

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

From the London People's Journal.

## THE CHILDREN.

BY CHARLOTTE YOUNG.

D'YE hear the children's footsteps  
Draw near with pattering tread?  
They're coming for a merry game,  
Before they go to bed.  
There's Frank and Tom and Emily,  
And little toddling Ned.

Frank is the first and eldest,  
And very wise indeed;  
He can tell you about King Harold,  
And the Barons of Runnymede;  
And loves to hear long stirring tales  
Of brave and noble deeds.

Friend! there's a shadow on thy brow,  
I've marked the unbidden sigh;  
Come let us see if childhood's hand  
Can some sweet balm supply;  
Let's mingle in the baby sport,  
And join the baby cry.

For the sorrowful forgets his cares,  
The sick his wasting pain,  
The old man throws aside his crutch  
And walks erect again,  
When the children, fresh and innocent,  
Come bounding o'er the plain.

Oh, praised be the God of love  
For blessings undefiled,  
For Truth and Love and Charity,  
For nature sweet and wild!  
But most of all—oh most of all  
Bless God for the little child!

It cometh like a messenger,  
A sweet and holy dove,  
Heaven's last created wonder,  
God's newest work of love—  
A living revelation  
From worlds of light above.

It cometh to awake again  
Each soul reviving dream;  
To loose the frozen fount of joy  
And melt it to a stream;  
To light the eye of weariness  
With love's own sparkling beam.

It cometh pure and spotless,  
Its soul a shrine so fair,  
Methinks that wise men as of old,  
Might come and worship there;  
But not with myrrh or frankincense,  
But the voice of prayer.

What keeps the spring time of the heart  
Still fresh as a first it smiled?  
What makes the lonely one less sad,  
The troubled spirit mild?  
Oh, 'tis the gushing memory  
Of some fair, happy child.

Of wondrous speeches conned by heart  
Such as some wise contemn,  
Foolish perchance to stranger ears,  
But eloquent to them—  
More precious than the fairest pearls  
In regal diadem.

Oh, praised be the God of love  
For blessings undefiled;  
For Truth and Love and Charity,  
For nature sweet and wild!  
But most of all—oh, most of all  
Bless God for the little child!

From the London People's Journal.

## UNFADING FLOWERS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

THIRTY years ago, a small, bare-footed boy  
paused to admire the flowers in a well-cultivated garden. The child was an orphan, and had already felt how hard was the orphan's lot. The owner of the garden, who was trimming a border, and spoke to him kindly.

'Do you love flowers?' said he.  
The boy replied, 'Oh, yes. We used to have beautiful flowers in our garden.'

The man laid down his knife, and gathering a few flowers, took them to the fence, through the pannels of which the boy was looking, and handing them to him, said as he did so, 'Here's a nice little bunch for you.'

A flush went over the child's face as he took the flowers. He did not make any reply, but in his large eyes, as he lifted them to the face of the man, was an expression of thankfulness to be read as plainly as words in a book.

The act, on the part of the man, was one of spontaneous kindness, and scarcely thought of again; but, by the child, it was never forgotten.

Years went by, and through toil, privation, and suffering, both in body and mind, the boy grew up to manhood. From ords like these come forth our most effective men. If kept free from vicious associates, the lad of feeling and mental activity becomes ambitious, and rises in society above the common level. So it proved in the case of this orphan boy. He had few advantages of education, but such as offered were well improved. It happened that his lot was cast in a printing office; and the young compositor became interested in his work. He did not set the types as a mere mechanic, but went beyond the duties of his calling, entering into the ideas to which he was giving verbal expression, and making them his own. At twenty-one he was a young man of more than ordinary intelligence and

force of character. At thirty-five he was the conductor of a widely-circulated and profitable newspaper, and as a man respected and esteemed by all who knew him.

