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YOUTH

VOLUME 1

NUMBER 3

1902

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An ILLUSTRATED
MONTHLY JOURNAL for
BOYS & GIRLS



The Penn Publishing Company Philadelphia

500.00 Prize Store Offer in this Number



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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION \$1.00

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Remittances may be made in the way most convenient to the sender, and should be sent to

THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

923 ARCH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

YOUTH

VOL. I

MAY 1902

No. 3

WITH WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE

By W. Bert Foster

CHAPTER VII A Friend on the Enemy's Side

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

The story opens in the year of 1777, during one of the most critical periods of the Revolution. Hadley Morris, our hero, is in the employ of Jonas Benson, the host of the Three Oaks, a well-known inn on the road between Philadelphia and New York. Like most of his neighbors, Hadley is an ardent sympathizer with the patriot cause. When, therefore, a dispatch bearer is captured on the way to Philadelphia, he gives Hadley the all-important packet to be forwarded to General Washington. The boy immediately escapes with it, and, after many perilous experiences, finally makes his way across the river to the Pennsylvania side. On the road, Hadley, failing to give the countersign, is stopped by a foraging party of Americans; but by his honest bearing he wins the attention of John Cadwalader, a personal friend of Washington, just then journeying to the American headquarters. Under his protection, our hero speedily arrives at his destination, and there, in an interview with General Washington himself, he tells his story and delivers the dispatches, which, because of the impending crisis, are received eagerly by the head of the patriot cause.

THE collie rattled his chain at the corner of the sheep pen, and from a low growl changed his welcome to a bark of delight and frisked about Hadley's legs as the boy stopped to pat him. The house door across the paved yard opened

and the innkeeper's voice cried: "Be still, Bose! Who's out there?"

Hadley went nearer and laughed. "What's the matter, Master Benson?" he asked. "Are the dragoons still about the place?"

At once the innkeeper plunged down the steps, and, reaching the boy, seized him tightly in his arms. "Had! Had!" he cried, "why did you come back to the Three Oaks? We thought you'd join the army for sure this time."

"Is the colonel still here?" asked Hadley, in haste, and drawing back from the inn.

"Yes, he's here," grunted Jonas, "but he can't do anything to you. The dragoons are no longer at the Mills. Malcolm's troop started for York this morning. There's something going to happen 'fore long, for the British are stirring, and they say Lord Howe has sailed with his fleet."

"I know," said the boy, with some pride. "There's going to be a big battle, or something. Those papers I ran away with told all about Lord Howe's plans, and now our generals will be able to meet him."

THE MONTH OF FLOWER

By JULIA McNAIR WRIGHT

NEITHER age, learning, nor fortune are needed to enable one to love and admire these gracious children of beauty—the flowers.

When the chill winds of autumn sound a knell for their departure, we have a sense of loneliness and loss. As the winter passes we long for the days when the blossoms shall come again.

The first tiny blossom of the star-flower; the first little tasseled bloom on the birch; the first adder's tongue, or violet, or broad, white salver of the mandrake flower; the snowy banners of the dogwood; the gray-white of the brave little plantain-leaved everlasting, fill all hearts with delight.

The life object of the flower is the production of seed. All the parts of the flower are in some way fitted to further that end. What is the story of the flower?

The stem and branches having developed a certain amount of leafage, may at length put forth blossoms. These spring, as leaves do, from the tips or axils of the branches. In truth, a flower is a modified branch, and all its parts are modified leaves. We will pass over this distinction of science, and will consider the flower as we popularly think and speak of it, the beautiful producer of seeds.

What is called a perfect flower we will examine in the common buttercup of the fields. At the top of the stem we find a cup or calyx of five narrow, separate green leaves, called sepals; these form the outer wrapping of the bud, and maintain and protect the more delicate inner parts of a flower. Within the calyx is the corolla—five glossy, yellow, roundish petals, set in a circle; within this we have another ring of downy, bright-yellow stamens, and still

within these, protected by all the others, certain yellow pistils, fewer and firmer in texture than the stamens.

All of these four rings of parts are placed upon the fleshy, enlarged top of the stem, which is called the receptacle. The yellow of this flower is very yellow, and the stem and leaves are very green. The stem and leaves of our buttercups are hairy; the whole plant is provided with a sharp, stinging juice.

The buttercup, as we have seen, is made up of four circles, each composed of several distinct parts.

A flower with several petals is called polypetalous.

Other flowers have but one petal; they are styled monopetalous. In fact, in such one-petaled flowers a number of petals have simply grown together. Let us take the morning-glory as an example. Pull off the calyx; it comes off as a whole, but is cleft half way down into five lobes, showing that it is truly composed of five united petals. Now pull the corolla from another calyx cup; it comes as a whole, and is not cleft as the calyx is, but it has five stripes, and at each stripe the margin has a little point, and we can make out very plainly that here are five prettily-pointed petals united into one, with a long tube made of the claws, and a beautiful wide margin made of the banners. Four-o'clocks, stramonium, Canterbury bells, phlox, and many other flowers have these one-petaled corollas. Such corollas differ greatly in shape, owing to the length and diameter of the tube and margin.

In the polypetalous corollas we have the rich splendors of roses, from single to the fullest double, where cultivation has

changed all stamens and pistils into petals. The polypetalous tribe give us also the lovely, perfume-filled chalice of the lilies; the peas, with their many-colored banners; the charming violets, with their spurred petals; the columbine, with its horns of plenty.

Color of some kind is one of the distinguishing features of blossoms.

Fragrance is another marked characteristic of plants, and is chiefly in the flower.

There are plenty of scentless plants, yet the majority are full of perfume. Some few have a very disagreeable smell. Fragrance in plants comes from certain oils or resin laid up in different parts of the plant, whether in the leaves, bark, wood, fruit, seeds, or blossoms.

In the month of May flowers crowd upon us in numbers so great that we are at a loss for a time to study them. Even if April has been cold, the matchless arbutus has found time to bloom above last year's protecting leaves and has passed away, leaving only a memory of its fragrance and rosy beauty. The dandelions—jolly, popular, child-beloved gold of the spring—have bloomed, and in May the grass is covered with their delicate clocks; we still, in early May, find the oxalis almost making a carpet for the pasture lands or sunny hillsides. When the oxalis grows in damp shade its flowers and leaves are larger and of a deeper color, but the blossoms are fewer. The leaf of the oxalis is three-divided, like the coarser leaf of the clover.

Some hold that it was the oxalis and not the shamrock leaf which good St. Patrick took to prove the possibility of Trinity—one in three. Some think that really the oxalis and not the clover was the shamrock of the ancient Irish.

May brings us an abundance of wild violets; the blue violets and the beautiful tri-colored pansies come in April, but the blue violets linger, growing larger and richer, while their cousins, the dainty white and the branching yellow violets, appear in the cool, damp woods. The wild violets are scentless, except for the spicy "woods odor" that seems to hang about all wild flowers.

A much humbler flower than the violets



NATURE'S FAVORITES

greet us on the roadsides—the bright yellow cinquefoil, its vine leaves, and blossom bearing resemblance to the strawberry, so that the county people call them "yellow-flowered strawberries." Common as the cinquefoil is, it belongs to a noble, even royal, family among flowers—the rose. It is a poor cousin of the garden's queen.