

Paine Albert Bigelow

A Little Garden Calendar for Boys and Girls



Albert Paine

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A Word to Teachers and Parents

When Dr. S. P. Langley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, established the Children's Room in that great museum, he took for his motto, "Knowledge begins in wonder," and he put into this room a selection of specimens especially intended to excite interest in the young mind. The biggest bird and the littlest were placed side by side; curious eggs, nests, and insects – not many in number, but temptingly displayed – were ranged about to attract attention and to awake the desire to know more. It was the same Dr. Langley who had once declared that his chief interests in life were children and fairy stories, and it is in the little Washington room that we seem to find the thought embodied, for the children are there, and the fairy stories of nature are suggested on every hand.

It is with Dr. Langley's motto in mind that the "Little Garden Calendar" is offered to parents and teachers, and to children themselves who are old enough to read. The author has tried to tell in simple language a few of the wonders of plant life, and to set down certain easy methods of observation, including planting, tending, and gathering the harvests, from month to month, throughout the year. Along with this it has been his aim to call attention to the more curious characteristics of certain plants – the really human instincts and habits of some, the family relations of others, the dependence of many upon mankind, animals, and insects, and the struggle for existence of all. Simple botany plays a part in the little narrative, which forms a continuous story from chapter to chapter, interwoven with a number of briefer stories – traditions, fairy tales, and the like, all relating to plant life and origin. These are presented by way of entertainment – to illuminate fact with fancy – to follow, as it were, the path of knowledge through the garden of imagination.

The illustrations in this book are from excellent photographs – especially made for the various chapters – that the student of plant life may compare and identify with some degree of assurance as to varieties and particular specimens, especially in the matter of plant organisms. The volume is divided according to the calendar, for the reason that in the plant world there is interest for every month in the year if only someone is by to point the way, and it is for this purpose that the little story of Prue and Davy and their garden is offered to instructors in the schoolroom and at home, and to the young people themselves, with the greetings and good wishes of

The Author.

JANUARY

I

YOU MAY BEGIN YOUR GARDEN RIGHT AWAY

THIS is the story of a year, and begins on New Year's day. It is the story of a garden – a little garden – and of a little boy and girl who owned the garden, and of the Chief Gardener, who helped them.

And the name of the little boy was David, after his grandfather. So they called him Davy, because when grandfather was a little boy, he had been called Davy, and this little boy wanted to be just as his grandfather had been – just the same kind of a little boy, with the same name and all.

And the name of the little girl was Prudence, and she was called Prue. For when her mother was a little girl, *she* had been called Prue, and the Chief Gardener still called her that, sometimes, when he did not call her just Mamma. And the little girl was five years old, and the little boy was 'most seven – "going-on seven" the little boy always said, when you asked him.

The garden was in a window, at first – in two windows, side by side – called a double window. It had to be in a window, because outside it was very cold, and the snow was white and deep on the beds where the Chief Gardener had flowers and vegetables in summer-time.

Prue and Davy were looking out on this white, snow-covered garden on New Year's afternoon. Christmas was over, and spring seemed far away. And there had been *so* much snow that they were tired of their sleds.

"I wish it would be warm again," said Davy, "so there would be strawberries and nice things to eat in the garden; don't you, Prue?"

"And nice green grass, and dandelions and pinks and morning-glories," said Prue, who loved flowers.

Then the little girl went over to where the Chief Gardener was reading. She leaned over his knee and rocked it back and forth.

"Will it *ever* be warm again?" she asked. "Will we *ever* have another garden?"

The Chief Gardener turned another page of his paper. Prue rocked his knee harder.

"I want it to be warm," she said. "I want it to be so we can plant flowers."

"And things," put in Davy, "*nice* things, to eat; pease and berries and radishes."

"Oh, Davy, you always want things to eat!" said the little girl. "We've just had our New Year's dinner!"

"But I'd be hungry again before the things grew, wouldn't I? And you like strawberries, too, and short-cake."

The Chief Gardener laid down his paper.

"What's all this about strawberry short-cake and morning-glories?" he asked.

"We want it to be warm," said Prue, "so we can have a garden, with pinks and pansies – "

"And pease – " began Davy.

"And a short-cake tree," put in the Chief Gardener, "with nice short-cakes covered with whipped cream, hanging on all the branches. That would suit you, wouldn't it, Davy boy?"

The very thought of a tree like that made Davy silent with joy; but Prue still rocked the knee and talked.

"When *will* it be warm? When *can* we have a garden?" she kept asking.

"It is warm, *now*, in this room," said the Chief Gardener, "and you may begin your garden right away, if you like."

The children looked at him, not knowing just what he meant.

"In the window," he went on. "There are two, side by side. They are a part of the garden, you know, for we always see the garden through them, in summer. You remember, we said last year they were like frames for it. Now, suppose we really put a little piece of garden in the windows."

Prue was already dancing.

"Oh, yes! And I'll have pansies, and roses, and hollyhocks, and pinks, and morning-glories, and – "

"And I'll have peaches, and apples, and strawberries, and pease – "

"And a field of corn and wheat," laughed the Chief Gardener, "and a grove of cocoanut trees! What magic windows we must have to hold all the things you have named. They will be like the pack of Santa Claus – never too full to hold more."

"But can't we have all the things we like?" asked Davy, anxiously.

"Not *quite* all, I'm afraid. The hollyhocks and roses that Prue wants do not bloom the first year from seed. It would hardly pay to plant them in a window-garden, and as for peach and apple trees, I am afraid you would get very tired waiting for them to bear. It takes at least five years for apple-trees to give us fruit, often much longer. Peach-trees bear about the third year. I think we would better try a few things that bloom and bear a little more quickly."

