

Poetry.

TRIED AS SILVER IS TRIED.

"Thou hast tried as silver is tried," Psalm lvi. 10.
I saw them crush the silver ore,
Till all the hills around,
That lay in beauty, calm and still,
Re-echoed with the sound.
I saw when hoofs of angry steeds
Had trampled out the ore,
And fiercely burned the furnace fires,
To purify still more.

I saw the silver in the fire,
The dross all burned away,
And perfect in its purity,
As of beauteous lay.
As silver thou dost try us, Lord,
Till melted at thy will,
In sweet submission we have learned
To suffer and be still.

The die must heavy press the heart
To bear this image there,
And those who love thee most, dear Lord,
Gladly thy sufferings share.
Oh! hark the furnace, Lord—
Refiner of the heart—
Till perfect, spotless, pure and white,
We see thee as thou art.

A BOY'S HYMN.

"Just as I am," Thy own to be,
Friend of the young, who lovest me;
To consecrate myself to thee,
O Jesus Christ I come.

In the glad morning of my day,
My life to give, my vows to pay,
With no reserve and no delay,
With all my heart I come.

I would live ever in the light,
I would work ever for the right,
I would serve Thee with all my might,
Therefore to Thee I come.

"Just as I am," young, strong and free,
To be the best that I can be,
For truth, and righteousness, and Thee,
Lord of my life, I come.

With many dreams of fame and gold
Success and joy to make me bold;
But dearer still my faith to hold,
Facing whole life I come.

And for Thy sake to win renown,
And then to take my victor's crown,
And at Thy feet to cast it down,
O Master, Lord, I come.

The Fireside.

THE LEAF.

Mary Baker was lame, and so it came to pass
That her brothers spent many of their holidays
At home with their crippled sister, instead of making
Long expeditions from it, as boys are wont to do at
such times.

On this particular Saturday afternoon, Fred,
Harry, Mary, and Lulu Baker had been having a
grand time in the yard with their friends, Willie
and Sammie Hartwell and Sarah Foster. It would
wear this poor old pen entirely out to tell you
about all the games they played; how the girls
kept house; how Hal, and Will, and Sam kept
store, while Fred ran a bank issuing greenbacks
made of leaves; how they all took tea, with pure
cold, well water for the tea; how Fred and Hal
and Will made speeches—*orations*, as Sam called
them—which the rest applauded; and how—but
oh, dear! I can't begin to tell you all the nice plays
they played.

Now, however, they were a little tired, just
enough as to be still and play some quiet game,
not tired enough to go home. So they had all gathered
in the arbor—a beautiful one it was, all covered
with rose vines, and fragrant with the scent of roses
—and were making wreaths of leaves.

Lulu crowned queen. A pretty picture they
would have made just then. Lulu, with her crown
of leaves and roses, sat enthroned upon a seat made
by the clasped hands of Willie Hartwell and Brother
Fred, while Harry, Sam, Mary, and Sarah, them-
selves loaded with trailing garlands, were all mak-
ing very low bows to her little majesty.

"Hail, all hail, most gracious sovereign!" said
a voice at the door, and all eyes were turned to
ward Hugh Baker, the oldest boy in the family, a
college student, now home to spend vacation.
"Hail, queen of the flowers!" May your reign—
what word of royalty so soon?" exclaimed Hugh,
as Lulu slid from her throne in a manner not very
queenly, and sprang into his arms.

He sat down, holding the little queen, to watch
the play, but the play seemed to have come to a
standstill, so there was none to watch.

"Tell a story, Hugh, do tell a story," lisped
Lulu, patting his cheek.

"That's no let's have a story!" chimed the rest.
"Tell us a fairy story," said Sammie.

"Tell a story about the Indians, or hunting
beats and buffaloes," said Harry.

"Tell us an Indian legend," said Fred.

"Tell a story about the sea," said Willie.

"Suppose you turn professor, and give us a lec-
ture, just such as you have in college," suggested
Mary.

"Well," said Hugh, laughing, "I'm not there any-
thing else you would like to hear? If not, I'll try
to gratify you all. I'll begin with the lecture, on
the principle of keeping the best till the last you
know."

So, stepping out into the middle of the arbor he
picked up a leaf, drawing his handkerchief from
the pocket of his coat, wiped his nose with
sundry solemn flourish. Then, clearing his
throat with a sufficiently loud and important
sneeze, with tones of mock seriousness and a
slightly nasal twang, he began:

"Ladies and gentlemen—allow me to intro-
duce you, by means of this leaf, to the extremely
interesting and useful science of botany. All
plants are either *phanerogams* or *cryptogams*.
Cryptogams, *andromedous* plants, are such as the
moss, *fungi*, *algae* and *slimes*. *Phanerogams*, or
flowering plants, comprise two divisions: the *endo-
genous* and *exogenous*. *The endogenous*—"

"Hold on! hold on!" broke in Fred. "You'll
lose all the time you have, if you don't stop using
such jaw-breakers."

"Oh! then you don't want to hear the lecture?"
said Hugh. "Well, I didn't really suppose it
would interest you much."

"Maybe it would, though," rejoined Fred, "if
you would talk plain English and kick the Latin
overboard."

"Let the lecture go, Hugh, give us an object
lesson instead. You have the object in your
hand," added Mary.

"Very well," said Hugh, "I never gave an
object lesson in my life, but I'll try it. Before I
begin, I want you to tell me the difference
between a plant and an animal. Can you, Queen
Lulu?"

"A animal walks," said Lulu soberly.
"Can you Sarah?"