During the earnest struggle that all men enter into who are anxious to rise in the world, the thoughts do not often go back and rest meditatively upon the earlier time of life. But after success has crowned each well-directed effort, and the gaining a desired position no longer remains a subject of doubt, the mind often brings up from the far-off past most vivid recollections of incidents and impressions that were painful or pleasurable at the time, and which are now seen to have had an influence, more or less decided, upon the whole after life. In this state of reflection sat one day the man we have here introduced. After musing for a long time, deeply abstracted, he took up his pen and wrote hastily; and these were the sentences he traced upon the paper that lay before him:

'How indelibly does a little act of kindness, performed at the right moment, impress itself upon the mind! We meet, as we pass through the world, so much of rude selfishness, that we guard ourselves against it, and scarcely feel its effects. But spontaneous kindness comes so rarely, that we are surprised when it appears, and delighted and refreshed as by the perfume of flowers in the dreary winter. When we were a small boy, an orphan, and with the memory of home for ever lost too vivid in our young heart, a man, into whose beautiful garden we stood looking, pulled a few flowers, and handed them thro' the fence, speaking a kind word as he did so. He did not know, and perhaps never will know, how deeply we were touched by his act. From a little boy we loved the flowers, and ere that heaviest affliction a child ever knows—the loss of parents—fell upon us, we almost lived among them. But death separated between us and all those tender associations and affections that, to the hearts of children, are like dew to the tender grass. We entered the dwelling of a stranger, and were treated thenceforth as if we had, or ought to have, no feelings, no hopes, no weaknesses. The harsh command came daily and almost hourly to our ears; and not even for work well done, or faithful service, were we cheered by words of commendation.

'One day—we were not more than eleven years old—something turned our thoughts back upon the earlier and happier time, when we had a true home, and were loved and cared for. We were once more in the garden and among the sweet blossoms, as of old, and the mother on whose bosom we had slept, sat under the grape arbor, while we filled her lap with flowers. There was a smile of love on her dear face, and her lips were parting with some words of affection, when to scatter into nothing those dear images of the lonely boy, came the sharp command of a master, and in obedience we started forth to perform some needed service. Our way was by the garden of which we have spoken; and it was on this occasion, and while the suddenly dissipated image of our mother among the flowers was reforming itself in our young imagination, that the incident to which we have alluded occurred. We can never forget the grateful perfume of those flowers, nor the strength and comfort which the kind words and manner of the giver imparted to our fainting spirit. We took them home and kept them fresh as long as water would preserve their life and beauty; and when they faded and the leaves fell faded and withered upon the ground, we grieved for their loss as if a real friend had been taken away.

'It is a long time since that incident occurred; but the flowers which there sprung up in our bosom are fresh and beautiful still. They are neither faded nor withered—they cannot, for they are unfading flowers. We never looked upon the man who gave them to us that our heart does not warm towards him. We know not now whether he be living or dead. Twenty years ago we lost sight of him; but, if still among the dwellers of earth, and in need of a friend, we would divide with him our last morsel.'

An old man with hair whitened by the snows of many winters, was sitting in a room that was poorly supplied with furniture, his head bowed down, and gaze cast dreamily upon the floor. A pale young girl came in while he thus sat musing. Lifting his eyes to her face, he said, while he tried to look cheerful.

'Ellen, my dear, you must not go out to-day.'

'I feel a great deal better, grandpapa,' returned the young girl, forcing a smile. 'I think I am quite able to go to work to-day again.'

'No child, you are not,' said the old man firmly; 'and you must not think of such a thing.'

'Don't be so positive grandpapa.' And as she uttered this little sentence in a half playful voice, she laid her hand among the thin grey locks on the old man's head and smoothed them caressingly. 'You know that I must not be idle.'

'Wait, then, child, until your strength returns.'

'Our wants will not wait, grandpapa.' As the girl said this her face became sber. The old man's eyes again fell to the floor, and a heavy sigh came forth from his bosom.

'I will be very careful and not overwork myself again,' resumed Ellen, after a short pause.

'You must not go to-day,' said the old man arousing himself. 'It is murder. Wait at least until to-morrow. You will be stronger then.'

'If I do not back to-day I may lose my

place. You know I have been home for three days.'

'You were sick.'

'Work will not wait. The last time I was kept away by sickness, a customer was disappointed; and there was a good deal of trouble about it.'

Another sigh came heavily from the old man's heart.