II

YOUR GARDEN MAY NOT LOOK AS I HAVE IT HERE

The Chief Gardener took his pencil and a piece of paper, and drew a little plan. He was not much of an artist, and sometimes when he drew things he had to write their names below, so that Prue and Davy could tell which was the rabbit and which was the donkey, and so they wouldn't think the kitten was a lion. But a window was not so hard, and then he could put names under the plants, too. On the next page is the picture that the Chief Gardener drew.

While he was making the picture, the children had been asking questions.

"Which is my side? Oh, what's that in the center – that tall plant? What are those vines? What will we have in those littlest pots? Oh, I know what those are! Those are morning-glories! Oh, goody!"

The last was from Prue, when she saw the artist putting the flowers along the vines that he had made climbing up the sides of her window.

"Yes," said the Chief Gardener, "those are morning-glories. You can have two vines in each pot, if you wish, and in that way get four colors – blue, white, purple, and pink. On Davy's side I have made climbing beans – scarlet and white runners – because they are very pretty, and also very good to eat. Davy's is a vegetable, and yours a flower, garden. Then, if Davy wants some flowers, and you get hungry, you can give him flowers for vegetables."

"Oh, that will be playing 'market,' won't it? I just love to play 'store' and 'going to market.'"

"My beans look a good deal like Prue's morning-glories, all but the flowers," said Davy.

"So they do, Davy; and they really look something the same in the garden. The leaves are nearly the same shape, only that the morning-glory's is more heart-shaped, and then beans have three leaves to the stem instead of one. Sometimes I have taken a morning-glory for a bean, just at first."

"What else have we?" asked Prue. "What are the little flowers, and the big one in the center?"

If the Chief Gardener felt hurt because his pictures did not show just what all the flowers were, without telling, he did not say so. He said:

"Well, in the center of your window, Prue, the big flower is made for a sunflower. Not the big kind, but the small western sunflower, such as we had along the back fence last summer. I think we can raise those in the house."

"I just love those," nodded Prue.

"Then those two slender plants are sweet-pease on your side, and garden-pease on Davy's. I put two in each window, because I know that you love sweet-pease, while Davy is very fond of the vegetable kind."

"I'd like a whole bushel of sweet-pease!" said Prue.

"And I wish I had a bushel of eating pease!" said Davy, "and I know that's sweet corn in the middle of my window. I just love it!"

"Yes," said the Chief Gardener, "and a little pot of radishes on one side, and a pot of lettuce salad on the other. Do you think you like that, Davy?"

"Can't I have strawberries, instead of the salad?" asked Davy.

"Strawberries don't bear from seed the first season, and I can't remember any fruit that does, unless you call tomatoes fruit, and I don't think a tomato vine would be quite pleasant in the house. It doesn't always have a sweet odor."

"Oh, well, I can eat lettuce," said Davy. "I can eat anything that's good."

"What are in my other little pots?" asked Prue for the third or fourth time.

"Well, one is meant for a pot of pansies – "

"Oh, pansies! pansies! Can't I have two pots of pansies?"

"You can have three or four plants in one pot – perhaps that will do. Then you can put nasturtiums in the other little pot. They are easy to grow, and very beautiful."

"Yes," said Prue, "I never saw anything so *lovely* as your nasturtiums by the house, last year."

The Chief Gardener looked at the sketch and tapped it with his pencil.

"Of course," he said, "your garden may not look just as I have it here. I don't draw very well, but I can make things about the right sizes to fit the windows, and that isn't so hard to do with a pencil as it is with the plants themselves. Plants, like children, don't always grow just as their friends want them to, and they are not always well behaved. You see – "

"But won't my bean vines and corn grow up like that?" asked Davy.

"And won't my morning-glories have flowers on them?" asked Prue.

"I hope they will, and we will try to coax them. But you see things may happen. Sometimes it comes a very cold night when the fires get low, and then plants are likely to chill, or perhaps freeze and die. We can only try to be very careful."

"How long will it take them to grow?" asked Davy.

"That is not easy to say. When everything is just right, some seeds start very soon. I have known radishes to pop up within three days, when the weather was warm and damp. Corn will sprout in about a week, in warm weather. Sweet-pease take a good deal longer, though we can hurry them a little by soaking them in warm water before we plant them. But we will talk about all that later. First, let's see about the pots and earth, and the seeds."

III

MANY SEEDS ARE GIVEN WINGS

The Chief Gardener took Davy and Prue down in the basement, where in one corner he kept his flower-pots and garden-tools.

"I'm going to use the hoe," said Davy, reaching for the long handle.

"I'll have the rake for my garden," said Prue.

The Chief Gardener smiled.

"I don't think we'll need either for this gardening. A small weeder or an old kitchen-knife will be about the largest tool you can use."

Then he picked out some pots, set them side by side on a table, and measured them to see how long a row they made. Then he changed them and measured again.

"There," he said, "those will just fit one window. Now, another set for the other window and we are ready for the soil."

"Where will you get dirt? Everything is frozen hard," said Davy.

The Chief Gardener took up a spading-fork from among the tools.

"We'll get our hats and coats, first," he said, "then we'll see what we can find."

Outside it was really very cold, but the children, with their thick wraps, did not mind. They raced in the snow across the empty little garden, and followed the Chief Gardener to a small mound in one corner. Here he pushed away the snow, and with the fork lifted up a layer of frozen-looking weeds; then another layer, not quite so frozen and not quite so weedy; then still another layer that did not seem at all frozen, but was just a mass of damp leaves and bits of grass. And under this layer it must have been quite warm, for steam began to rise white in the cold air.

"Oh, see!" said Prue. "What makes the smoke?"

"That's steam," said Davy, wisely; "but what makes it warm?"

