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## LITERATURE.

### THE SUN AND THE FLOWER.

Thyself art the Sun, O my Savior! My life is the life of a flower,  
If thy rays are withheld from my being I wither  
In a few hours.  
Turn towards me the wealth of thy shining—let me wake in its welcome, and show  
How grandly one flower in earth's garden,  
Though the poorest and humblest, may grow.

Turn toward me the wealth of thy shining,  
Though round me the breezes blow sweet,  
Though the moss cups shower dewdrops above me,  
And rich is the soil at my feet.  
I pant, yes, I cry for thy burning: shine down  
And this weed will expand  
And bloom in the dearth of its beauty as though  
The queen rose of the land.

All my life does live through thy glory—shed o'er me the glow of the sun,  
Though I wear not the snow of the lily, nor the tints of the violet have won.  
I question not why they are comely and their robes are so royal to see,  
I can only keep prayerfully growing and hopeful climb upward to thee.

So I envy not roses nor lilies, whose hues are the pride of the land,  
Perhaps a poor plant struggling upward is crowned with a mission as grand,  
If it seek but to drink in the sunshine, to cast off the mull of the clay,  
To hear the glad summons of higher—to climb to the light and obey.

So lift up my life to the sunshine—though a flower that is crushed to the soil,  
In the rays of thy glory expanding the canker and worm cannot spoil.  
Each tendril will lean toward thy burning—each leaf to thy warmth will incline,  
And this plant, though unsightly, will blossom, and find its heart's richness in thine.

### AN EASTER GIFT.

'No,' said Uncle Zebedee, 'no; we told 'em just exactly how 't would be. They wouldn't believe us. Now let 'em take the consequences.'

'We warned 'em beforehand,' said Aunt Zeruah. 'They couldn't expect nothin' fairer than that.'

Uncle Zeb and Aunt Ruey sat looking at each other, one on either side of the big stone fireplace, like the old man and woman we sometimes see *tele-a-tele* in a toy-shop.

They were ancient and weazen and wrinkled—so thin that it would seem as if an extra blast from the brass-nozzled bellows must assuredly blow them away, while their spectacles shone like stray stars from some unheard-of constellation and the veins stood out like whip-cord from their lean old hands.

Uncle Zeb Waterson and Aunt Ruey, his sister, were old bachelor and old maid. All their lives long they had been saving and scrimping and pinching as if economy were the mainspring of their existence. They never saw a red apple with any appreciation of its artistic beauty; they thought of it only as being worth so much a barrel; the corn silked and tasseled out only as so much 'prime Indian-meal'; the pink-and-white clover-heads represented only pasturage value, and the star-eyed daisies were nothing more than 'pesky

weeds, that no critter on earth would eat.'

And when, eight years ago, their half-sister Nelly had run away—actually run away from four dollars a month and her board—to marry a black-eyed sailor laddie, Uncle Zeb and Aunt Ruey had washed their skinny hands of her altogether.

Alas and alack-a-day! Love proved but a fickle reed for Hal and Nelly Arbush to lean on. The young sailor was lost on the first voyage out after his marriage, and Nelly was left to support her child as best she might.

It was an uneven battle between life's troubles and the poor young widow, and when Nelly died, the little girl was sent home to Spriggerdaie, with a pitiful letter from the young mother whose sun had set so early.

But Uncle Zeb and Aunt Ruey absolutely declined to receive Nell.

'She ain't nothin' to us,' said Uncle Zeb.

'Lether go to Hal Arbush's relations!' said Aunt Ruey. 'Eh! he hadn't no relations? Well, I ain't to blame for that as I know of.'

'You wouldn't let this child go on the town,' said Mr. Jones, the express-agent, to whose care little Nell had been consigned as if she were a brown-paper package.

'Yes, I would!' said Uncle Zeb.

'Why not?' said Aunt Ruey, bluntly.

So Nell was taken, with her little bandbox full of clothes, to the town-house.

The matron looked puzzled—she had no changes so young as Nell—but she kissed the child, and gave her a piece of ginger-bread and some patchwork, and told her to be a good girl.

Nell played about until she was tired, and then came to the matron with wistful, upturned gaze.

'When am I going home?' said she.

'This is home,' said the matron.

Nell's lip quivered; her blue eyes swam in tear.

'I don't like it!' said she. 'I don't want to live here! Mamma said I was to come home Easter!'

'What does the child mean?' said the bewildered matron.

'Don't you know?' said Nell. 'First comes Christmas—then Easter! And mamma said I was to go home at Easter. We don't have Easters here—except now and again a few colored eggs,' said the good matron. 'This is home, my dear; so put all of that nonsense out of your head.'

But Nell cried, and refused to be comforted.

'Can I go and play?' said she, after a little while, with the tears yet on her lashes.

'Yes—in the back yard, as much as you please,' said the kindly matron.

'I don't like the back yard,' said fastidious Nell. 'It's all full of brick-bats and tomato-cans, and broken bottles that won't hold anything. I want to go in the woods.'

