

**BENDER IDA CATHERINE,
BALDWIN JAMES**

EIGHTH READER

Ida Bender
James Baldwin
Eighth Reader

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Eighth Reader

TO THE TEACHER

The paramount design of this series of School Readers is to help young people to acquire the art and the habit of reading well – that is, of interpreting the printed page in such manner as to give pleasure and instruction to themselves and to those who listen to them. In his eighth year at school the pupil is supposed to be able to read, with ease and with some degree of fluency, anything in the English language that may come to his hand; but, that he may read always with the understanding and in a manner pleasing to his hearers and satisfactory to himself, he must still have daily systematic practice in the rendering of selections not too difficult for comprehension and yet embracing various styles of literary workmanship and illustrating the different forms of English composition. The contents of this volume have been chosen and arranged to supply – or, where not supplying, to suggest – the materials for this kind of practice.

Particular attention is called both to the high quality and to the wide variety of the selections herein presented. They include specimens of many styles of literary workmanship – the products of the best thought of modern times. It is believed that their study

will not only prove interesting to pupils, but will inspire them with a desire to read still more upon the same subjects or from the works of the same authors; for it is only by loving books and learning to know them that any one can become a really good reader.

The pupils should be encouraged to seek for and point out the particular passages in each selection that are distinguished for their beauty, their truth, or their peculiar adaptability to the purpose in view. The habit should be cultivated of looking for and enjoying the admirable qualities of any worthy literary production; and special attention should be given to the style of writing which characterizes and gives value to the works of various authors. These points should be the subjects of daily discussions between teacher and pupils.

The notes under the head of "Expression," which follow many of the lessons, are intended, not only to aid in securing correctness of expression, but also to afford suggestions for the appreciative reading of the selections and an intelligent comparison of their literary peculiarities. In the study of new, difficult, or unusual words, the pupils should invariably refer to the dictionary.

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BROTHER AND SISTER ¹

I. The Home Coming

Tom was to arrive early in the afternoon, and there was another fluttering heart besides Maggie's when it was late enough for the sound of the gig wheels to be expected. For if Mrs. Tulliver had a strong feeling, it was fondness for her boy. At last the sound came – that quick light bowling of the gig wheels.

"There he is, my sweet lad!" Mrs. Tulliver stood with her arms open; Maggie jumped first on one leg and then on the other; while Tom descended from the gig, and said, with masculine reticence as to the tender emotions, "Hallo! Yap – what! are you there?"

Nevertheless he submitted to be kissed willingly enough, though Maggie hung on his neck in rather a strangling fashion, while his blue eyes wandered toward the croft and the lambs and the river, where he promised himself he would begin to fish the first thing to-morrow morning. He was one of those lads that grow everywhere in England, and at twelve or thirteen years of age look as much alike as goslings, – a lad with a physiognomy in which it seems impossible to discern anything but the generic

¹ From "The Mill on the Floss," by George Eliot.

character of boyhood.

"Maggie," said Tom, confidentially, taking her into a corner, as soon as his mother was gone out to examine his box, and the warm parlor had taken off the chill he had felt from the long drive, "you don't know what I've got in my pockets," nodding his head up and down as a means of rousing her sense of mystery.

"No," said Maggie. "How stodgy they look, Tom! Is it marbles or cobnuts?" Maggie's heart sank a little, because Tom always said it was "no good" playing with her at those games – she played so badly.

"Marbles! no; I've swopped all my marbles with the little fellows, and cobnuts are no fun, you silly, only when the nuts are green. But see here!" He drew something half out of his right-hand pocket.

"What is it?" said Maggie, in a whisper. "I can see nothing but a bit of yellow."

"Why, it's – a – new – guess, Maggie!"

"Oh, I can't guess, Tom," said Maggie, impatiently.

"Don't be a spitfire, else I won't tell you," said Tom, thrusting his hand back into his pocket, and looking determined.

"No, Tom," said Maggie, imploringly, laying hold of the arm that was held stiffly in the pocket. "I'm not cross, Tom; it was only because I can't bear guessing. Please be good to me."

Tom's arm slowly relaxed, and he said, "Well, then, it's a new fish line – two new ones – one for you, Maggie, all to yourself. I wouldn't go halves in the toffee and gingerbread on purpose

to save the money; and Gibson and Spouncer fought with me because I wouldn't. And here's hooks; see here! – I say, won't we go and fish to-morrow down by the Round Pool? And you shall catch your own fish, Maggie, and put the worms on, and everything – won't it be fun?"

Maggie's answer was to throw her arms around Tom's neck and hug him, and hold her cheek against his without speaking, while he slowly unwound some of the line, saying, after a pause:

—

"Wasn't I a good brother, now, to buy you a line all to yourself? You know, I needn't have bought it, if I hadn't liked."

"Yes, very, very good – I do love you, Tom."

Tom had put the line back in his pocket, and was looking at the hooks one by one, before he spoke again. "And the fellows fought me, because I wouldn't give in about the toffee."

"Oh, dear! I wish they wouldn't fight at your school, Tom. Didn't it hurt you?"

"Hurt me? no," said Tom, putting up the hooks again, taking out a large pocketknife, and slowly opening the largest blade, which he looked at meditatively as he rubbed his finger along it. Then he added – "I gave Spouncer a black eye, I know – that's what he got by wanting to leather me; I wasn't going to go halves because anybody leathered me."

"Oh, how brave you are, Tom! I think you're like Samson. If there came a lion roaring at me, I think you'd fight him – wouldn't you, Tom?"

"How can a lion come roaring at you, you silly thing? There's no lions, only in the shows."

"No; but if we were in the lion countries – I mean in Africa, where it's very hot – the lions eat people there. I can show it to you in the book where I read it."

"Well, I should get a gun and shoot him."

"But if you hadn't got a gun – we might have gone out, you know, not thinking just as we go fishing; and then a great lion might run toward us roaring, and we couldn't get away from him. What should you do, Tom?" Tom paused, and at last turned away contemptuously, saying, "But the lion isn't coming. What's the use of talking?"

"But I like to fancy how it would be," said Maggie, following him. "Just think what you would do, Tom."

"Oh, don't bother, Maggie! you're such a silly – I shall go and see my rabbits."

II. The Falling Out

Maggie's heart began to flutter with fear. She dared not tell the sad truth at once, but she walked after Tom in trembling silence as he went out, thinking how she could tell him the news so as to soften at once his sorrow and his anger; for Maggie dreaded Tom's anger of all things – it was quite a different anger from her own. "Tom," she said timidly, when they were out of doors, "how much money did you give for your rabbits?"

"Two half crowns and a sixpence," said Tom.

"I think I've got a great deal more than that in my steel purse upstairs. I'll ask mother to give it to you."

"What for?" said Tom. "I don't want your money, you silly thing. I've got a great deal more money than you, because I'm a boy. I always have half sovereigns and sovereigns for my Christmas boxes, because I shall be a man, and you only have five-shilling pieces, because you're only a girl."