"Fever," said the Chief Gardener, "just as you had, Davy, that night you ate too much layer-cake. You said you were burning up, but it was only nature trying to burn up the extra food. That is what nature is doing here – trying to burn up and turn to earth the pile of weeds and grass I threw here last summer for compost. Next spring the fire will be out, and leave only a heap of rich soil for the garden."

Beneath the last layer there was warm, dark earth. The Chief Gardener filled the basket he had brought, and they hurried back to the basement to fill the pots.

"Not too full – we must leave room at the top for digging and watering, without spilling dirt and water on the floor. Then the plants will help fill up by and by, too, and I think we would better put in a little of this compost at the bottom. When the roots run down they will be glad to find some fresh, rich food. Don't pack the earth too tightly, Davy; just jar the pot a little to settle it, and it should be fine and quite dry. Perhaps we'd better dry it a little," the Chief Gardener added, as he saw by the children's hands that some of the earth was rather damp and sticky.

So he brought out a flat box, emptied all the pots into it, and set the box on top of the furnace.

"While it's drying, we'll go upstairs and pick out the seeds," he said.

"Oh, see my beans! How pretty they are!" cried Davy, as the Chief Gardener pointed out the purple-mottled seeds of the scarlet runners.

Prue looked a little envious. She was fond of pretty things.

"But my pease are better-looking than those crinkly things of yours," she said; "mine are most like little beads; and see my nasturtium seed! They look good to eat, like little peanuts."

It was Davy's turn now to be envious. Anything that looked like peanuts must be very good to eat.

"People often pickle nasturtium pods," said the Chief Gardener. "They are fine and peppery. So Prue will really have something to eat in her garden, while Davy will have beautiful flowers on his scarlet runners."

"See my morning-glory seed, like quarters of a little black apple, and how tiny my pansy seeds are!" cried Prue, holding out the papers.

Davy was looking at the little round, brown kernels that the Chief Gardener had said were radish seeds, and the light little flakes that were to grow into lettuce.

"What makes seeds so different?" he asked soberly.

"Ah, Davy, that is a hard question," answered the Chief Gardener. "A great many very great people have tried to answer it."

He opened a little paper and held it out for them to see.

"What funny little feather-tops!" said Prue.

"Like little darts," said Davy. "What are they?"

"Marigold seeds. They are very light, and the little tufts or wings are to carry them through the air, so they will be scattered and sown by the wind. Many seeds are given wings of different kinds. Maple seeds have a real pair of wings. Others have a tuft of down on them, so light that they are carried for miles. But many seeds are hard to explain. Plants very nearly alike grow from seeds that are not at all alike, while plants as different as can be grow from seeds that can hardly be told apart, even under the magnifying-glass."

The pots filled with the warm earth were brought up and ranged in the windows.

"How deep, and how many seeds in a pot?" asked Davy.

"That depends," the Chief Gardener answered. "I believe there is a rule that says to plant twice as deep as the seed is long, though sweet-pease and some other things are planted deeper; and you may plant more seeds than you want plants, so that enough are pretty sure to grow; four beans in each pot, Davy – two white and two colored, and three grains of corn in the large center pot."

The children planted the seeds – the Chief Gardener helping, showing how to cover them with fine earth – the corn and beans quite deeply, the sweet-pease still deeper, fully an inch or more, the smaller seeds thinly and evenly: then how to pat them down so that the earth might be lightly but snugly packed about the sleeping seeds.

"Now we will dampen them a little," he said, "and when they feel their covering getting moist, perhaps they will think of waking."

So he brought a cup of warm water, and the children dipped in their fingers and sprinkled the earth in each pot until it was quite damp. Then they drew up chairs and sat down to look at their garden, as if expecting the things to grow while they waited.

IV

I THINK SEEDS KNOW THE MONTHS

But the seeds did not sprout that day, nor the next, nor for many days after they were planted.

Prue and Davy watered them a little every morning, and were quite sure the room had been warm, but it takes sunshine, too, to make seeds think of waking from their long nap, and the sun does not always shine in January. Even when it does, it is so low in the sky, and stays such a little time each day, that it does not find its way down into the soil as it does in spring and summer time.

"You said that corn sprouts in a week," said Davy to the Chief Gardener, one morning, "and it's a week to-day since we planted it, and even the radishes are not up yet."

Prue also looked into her little row of pots, and said sadly that there was not even a little teeny-weeny speck of anything coming up that she could see.

"I'm sorry," said the Chief Gardener, "but you know I really can't make the sun shine, and even if I could, perhaps they would be slow about coming, at this season. Sometimes I think seeds know the months as well as we do, for I have known seeds to sprout in June in a place where there was very little warmth or moisture and no sunshine at all. Yes, I think the seeds know."

"And won't my pansies come at all?" whimpered little Prue.

"Oh, I think so. They only need a little more coaxing. Suppose we see just what is going on. You planted a few extra radish seeds, Davy. We will do as little folks often do – dig up one and see what has happened."

So the Chief Gardener dug down with his pocket-knife and lifted a bit of the dirt, which he looked at carefully. Then he held it to the light and let the children look. Sticking to the earth there was a seed, but it was no longer the tiny brown thing which Davy had planted. It was so large that Davy at first thought it was one of his pease, and on one side of it there was an edge of green.

"It's all right, Davy boy. They'll be up in a day or two," laughed the Chief Gardener. "Now, we'll try a pansy."

"Oh, yes, try a pansy! try a pansy!" danced little Prue, who was as happy as Davy over the sprouting of the radish.

So the Chief Gardener dug down into the pansy-pot, but just at first could not find a pansy seed, they were so small. Then he did find one, and coming out of it were two tiny pale-green leaves, and a thread of white rootlet that had started downward.