'I will go,' said the girl. 'Perhaps they will let me off for a day longer. If so, I will come back. But I must not lose this place.'

No further resistance was made by the old man. In a little time he was alone. Hours went by, but Ellen did not return. She had gone to work. Her employer would not let her go away, feeble as she was, without a forfeiture of her place.

About mid-day, finding that Ellen did not come back, the old man, after taking some food, went out. The pressure of seventy years was upon him, and his steps were slow and carefully taken.

'I must get something to do. I can work still,' he muttered to himself as he moved along the streets. 'The dear child is killing herself, and all for me.'

But what could he do? Who wanted the services of an old man like him, whose mind had lost its clearness, whose step faltered, and whose hand was no longer steady? In vain he made application for employment. Younger and more vigorous men filled all the places, and he was pushed aside. Discouraged and drooping in spirit, he went back to his home, and there awaited the fall of the evening, which was to bring the return of the only being on earth left to love him. At night-fall Ellen came in. Her face, so pale in the morning was now slightly flushed; and her eyes were brighter than when she went out. The grandfather was not deceived by this; he knew it as the sign of disease. He took her hand—it was hot; and when he bent to kiss her gentle lips, he found them burning with fever.

'Ellen, my dear child why did you go out to work to-day? I knew that it would make you sick,' the old man said in a voice of anguish.

Ellen tried to smile, and to appear not so very ill. But nature was too much oppressed.

'I brought home some work, and will not go out to-morrow,' she remarked. 'I think the walk fatigued me more than anything else. I will feel better in the morning, after a good night's sleep.'

But the girl's hope failed in this. The morning found her so weak that she could not rise from bed; and when her grandfather came into the room, to learn how she had passed the night, he found her weeping on her pillow. She had endeavored to get up, but her head, which was aching terribly, grew dizzy, and she fell back under a despairing consciousness that her strength was gone.

The day passed but Ellen did not grow better. The fever still kept her prostrate. Once or twice when her grandfather was out of the room, she took the work she brought home, and tried to do some of it while sitting up in bed. But ere a minute passed she became faint, while all grew dark around her. She was no better when night came. If her mind could have rested—if she had been free from anxious and depressing thoughts, nature would have had some power to re-act, but as it was, the pressure upon her was to great. She could not forget that they had scarcely as much money as a shilling left, and that her old grandfather was too feeble to work. Upon her rested all the burden of their support, and she was now helpless.

On the next morning Ellen was better. She could sit up without feeling dizzy, though her head still ached, and the fever slightly abated. But the old man would not permit her to leave her bed, though she begged him earnestly to let her do so.

The bundle of work that Ellen had brought home was wrapped in a newspaper, and this her grandfather took up and read some time during the day.

'This is T—'s paper,' said he as he opened it and saw the title. 'I knew T— when was a poor little orphan boy. But of course he don't remember me. He's prospered wonderfully.'

And then his eyes went along the columns of the paper, and he read aloud to Ellen such things as he thought would interest her. Among others was a reminiscence by the editor—the same that we have just given. The old man's voice faltered as he read. The little incident so feelingly described, had long been hidden in his memory under the gathering dust of time. But now the dust was swept away, and he saw his own beautiful garden. He was in it and among the flowers; and wishfully looking through the fence stood the orphan boy. He remembered having felt pity for him, and he remembered now as distinctly as if it were but yesterday, though thirty years had intervened, the light that went over the child's face as he handed him a few flowers that were to fade and wither in a day.

Yes, the old man's voice faltered while he read; and when he came to the last sentence the paper dropped upon the floor, and clasping his hands together, he lifted his dim eyes upwards, while his lips moved in whispered words of thankfulness.

'What ails you, grandpapa?' asked Ellen, in surprise. But the old man did not seem to hear her voice.

'Dear grandpapa,' repeated the girl, 'why do you look so strangely?' She had risen in bed and was bending towards him.

'Ellen, child,' said the old man, a light

breaking over his countenance, as though a sunbeam had suddenly come into the room, it was your old grandfather that gave the flowers to that poor little boy. Do you hear what he said, dear?—he would divide his last morsel.'