"Well, but, Tom – if mother would let me give you two half crowns and a sixpence out of my purse to put into your pocket and spend, you know; and buy some more rabbits with it?"

"More rabbits? I don't want any more."

"Oh, but, Tom, they're all dead."

Tom stopped immediately in his walk and turned round toward Maggie. "You forgot to feed 'em, then, and Harry forgot," he said, his color heightening for a moment, but soon subsiding. "I'll pitch into Harry – I'll have him turned away. And I don't love you, Maggie. You shan't go fishing with me to-morrow. I told you to go and see the rabbits every day."

He walked on again.

"Yes, but I forgot – and I couldn't help it, indeed, Tom. I'm so very sorry," said Maggie, while the tears rushed fast.

"You're a naughty girl," said Tom, severely; "and I'm sorry I bought you the fish line. I don't love you."

"Oh, Tom, it's very cruel," sobbed Maggie. "I'd forgive you, if you forgot anything – I wouldn't mind what you did – I'd forgive

you and love you."

"Yes, you're a silly – but I never do forget things – I don't."

"Oh, please forgive me, Tom; my heart will break," said Maggie, shaking with sobs, clinging to Tom's arm, and laying her wet cheek on his shoulder.

Tom shook her off, and stopped again, saying in a peremptory tone, "Now, Maggie, you just listen. Aren't I a good brother to you?"

"Ye-ye-es," sobbed Maggie, her chin rising and falling convulsedly.

"Didn't I think about your fish line all this quarter, and mean to buy it, and saved my money o' purpose, and wouldn't go halves in the toffee, and Spouncer fought me because I wouldn't?"

"Ye-ye-es – and I – lo-lo-love you so, Tom."

"But you're a naughty girl. Last holidays you licked the paint off my lozenge box, and the holidays before that you let the boat drag my fish line down when I'd set you to watch it, and you pushed your head through my kite, all for nothing."

"But I didn't mean," said Maggie; "I couldn't help it."

"Yes, you could," said Tom, "if you'd minded what you were doing. And you're a naughty girl, and you shan't go fishing with me to-morrow." With this terrible conclusion, Tom ran away from Maggie toward the mill.

Maggie stood motionless, except for her sobs, for a minute or two; then she turned round and ran into the house, and up to her attic, where she sat on the floor, and laid her head against

the worm-eaten shelf, with a crushing sense of misery. Tom was come home, and she had thought how happy she should be – and now he was cruel to her. What use was anything, if Tom didn't love her? Oh, he was very cruel! Hadn't she wanted to give him the money, and said how very sorry she was? She had never been naughty to Tom – had never meant to be naughty to him.

"Oh, he is cruel!" Maggie sobbed aloud, finding a wretched pleasure in the hollow resonance that came through the long empty space of the attic. She was too miserable to be angry.

III. The Making Up

Maggie soon thought she had been hours in the attic, and it must be tea time, and they were all having their tea, and not thinking of her. Well, then, she would stay up there and starve herself – hide herself behind the tub, and stay there all night; and then they would all be frightened, and Tom would be sorry. Thus Maggie thought as she crept behind the tub; but presently she began to cry again at the idea that they didn't mind her being there.

Tom had been too much interested in going the round of the premises, to think of Maggie and the effect his anger had produced on her. He meant to punish her, and that business having been performed, he occupied himself with other matters, like a practical person. But when he had been called in to tea, his father said, "Why, where's the little wench?" and Mrs. Tulliver,

almost at the same moment, said, "Where's your little sister?" – both of them having supposed that Maggie and Tom had been together all the afternoon.

"I don't know," said Tom. He didn't want to "tell" of Maggie, though he was angry with her; for Tom Tulliver was a lad of honor.

"What! hasn't she been playing with you all this while?" said the father. "She'd been thinking of nothing but your coming home."

"I haven't seen her this two hours," says Tom, commencing on the plum cake.

"Goodness heart! She's got drowned!" exclaimed Mrs. Tulliver, rising from her seat and running to the window. "How could you let her do so?" she added, as became a fearful woman, accusing she didn't know whom of she didn't know what.

"Nay, nay, she's none drowned," said Mr. Tulliver. "You've been naughty to her, I doubt, Tom?"

"I'm sure I haven't, father," said Tom, indignantly. "I think she's in the house."

"Perhaps up in that attic," said Mrs. Tulliver, "a-singing and talking to herself, and forgetting all about mealtimes."

"You go and fetch her down, Tom," said Mr. Tulliver, rather sharply, his perspicacity or his fatherly fondness for Maggie making him suspect that the lad had been hard upon "the little un," else she would never have left his side. "And be good to her, do you hear? Else I'll let you know better."

Tom never disobeyed his father, for Mr. Tulliver was a peremptory man; but he went out rather sullenly, carrying his piece of plum cake, and not intending to reprove Maggie's punishment, which was no more than she deserved. Tom was only thirteen, and had no decided views in grammar and arithmetic, regarding them for the most part as open questions, but he was particularly clear and positive on one point – namely, that he would punish everybody who deserved it; why, he wouldn't have minded being punished himself, if he deserved it; but, then, he never did deserve it.

It was Tom's step, then, that Maggie heard on the stairs, when her need of love had triumphed over her pride, and she was going down with her swollen eyes and disheveled hair to beg for pity. At least her father would stroke her head and say, "Never mind, my wench."

But she knew Tom's step, and her heart began to beat violently with the sudden shock of hope. He only stood still at the top of the stairs and said, "Maggie, you're to come down." But she rushed to him and clung round his neck, sobbing, "O Tom, please forgive me – I can't bear it – I will always be good – always remember things – do love me – please, dear Tom!"

Maggie and Tom were still very much like young animals, and so she could rub her cheek against his, and kiss his ear in a random, sobbing way; and there were tender fibers in the lad that had been used to answer to Maggie's fondling; so that he behaved with a weakness quite inconsistent with his resolution

to punish her as much as she deserved; he actually began to kiss her in return, and say: —

"Don't cry, then, Magsie — here, eat a bit o' cake." Maggie's sobs began to subside, and she put out her mouth for the cake and bit a piece; and then Tom bit a piece, just for company, and they ate together and rubbed each other's cheeks and brows and noses together, while they ate, with a humiliating resemblance to two friendly ponies.

"Come along, Magsie, and have tea," said Tom at last, when there was no more cake except what was downstairs.

So ended the sorrows of this day.

MY LAST DAY AT SALEM HOUSE ²

I pass over all that happened at school, until the anniversary of my birthday came round in March. The great remembrance by which that time is marked in my mind seems to have swallowed up all lesser recollections, and to exist alone.

It is even difficult for me to believe there was a gap of full two months between my return to Salem House and the arrival of that birthday. I can only understand that the fact was so, because I know it must have been so; otherwise I should feel convinced there was no interval, and that the one occasion trod upon the other's heels.

How well I recollect the kind of day it was! I smell the fog that hung about the place; I see the hoar-frost ghostly, through it; I feel my rimy hair fall clammy on my cheek; I look along the dim perspective of the schoolroom, with a spluttering candle here and there to light up the foggy morning, and the breath of the boys wreathing and smoking in the raw cold as they blow upon their fingers, and tap their feet upon the floor.