Prue clapped her hands and wanted the Chief Gardener to dig in all the pots, but he told them that it would not be good gardening to do that, and that they must be patient now, and wait. So then another anxious week went by. And all at once, one morning very early, Prue and Davy came shouting up the stairs to where the Chief Gardener was shaving.

"They're up! They're up!"

"My pansies!"

"And my radishes! They've lifted up a piece of dirt over every seed, and there's one little green point in the corn-pot, too!"

The Chief Gardener had to leave his shaving to see. Sure enough! Davy's radishes and Prue's pansies were beginning to show, and one tender shoot of Davy's corn. And in less than another week Davy's lettuce and pease and beans were breaking the ground above each seed, while Prue's garden was coming too, all but the sweet-pease, which, because of their hard shell, sprouted more slowly, even though they had been soaked in warm water before planting. But in another week they began to show, too, and everything else was quite above ground.

Then the Chief Gardener dug up one each of the extra seeds, root and all, and showed them just how they had sprouted and started to grow. He showed them how the shell or husk of the seed still clung to the two first leaves of some of the morning-glory and radish plants, how when the little

plant had awakened from its long nap, it had stretched, just as a little boy would stretch, getting up out of bed, and how, being hungry, it had made its breakfast on a part of the tender kernel packed about it in the seed, and then pushed its leaves up for light and air. He also showed them how the grain of corn and the pea stayed below the ground to feed the little shoots that pushed up and the sprangled roots that were starting down to hunt for richness. But they all laughed at the beans, for the beans left only the husk below and pushed the rich kernel up into the air – coming up topsy-turvy, Davy said, while Prue thought the leaves must be very greedy to take the kernel all away from the roots, instead of leaving it where both could have a share.

And now another week passed, and other tiny leaves began to show on most of the plants. These were different shaped from the first oval or heart-shaped seed-leaves – real, natural leaves, Prue said, such as they would have when they were grown. Only the corn did not change, but just unfolded and grew larger.

And so in every pot there were tender green promises of fruit and flower. The little garden was really a garden at last.

FEBRUARY

I

LITTLE PLANTS WON'T STAND MUCH HANDLING

YET the little garden seemed to grow slowly. The sun in February was getting farther to the north, and came earlier and stayed later than it had in January, and was brighter, too. But for all that, to Davy and Prue, each new leaf came quite slowly – just a tiny point or bud at first, then a little green heart or oval or crinkly oblong with a wee stem of its own. It was very hard to see each morning, just what had grown since the morning before.

Of course they did grow – little by little, and inch by inch – just as children grow, and a good deal faster, for when they measured their bean and morning-glory vines, they found one morning that they had grown at least a half an inch since the day before, and that would be a good deal for a little boy or girl to grow in one day.

But Davy perhaps remembered the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk" and how Jack's bean had grown to the sky in a very short time; and, of course, remembering a story like that is apt to make anybody impatient with a bean that grows only half an inch a day.

"I think it would be a good plan," he said one morning, "to tie a rubber band to the top of each of my bean vines, and then fasten the other end higher up the window to help pull the vines along."

And little Prue said:

"I pulled my morning-glories along yesterday a little, with my fingers. I know they grew a tiny speck then, but they don't look quite so nice this morning."

The Chief Gardener came over to see what was going on.

"I don't think we'd better try any new plans," he said. "I'm afraid if we pull our plants to make them grow, we will have to pull them up altogether, pretty soon, and plant new ones. Tender little plants won't stand much handling."

The Chief Gardener was not cross, but his voice was quite solemn. Little Prue looked frightened and her lip quivered the least bit.

"Oh, will my morning-glories die now?" she asked; "and I pulled the pansies just a tiny speck, too. Will they die?"

"Not this time, I think; but I wouldn't do it again. Just give them a little water now and then, and dig in the pots a little, and turn them around sometimes so that each side of the plant gets the light, and nature will do the rest. Of course you can't turn the bean and morning-glory pots after they get to climbing the strings, but they will twine round and round and so turn themselves. Your garden looks very well for the time of year. Perhaps if you did not watch it so much it would grow faster. They say that a watched pot never boils, so perhaps a watched plant does not grow well. I am sure they do not like to be stretched up to a measuring-stick every morning at eight o'clock. Suppose now we put up the strings for the morning-glories and beans to climb on, and some nice branchy twigs for the pease, then water them well and leave them for a few days and see what happens."

So then the Chief Gardener and the two little gardeners went down in the basement, where they found some tiny screw-hooks and some string, and where they cut some nice sprangly little limbs from the Christmas tree that still stood in one corner, and was getting very dry. Then they all came up again and put up strings for the scarlet runners and morning-glories, by tying one end of each string to a stout little stick which the Chief Gardener pushed carefully into the soil between the plants, and then carried the string to the small screw-hooks, which were put about half-way up, and at the top of

the window-casings. The branchy twigs were stuck carefully into the pots where the pease grew, and stood up straight and fine – like little ladders, Prue said – for the pease to climb.

"It's just like a circus," said Davy. "The beans and morning-glories will be climbing ropes, and the pease will be running up straight ladders."

"And while we are waiting for the performance to begin," added the Chief Gardener, "suppose you let me tell you something about the performers – where they came from, and some stories that are told of them."

II

HEY FOR THE MERRY LITTLE SWEET-PEA

The Chief Gardener went into the next room, which was the library, and drew a cozy little settee up before the bright hickory fire. It was just wide enough for three, and when he sat down, Davy and Little Prue promptly hopped up, one on each side. In a low rocker near the window Big Prue was doing something with silks and needles and a very bright pair of scissors. The Chief Gardener stirred the fire and looked into it. Then he said:

"Speaking of pease, I wonder if you ever heard this little song about

'THE TWO PEAS

'Oh, a little sweet-pea in the garden grew —
Hey, for the merry little sweet-pea!
And a garden-pea, it grew there, too —
Hi, for the happy little eat-pea!
In all kinds of weather
They grew there together —
Ho, for the pease in the garden!
Hey, for the sweet-pea! Hi, for the eat-pea!
Hey, he, hi, ho, hum!

