

trim ; but can I make a single seed grow ? Can I paint one flower leaf, or give to it a pleasant odor ? Can I bring a single peach out of that limb, or give to it its flavor ? Skillful gardening is little more than taking hinderances out of the way, that God's beautiful works may be seen. And God would have been unspeakably good, if there had been no flowers to please the eye and delight the smell, and if there had been not one half the variety of fruits and vegetables to gratify our appetite. What thanks then are due to him for beautifying the earth which our sins have cursed, and making it so abundant in healthy fruits, when in justice he might have made it bring forth only briars and thorns."

THE LITTLE GIRL AND HER FATHER.



LITTLE girl once asked her father why some people, who are rich and have money enough to buy everything they want, are not happy ; while other people, who are poor, are yet contented with their lot in life and live happily. Her father answered her question and explained to her the reason of it, and then told her a story in the shape of a fable, which, as other little girls may like to read it, we put in the *Life Boat*.

The father of this little girl said "that some persons are *disposed* to be contented in any circumstances ; they are always cheerful and good-natured, and make everybody

around them happy. Others have a peevish, discontented disposition, which would make them unhappy if they were masters of the world. You have seen examples of both these kinds of persons."

"Have I, papa ? who are they, I wonder ? O, I know ! Cousin Sarah is the one that is always so happy, and?"—

"Well, it is no matter who the other is. I have one thing to tell you, and that is that any place or situation looks pleasanter at a distance than near. Those persons whom you think the happiest have some secret trouble of which you know nothing ; and if you could change places with them, you would probably be glad to return to your own condition. When you are a little older you shall read a fable on this subject that will amuse you I think."

"O, papa, please to tell it to me, instead of letting me read it."

"I will tell you a little about it. The fable supposes that Jupiter, being wearied with the complaints of mortals, gave them all leave to bring their calamities, and deposit them in a mass. So, there might be seen persons coming from every quarter, bearing loads on their shoulders, which they hastened to throw down as soon as they reached the appointed place.—Most of the burdens consisted of some personal defect ; but no one took this opportunity to get rid of their sins. There was a personage named Fancy, with a mirror in her hand, who made herself very busy in the scene, causing each man's burden to appear much larger than before. After the grievances had been all deposited, Jupiter issued another proclamation, directing each one to take his choice from among the burdens thrown down by the others. I do not remember the particular exchanges which were made, but