"The animal walks and eats, and the plant
doesn't," answered Sarah.

"That isn't exactly true," remarked Hugh,
"for many animals do not walk, and all plants
eat."

"Plants eat?" exclaimed several at once.

"Of course. How can they grow without
eating?"

"Where's their mouth?" asked Sammie, who
was skeptical.

"Some plants have more mouths than you could
sleep."

count in a lifetime, but we won't talk about that
till we get to it. I want to know now the differ-
ence between plants and animals."

"Animals," said Mary, who had somewhere
read the definition, "animals grow, live and feel,
but plants only grow and live."

"Well, that is pretty near it. The animal lives,
moves, feels, eats vegetable food, and breathes out
carbonic acid gas; while the plant does not feel, lives
on mineral food, (that is food taken from the earth
and air), and breathes out oxygen. Now," con-
tinued Hugh, "that you may understand me, I
shall have to give you a short lesson in chemistry.
I said that animals breathe out carbonic acid gas.
The air that you breathe is not the same that
you breathe in. You breathe in air and breathe
out this gas. If you were shut up in an air-tight
room till you had breathed over all the air and
made it into carbonic acid gas, you would soon die
in it. It is poisonous for animals, but good food
for plants. At least the elements of the carbon in
it. For carbonic acid is made of carbon, and oxygen,
and oxygen is a gas, which makes a fifth part of the air, and is the part of it
which supports life. We could not live without it.
Animals, then, by breathing out this carbonic acid,
are all the time making the air impure; but plants,
by taking this gas through their mouths, using the
carbon and giving back the oxygen, are all the time
making the air pure. In every twenty-five hun-
dred gallons of air there is always about one gallon
of carbonic acid. Carbon, then, is the plants' fa-
vorite food; and men get it by heating wood just
enough to drive away the other parts and leave
that. If you burn up a stick of wood, the carbon
goes off in smoke, and the ashes remaining are
earthy substances which the plants drink in with
water from the ground."

"Haven't you got most to their mouths now?"
asked Sammie, who thought the object lesson too
much like a lecture.

"Almost. Now, if you will each take a leaf and
look at it, you will see that it is made up, first,
of woody fibres, or threads, some large and some quite
small, which, cross and cross each other in every direction,
make a strong frame, or skeleton, for the leaf.
Second, of green pulp, which fills up the frame-
work; and third, of a sort of skin which covers the
whole. This skin is thicker and tougher upon the
upper than on the lower side, enabling the leaf to
bear the heat of the sunshine. If you twist a leaf
upside down it will turn itself back again, or, if
you keep it from turning, it will die in the attempt."

"I'm going to try that," cried Fred, seizing a
rose leaf.

"Now," observed Hugh, as he fished a pocket
microscope from his pocket and placed it on the
underside of the leaf, "if you will look carefully
through this glass I think you will see the mouths
or pores as they are more commonly called. They
are little openings in the skin of the leaf which
botanists call *stomata*, the Greek word for mouths.
I don't know why it isn't just as well to call them
mouths in English as in Greek."

Hugh passed the glass and leaf around, and all
looked at the leaf-mouths, which, though they
seemed much larger than they really were, looked
like a mouth and was quite disconcerting.

"These mouths," continued Hugh, "are very
numerous, but are almost all on the under side of
the leaf. There may be a few thousand on the
upper side, but they are few in comparison with
the whole number. It is said that the leaf of the
apple tree has 54,000 of them on every square inch
of the lower surface, and some leaves have many more
to the square inch. Some of our largest trees, then,
whose leaves if put together into one leaf would
cover four or five acres of ground, must have thou-
sands and thousands of millions of mouths. These
leaf-mouths not only breathe in carbonic acid and
breathe out oxygen, but they give out in the form
of a vapor much of the water which the plants
drink in by its roots. They are also guarded by
a pair of little cells which open when moist, so as
to let out the vapor, but close when dry so as to
keep it back. But you must not suppose that the
plant gets all its food or even all its carbon from
the air. The roots bring up water from the ground,
and the water feeds the tree with oxygen and hy-
drogen. Besides, there is dissolved in the water a
little carbonic acid, and some earthy substances
which the plant uses. So out of the air, the earth,
and the water, the plant makes food for animals,
and sends it to wake up the birds. These unfail-
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summer's work. Every breeze wafts along some of
this carbonic acid, and the leaf-mouths open and
eat. Every drop of rain while falling absorbs a
little of the acid, and that is why the air is more
pure after a shower. Then the greedy roots suck
up the water, and the tree is fed and grows and
brings forth fruit, and gives us food for our stores,
and lumber for our houses."

"Perhaps you never noticed that the buds are
formed in the fall before the leaves fall off. Dur-
ing the winter the tree sleeps, we might say, but
in the spring when the snow melts, the ground
thaws, and the showers fall, the thirsty roots drink
up the moisture in the ground, convert it into sap,
and send it to wake up the buds. These unfail-
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drogen. Besides, there is dissolved in the water a
little carbonic acid, and some earthy substances
which the plant uses. So out of the air, the earth,
and the water, the plant makes food for animals,
and sends it to wake up the birds. These unfail-
ing leaves, and then the plant is ready to do its
summer's work. Every breeze wafts along some of
this carbonic acid, and the leaf-mouths open and
eat. Every drop of rain while falling absorbs a
little of the acid, and that is why the air is more
pure after a shower. Then the greedy roots suck
up the water, and the tree is fed and grows and
brings forth fruit, and gives us food for our stores,
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