'Oh, the sweet-pea bloomed and the eat-pea bore —
Hey, for the merry little sweet-pea!
And they both were sent to a poor man's door —
Hi, for the happy little eat-pea!
In all kinds of weather
They came there together!
Ho, for the pease from the garden!
Hey, for the sweet-pea! Hi, for the eat-pea!
Hey, he, hi, ho, hum!

'Now, the poor man's poor little girl lay ill —
What a chance for a merry little sweet-pea!
And there wasn't a cent in the poor man's till —
Good-by to the jolly little eat-pea!
In all kinds of weather
They brought joy together
When they came from the happy little garden!
Hey, for the sweet-pea! Hi, for the eat-pea!
Hey, he, hi, ho, hum!"

"Was there really ever a poor man and a little sick girl who had pease sent to them?" asked little Prue, as the Chief Gardener finished.

"Oh, I am sure there must have been! A great many of them."

"But the ones you sung about. Those really same ones – did they ever really live, or did you make it up about them?"

"I don't think my pease would be quite enough for a poor man who didn't have a cent of money," said Davy, after thinking about it.

"But my sweet-pease will be enough, only I want to know if there is really such a little girl, so I can send them. Is there, Papa?"

"Well, I am sure we can find such a little girl, if we try. And I know she'd be glad for some sweet-pease. And now here's a little story that I really didn't make up, but read a long time ago.

"Once upon a time there were two friars – "

"What are friars?" asked Prue. "Do they fry things?"

"Well, not exactly, though one of these did do some stewing, and the other, too, perhaps, though in a different way. A friar is a kind of priest, and these two had done something which the abbot, who is the head priest, did not like, so he punished them."

"What did they do?" asked Prue, who liked to know just what people could be punished for.

"I don't remember now. It's so long – "

"What do you *s'pose* it was?"

"Well, I really can't s'pose, but it may have been because they forgot their prayers. Abbots don't like friars to forget their prayers – "

"If I should forget my prayers, I'd say 'em twice to make up."

"Oh, Prue!" said Davy, "*do* let Papa go on with the story!"

"But I would. I'd say 'em sixty times!"

"Yes," said the Chief Gardener, "friars have to do that, too, I believe; but these had to do something different. They had to wear pease in their shoes."

"Had to wear pease! In their shoes!"

"Yes, pease, like those we planted, and they had to walk quite a long ways, and, of course, it wouldn't be pleasant to walk with those little hard things under your feet.

"Well, they started, and one of them went limping and stewing along, and making an awful fuss, because his feet hurt him so, but when he looked at the other he saw that instead of hobbling and groaning as he was, he was walking along, as lively as could be, and seemed to be enjoying the fine morning, and was actually whistling.

"'Oh, dear!' said the one who was limping, 'how is it you can walk along so spry, and feel so happy, with those dreadful pease in your shoes?'

"'Why,' said the other, 'before I started, I took the liberty to *boil my pease!*'"

"But, Papa," began little Prue, "I don't see – "

"I do," said Davy, "it made them soft, so they didn't hurt."

"What kind of pease were they?" asked Prue. "Like Davy's or mine?"

"Well, I've never heard just what kind they were. There are a good many kinds of pease, and they seem to have come from a good many places. Besides the sweet-pease and garden-pease, there are field-pease, used dry for cattle, and in England there is what is called a sea-pea, because it was first found growing on the shore of a place called Sussex, more than three hundred and fifty years ago, in a year of famine. There were many, many of them and they were in a place where even grass had not grown before that time. The people thought they must have been cast up by some shipwrecked vessel, and they gathered them for food, and so kept from going hungry and starving to death. The garden-pea is almost the finest of vegetables, and there are many kinds – some large, some small, some very sweet, some that grow on tall vines and have to have stakes, and some that grow very short without stakes, and are called dwarfs. There are a good many kinds of sweet-pease, too, different sizes and colors, but I think all the different kinds of garden-pease and sweet-pease might have come from one kind of each, a very, very long time ago, and that takes me to another story which I will

have to put off until next time. I have some books now to look over, and you and Davy, Prue, can go for a run in the fresh air."

III

EVEN CLOVER BELONGS TO THE PULSE FAMILY

It was on the same evening that Prue and Davy asked for the other story. And of course the Chief Gardener had to tell it, for he had promised, and little Prue, especially, didn't like to put off anything that had been promised. So this is the story that the Chief Gardener told:

"The Pulse family is a very large one. I don't know just where the first old great-grandfather Pulse ever did come from, but it is thought to be some place in Asia, a great country of the far East. It may be that the first Pulse lived in the Garden of Eden, though whether as a tree or a vine or a shrub, or only as a little plant, we can't tell now."

"I think it's going to be a fairy story," said Prue, settling down to listen. "Is it, Papa? A real, true fairy story?"

"Well, perhaps it is a sort of a fairy story, and I'll try to tell it just as truly as I can. Anyway, the story goes, that a long time after the Garden of Eden was ruined and the Pulse family started west, there were two cousins, and these two cousins were vines, though whether they were always vines, or only got to be vines so they could travel faster, I do not know. Some of their relations were trees then, and are now; the locust tree out in the corner of the yard is one of them."

Davy looked up, and was about to ask a question. The Chief Gardener went on.