'Well, don't go far, then,' said the matron, who was busy mixing lime for the spring white-washing, and perhaps was a little relieved to be rid of Nell's perpetual questioning.

So away went little Nell, her white cambric sunbonnet fluttering in the early April wind, down into the dells, where the first pallid violets were thrusting their purple heads up through layers of moist, dead leaves, and a tender fringe of green followed the course as the rivulet, the happiest little lass that the sun ever shone on.

I wish I could stay here always, and live in a cave, and eat berries and sassafras-buds, and drink water from the brook! thought Nell. I don't want to go back to the town-house, where Uncle Tim makes faces at me, and old Mrs. Hatach's hand shakes so that she spills her tea all over the table.

But the afternoon wore on—Saturday afternoon, always the busiest of the week—and Mrs. Gaff, the matron, began to be uneasy about the youngest inhabitant of the town-house.

'She can't be drowned, for the brook isn't deep enough,' said Mrs. Gaff. 'But I s'pose a strange child could be lost in them woods. I'm a'most sorry now I let her go. Ef she ain't back by dark, I'll send Foolish Frank after her. I guess he's got sense enough to bring her home if he finds her.'

Uncle Zeb and Aunt Ruey Waterson were sitting at their supper—a pot of weak tea, some bread and butter, and a dish of stewed peaches—when the door opened softly, and in came a little girl of five years old, with a sunbonnet flung back from her brown curls, and her apron full of pale-pink arbutus, slender-stemmed wild-flowers and blue violets.

Aunt Ruey started back.

'It's Nelly!' said she, startled at the wonderful resemblance to the fair face that was now coffined and buried.

'Lord save us!' gasped Uncle Zeb, who, like most illiterate men, was not without a spice of the superstitious in his nature. 'Don't go a-nigh her, Ruey. Maybe she ain't real!'

'Yes, I'm Nelly,' said the child, emptying her flowers into the old lady's lap. 'I've brought you some Easter flowers.'

And she looked solemnly around her at the fire in the deep chimney-place, the shining copper kettle, the blossoming rose-tree in the window, and the red reflections of sunset on the wall.

'La' sakes!' said Aunt Ruey, looking helplessly first at the flowers and then at the child, 'where did you come from? From the town-house,' said Nell.

'But to-morrow is Easter Day. I counted it up from the calendar that hangs under the clock-shelf in Mrs. Gaff's room. Mamma said I was to come home on Easter.'

Uncle Zeb put out his coarse, wrinkled hand and touched Nell's hair as softly as if she had been a piece of Dresden china, in danger of cracking.

'She's a pretty little creetur, ain't she?' said he. 'Come here, child. Will you give me a kiss?'

'Yes,' answered Nell, putting up her coral lips to the old man's withered face, and climbing unceremoniously upon his lap. 'Now give me some bread and milk.'

'Well, I declare, Zeb!' cried his sister. 'Ef you don't look queer with a little child a-sittin' on your knee!'

Uncle Zeb wriggled himself this way and that.

'I dunno 'zactly how it looks,' said he, 'but I tell you it feels mighty slick. Ain't she got our Nelly's eyes right over ag'in? Get her some bread and milk, Ruey. Easter! Is it really Easter to-morrow? You and me, Ruey, we ain't been to church in a powerful long time. Let's try how it seems to-morrow. Ye s'pose we could make the little gal up a bed on the old trundle in the west room?'

'You ain't going to keep her?' said Aunt Ruey, with eager, questioning eyes full of a certain joy.

Uncle Zeb stroked the soft, brown curls.

'Well, I dunno,' said he. 'It seems 'most a pity to send her back there, doesn't it?'

—Aunt Ruey reflected.

'I've 'most a mid to try how I like her,' said she. 'I allus was partial to cats, and it does seem as if a well behaved child needn't be much more trouble about the house than a cat.'

And when she had brought in a blue-edged bowl full of milk and a goodly slice of bread, she actually gathered up the fast-wilting flowers and put them in a cracked picher on the mantle.

'La'!' said she, as she turned around, 'if the poor child hasn't fell dead asleep, with her head agin your waistcoat, Zebedee.'

I guess you'd better undress her and put her to bed, said Uncle Zeb, gently laying down the limp little figure, with its cheeks flushed with slumber. We'll go right up and put the jints of the old trundle together, you and me.

Aunt Ruey was a little awkward with the buttons and strings. It was a long time since her stiff, old hands had wrought such work as this: but Nell never woke up.

She does look dreadful pretty there, fast asleep, said she. I—I guess we'll keep her, Zebedee.

I guess we will, said the old man. Folks will call us dreadful silly. Let them, said Uncle Zebedee.

When Foolish Frank, from the town-house, came to know of they had not nowher seen a little girl, Uncle Zebedee informed him that they had decided to keep little Nell Arbush.

Eh? said Foolish Frank. For good and all?

Yes, said Uncle Zebedee, for good and all. Go and tell Mrs. Gaff so.

Foolish Frank went back, much wondering.

But little Nell woke up, the next morning, with glittering eyes and rose-red lips apart, as in a smile.