It was after breakfast, and we had been summoned in from the playground, when Mr. Sharp entered and said, "David Copperfield is to go into the parlor."

I expected a hamper from home, and brightened at the order.

² From "David Copperfield," by Charles Dickens.

Some of the boys about me put in their claim not to be forgotten in the distribution of the good things, as I got out of my seat with great alacrity.

"Don't hurry, David," said Mr. Sharp. "There's time enough, my boy, don't hurry."

I might have been surprised by the feeling tone in which he spoke, if I had given it a thought; but I gave it none until afterward. I hurried away to the parlor; and there I found Mr. Creakle, sitting at his breakfast with the cane and newspaper before him, and Mrs. Creakle with an opened letter in her hand. But no hamper.

"David Copperfield," said Mrs. Creakle, leading me to a sofa, and sitting down beside me, "I want to speak to you very particularly. I have something to tell you, my child."

Mr. Creakle, at whom of course I looked, shook his head without looking at me, and stopped up a sigh with a very large piece of buttered toast.

"You are too young to know how the world changes every day," said Mrs. Creakle, "and how the people in it pass away. But we all have to learn it, David; some of us when we are young, some of us when we are old, some of us at all times of our lives."

I looked at her earnestly.

"When you came away from home at the end of the vacation," said Mrs. Creakle, after a pause, "were they all well?" After another pause, "Was your mamma well?"

I trembled without distinctly knowing why, and still looked at

her earnestly, making no attempt to answer.

"Because," said she, "I grieve to tell you that I hear this morning your mamma is very ill."

A mist rose between Mrs. Creakle and me, and her figure seemed to move in it for an instant. Then I felt the burning tears run down my face, and it was steady again.

"She is very dangerously ill," she added.

I knew all now.

"She is dead." There was no need to tell me so. I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world.

She was very kind to me. She kept me there all day, and left me alone sometimes; and I cried and wore myself to sleep, and awoke and cried again. When I could cry no more, I began to think; and then the oppression on my breast was heaviest, and my grief a dull pain that there was no ease for.

And yet my thoughts were idle; not intent on the calamity that weighed upon my heart, but idly loitering near it. I thought of our house shut up and hushed. I thought of the little baby, who, Mrs. Creakle said, had been pining away for some time, and who, they believed, would die too. I thought of my father's grave in the churchyard, by our house, and of my mother lying there beneath the tree I knew so well.

I stood upon a chair when I was left alone, and looked into the glass to see how red my eyes were, and how sorrowful my face. I considered, after some hours were gone, if my tears were really

hard to flow now, as they seemed to be, what, in connection with my loss, it would affect me most to think of when I drew near home – for I was going home to the funeral. I am sensible of having felt that a dignity attached to me among the rest of the boys, and that I was important in my affliction.

If ever child were stricken with sincere grief, I was. But I remembered that this importance was a kind of satisfaction to me, when I walked in the playground that afternoon while the boys were in school. When I saw them glancing at me out of the windows, as they went up to their classes, I felt distinguished, and looked more melancholy, and walked slower. When school was over, and they came out and spoke to me, I felt it rather good in myself not to be proud to any of them, and to take exactly the same notice of them all, as before.

I was to go home next night; not by the mail, but by the heavy night coach, which was called the Farmer, and was principally used by country people traveling short intermediate distances upon the road. We had no story telling that evening, and Traddles insisted on lending me his pillow. I don't know what good he thought it would do me, for I had one of my own; but it was all he had to lend, poor fellow, except a sheet of letter paper full of skeletons; and that he gave me at parting, as a soother of my sorrows and a contribution to my peace of mind.

I left Salem House upon the morrow afternoon. I little thought then that I left it, never to return. We traveled very slowly all night, and did not get into Yarmouth before nine or ten o'clock

in the morning. I looked out for Mr. Barkis, but he was not there; and instead of him a fat, short-winded, merry-looking little old man in black, with rusty little bunches of ribbons at the knees of his breeches, black stockings, and a broad-brimmed hat, came puffing up to the coach window, and said, "Master Copperfield?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you come with me, young sir, if you please," he said, opening the door, "and I shall have the pleasure of taking you home!"

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Expression: The two stories which you have just read were written by two of the greatest masters of fiction in English literature. Talk with your teacher about George Eliot and Charles Dickens, and learn all that you can about their works. Which of these two stories do you prefer? Why?

Reread the conversation on pages [14](#) and [15](#). Imagine yourself to be Tom or Maggie, and speak just as he or she did. Read the conversation on pages [16](#) and [17](#) in the same way. Reread other portions that you like particularly well.

In what respect does the second story differ most strongly from the first? Select the most striking passage and read it with expression sad feeling.

THE DEPARTURE FROM MISS PINKERTON'S ³

I

One sunshiny morning in June, there drove up to the great iron gate of Miss Pinkerton's Academy for young ladies, on Chiswick Mall, a large family coach, with two fat horses in blazing harness, driven by a fat coachman in a three-cornered hat and wig, at the rate of four miles an hour.

A black servant, who reposed on the box beside the fat coachman, uncurled his bandy legs as soon as the equipage drew up opposite Miss Pinkerton's shining brass plate; and as he pulled the bell, at least a score of young heads were seen peering out of the narrow windows of the stately old brick house. Nay, the acute observer might have recognized the little red nose of good-natured Miss Jemima Pinkerton herself, rising over some geranium pots in the window of that lady's own drawing room.

"It is Mrs. Sedley's coach, sister," said Miss Jemima. "Sambo, the black servant, has just rung the bell; and the coachman has a new red waistcoat."

"Have you completed all the necessary preparations incident

³ From "Vanity Fair," by William Makepeace Thackeray.

to Miss Sedley's departure?" asked Miss Pinkerton, that majestic lady, the friend of the famous literary man, Dr. Johnson, the author of the great "Dixonary" of the English language, called commonly the great Lexicographer.

"The girls were up at four this morning, packing her trunks, sister," answered Miss Jemima. "We have made her a bowpot."

"Say a bouquet, sister Jemima; 'tis more genteel."

"Well, a booky as big almost as a haystack. I have put up two bottles of the gillyflower water for Mrs. Sedley, and the receipt for making it is in Amelia's box."

"And I trust, Miss Jemima, you have made a copy of Miss Sedley's account. That is it, is it? Very good! Ninety-three pounds, four shillings. Be kind enough to address it to John Sedley, Esquire, and to seal this billet which I have written to his lady."

II

In Miss Jemima's eyes an autograph letter of her sister, Miss Pinkerton, was an object of as deep veneration as would have been a letter from a sovereign. Only when her pupils quitted the establishment, or when they were about to be married, and once when poor Miss Birch died of the scarlet fever, was Miss Pinkerton known to write personally to the parents of her pupils.