"The cousins I am talking about, being vines, traveled quite fast in the summer-time, but when it came winter, they lay down for a long nap, and only when spring came they roused up and traveled on. One of them was a very fine fellow, with gay flowers that had a sweet smell, and people loved him for his beauty and fragrance. The other brought only greenish-white flowers, not very showy, but some thought him far more useful than his pretty cousin, for he gave the people food as he passed along.

"So they journeyed on, down by the way of the Black Sea, which you will know about when you are a little older, and still farther west until at last the pretty Pulse cousin and the plain but useful Pulse cousin had spread their families all over Europe, and were called P's, perhaps because the first letter of their family name began with P. Then by and by it was spelled p-e-a, and they were called garden-pease and sweet-pease, and were planted everywhere, one for the lovely flowers, and the other for food. Now we have them side by side in your windows, just as they were when they first started on their travels, so very, very long ago."

"Did they really travel as you have told?" asked Davy, looking into the fire.

"Well, I have never been able to find any printed history of their travels, so it may have been something like that."

"They did, didn't they, Papa?" insisted little Prue, who always wanted to believe every word of every fairy story. "They went hand in hand, just as Davy and I do when we go walking, didn't they?"

"And Davy is the garden-pea and you the sweet-pea, is that it? Well, they did come a long way – that is true – and they do belong to a very large family. Why, even the clover belongs to the Pulse family, and the peanut, and the locust, and the laburnum, and there is one distant branch of the family that is so modest and sensitive that at the least touch its members shrink and hide, and these are called sensitive plants."

"Aren't beans of the Pulse family, too?" asked Davy.

"Why do you think so?" asked the Chief Gardener.

"Well, I remember that the flowers are something alike, and then they both have pods."

"And you are right, Davy. Both the flowers are what is called butterfly-shaped, and pods of that kind are called legumes. Whenever you see a flower of that shape, or a pod of that kind, no matter how small or how large, or whether they grow on a plant or a tree or a shrub, you will know you have found one of the Pulse family and a relative of the pea. Your scarlet runners are about second cousins, I should think, and I have something to tell about them, too, but it is too late this evening."

IV

BEANS AND MORNING-GLORIES TWINE TO THE RIGHT

"My morning-glories are climbing! My morning-glories are climbing up the strings!"

"And so are my scarlet runners! Two of them have gone twice around already, and one of them three times! But oh, Papa, something has broken one of my stalks of corn, right off close to the ground!"

It was two days after the strings had been put up, and Prue and Davy had tried very hard not to look at their garden during all that time. Then they just had to look, and found that the beans and morning-glories were really starting up the strings. But what could have happened to Davy's corn!

The Chief Gardener hurried down to see. Then with an old knife he dug down into the pot a little, and up came, what do you suppose? Why, a white, fat ugly worm – a cut-worm, the Chief Gardener called him.

"They are a great enemy to young corn," he said, "especially in cool weather. Sometimes almost whole fields have to be replanted. Blackbirds will kill them, but many times the farmer thinks the blackbird is pulling up his corn, and drives him away with a gun, when the blackbird is only trying to help the farmer."

"Do you suppose there are any more?" asked Davy anxiously.

The Chief Gardener dug carefully around the other stalk, until the white roots began to show.

"No, I think your other stalk is safe," he said, "at least from cut-worms."

Grown-up Prue came to see the gardens. Yes, the vines were really making a nice start, as well as the other things. One of Davy's pease had sent out some tiny tendrils that were reaching toward the slender twig-branches, but thoughtful Davy was looking first at his beans, then at Prue's morning-glories.

"They all go around the strings just alike," he said at last; "all the same way. Why don't some go the other way?"

"You ask such hard questions, Davy," the Chief Gardener answered. "I have never known anybody to tell why all the beans and morning-glories twine to the right, any more than why all the honeysuckles twine to the left." The Chief Gardener turned to the little woman beside him. "There must be some reason, of course; some law of harmony and attraction. I suppose it would be quite simple to us if we knew. Why, where did Davy go?"

Davy came in, just then, with his hat and coat on.

"I'm going to look at the honeysuckles," he said, "those out on the porch."

The others put on wraps, too, and went with him. It was crisp and bright out there, and dry leaves still clinging to the vines whispered and gossiped together in the wintry breeze.

"They do!" said Davy, "they every one turn the other way – every single one! How do you suppose they can tell which way to start – which is right, and which is left?"

The Chief Gardener shook his head.

"Perhaps a story might explain it," he said. "Stories have to explain a good many things until we find better ways."

So then they went inside to see if a story would really tell why the morning-glory and scarlet runner always twined to the right, and why the honeysuckle always twined to the left. And this was the Chief Gardener's story:

V

THE HONEYSUCKLE TWINES ALWAYS TO THE LEFT

"Away back in the days that came after Eden, the time I told you of, when the garden was given up to weeds and the plants went wandering out through the world, a certain morning-glory and climbing-bean were good friends, and were often found together – twining up the same little tree or trellis, and very happy. Of course they were not called morning-glory and bean then, and the honeysuckle that grew near was not called honeysuckle either, though it had just the same sweet flowers, and the humming-birds came to suckle honey from them, just as they do now, in summer-time. I don't know what the old names were. It has been so long since then, I suppose they are all forgotten.

"Now the honeysuckle was very proud of its sweet flowers, that scented all the air around and drew the beautiful humming-birds, while the morning-glory and bean had only very pale little flowers that the humming-birds did not care for at all.

"And the honeysuckle used to laugh at them, and tell them how plain and useless they were. How they lived only a little while in summer, and withered when the frost came, while it only shed its leaves, and stood strong and sturdy against the wind and cold of winter, ready to grow larger and more useful each spring. And this, of course, made the two friends feel very sorry, and wish they could be beautiful and useful, too.

