

road. This accounts for its being chosen by Zaccheus, as at once easy to climb, and also as affording a good view of the Saviour as He passed along (Luke xix. 4). Again, the fruit is small, very insipid, and used only by the poorer classes. Hence, a gatherer of sycamore fruit would belong to the humbler classes, as Amos implies (Amos vii. 24).—The tree also strikes its roots to a great depth, and in size they correspond to the large branches above; thus giving great force to the words of Christ (Luke xvii. 6), "Say to this sycamore tree, *Be thou plucked up by the roots.*" But the mulberry tree, with which some confound it, is more easily uprooted than any other tree of the same size in the country. The author might have added, that the heavy branching top of the sycamore gives great force to the additional statement of our Lord, "Be thou planted in the sea;" for it is not, *Be thou cast into the sea, there to float and wear away;* but, *Be thou planted there, to grow and flourish;* a beautiful illustration of the seeming impossibilities wrought by the power of faith; as Stier says, in his "Words of Jesus" (iv. 258), "It is a perfect impossibility in the course of nature, and so is a type and symbol of the spiritual, supernatural abiding of believers firm in the tumultuous shifting sea of this world, *in* as it is of offence and sin." The wood of this tree is soft and of little value, thus illustrating the meaning of Isa. ix. 10, and 1 Kings x. 27. And, last of all, it grows only on the low plains, and cannot bear the cold of the mountains. Dr. Russell omits it altogether from his list of trees around Aleppo; it cannot live in a plain so far north as that. It was one of the wonders wrought in Egypt, that their sycamores were destroyed with frost (Psa. lxxviii. 47). Dr. T. might have also referred to 1 Chron. xii. 29, "Over the sycamore trees in the low plains was Baalhanan."

THE FULNESS OF JESUS.

To the half of his kingdom, the Persian monarch promised whatever his queen might ask: and generous, right royal as was his offer, it helps us by its very meanness—as a molehill at the foot of a mountain, as a taper's feeble yellow flame held up against the blazing sun—to form some estimate of the boundless grace of our Lord Christ. Half His kingdom! He offers nothing by halves. His promise is illimitable. "All mine is thine." Confining his generosity neither to kingdoms, nor continents, nor worlds, nor heaven itself, He lays the whole universe at the poor sinner's feet.—Away, then, with fears and cares! There is nothing we need that we shall not get—nothing we can ask that we shall not receive. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."—Transferring Divine wealth, if I may so speak to our account in the bank of heaven, and giving us unlimited credit there, Jesus says, "All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive."—Guthrie.

DANGER TO YOUTH FROM IMPROPER BOOKS.

Books of a certain kind are a fruitful source of injury to the young.

Ours, we love to say, is a reading age; and few are the parents who do not feel gratified to see their children become fond of this employment. But we should make a great blunder if we conclude that all must be well because they subscribe for a magazine, and are often seen with a book in their hands. What tales of crime in its worst possible form have been told within a few years, in some of the high places of our own land, as the known and recognized result of pernicious reading! Again and again have both adultery and blood been traced to this single source. As it regards the books with which the country is fairly inundated, it may well be said, "All is not gold that glitters."

If one contains the bread of life, another is filled with deadly poison. To say the least, there is a kind of sickly sentimentalism pervading many of the fashionable volumes of the day, which scarcely less really unfit the reader for the duties of earth than for intercourse with heaven. "Such reading," as Hannah More well remarks, "relaxes the mind, which needs hardening—dissolves the heart, which needs fortifying—stirs the imagination, which needs quieting—irritates the passions, which need calming—and, above all, disinclines and disqualifies for active virtues and spiritual exercises." Young men must take heed what they read, as well as how they hear. The eye is as fruitful an inlet of evil as the ear.

It is my deliberate opinion that thoughtful, studious youth are exposed to few greater perils than are to be found in books. So fully am I convinced of this, that I could see a large majority of the publications that come in such crowds from the press consigned to one enormous conflagration without a lingering regret. The ability to read and the love of reading, like a thousand other things good in themselves, have their attendant evils. A bad book must exert a bad influence, and the more touching it is in incident, and the more captivating in style, the worse of necessity this influence will be.

The heaviest censures upon such works have fallen sometimes from the authors themselves. Goldsmith, though a very popular novelist and writer of plays, gave this advice in respect to the education of a nephew: "Above all things never let him touch a novel or romance." Moore had good sense and right feeling enough to keep his voluptuous lines from his own daughters, though not enough to prevent his sending them abroad