In the present instance Miss Pinkerton's "billet" was to the following effect: —

Madam:

After her six years' residence at the Mall, I have the honor and happiness of presenting Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents, as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle. Those virtues which characterize the young English gentlewomen; those accomplishments which become her birth and station, will not be found wanting in the amiable Miss Sedley, whose industry and obedience have endeared her to her instructors, and whose delightful sweetness of temper has charmed her aged and her youthful companions.

In music, dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needle-work she will be found to have realized her friends' fondest wishes. In geography there is still much to be desired; and a careful and undeviating use of the back-board, for four hours daily during the next three years, is recommended as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified deportment and carriage so requisite for every young lady of fashion.

In the principles of religion and morality, Miss Sedley will be found worthy of an establishment which has been honored by the presence of The Great Lexicographer and the patronage of the admirable Mrs. Chapone. In leaving them all, Miss Amelia carries with her the hearts of her companions and the affectionate regards of her mistress, who has the honor to subscribe herself,

Madam your most obliged humble servant,
Barbara Pinkerton.

P.S. – Miss Sharp accompanies Miss Sedley. It is particularly requested that Miss Sharp's stay in Russell Square may not exceed ten days. The family of distinction with whom she is engaged as governess desire to avail themselves of her services as soon as possible.

This letter completed, Miss Pinkerton proceeded to write her own name and Miss Sedley's in the flyleaf of a Johnson's Dictionary, the interesting work which she invariably presented to her scholars on their departure from the Mall. On the cover was inserted a copy of "Lines addressed to a Young Lady on quitting Miss Pinkerton's School, at the Mall; by the late revered Dr. Samuel Johnson." In fact, the Lexicographer's name was always on the lips of this majestic woman, and a visit he had paid to her was the cause of her reputation and her fortune.

Being commanded by her elder sister to get "The Dixonary" from the cupboard, Miss Jemima had extracted two copies of the book from the receptacle in question. When Miss Pinkerton had finished the inscription in the first, Jemima, with rather a dubious and timid air, handed her the second.

"For whom is this, Miss Jemima?" said Miss Pinkerton with awful coldness.

"For Becky Sharp," answered Jemima, trembling very much, and blushing over her withered face and neck, as she turned her back on her sister. "For Becky Sharp. She's going, too."

"MISS JEMIMA!" exclaimed Miss Pinkerton, in the largest capitals. "Are you in your senses? Replace the Dixonary in the closet, and never venture to take such a liberty in future."

With an unusual display of courage, Miss Jemima mildly protested: "Well, sister, it's only two and nine-pence, and poor Becky will be miserable if she doesn't get one."

"Send Miss Sedley instantly to me," was Miss Pinkerton's only answer. And, venturing not to say another word, poor Jemima trotted off, exceedingly flurried and nervous, while the two pupils, Miss Sedley and Miss Sharp, were making final preparations for their departure for Miss Sedley's home.

III

Well, then. The flowers, and the presents, and the trunks, and the bonnet boxes of Miss Sedley having been arranged by Mr. Sambo in the carriage, together with a very small and weather-beaten old cowskin trunk with Miss Sharp's card neatly nailed upon it, which was delivered by Sambo with a grin, and packed by the coachman with a corresponding sneer, the hour for parting came; and the grief of that moment was considerably lessened by the admirable discourse which Miss Pinkerton addressed to her pupil.

Not that the parting speech caused Amelia to philosophize, or that it armed her in any way with a calmness, the result of argument; but it was intolerably dull, and having the fear of

her schoolmistress greatly before her eyes, Miss Sedley did not venture, in her presence, to give way to any ablutions of private grief. A seed cake and a bottle of wine were produced in the drawing room, as on the solemn occasions of the visits of parents; and these refreshments being partaken of, Miss Sedley was at liberty to depart.

"You'll go in and say good-by to Miss Pinkerton, Becky!" said Miss Jemima to that young lady, of whom nobody took any notice, and who was coming downstairs with her own bandbox.

"I suppose I must," said Miss Sharp calmly, and much to the wonder of Miss Jemima; and the latter having knocked at the door, and receiving permission to come in, Miss Sharp advanced in a very unconcerned manner, and said in French, and with a perfect accent, "*Mademoiselle, je viens vous faire mes adieux.*"⁴

Miss Pinkerton did not understand French, as we know; she only directed those who did. Biting her lips and throwing up her venerable and Roman-nosed head, she said, "Miss Sharp, I wish you a good morning."

As she spoke, she waved one hand, both by way of adieu and to give Miss Sharp an opportunity of shaking one of the fingers of the hand, which was left out for that purpose. Miss Sharp only folded her own hands with a very frigid smile and bow, and quite declined to accept the proffered honor; on which Miss Pinkerton tossed up her turban more indignantly than ever. In fact, it was a little battle between the young lady and the old one, and the

⁴ "Madam, I have come to tell you good-by."

latter was worsted.

"Come away, Becky," said Miss Jemima, pulling the young woman away in great alarm; and the drawing room door closed upon her forever.

Then came the struggle and parting below. Words refuse to tell it. All the servants were there in the hall – all the dear friends – all the young ladies – even the dancing master, who had just arrived; and there was such a scuffling and hugging, and kissing, and crying, with the hysterical *yoops* of Miss Schwartz, the parlor boarder, as no pen can depict, and as the tender heart would feign pass over.

The embracing was finished; they parted – that is, Miss Sedley parted from her friends. Miss Sharp had demurely entered the carriage some minutes before. Nobody cried for leaving *her*.

Sambo of the bandy legs slammed the carriage door on his young weeping mistress. He sprang up behind the carriage.

"Stop!" cried Miss Jemima, rushing to the gate with a parcel.

"It's some sandwiches, my dear," she called to Amelia. "You may be hungry, you know; and, Becky – Becky Sharp – here's a book for you, that my sister – that is, I – Johnson's Dictionary, you know. You mustn't leave us without that. Good-by! Drive on, coachman! – God bless you! Good-by."

Then the kind creature retreated into the garden, overcome with emotion.

But lo! and just as the coach drove off, Miss Sharp suddenly put her pale face out of the window, and flung the book back

into the garden – flung it far and fast – watching it fall at the feet of astonished Miss Jemima; then sank back in the carriage, exclaiming, "So much for the 'Dixonary'; and thank God I'm out of Chiswick!"

The shock of such an act almost caused Jemima to faint with terror.

"Well, I never – " she began. "What an audacious – " she gasped. Emotion prevented her from completing either sentence.

The carriage rolled away; the great gates were closed; the bell rang for the dancing lesson. The world is before the two young ladies; and so, farewell to Chiswick Mall!

-

Expression: By many able critics, Thackeray is regarded as a greater novelist than either Dickens or George Eliot. Compare this extract from one of his best works with the two selections which precede it. Which of the three stories is the most interesting to you? Which sounds the best when read aloud? Which is the most humorous? Which is the most pathetic?

Reread the three selections very carefully. Now tell what you observe about the style of each. In what respects is the style of the third story different from that of either of the others? Reread Miss Pinkerton's letter. What peculiarities do you observe in it? Select and reread the most humorous passage in this last story.