"Now, one day in early spring, the sun, who makes the plants grow and gives the colors to the flowers, heard the honeysuckle, which was putting out green leaves on its strong vines, laughing at the bean and morning-glory, that were just peeping from the earth.

"And the sun said, 'This is too bad. It is not fair for one who has so much to make fun of those who have so little. I must give them more.'

"So, lo and behold, when the morning-glory vine began to bloom, instead of having pale little flowers, they were a beautiful white and blue and purple and rose color, and when the bean blossomed, it had a fine scarlet flower, and both were more beautiful than the honeysuckle, though the honeysuckle still had its sweet perfume, and its honey for the humming-birds."

"But what about the twining?" asked Davy. "That is what you started to tell."

"Why, yes, of course. I forgot that. Well, when the sun came to look at them he said, first to the honeysuckle, 'Because you have been so proud, you must follow me,' and to the bean and morning-glory, 'Because you have been meek, you shall turn always to meet me,' and since that day, the honeysuckle has turned always to the left, following the sun, while the bean and the morning-glory have twined always to the right, to meet it on every turn."

The Chief Gardener paused, seeing that Davy was making circles in the air with his finger – first circles to the right, then more circles to the left. Then the circles got slower and slower, showing that he was thinking very hard.

"That's right," he said at last. "If they turned to the right, they would meet the sun every time around, and if they turned to the left they would be following it."

The Chief Gardener was glad he had told his story right.

"And then, by and by," he said, "I suppose people must have given them their names – the honeysuckle's because of the humming-birds that came to suckle the flowers, and the morning-glory's because it made each morning bright with its beautiful flowers, while the bean they called the scarlet runner, and when they found that its pods held good food, they planted it both for its flowers and its usefulness, and valued it very highly, indeed. Just where all this happened I do not know. The honeysuckle and morning-glory now grow wild, both in Europe and the United States, and the scarlet runner is said to have been found wild in these countries, too, though I have never seen it except in gardens."

"Papa," asked little Prue, "haven't my morning-glories any useful relations, like my sweet-pease?"

"Why, yes, of course, let me see. The sweet potato belongs to that family. It is really about a first cousin, and useful drugs are made from the juice and root of a wild morning-glory. There are hardly any families that do not have both useful and ornamental members, and most of them, I am sorry to say, have troublesome ones, too, which we call weeds. But I must run away now, and all that will have to wait until another time."

MARCH

I

STILL, IT WAS REALLY A RADISH

AND so the month of February passed. Once the vines had started up the strings, they seemed to grow faster – almost as if they were running races, while the pease reached out and clung to the little twigs, and stood up straight and trim, like soldiers. The pansies and nasturtiums, too, and the lettuce and radishes all sent out more and more leaves, and began to hide the little pods. Davy was wild to pull up just one radish to see if it wasn't big enough to eat, but on the first day of March, when the Chief Gardener told him that he might do so, he was grieved to find only a pale little root, just a bit larger and a trifle pinker at the top, instead of the fat, round vegetable he had expected.

Still, it was really a radish, Davy said, and he cut the thickest part in two and gave half to little Prue, who brought out her little dishes and set her table that Santa Claus left under the Christmas Tree. Then she put her piece on one little plate, and Davy's piece on another, and picked one tiny pansy leaf and one from the nasturtiums to make bouquets. And Davy picked a lettuce leaf – a very small lettuce leaf – for a salad, so that when their little table was all spread and ready, with some very small slices of bread, and some cookies – some quite large cookies – and some animal crackers, with milk for tea, it really looked quite fresh and pretty and made you hungry just to look at it.

And, oh, yes, I forgot to say that there was some salt, the least little bit, in two of the tiniest salt dishes, and when they sat down at last to the very first meal out of their garden, all on the first day of March, when no other gardens around about had been planted yet, they dipped the tiny bits of radish into the tiny salt dishes, and nibbled it, just a wee bit at a time to make it last, and last, ever so long. And they said it tasted real radishy, and that the lettuce leaf, with one drop of vinegar and a speck of salt, was just fine. And little Prue held her doll and made her taste, too, and then the Chief Gardener and grown-up Prue must each have a tiny, tiny bite.

And so, of course, Davy got to be really quite proud of his first radish, and said that after all it wasn't so bad for the first one, and that it was almost as big as a slate-pencil, in the thickest part. Pretty soon they might have a radish that would be big enough for each one to have quite a piece, and they would serve it on a whole leaf of salad. He felt sure that on his birthday, which would be on the tenth, they might really have something very nice.

Then Prue was very quiet for a minute, thinking. By and by she asked:

"And do you think I will have flowers for Davy's birthday? Davy can just pick his lettuce and radishes any time. My 'sturtiums and pansies are as big as his things, but I have to wait for them to bloom."

"Why, that's so, Prue." The Chief Gardener went over to her pansies and looked at them very closely, but if he saw anything he did not speak of it. "Oh, well," he said, "if you don't have flowers for Davy's birthday, maybe you will for mine. It comes in March, too, you know. And then it's ten days yet till Davy's, and you never can tell what will happen in ten days."

Alas, this was too true. It got quite warm during the second week of March, and the fire in the furnace was allowed to get low. Then one night it suddenly turned cold – as cold as January.

"Oh, what makes some of my pea leaves look so dark?" asked Davy, as they stopped in the icy sitting-room for a moment, before hurrying through to the warm dining-room, where a big open fire was blazing.

The Chief Gardener shook his head, rather solemnly.

"I'm afraid they are bitten a little by Jack Frost," he said.

"Oh, mine are all dark, too," whispered Prue, sorrowfully. "I am going to take them right out to the dining-room fire, and warm them."

