

The veil of ignorance and superstition is being removed from their understandings, and their eyes are being enlightened by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

CONSCIENCE; OR, "JEM, JEM."

A little boy, named Jem Roberts, having been set to weed in a gentleman's garden, and observing some very beautiful peaches on a wall, was strongly tempted to pluck one.

"If it tastes but half as nice as it looks," thought he, "how delightful it must be!" He stood for an instant gazing on the tree, while his mother's words "Touch nothing that does not belong to you," came vividly to mind. He withdrew his eyes from the tempting object, and with great diligence pursued his occupation. The fruit was forgotten, and with pleasure he now perceived he had nearly reached the end of the bed which he had been ordered to clear. Collecting in his hands the heap of weeds he had laid beside him, he returned to deposit them in the wheel-barrow which stood near the peach-tree. Again the glowing fruit met his eye, more beautiful, more tempting than ever, for he was hot and thirsty. He stood still, his heart beat; his mother's command was heard no more; his resolution was gone. He looked around there was no one but himself in the garden. "They can never miss one out of so many," he said to himself. He made a step--only one, he was now in reach of his prize; he darted forth his hand to seize it, when at the very moment a sparrow from a neighbouring tree, calling its companion, to his startled ear seemed to say "Jem! Jem!" He sprang to the wall, his hand fell to his side, his whole frame shook; and no sooner had he recovered himself, than he fled from the spot.

In a short time afterwards he began thus to reason with himself: "If a sparrow could frighten me thus, I may be sure what I was going to do was very wicked."

And now he worked with greater diligence than ever nor once again trusted himself to gaze on the fruit which had so nearly led him to commit so great a fault. The sparrow chirped again as he was leaving the garden, but he no longer fled away at the sound.

"You may cry 'Jem, Jem,'" said he, looking steadily at the tree on which several were perched, "as often as you like! I don't care for you now; but this I will say, I will never forget how good one of you has been to me, and I will rob none of your nests again."