the Garden. The story is not ended yet, but from the Word of God we know how it is going to end.

It tells of a time when all fear of man will be taken away from the whole animal creation, neither shall they fear one another any more, but...

Isaiah 11

⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.

Adam lost his power over the animals when he sinned. But in the lowly stable of the Bethlehem inn a new King was born for them, who should rule them again with the gentle sway of love. I need not tell you who this gentle King is.

When His kingdom comes, and His will is done on earth as it is in heaven, the beautiful will be restored, and the happy time will come again when there will be no fear in all the earth, but all God's creatures will be at peace one with another, and look up to man as their king, their protector, and their friend.



42. The Snail

Present Truth, January 1, 1903

Original title: Nature Studies for the Little Ones

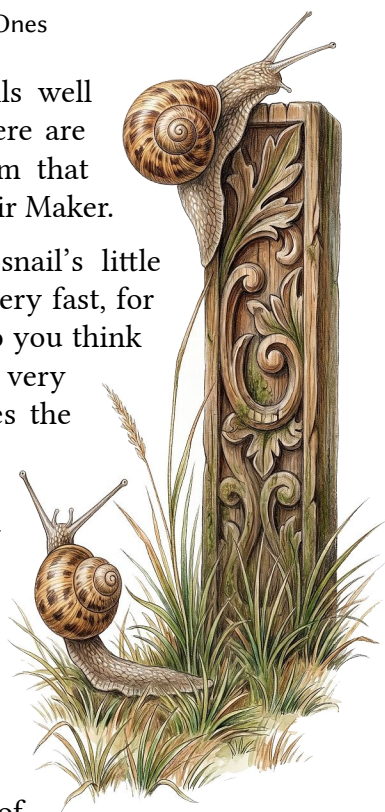
PERHAPS you do not like snails well enough to watch them. Yet there are many wonderful things about them that show us how wise and skillful is their Maker.

The first thing you see is the snail's little house. No wonder he does not go very fast, for he carries his house on his back. Do you think this would be tiresome? The snail is very glad of its shelter from his enemies the birds, and other creatures that would like to eat him. Touch one, and see how quickly he draws himself into his house and shuts the door.

Did you ever wonder how the snail's house grows? for some have large and some small houses. It is not always the largest ones that are the oldest. Those that have plenty of good food grow larger than those that are not well fed.

The snail has a loose skin covering that is called the Mantle. You can sometimes see it spread out round the opening of the shell, like a short skirt. This is always wet and slimy, and from it comes the sticky matter that gets hard and makes the shell. So the snail builds his own house, and shapes it very beautifully into a spiral in which he coils up his soft body.

The snail does not grow or feed in the winter. He closes up his house with one, two, or sometimes three doors, leaving a little hole to let in the air. Then he goes to sleep, and does not wake up until the warm Spring.



43. Raining Flowers

Present Truth, April 23, 1903

Original title: For the Children. Raining Flowers

An April Shower

It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining daffodils.
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on the hills.
The clouds of gray engulf the day,
And overwhelm the town,—
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining roses down.

It isn't raining rain to me,
But fields of clover bloom,
Where any buccaneering bee
May find a bed and room.
A health unto the happy,
A fig for him who frets,—
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining violets.

—Robert Loveman

THE words above are not fancy, but it is really true that God rains down flowers upon the earth. This is what He is sending us in the rain that falls from the clouds. For the rain that comes from heaven to water the earth makes it...

Isaiah 55

¹⁰ ...bring forth and bud.

In his beautiful Song of the Springtime, Solomon says,

Song of Solomon 2

¹¹ ...the rain is over and gone;

¹² The flowers appear on the earth.

After the rain, and because of the rain, come the beautiful flowers.

The fair land of Palestine was described by the Lord as...

Exodus 3

⁸ ...a land flowing with milk and honey.

Honey is gathered from the flowers; so it was a flowery land. And Moses told the people that it was such a beautiful, flowery, fruitful land because it...

Deuteronomy 11

¹¹ ...drank water of the rain of heaven.

The Lord spread the flowers over it by sending the rain upon it. That is the way that He is spreading a flowery carpet for our feet today. So we should not mind when we see the dark clouds. Although they look black and angry, they are really full of hidden beauty. Each one might truly be called a basket of flowers.

The clouds you so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings o'er your head.¹³⁰

At ancient festivals flowers were sometimes showered upon the guests, and in some lands this is done to this day. But men can only take the flowers that God has already sent down from heaven, to give to their friends.

God might send down these sweet gifts to us ready-made, but how much pleasure we should miss. We should not then be able to watch Him at work making the flowers, and even share in the work as He now lets us do. We should not see the sweet buds unfold and spread out their lovely colored petals holding a rich feast of honey for bee and butterfly, as well as a feast of beauty and fragrance for our senses.

¹³⁰ William Cowper, Hymn: *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*, 1774.

In some very hot countries the flowers come very quickly to perfection, and sometimes seem almost to have sprung up in one night. Very heavy dews fall during the night, and refresh the parched land. God says,

Hosea 14

⁵ I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily.

He also promises to rain righteousness upon us,¹³¹ and in doing this, He is sending the flowers of grace into the hearts of His children.

Isaiah 61

¹¹ As the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations.

In our dear Lord's garden
Planted here below,
Many tiny flowerets
In sweet beauty grow.

Christ, the loving Gardener,
Tends these blossoms small,
Loves the little lilies
As the cedars tall.