TWO GEMS FROM BROWNING

I. Incident of the French Camp

In the small kingdom of Bavaria, on the south bank of the Danube River, there is a famous old city called Ratisbon. It is not a very large city, but its history can be traced far back to the time when the Romans had a military camp there which they used as an outpost against the German barbarians. At one time it ranked among the most flourishing towns of Germany.

It is now of little commercial importance – a quaint and quiet old place, with a fine cathedral and many notable buildings which testify to its former greatness.

During the earlier years of the nineteenth century, Napoleon Bonaparte, emperor of the French, was engaged in bitter warfare with Austria and indeed with nearly the whole of Europe. In April, 1809, the Austrian army, under Grand Duke Charles, was intrenched in Ratisbon and the neighboring towns. There it was attacked by the French army commanded by Napoleon himself and led by the brave Marshal Lannes, Duke of Montebello.

The battle raged, first on this side of the city, then on that, and for several days no one could tell which of the combatants would be victorious. At length Napoleon decided to end the matter by

storming the city and, if possible, driving the archduke from his stronghold. He, therefore, sent Marshal Lannes forward to direct the battle, while he watched the conflict and gave commands from a distance. For a long time the issue seemed doubtful, and not even Napoleon could guess what the result would be. Late in the day, however, French valor prevailed, the Austrians were routed, and Marshal Lannes forced his way into the city.

It was at this time that the incident described so touchingly in the following poem by Robert Browning is supposed to have taken place. We do not know, nor does any one know, whether the story has any foundation in fact. It illustrates, however, the spirit of bravery and self-sacrifice that prevailed among the soldiers of Napoleon; and such an incident might, indeed, have happened not only at Ratisbon, but at almost any place where the emperor's presence urged his troops to victory. For, such was Napoleon's magic influence and such was the love which he inspired among all his followers, that thousands of young men were ready cheerfully to give their lives for the promotion of his selfish ambition.

The poem, which is now regarded as one of the classics of our language, was first published in 1843, in a small volume entitled "Dramatic Lyrics." The same volume contained the well-known rime of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." Robert Browning was at that time a young man of thirty, and most of the poems which afterwards made him famous were still unwritten.

Browning's Poem

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon:
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming day:
With neck outthrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall," —
Out 'twixt the battery smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
You hardly could suspect —
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through)

You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The Marshal's in the market place,
And you'll be there anon
To see your flag bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chiefs eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes;
"You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,
Smiling, the boy fell dead.

-

Expression: This is a difficult selection to read properly and with spirit and feeling. Study each stanza until you understand it thoroughly. Practice reading the following passages, giving the proper emphasis and inflections.

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon.

With neck outthrust you fancy how.

"We've got you Ratisbon!"

"You're wounded!" "Nay, I'm killed, Sire!"

Word Study: *Napoleon, Ratisbon, Bavaria, Lannes; anon, vans, sheathes, eaglet, Sire.*

Explain: *"To see your flag bird flap his vans." "His plans soared up again like fire."*

II. Dog Tray ⁵

A beggar child

Sat on a quay's edge: like a bird

Sang to herself at careless play,

And fell into the stream. "Dismay!

Help, you standers-by!" None stirred.

Bystanders reason, think of wives

And children ere they risk their lives.

Over the balustrade has bounced

A mere instinctive dog, and pounced

Plumb on the prize. "How well he dives!"

"Up he comes with the child, see, tight

In mouth, alive, too, clutched from quite

⁵ By Robert Browning.

A depth of ten feet – twelve, I bet!
Good dog! What, off again? There's yet
Another child to save? All right!"

"How strange we saw no other fall!
It's instinct in the animal.
Good dog! But he's a long time under:
If he got drowned, I should not wonder —
Strong current, that against the wall!

"Here he comes, holds in mouth this time
– What may the thing be? Well, that's prime!
Now, did you ever? Reason reigns
In man alone, since all Tray's pains
Have fished – the child's doll from the slime!"

-

Expression: Read the story silently, being sure that you understand it clearly. Then read each passage aloud, giving special attention to emphasis and inflections. Answer these questions by reading from the poem:

Where was the child? What did she do?

What did some one cry out?

Why did not the bystanders help?

What did the dog do?

What did one bystander say?

What did another say when the dog came up?

What did he say when the dog went back?

Read correctly: "*Well, that's prime!*" "*Now, did you ever?*" "*All right!*" "*If he got drowned, I should not wonder.*"

In what respects do these two poems differ from your favorite poems by Longfellow or Tennyson? Do you think there is much music in them?

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA ⁶

It was on Friday morning, the 12th of October, that Columbus first beheld the New World. As the day dawned he saw before him a level island, several leagues in extent, and covered with trees like a continual orchard. Though apparently uncultivated, it was populous, for the inhabitants were seen issuing from all parts of the woods and running to the shore. They stood gazing at the ships, and appeared, by their attitudes and gestures, to be lost in astonishment.

Columbus made signal for the ships to cast anchor and the boats to be manned and armed. He entered his own boat richly attired in scarlet and holding the royal standard; while Martin Alonzo Pinzon and his brother put off in company in their boats, each with a banner of the enterprise emblazoned with a green cross, having on either side the letters F and Y, the initials of the Castilian monarchs Fernando and Ysabel, surmounted by crowns.

As he approached the shore, Columbus, who was disposed for all kinds of agreeable impressions, was delighted with the purity and suavity of the atmosphere, the crystal transparency of the sea, and the extraordinary beauty of the vegetation. He beheld also fruits of an unknown kind upon the trees which overhung

⁶ From "The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus," by Washington Irving.

the shores. On landing he threw himself on his knees, kissed the earth, and returned thanks to God with tears of joy.

His example was followed by the rest, whose hearts indeed overflowed with the same feelings of gratitude. Columbus then rising drew his sword, displayed the royal standard, and, assembling round him the two captains and the rest who had landed, he took solemn possession in the name of the Castilian sovereigns, giving the island the name of San Salvador. Having complied with the requisite forms and ceremonies, he called upon all present to take the oath of obedience to him as admiral and viceroy, representing the persons of the sovereigns.

The feelings of the crew now burst forth in the most extravagant transports. They had recently considered themselves devoted men hurrying forward to destruction; they now looked upon themselves as favorites of fortune and gave themselves up to the most unbounded joy. They thronged around the admiral with overflowing zeal, some embracing him, others kissing his hands.

Those who had been most mutinous and turbulent during the voyage were now most devoted and enthusiastic. Some begged favors of him, as if he had already wealth and honors in his gift. Many abject spirits, who had outraged him by their insolence, now crouched at his feet, begging pardon for all the trouble they had caused him and promising the blindest obedience for the future.

The natives of the island, when at the dawn of day they had

beheld the ships hovering on their coast, had supposed them monsters which had issued from the deep during the night. They had crowded to the beach and watched their movements with awful anxiety. Their veering about apparently without effort, and the shifting and furling of their sails, resembling huge wings, filled them with astonishment. When they beheld their boats approach the shore, and a number of strange beings clad in glittering steel, or raiment of various colors, landing upon the beach, they fled in affright to the woods.

