

a beautiful grove, a little back off the house, and there, as early as I can remember anything, I can remember that she took me by the hand and caused me to kneel by her side, while she prayed aloud for my absent father and for me. At first, I hardly understood it; but soon learned that God, who dwelt far, far above those high trees, could hear her prayer, and was harkening to her sweet voice. She used stately to lead me there, and always laid her right hand on my head while she prayed; and feelings of deep awe always came over me. She never omitted this practice whilst she lived; and I there had distinct and correct impressions made as to my character, as well as to the character of God.

"She died when I was nine years old, and was buried near by. During the most giddy and wicked period of my life, I could never forget these impressions. The grove is cut down now, but the spot seems a hallowed spot. Even since the grove has been gone, and since my Mother's grave has become level with the surrounding ground, I have stood on this spot, and her meek image seemed to be before me, and her voice, tremulous with feeling, seemed to come again to my ears; and I have paused there in tears, chained by a remembrance of her faithfulness and her love. No legacy could she have left me half so precious, nor could her features have been more vividly and accurately left upon canvass, than they are upon my memory.

"Many years after my Mother's death, I was in the hey-day of youth, and in a course of sin truly dreadful. The restraints of conscience were broken, and there was little that could or did check me, except my early education. My Mother had died when I was a mere child, and my Father was too far off to reach me otherwise than by his prayers. I well remember many seasons of deep conviction for sin, but which my stubborn heart resisted or stifled. One night at a ball, whither I went, as I should then have said, for rational and innocent amusement, my conscience was suddenly startled.

"I was introduced to a young lady for my partner, who came from a distant section of the country. After the dance, in which we were partners, I entered into conversation with her respecting the place from which she came. She gave me many interesting particulars of that then newly settled place, and among other things mentioned the late sickness of her Father, and the many continued kindnesses and attentions of a Mr. Barr, a missionary; stating that Mr. Barr had been to see her Father very frequently, and that she felt much attached to him. She knew not my name. I replied, that 'Mr. Barr, the missionary, is my Father.' She started as if from an auditor. 'Your Father! he your Father! what would he say if he knew you were here!' Had a dagger been thrust into me, I could not have felt the wound more deeply. It spoiled the evening for me. It ruined my peace, and, though I know not that it can be said to have been the means of my awakening from the sleep of sin, yet, I am confident it planted a thorn in my conscience, which was not taken out till I had bowed to God with a broken heart. The giving and receiving of this keen reproof were both, as it were, involuntary, and showed that neither of our consciences could approve of the employment of that evening, if allowed to speak out without restraint.

"A few days after the ball, I was present at a communion. At the table many of my near friends were found. The scene before me, and the thoughts of a future, eternal separation, affected me greatly. The sermon, too, reached my conscience; and I might, at the close of the service, be said to have been under strong convictions of sin. The same day a very devoted Christian was accidentally thrown in my way. He began to address me on the subject of my salvation, without knowing anything of my previous history, or the state of my feelings at that time. Then my heart began to rise with a strength of bitterness which I never knew before. I reproached him, pointing to the inconsistencies in the church; raved like a madman; and, while my conscience was grinding me like a millstone, I still kept pouring out my invectives. He bore it with meekness, perfectly unmoved, and, by his gentleness, held up a shield which caused every dart I threw to recoil upon myself. His Christian meekness was too much for me; I rose up in wrath and left him. Had he given only one retort—shown one angry feeling, it would have relieved me; but no, I could find no handle. I went out into the woods, smarting under the wounds which I had been giving myself; and when I could stand under it no longer, I returned—told my Christian friend my situation and feelings—asked his pardon, and beg-

ged his prayers. Truly, as Henry Martyn beautifully says, "And thus also I learned, that the power of gentleness is irresistible."

"I had now been under deep and pungent convictions of sin for more than three weeks. I could not pray. I could not feel sorry for sin, nor hate it except as it must bring me to unspeakable ruin. There seemed to be no mercy for me. At length, I determined to take my own life. Not far from me was a considerable waterfall; thither I went one beautiful morning, fully resolved to return no more. The waters, dark and deep, gathered themselves together in a narrow channel, and after whirling themselves around several times, as if recoiling from the plunge, they rushed headlong over a time-worn rock, and fell forty feet or more into a large basin beneath. On that rock I placed myself prepared to do the deed. I looked down into the great basin, forty feet below me, and there the falling waters were boiling and foaming up, as if indignant at being thus cast down. I drew myself back to take the plunge. There was no faltering—no shaking of a single muscle—no sensation of fear. But just as I was in the act of leaping, the hand of Omnipotence seemed to be laid suddenly upon me. Every nerve seemed to be paralyzed, and every bodily function to fail. A cold shivering came over me, and I had not the strength of a child. I turned my face away; the beautiful sun was shining, and for the first time a voice, like that of my departed mother's, seemed to say, 'Perhaps there may yet be mercy for you.' 'Yes,' I replied, 'I will seek it till God takes my life!' And there, on the very spot where I was about to consign soul and body over to endless misery, there the mercy of God found me, and there the first ray of hope visited me. Oh! I can never think of this temptation without feeling that I have been near the pit; and that man, if left by God, will quickly destroy both soul and body."

Before closing this narrative, I will add, that this interesting young man lived the life of devoted, consistent, ardent piety. He completed his education, and devoted himself as a missionary to Africa. He was all ready to depart—had taken farewell of his friends, and was, as I believe, on his way to the ship which was to convey him to Africa. He arrived at Richmond, Va., on Saturday night, and was to have preached the next day; but about midnight he was seized with the cholera, (of which he was the first and only victim in that city,) and after twelve hours passed in indescribable pain, he calmly and sweetly fell into the arms of God's messenger, and was carried to that glorious assembly where the praying mother, we doubt not, welcomed to her everlasting embrace, the child of so many prayers.

How mysterious are the ways of God! He raises up pious friends, and leads them to labour, and pray, and go down to the grave, without seeing any good fruit from the plants which they nourish and water with prayers and tears. But, long after they are gone, their prayers are answered and their labours blessed. Let no praying mother doubt that her prayers will finally be answered. God is mysterious, too, in that he raises up instruments apparently fitted for great usefulness, and then cuts them off just when they promise to be most useful. But his own glorious plans will go on, and he will raise up others to take the places of those who are dead. All shall be for the glory of God! Oh! the blessedness of belonging to a kingdom which cannot be injured by any changes among such beings as we are. Reader! if you belong to this kingdom, be up, be doing, be vigilant, be faithful. Your crown is near—it is sure. If you do not belong to this kingdom, come at once and give yourself to the work of serving God. Repent of all sin, forsake all sin, and that same Redeemer who saved the dear youth of whom I have been speaking, shall be yours.

SCRAPS OF BOTANY FOR THE NURSERY.

CHRIST'S THORN—ALOE PLANTS—PALM TREES—THE PALMYRA TREE.

From the British Mothers' Magazine.

The cruel crown of thorns which the Jews thrust upon the head of our Redeemer at his crucifixion, may have been formed of any one or more of numerous thorny plants which grow wild in Palestine; yet it is commonly supposed, and not without good reason, to have been wholly formed of the shrub which gardeners call Christ's Thorn, and botanists *Paliurus aculeatus*. This plant is closely allied to the buck-thorns. It is a native of most of the countries which border upon the Mediterranean; and has, for upwards of two centuries, been allowed a place in many