Nothing is too little
For His gentle care,
Nothing is too lowly
In His love to share.

Jesus calls the children,
Bids them come and stand
In His pleasant garden,
Watered by His hand.¹³²

¹³¹ *Hosea 10:12.*

¹³² Ella Sophia Armitage, *Christ's Love for Children*, 1881.



Appendix: A Word for the Caterpillar

Present Truth, August 2, 1900

From: *Our Animal Friends*

PP Editor's note: This article is referred to at the end of [Article 24](#), "In the Meadow."

WHY the caterpillar should excite fear or disgust we could never well understand, but we have heard boys as well as girls—yes, and men as well as women—say,

"Caterpillars make me shudder!"

Yet the caterpillar spends his life in trying to keep out of everybody's way. Some species hide on the under surfaces of leaves; others on the stems or blades of grass which serve them as food; others again build little nests for concealment, or else they lie snugly hidden between the curled edges of leaves, which they draw close together until the opposite edges meet.

The caterpillar is a sociable creature in his own family. He knows that there is safety in numbers, and you will find whole companies feeding side by side, while keeping a sharp lookout for their bird enemies. But when a caterpillar is by himself, he scarcely dares to move for fear of attracting attention. Even when he is obliged to change his skin, he doesn't venture to leave his old coat lying about.

The moment he takes it off he eats it. The caterpillars that live in companies shed their skins boldly; only the poor solitary fellows feel forced to swallow their old clothes.

A great protection to the unfortunate caterpillar when he leaves his nest early in the spring is power of mimicry. The viceroy caterpillar is either red-spotted, or is dressed in conspicuous purple bands, and he feeds on birches. He is clever enough to place himself so that he exactly resembles the opening buds and the curving shoots of the twig on which he lies. He can make himself look the color of the soft down of the buds, and he often deceives the ichneumon flies that are searching for him high and low. With

all his cleverness, with all his trouble, we know that many a caterpillar has to go to furnish a meal for the hungry birds. But do not crush a caterpillar with your heel simply because he lies in your path. Don't shake him from the ingenious little nest he has constructed with so cunning a patience, and then stamp out his life. Leave him a legitimate prey for the birds, or for any creature which has actual need of him.





Appendix: The Color of Fruits

Present Truth, August 2, 1900

By Lucas A. Reed

PP Editor's note: This article appeared in the *Present Truth* for August 2, 1900, along with two articles by Waggoner (*In the Meadow*, and *The Slave-Making Ants*) which are included in the main body of this book. I thought this fit well in the series, so it is included here.

THERE is much to be learned from the colors of fruit. If the different fruits are not in some way carried from the tree or plant upon which they grow, they must nearly all fall in one spot. Only a few of these will be able to grow; the rest will be crowded out. How may these fruits be carried to other and distant places, where there is more room, and where they may have an opportunity for growth?

In answering this question, let me ask another:

“Why are many of the berries so highly colored?”

They would be just as useful for us for food if they were the same color as the leaves; but being so bright, they are very conspicuous and attract the attention of multitudes of birds.

I have counted fully twenty different kinds of birds eating the fruit of the mulberry tree,—an unknown number of each of these kinds. The seeds of berries are not digested by many birds, and hence are scattered by them hither and yon. Do you catch the se-

cret? The berries are bright-colored to attract the birds; and the birds, by eating the berries, sow the seeds here and there.

Does this help you to understand why most grapes are purple? Why are they not red, like the cherry? Well, we have seen that the color is to make the berry or fruit noticeable. The cherry, growing and ripening in the early summer, when the leaves are green, is easily seen, in contrast with the green foliage; for green and red are as opposite as can be in color.

But in the autumn the leaves themselves become red; and if grapes were also red, they would not be easily seen. Grapes are generally blue or purple, sometimes green, and show forth in decided contrast with the fading and reddish leaves.

Unripe fruits and seeds are usually hidden away in the foliage and are of the same color as the leaves. But when the fruits ripen, and the seeds are ready for the sowing, the fruits almost invariably take on a color strikingly in contrast with the color of the foliage. The different tones of red stand out best when surrounded and backed up by green; therefore, for plants with green foliage, a red coloring of the fruit is the most advantageous. On this account the strawberry, the raspberry, the currant, the wild cherry, and the red-berried elder are red in hue. On the other hand, red fruits would stand out but little against a background of foliage that has donned the red or yellow tints of autumn by the time they are ripened; and accordingly the prune, the plum, and the grape are blue or black.

Following out the same law of contrast, white berries occur principally in the plants that cast their leaves before the fruit is ripe; standing out against the brown, black, or gray background formed by the leafless branches and the fallen leaves of autumn, these white fruits are easily seen.

But these are only a few of the means which God has devised, and which He uses, for the carrying out of His purposes. The birds and animals think only of satisfying hunger, and seek the fruits purely from self-interested motives; but nevertheless they

thereby fulfill the will of God in sowing the seeds. Even so we ourselves, though seeking only the satisfying of self, often unwittingly carry out the great purposes of God; for He has ordained that even the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder, which is purposeless, He restrains.¹³³ But how much better, when we intelligently and in full measure learn His great purposes, and, for ever yielding ourselves to the work, become co-laborers with Him!

1 Corinthians 3

⁹ For we are laborers together with God: you are God's husbandry, you are God's building.



¹³³ *Psalm 76:10.*