"And that would be the very worst thing you could do," said the Chief Gardener. "Let them stay right where they are, and we will heat the room slowly by opening the register just the least bit at a time, and draw the shades to keep out the sun. Perhaps if we do that the frost will come out so gently that the plants will not be killed. If you should warm them quickly they would be very apt to die, or at least to be badly injured."

So they did as the Chief Gardener said, and kept the sitting-room quite cool all day. Then by another day the pease and all the others looked about as well as ever, only a few of the tenderest leaves withered up and dropped off because Jack Frost had breathed harder on these than on the others. As for the radishes and lettuce and pansies, they hadn't minded it the least bit, for they can stand a good deal of cold, and the corn and sunflower and nasturtiums didn't lose any leaves, so, perhaps, they didn't care for a touch of frost either.

II

THE SUN SWINGS LIKE A GREAT PENDULUM

And now with each day there was brighter sunshine that came earlier and stayed longer. From a high east window they saw the sun rise each morning, when it was bright weather, and when they happened to be awake in time, and they saw how the big red ball crept farther and farther to the north, along the far fringe of trees, beyond all the houses which they could see.

"It rose away down beyond that little white house on Christmas morning," said Davy, who was always up early. "I remember very well. Now it's got past the tall pine by the red barn. How much farther will it go?"

The Chief Gardener pointed to a dim pencil-mark on the window-sill.

"That was the angle of the shadow," he said, "on the twenty-first of June, and points to just where the sun will rise on the longest day of the year. You will have to be up very early to see it on that day." He pointed to another faint line. "That," he said, "was the angle on the twenty-first of December, the shortest day. The sun swings like a great pendulum from one point to the other and gives us winter and summer, and all the seasons between. Half-way between these marks is due east, and there the sun will rise on the twenty-first of March, which is the first day of spring."

"Do you think our garden things are looking at it, and wishing it would hurry and get farther toward the June mark," said little Prue.

"I think they are," the Chief Gardener answered. "They don't have eyes, as we have, but they have a way of seeing the sun, and of knowing just where it is, for most of them turn toward it as they grow, and some of them follow it all the way across the sky, from morning until night, and then turn back and wait for it to rise again. Your sunflower would do that, Prue, if it were out under the open sky."

"Oh, it does now. I mean it looks toward the sun in the morning, with its top leaves, and keeps them turned toward it as far as it can."

"So you have noticed that, have you? Well, I'm glad, for I have read in books – books written by very wise men – that the sunflower did not really do this, but that it was just an old fable. I think those wise men, perhaps, never saw the wild western sunflowers, but only the big tame ones that have heavy, coarse stems and are so big and clumsy and fat that they couldn't well turn, even if they wanted to. I have seen whole fields of wild sunflowers – little ones like yours, and long before they were in bloom – with every stem bent toward the sunrise, when there was not a breath of wind blowing; and I have seen the same flowers straighten their little stems as the sun rose higher, and then bend them again to the west in the evening; and the little bend would be so tight and firm that you could hardly straighten the stalk without breaking it. Very wise men make mistakes sometimes, mistakes that even a little girl would not make, just because they have not happened to see something which a little girl with sharp eyes has seen and thought about. It is a wonderful and beautiful sight on the prairies of the West to see miles of wild sunflowers in full bloom. They are like a great sea of gold, and in the early morning, when the air is still, every bloom is faced toward the sunrise, as bright and fresh and faithful as the sun itself."

"I should think there would be a story about the sunflower," said Davy, half speaking to himself.

"Oh, there have been many stories about it, Davy. After breakfast I will try and remember the one I like best."

So then they hurried down to the dining-room, pausing just long enough to see that the garden was all safe, and to notice that the upper leaves of Prue's sunflower were really faced so far to the sun that there was a sharp little crook in the stem, then out to the big dining-room fire, for the fragrant breakfast that was waiting, and back to the library fire for the story that was to be told.

III

LONG BEFORE THERE WERE ANY RAILROADS AND CITIES

"Once upon a time – "

"Oh," said Prue, "once upon a time – I just love 'once upon a time.'"

"Yes," nodded Davy, solemnly, "and once upon a time there was a little girl who couldn't keep still so that her Papa could tell a story."

Prue snuggled down, and the Chief Gardener began all over.

"Once upon a time, long before there were any railroads, and cities such as ours, long before Columbus ever sailed over the ocean to a new world – when all this great wide country, as you know, was held by Indians, who hunted and fished, and made war sometimes, when they had disputes – there lived away in the far West two very friendly tribes. Their lands joined and they hunted together, and when one tribe was at war the other joined in and helped to fight the enemy. So they became almost as one tribe and their children grew up together.

"Now, in one tribe there was a little Indian boy, a chief's son, who was very fond of a little Indian girl of the other tribe. Their mothers had always been great friends, and often for a whole day at a time the little Indian boy and girl played together, and as they grew up they cared for each other more and more, and the Indian boy, Ahlogah, said that when he was older and a chief he would make the little Indian girl, Laida, his wife.

"But it happened that in Laida's tribe there was also a chief's son, a jealous-hearted and cruel boy that Laida did not like. But this boy cared for Laida, and like Ahlogah made up his mind that some day she should be his wife.

"So they all grew up, and Ahlogah and Laida loved each other more dearly every day, and Kapoka, the other youth, grew more jealous and more cruel-hearted. And when one day his father died, and he became chief of his tribe, he said that if she did not give up Ahlogah, he would make war on Ahlogah's tribe.

"So then Ahlogah and Laida met one evening just before sunset to say good-by for the last time. Their tribes had never been at war, and they were willing to part forever to keep Kapoka from making a war now. Laida had not promised to marry Kapoka, she had only promised not to see Ahlogah again. And now they parted, just as the sun was going down, and they both turned to see it for the last time side by side. And then Ahlogah said:

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