Finding, however, that there was no attempt to pursue or molest them, they gradually recovered from their terror and approached the Spaniards with great awe, frequently prostrating themselves on the earth and making signs of adoration. During the ceremonies of taking possession, they remained gazing in timid admiration at the complexion, the beards, the shining armor and splendid dress of the Spaniards. The admiral particularly attracted their attention, from his commanding height, his air of authority, his dress of scarlet, and the deference which was paid him by his companions; all which pointed him out to be the commander.

When they had still further recovered from their fears, they approached the Spaniards, touched their beards and examined their hands and faces, admiring their whiteness. Columbus was pleased with their gentleness and confiding simplicity, and soon won them by his kindly bearing. They now supposed that the ships had sailed out of the crystal firmament which bounded their

horizon, or had descended from above on their ample wings, and that these marvelous beings were inhabitants of the skies.

The natives of the island were no less objects of curiosity to the Spaniards, differing as they did from any race of men they had ever seen. Their appearance gave no promise of either wealth or civilization, for they were entirely naked and painted with a variety of colors. With some it was confined merely to a part of the face, the nose, or around the eyes; with others it extended to the whole body and gave them a wild and fantastic appearance.

Their complexion was of a tawny, or copper hue, and they were entirely destitute of beards. Their hair was not crisped, like the recently discovered tribes of the African coast, under the same latitude, but straight and coarse, partly cut short above the ears, but some locks were left long behind and falling upon their shoulders. Their features, though obscured and disfigured by paint, were agreeable; they had lofty foreheads and remarkably fine eyes. They were of moderate stature and well shaped.

As Columbus supposed himself to have landed on an island at the extremity of India, he called the natives by the general name of Indians, which was universally adopted before the true nature of his discovery was known, and has since been extended to all the aboriginals of the New World.

The islanders were friendly and gentle. Their only arms were lances, hardened at the end by fire, or pointed with a flint, or the teeth or bone of a fish. There was no iron to be seen, nor did they appear acquainted with its properties; for, when a drawn sword

was presented to them, they unguardedly took it by the edge.

Columbus distributed among them colored caps, glass beads, hawks' bells and other trifles, such as the Portuguese were accustomed to trade with among the nations of the gold coast of Africa. They received them eagerly, hung the beads round their necks, and were wonderfully pleased with their finery, and with the sound of the bells. The Spaniards remained all day on shore refreshing themselves, after their anxious voyage, amid the beautiful groves of the island, and returned on board late in the evening, delighted with all they had seen.

The island where Columbus had thus, for the first time, set his foot upon the New World, was called by the natives Guanahane. It still retains the name of San Salvador, which he gave to it, though called by the English Cat Island.

THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS ⁷

King Francis was a hearty king, and loved a royal sport,
And one day as his lions fought, sat looking on the court;
The nobles filled the benches, with the ladies in their pride,
And 'mong them sat the Count de Lorge with one for whom
he sighed:

And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show,
Valor, and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a wind went
with their paws;

With wallowing might and stifled roar they rolled on one
another,

Till all the pit with sand and mane was in a thundrous
smother;

The bloody foam above the bars came whisking through the
air;

Said Francis then, "Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than
there."

De Lorge's love o'erheard the King, – a beauteous lively dame
With smiling lips and sharp, bright eyes, which always
seemed the same:

⁷ By Leigh Hunt, an English essayist and poet (1784-1859).

She thought, "The Count, my lover, is brave as brave can be;
He surely would do wondrous things to show his love of me;
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is divine;
I'll drop my glove, to prove his love; great glory will be mine."

She dropped her glove, to prove his love, then looked at him
and smiled;

He bowed, and in a moment leaped among the lions wild:
His leap was quick, return was quick, he has regained his
place,

Then threw the glove, but not with love, right in the lady's
face.

"Well done!" cried Francis, "bravely done!" and he rose from
where he sat:

"No love," quoth he, "but vanity, sets love a task like that."

-

Expression: Read this poem silently, trying to understand fully the circumstances of the story: (1) the time; (2) the place; (3) the character of the leading actors. Then read aloud each stanza with feeling and expression.

ST. FRANCIS, THE GENTLE⁸

Seven hundred years ago, Francis the gentlest of the saints was born in Assisi, the quaint Umbrian town among the rocks; and for twenty years and more he cherished but one thought, and one desire, and one hope; and these were that he might lead the beautiful and holy and sorrowful life which our Master lived on earth, and that in every way he might resemble Him in the purity and loveliness of his humanity.

Not to men alone but to all living things on earth and air and water was St. Francis most gracious and loving. They were all his little brothers and sisters, and he forgot them not, still less scorned or slighted them, but spoke to them often and blessed them, and in return they showed him great love and sought to be of his fellowship. He bade his companions keep plots of ground for their little sisters the flowers, and to these lovely and speechless creatures he spoke, with no great fear that they would not understand his words. And all this was a marvelous thing in a cruel time, when human life was accounted of slight worth by fierce barons and ruffling marauders.

For the bees he set honey and wine in the winter, lest they should feel the nip of the cold too keenly; and bread for the birds, that they all, but especially "my brother Lark," should have joy

⁸ By William Canton, an English journalist and poet (1845-).

of Christmastide, and at Rieti a brood of redbreasts were the guests of the house and raided the tables while the brethren were at meals; and when a youth gave St. Francis the turtledoves he had snared, the Saint had nests made for them, and there they laid their eggs and hatched them, and fed from the hands of the brethren.

Out of affection a fisherman once gave him a great tench, but he put it back into the clear water of the lake, bidding it love God; and the fish played about the boat till St. Francis blessed it and bade it go.

"Why dost thou torment my little brothers the Lambs," he asked of a shepherd, "carrying them bound thus and hanging from a staff, so that they cry piteously?" And in exchange for the lambs he gave the shepherd his cloak. And at another time seeing amid a flock of goats one white lamb feeding, he was concerned that he had nothing but his brown robe to offer for it (for it reminded him of our Lord among the Pharisees); but a merchant came up and paid for it and gave it him, and he took it with him to the city and preached about it so that the hearts of those hearing him were melted. Afterwards the lamb was left in the care of a convent of holy women, and to the Saint's great delight, these wove him a gown of the lamb's innocent wool.

Fain would I tell of the coneys that took refuge in the folds of his habit, and of the swifts which flew screaming in their glee while he was preaching; but now it is time to speak of the sermon which he preached to a great multitude of birds in a field by the

roadside, when he was on his way to Bevagno. Down from the trees flew the birds to hear him, and they nestled in the grassy bosom of the field, and listened till he had done. And these were the words he spoke to them: —

"Little birds, little sisters mine, much are you holden to God your Creator; and at all times and in every place you ought to praise Him. Freedom He has given you to fly everywhere; and raiment He has given you, double and threefold. More than this, He preserved your kind in the Ark, so that your race might not come to an end. Still more do you owe Him for the element of air, which He has made your portion. Over and above, you sow not, neither do you reap; but God feeds you, and gives you streams and springs for your thirst; the mountains He gives you, and the valleys for your refuge, and the tall trees wherein to build your nests. And because you cannot sew or spin, God takes thought to clothe you, you and your little ones. It must be, then, that your Creator loves you much, since He has granted you so many benefits. Be on your guard then against the sin of ingratitude, and strive always to give God praise."

