

## CHILDRENS DEPARTMENT.

## THE TREE.

"See papa," cried Robert, as he and his father one day prolonged their walk rather more than usual—"See papa, what a beautiful tree stands yonder, let us go and sit down under its shade, I am sure it is pleasanter in a hot day to sit under such a fine shady tree than to sit in the best house."—"You are right my son, said the father: the finest house in the country is not to be compared with such a tree. A tree is more wonderful than any house: its curious workmanship is surprising."

After they were seated under the shade of the tree, Robert began to look up into its branches with a good deal of curiosity. At length he cried out. "O papa! I never thought how the trees come: who made them? I am sure I never saw you or any body make a tree, tho' I have seen trees cut down. I saw the carpenter make a house out of wood, and the mason make a chimney out of brick and mortar; but I never saw them make a tree."—"No, Robert, said his father, all the men in the world cannot make a tree."

"Then says Robert, do trees make themselves? I am sure I cannot tell how else they come, if nobody makes them. Now I remember that I saw you cutting limbs off the trees in the orchard, and you said it was to make them grow good, and bear apples. Was not that like making trees?"

"O no, my son," said his father: it was only helping the tree to grow handsome: but I have no power to make the trees."—"But papa, replied Robert, you can kill the trees, if you can't make them: for I saw the limbs die that you cut off."

"Very true, my son, said his father, we can kill and destroy and do mischief very easy indeed. How quickly could we destroy our house by fire, which took so much time and money to build it! Remember this Robert, while you live, we can do bad things at any time which we never can mend. Ten men can destroy faster than ten thousand can make up. Did you see all the curious things in the cotton factory the other day? One man in a few minutes could break them all in pieces—yet Mr. Johnson was a long time preparing it to spin cotton."—"But do tell me, papa, said Robert, how the trees are made?" "I will, Robert, said his father, tell you all I can."

"Do you remember," continued he, hearing me read in the beginning of the Bible who made the world and all things in it? God made them all. He is a wonderful workman, Robert. I cannot understand how he does these things; but I know that he does make them. He knew how, or he

could not do them. Now you must know that when God made the world, as we read in the first chapter of Genesis, he said: "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." You see it was done as soon as he said the word. You know that you can move your hand as quick as you wish to move it. So God does every thing as quick as he wishes it. He first made the ground; then made the grass and the trees to grow out of the ground; then made them to blossom and bear fruit and seeds. These seeds are the means of producing new trees. They fall into the earth, and by a curious contrivance that God puts inside of them, when they are damp and warm, they sprout out in a very little young tender tree, which rises up. It has roots too, which grow out on the under side, run into the soft ground, and both hold it fast, and keep it growing.

"Now see how much better a workman God is than men. When a man builds a house, he has to employ a great many men, who bring timber, and boards, and nails, and glass, and stone and mortar. They work hard, and chop, and break the stones, and plane boards, and drive nails, and make noise and dirt, and the house is not fit to live in till it is all furnished; neither is it pretty to look at. They have ugly scaffolds, and carry round the stones and mortar and boards, and it all looks like confusion. But see how God makes the tree work and build up itself. The roots run into the ground, and spread round in very small branches. The little ends of these branches have a contrivance for sucking up water out of the moist ground, in which there is a little earth. There is also a contrivance in the wood and inside bark, for carrying this water, or sap, as we call it, up to the ends of the branches and limbs; and there it comes out in tender twigs and leaves, and so it grows up into a tall tree. At the same time a growth is formed all over the body of the tree and branches, between the bark and the hard wood. When this growth is forming, in the spring, it swells up the outside bark; and then, the new growth being soft and tender, the bark will peel off easily. But when it gets hard the bark sticks fast to it, and will not peel off. There is at the same time a new growth formed on the inside of the bark also: by which means the tree is preserved with a constant coat of bark, to defend it from the weather. You see how the outside of the bark appears. The sun and wind dry it—it cracks off and crumbles down by degrees. This would leave the tree naked, and cause it to die, had not God caused a new growth to grow every year, and supply