The old man moved about the room with his unsteady steps, talking in a wandering way, so overjoyed at the prospect of his child's relief, that he was nearly beside himself. But there yet lingered some embers of pride in his heart; and from these the ashes were blown away, and they became bright and glowing. The thought of asking a favor as a return for this little act, which was to him, at the time, a pleasure, came with a feeling of reluctance. But when he looked at the pale young girl who lay with her eyes closed and her face half buried in the pillow, he murmured to himself. 'It is for you!' And taking up his staff he went forth into the open air.

The Editor was sitting in his office writing when he heard the door open, and turning, he saw before him an old man with bent form and snowy head. Something in the visitor's countenance struck him as familiar, but he did not recognise him as one whom he had seen before.

'Is Mr T— in?' enquired the old man.

'My name is T—,' answered the editor.

'You!' There was a slight expression of surprise in the old man's voice.

'Yes I am T—, my friend,' was kindly said. 'Can I do anything for you. Take this chair.'

The offered seat was accepted; as the old man sunk into it, his countenance betrayed his emotion.

'I have come,' said he, and his voice was unsteady, 'to do what I could not do for myself alone. But I cannot see my poor sick grandchild wear out and die under the weight of burdens that are too heavy to be borne. For her sake I have conquered my own pride.'

There was a pause.

'Go on,' said T—, who was looking at the old man, and endeavoring to fix his identity in his mind.

'You don't know me?'

'Your face is not entirely strange to me,' said T—. 'It must have been a long time since we met.'

'Long? Oh yes! It is a long, long time since. You were then a boy. I unbent by age.'

'Markland!' exclaimed T— with sudden energy, springing to his feet, as the truth flashed upon him. 'Say—is it so?'

'My name is Markland,' said the old man.

'And do we meet again thus!' said T—, with emotion, as he grasped the old man's hand. 'Ah, sir, I have never forgotten you. When a sad-hearted boy, you spoke to me kindly, and the words comforted me when I had no other comfort. The bunch of flowers you gave me, you remember it no doubt, are still fresh in my heart. Not a leaf has faded. They are as bright and green and full of perfume as when I first hid them there; and they shall bloom forever, the unfading flowers of gratitude. I am glad you have come, though grieved that your declining years are made heavy by misfortune. Heaven has smiled on my efforts in the world. I have enough, and to spare.'

'I have not come for charity,' returned Markland. 'I have hands, and they would not be idle, though it is not much they can accomplish.'

'Be not troubled on that account, my friend,' was kindly answered. 'I will find something for you to do. But first tell me all about yourself.'

Thus encouraged, the old man told his story. It was the common history of loss of property and friends, and the approach of want with declining years. T— saw that pride and native independence was still strong in Markland's bosom, feeble as he was, and really unable to enter upon any serious employment; and his first impulse was to save his feelings at the same time that he extended to him entire and permanent relief. This he found no difficulty in doing, and the old man was soon after placed in a situation where but little application was necessary, while the income was all sufficient for the comfortable support of himself and grandchild.

The flowers offered with a purely humane feeling, proved to be fadeless flowers; and their beauty and perfume came back to the senses of the giver when all other flowers were dead or dying on his dark and dreary way.

A military officer being at sea in a dreadful storm, his lady, who was sitting in the cabin near him, and filled with alarms for the safety of the vessel, was so surprised at his composure that she cried out—

'My dear, are you not afraid! How is it possible you can be so calm in such a storm?'

He arose from his chair lashed to the deck, and supporting himself by a pillar of a bed place, he drew his sword, and pointing it to the breast of his wife, exclaimed—

'Are you not afraid?'

'No certainly not,' she replied.

'Why?' asked the officer.

'Because,' rejoined his lady, 'I know the sword is in the hand of my husband, and he loves me too well to hurt me.'

'Then,' said he, 'remember I know in whom I have believed, and that He holds the winds in His fist, and the water in the hollow of His hand.'

'What monsters them cotton-factors must be!' said Mrs Partington. 'I'm told some of 'em has as many as a hundred hands!'