And when the Saint ceased speaking, the birds made such signs as they might, by spreading their wings and opening their beaks, to show their love and pleasure; and when he had blessed them with the sign of the cross, they sprang up, and singing songs of unspeakable sweetness, away they streamed in a great cross to the four quarters of heaven.

THE SERMON OF ST. FRANCIS ⁹

Up soared the lark into the air,
A shaft of song, a winged prayer,
As if a soul, released from pain,
Were flying back to heaven again.

St. Francis heard; it was to him
An emblem of the Seraphim;
The upward motion of the fire,
The light, the heat, the heart's desire.

Around Assisi's convent gate
The birds, God's poor who cannot wait,
From moor and mere and darksome wood,
Came flocking for their dole of food.

"O brother birds," St. Francis said,
"Ye come to me and ask for bread,
But not with bread alone to-day
Shall ye be fed and sent away.

"Ye shall be fed, ye happy birds,
With manna of celestial words;
Not mine, though mine they seem to be,

⁹ By Henry W. Longfellow.

Not mine, though they be spoken through me.

"Oh, doubly are ye bound to praise
The great creator in your lays;
He giveth you your plumes of down,
Your crimson hoods, your cloaks of brown.

"He giveth you your wings to fly
And breathe a purer air on high,
And careth for you everywhere
Who for yourselves so little care."

With flutter of swift wings and songs
Together rose the feathered throngs
And, singing, scattered far apart;
Deep peace was in St. Francis' heart.

He knew not if the brotherhood
His homily had understood;
He only knew that to one ear
The meaning of his words was clear.

-

Expression: Talk with your teacher about the life, work, and influence of St. Francis. Refer to cyclopedias for information. Read aloud the prose version of his sermon to the birds; the

poetical version. Compare the two versions. What is said in one that is not said in the other?

IN THE WOODS ¹⁰

Years ago, when quite a youth, I was rambling in the woods one day with my brothers, gathering black birch and wintergreens.

As we lay upon the ground, gazing vaguely up into the trees, I caught sight of a bird, the like of which I had never before seen or heard of. It was the blue yellow-backed warbler, which I have found since; but to my young fancy it seemed like some fairy bird, so curiously marked was it, and so new and unexpected. I saw it a moment as the flickering leaves parted, noted the white spot on its wing, and it was gone.

It was a revelation. It was the first intimation I had had that the woods we knew so well held birds that we knew not at all. Were our eyes and ears so dull? Did we pass by the beautiful things in nature without seeing them? Had we been blind then? There were the robin, the bluejay, the yellowbird, and others familiar to every one; but who ever dreamed that there were still others that not even the hunters saw, and whose names few had ever heard?

The surprise that awaits every close observer of birds, the thrill of delight that accompanies it, and the feeling of fresh eager inquiry that follows can hardly be awakened by any other pursuit.

There is a fascination about it quite overpowering.

¹⁰ By John Burroughs, an American writer on nature (1837-).

It fits so well with other things – with fishing, hunting, farming, walking, camping out – with all that takes one to the fields and the woods. One may go blackberrying and make some rare discovery; or, while driving his cow to pasture, hear a new song, or make a new observation. Secrets lurk on all sides. There is news in every bush. Expectation is ever on tiptoe. What no man ever saw may the next moment be revealed to you.

What a new interest this gives to the woods! How you long to explore every nook and corner of them! One must taste it to understand. The looker-on sees nothing to make such a fuss about. Only a little glimpse of feathers and a half-musical note or two – why all this ado? It is not the mere knowledge of birds that you get, but a new interest in the fields and woods, the air, the sunshine, the healing fragrance and coolness, and the getting away from the worry of life.

Yesterday was an October day of rare brightness and warmth. I spent the most of it in a wild, wooded gorge of Rock Creek. A tree which stood upon the bank had dropped some of its fruit in the water. As I stood there, half-leg deep, a wood duck came flying down the creek.

Presently it returned, flying up; then it came back again, and sweeping low around a bend, prepared to alight in a still, dark reach in the creek which was hidden from my view. As I passed that way about half an hour afterward, the duck started up, uttering its wild alarm note. In the stillness I could hear the whistle of its wings and the splash of the water when it took

flight. Near by I saw where a raccoon had come down to the water for fresh clams, leaving its long, sharp track in the mud and sand. Before I had passed this hidden stretch of water, a pair of strange thrushes flew up from the ground and perched on a low branch.

Who can tell how much this duck, this footprint on the sand, and these strange thrushes from the far North enhanced the interest and charm of the autumn woods?

Birds cannot be learned satisfactorily from books. The satisfaction is in learning them from nature. One must have an original experience with the birds. The books are only the guide, the invitation. But let me say in the same breath that the books can by no manner of means be dispensed with.

In the beginning one finds it very difficult to identify a bird in any verbal description. First find your bird; observe its ways, its song, its calls, its flight, its haunts. Then compare with your book. In this way the feathered kingdom may soon be conquered.

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Expression: This and the selection which follows are fine examples of descriptive writing. Read them so that your hearers will understand every statement clearly and without special effort on their part. Talk about the various objects that are mentioned, and tell what you have learned about them from other sources.

BEES AND FLOWERS ¹¹

Fancy yourself to be in a pretty country garden on a hot summer's morning. Perhaps you have been walking, or reading, or playing, but it is getting too hot now to do anything. So you have chosen the shadiest nook under the walnut tree, close to some pretty flower bed.

As you lie there you notice a gentle buzzing near you, and you see that on the flower bed close by several bees are working busily among the flowers. They do not seem to mind the heat, nor do they wish to rest; and they fly so lightly, and look so happy over their work, that it is pleasant to watch them.

That great bumblebee takes it leisurely enough as she goes lumbering along, poking her head into the larkspurs; she remains so long in each that you might almost think she had fallen asleep. The brown hive-bee, on the other hand, moves busily and quickly among the stocks, sweet peas, and mignonette. She is evidently out on active duty, and means to get all she can from each flower, so as to carry a good load back to the hive. In some blossoms she does not stay a moment, but draws her head back almost as soon as she has popped it in, as if to say, "No honey there." But over other flowers she lingers a little, and then scrambles out again with her drop of honey, and goes off to seek more.

¹¹ From "The Fairy Land of Nature," by Arabella B. Buckley.

Let us watch her a little more closely. There are many different plants growing in the flower bed, but, curiously enough, she does not go first to one kind and then to another, but keeps to one the whole time.

Now she flies away. Rouse yourself to follow her, and you will see she takes her way back to the hive. We all know why she makes so many journeys between the garden and the hive, and that she is collecting drops of nectar from the flowers and carrying it to the hive to be stored up in the honeycomb for the winter's food. When she comes back again to the garden, we will follow her in her work among the flowers, and see what she is doing for them in return for their gifts to her.