It is Easter Day! said she. I dreamed mamma came to me and put her hand on my shoulder, and said we had both got home.

Uncle Zeb and Aunt Ruey looked at each other with tearful eyes. And that day—the first in half a score of years—they went to church, through the budding woods, with Nell skipping on before.

And when the minister saw them come in, he could not but think of the blessed Scriptural words:

And a little child shall lead them!

## A DOCTOR ON BREAKFAST.

SUGGESTIONS ABOUT EATING FOR ALL TO OBSERVE.

Breakfast ought to be a hearty meal, eaten early in the morning, and eaten slowly, so as to preclude the possibility of eating too heavily, which would materially interfere with the business of the day. A man or woman who is no breakfast-eater must either be a heavy—over-heavy—supper-eater, or be in a bad state of health. A person who requires the stimulus of a cup of tea, or any other stimulus or stimulant whatever, before partaking of solid food, is not in the hey-day of health. I like to see a man have his breakfast first, and then feel round for his cup of coffee, tea or chocolate. I have known the strongest and healthiest of men to positively forget all about the liquid part of their breakfast, and leave the table without it. I have known men who scarcely ever touch a drop of liquid of any kind from one week's end to another, and who nevertheless were in ruddy and robust health.

Ham and eggs, bacon and eggs, or a beefsteak, or underdone chop, with boiled eggs to follow, and then a cup of nice tea, is a sensible breakfast for a man who is going away out into the fresh air to walk or ride or work till noon; but not for a person who is to sit all day in the same position at manual labor. I emphasize the world manual, because intellectual or mental work conduces to appetite. An author hard at his desk if his ideas be flowing freely if he be happy at his work and time flying swiftly with him soon gets hungry which only proves that he must support the body well, then there is a strain upon his mind, so that no extra expenditure of tissues may lead to debility.

Cheerful conversation insures the easy digestion of a good breakfast. It is a pity that the custom of inviting friends to the matutinal meal is not prevalent. It may seem a strange thing to say, but I would ten times sooner go out to breakfast than to dinner. One is, or ought to be, freshest in the morning; he then needs no artificial stimulus to make him feel bright, witty happy as he too often does after the duties of the day are over.

WANT OF TACK.—Throw a bone to a dog, and he will run off with it in his mouth, but with no vibration in his tail. Call the dog to you, pat him on the head, let him take the bone from your hand, and his tail will wag with gratitude. The dog recognizes both the good deed and the gracious manner of doing it. Those who throw their good deeds should not expect them to be caught with a thankful smile. The following anecdote illustrates how a generous action may be marred by the want of that tact which associates graciousness with goodness:

A good but uncouth deacon of a New England church called on the wife of his minister, and after the usual exchange of greetings, said:—

Mrs. Blank, don't you want some pears?

Yes, deacon, was the reply, I should be glad to have some.

Well, then, said the old man, you jest send down to my orchard and hev jest as menny as you want picked up. That's a sight on 'em on the ground and my old mare won't em, so I'd jest as lieves you'd hev 'em es not!

Although the pears were rejected by the deacon's mare, the minister's wife overlooked the odd terms in which the offer was made.

This same young wife visited one of the old and lone widows of the flock and was received with warm words of welcome by the aged dame.

How d'ye do? said the ancient person. I'm powerful glad to see you; I was so longing to see some creetur!

WHAT SHE FEARED.—I understand, Mr. Softly, said Miss Muffin, that you play the violin.

Well, yes, Miss Muffin, I—a try—to play the violin.

That's what I heard. You see, Mr. Softly, we are going to have a little sociable at our house next Thursday evening. I wanted to invite you—but ma—she is so very anxious not to give anybody any trouble—ma was afraid that—

Oh, no trouble at all, I assure you, Miss Muffin, eagerly interposed Softly. It will be a positive pleasure to me to bring my violin.

Ye-e-es, that's what ma was afraid of.

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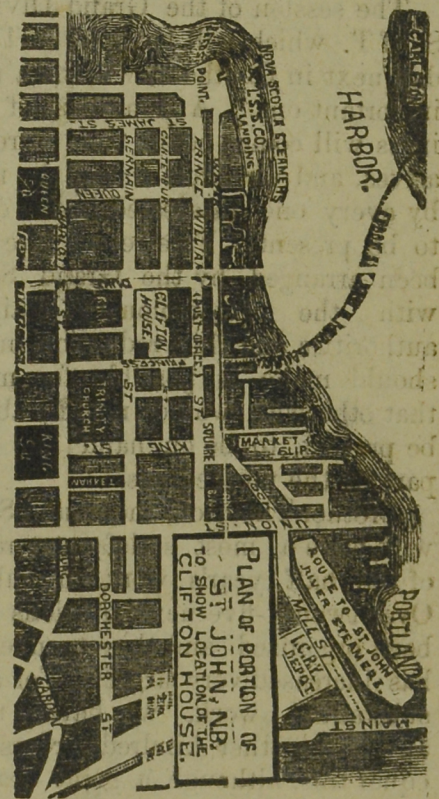
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