No doubt you have already learned that plants can make better and stronger seeds when they can get the pollen dust from other plants. But I am sure that you will be very much surprised to hear that the colors, the scent, and the curious shapes of the flowers are all so many baits to attract insects. And for what reason? In order that the insects may come and carry the pollen dust from one plant to another.

So far as we know, it is entirely for this purpose that the plants form honey in different parts of the flower. This food they prepare for the insects, and then they have all sorts of contrivances to entice the little creatures to come and get it. The plants hang out gay-colored signs, as much as to say: —

"Come to me, and I will give you honey, if you will bring me pollen dust in exchange."

If you watch the different kinds of grasses, sedges, and rushes, which have such tiny flowers that you can scarcely see them, you will find that no insects visit them. Neither will you ever find bees buzzing round oak trees, elms, or birches. But on the pretty and sweet-smelling apple blossoms you will find bees, wasps, and other insects.

The reason of this is that grasses, sedges, rushes, and oak trees have a great deal of pollen dust. As the wind blows them to and fro it wafts the dust from one flower to another. And so these plants do not need to give out honey, or to have gaudy or sweet-scented flowers to attract insects.

But the brilliant poppy, the large-flowered hollyhock, the flaunting dandelion, and the bright blue forget-me-not, – all these are visited by insects, which easily catch sight of them and hasten to sip their honey.

We must not forget what the fragrance of the flowers can do. Have you ever noticed the delicious odor which comes from beds of mignonette, mint, or sweet alyssum? These plants have found another way of attracting the insects; they have no need of bright colors, for their fragrance is quite as true and certain a guide. You will be surprised if you once begin to count them up, how many dull-looking flowers are sweet-scented, while some gaudy flowers have little or no scent. Still we find some flowers, like the beautiful lily, the lovely rose, and the delicate hyacinth, which have color and fragrance and graceful shapes all combined.

But there are still other ways by which flowers secure the visits

of insects. Have you not observed that different flowers open and close at different times? The daisy receives its name "day's eye" because it opens at sunrise and closes at sunset, while the evening primrose spreads out its flowers just as the daisy is going to bed.

What do you think is the reason of this? If you go near a bed of evening primroses just when the sun is setting, you will soon be able to guess. They will then give out such a sweet odor that you will not doubt for a moment that they are calling the evening moths to come and visit them. The daisy, however, opens by day and is therefore visited by day insects.

Again, some flowers close whenever rain is coming. Look at the daisies when a storm is threatening. As the sky grows dark and heavy, you will see them shrink and close till the sun shines again. They do this because in the center of the flower there is a drop of honey which would be spoiled if it were washed by the rain.

And now you will see why the cup-shaped flowers so often droop their heads, – think of the snowdrop, the lily-of-the-valley, and a host of others. How pretty they look with their bells hanging so modestly from the slender stalk! They are bending down to protect the honey within their cups.

We are gradually learning that everything which a plant does has its meaning, if we can only find it out. And when we are aware of this, a flower garden may become a new world to us if we open our eyes to all that is going on in it. And so we learn that even among insects and flowers, those who do most for others

receive most in return. The bee and the flower do not reason about the matter; they only live their little lives as nature guides them, helping and improving each other.

I have been able to tell you but very little about the hidden work that is going on around us, and you must not for a moment imagine that we have fully explored the fairy land of nature. But at least we have passed through the gates, and have learned that there is a world of wonder which we may visit if we will. And it lies quite close to us, hidden in every dewdrop and gust of wind, in every brook and valley, in every little plant and animal.

-

Expression: Make a list of all the natural objects that are mentioned in this selection. Read what is said of each. Describe as many of them as you can in your own words. Tell what you have observed about bees and flowers. The daisy that is referred to is the true European daisy. The daisy, or whiteweed, of the United States does not open and close in the manner here described.

SONG OF THE RIVER ¹²

A river went singing a-down to the sea,
A-singing – low – singing —
And the dim rippling river said softly to me,
"I'm bringing, a-bringing —
While floating along —
A beautiful song
To the shores that are white where the waves are so weary,
To the beach that is burdened with wrecks that are dreary.

"A song sweet and calm
As the peacefulest psalm;
And the shore that was sad
Will be grateful and glad,
And the weariest wave from its dreariest dream
Will wake to the sound of the song of the stream;
And the tempests shall cease
And there shall be peace."
From the fairest of fountains
And farthest of mountains,
From the stillness of snow
Came the stream in its flow.

Down the slopes where the rocks are gray,

¹² By Abram J. Ryan, an American clergyman and poet.

Through the vales where the flowers are fair —
Where the sunlight flashed – where the shadows lay
Like stories that cloud a face of care,
The river ran on – and on – and on,
Day and night, and night and day.
Going and going, and never gone,
Longing to flow to the "far away."
Staying and staying, and never still, —
Going and staying, as if one will
Said, "Beautiful river, go to the sea,"
And another will whispered, "Stay with me" —
And the river made answer, soft and low,
"I go and stay – I stay and go."

"But what is the song?" I said at last
To the passing river that never passed;
And a white, white wave whispered, "List to me,
I'm a note in the song for the beautiful sea,
A song whose grand accents no earth din may sever,
And the river flows on in the same mystic key
That blends in one chord the 'forever and never.'"

-

Expression: Read aloud the three lines which introduce the song of the river. Read them in such a manner as to call up a mental picture of the river on its way to the sea. Read the first

five lines of the third stanza in a similar way, and tell what picture is now called up in your mind. Now read the river's song. Read what the white wave said. Read the whole poem with spirit and feeling.

Notice the words "a-down," "a-singing," "a-bringing." What effect is produced by the use of these unusual forms?

SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE ¹³

Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried, "Abide, abide,"
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
The loving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said, "Stay,"
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed, "Abide, abide,"
Here in the hills of Habersham,

¹³ By Sidney Lanier, an American musician and poet (1842-1881). From the *Poems of Sidney Lanier*, published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade; the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold;
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, "Pass not so cold, these manifold
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall."

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl;
And many a luminous jewel lone
(Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet, or amethyst)
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

-

Expression: Compare this poem with the one which

precedes it. Compare them both with Tennyson's "Song of the Brook" ("Fifth Reader," p. 249). Which is the most musical? Which is the best simply as a description?

Make a list of the unusual words in this last poem, and refer to the dictionary for their meaning. In what state is the Chattahoochee River? "Habersham" and "Hall" are the names of two counties in the same state.

If you have access to a library, find Southey's poem, "The Cataract of Lodore," and read it aloud.

WAR AND PEACE

I. War as the Mother of Valor and Civilization ¹⁴

We still hear war extolled at times as the mother of valor and the prime agency in the world's advancement. By it, we are told, civilization has spread and nations have been created, slavery has been abolished and the American Union preserved. It is even held that without war human progress would have been impossible.

¹⁴ By Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish-American manufacturer and philanthropist (1837-).

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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