

Our Contributors.

CONCERNING SOME THINGS THAT GROW.

BY KNOXONIAN.

Many things have grown considerably since we talked with the genial readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN on plants and planting, seeds and seedling. Each bushel of wheat put into Ontario soil last spring is growing into, perhaps, twenty-five. Other grains are growing in proportion. That collection of highly useful vegetables comprehended under the general term "garden sass," has done well. Of course the usual number of chronic grumblers who say that "the crops are a failure" are to the front. They are always in the front while the grateful men are too frequently in the rear. A healthy specimen of the grumbling class might have been found last year who would complain about the crops while everybody knows that the low price of wheat was brought about by the fact that there were many millions more of bushels in the world than the human family could consume. A man who has cultivated the delightful habit of grumbling—whose mouth has, through long practice, taken such a shape that it cannot utter anything but a whine—will always grumble. No hope for him.

Good things are growing in abundance. Let us all be thankful. There will be enough for man and beast and plenty to export. There is a serious offset, however. Many things not good have been growing and things not good grow with marvellous rapidity. There is nothing in Canada that grows like a Canada thistle. Somebody got an Act of Parliament passed a few years ago to exterminate the Canada thistle. The thistle cared as little for the Act as some liquor sellers care for the Scott Act. It wouldn't be exterminated. Those good, domestic husbands who hoe every evening and morning in the garden know how quickly weeds grow. No flower can keep within sight of them. The good man's heart fairly breaks when he comes home after a few days' absence, and sees how the weeds have got the start of him. Weeds and thistles grow quickly and without any coaxing.

Passing from the world of nature to the world of morals, we find the good and the evil vigorously growing. A larger number of men heard the Gospel last Sabbath than ever heard it on any one day since the Gospel was first preached. Probably ten times as many sinners were converted last Sabbath as were converted on the Day of Pentecost. The effects of the Gospel are felt in a greater degree and over a wider area than they were ever felt before. The poor are more kindly treated. The deaf, the dumb, the blind, the insane and the helpless of all classes are better cared for than they ever were in any period of the world's history. Human life in all civilized countries is better protected than it ever was. The liberty of the subject is enjoyed in some countries until there is danger that liberty may degenerate into license. In short, the good is growing all the world over. Slowly, indeed, in some places, but still it is growing. The general trend is toward the right.

The evil is growing too, and, like the evil in the world of nature, it grows easily and quickly. Dr. Ormiston used to tell a good story to illustrate how easily evil seed grows. A Scotchman left his native isle, and went to one of the British Colonies. Like many other Scotchmen who have emigrated, he grew rich. During the years of colonial life he was grieved because he saw no Scotch thistles. His heart yearned for his native "thussle." Having amassed a fortune he paid a short visit to the land of his fathers. When leaving Scotland for his colonial home, he put a little package of thistle seed in his pocket. He planted them carefully in his garden. Of course they grew. Where is the spot on this earth on which a Scotch thistle will not grow? When the thistles ripened the seeds were blown over into the gardens of the Scotchman's neighbours. From the gardens they spread to the adjoining farms and from the farms were scattered over the whole colony. Future generations of farmers cursed the memory of that patriotic Scotchman. Fact or fiction, the story will illustrate the easy and rapid growth of evil.

There is nothing that grows faster than a lie. The nod of a practised old liar often grows into a story long and base. The mere wink of a slanderer often grows into a huge slander. The leer of a lecherous rufian may grow into a scandal. A base, cowardly in-

nuendo often grows into a damaging report. An insinuation, made with that skill which the devil always gives to his dutiful children, sometimes grows into a matter requiring judicial investigation. There is no man in society who can do such a large business on such small capital as an experienced liar? His dollar grows into a million with the least possible effort. By his dollar of course we mean his nod, or his wink, or his insinuation, or his innuendo, or whatever he uses to start his story. If people who might and ought to know better were not so willing to listen, a lie would not grow so fast.

Covetousness grows very fast. If a man once allows the love of money to master him he is probably a slave for life. Every dollar he makes strengthens the chain that binds him. Covetousness grows by that on which it feeds. You might as well try to extinguish a fire by putting on more fuel as kill covetousness by making more money. The more the victim gets the more he wants. The desire grows faster than the pile. Money is a good thing, and may be a power for doing good. The man who has a fair share of it has opportunities for doing good that poorer men may well be excused for envying. A reasonable desire to make money is not a bad thing, but it is a desire that needs watching.

Selfishness grows fast. A boy who thinks his father's house was made exclusively for him is very likely to develop into a biped who thinks that the world was created for his special benefit. The little miss that imagines that father, mother and all the other members of the family were born to wait upon her is certain to grow into the belief that everybody should wait upon her. These children always get a rude awakening when they grow up. Selfishness is a bad weed.

The love of strong drink usually grows fast. One of the chief dangers of drinking moderately is that the desire grows more quickly than the person ever thought it would. He is often caught before he knows. The only way he could have measured the strength of the desire was by stopping, but he didn't stop. He tried to stop, perhaps, when it was too late, and found the love of alcohol had grown so much faster than he expected that it had mastered him. Hundreds of other bad things grow easily. A bad temper usually becomes worse. The habit of grumbling grows with fearful rapidity. Meanness grows more mean. Sensuality grows more sensual. Dishonesty often increases into crime.

Whilst it is true that these and many other bad weeds grow quickly and easily, it is also true that all good plants also grow with proper cultivation. Liberality in giving grows by giving. The more a man gives the more as a rule he can give. Cheerfulness grows by the habit of looking on the bright side of things. Gratitude grows by thinking of the many things we have that we should be thankful for. The power of doing good grows by doing good. Every good plant may be cultivated.

Moral. Cultivate the good plants and stamp out the evil.

THE WORKINGMAN'S HOME.

NO. II.—DISCIPLINE AND CONFORMITY TO FAMILY REGULATIONS.

A kingdom is a nest of families, and a family a small kingdom;
And the government of whole or part differeth in nothing but extent.
The house where the master ruleth is strong in united subjection,
And the only commandment with promise, being honoured, is a blessing to that house;
But if he yieldeth up the reins, it is weak in discordant anarchy,
And the bonds of love and union melt away as ropes of sand.
—Martin F. Tupper

Miserable is the family where neither law nor order exists, where every one does that which is right in his own eyes, and where selfishness, and not love, is the ruling principle. On the other hand, happy is the home where the law of kindness prevails, moves the heart and regulates the conduct, where husband and wife, recognizing their true relationship to God and to each other, seek and strive humbly and forbearingly to perform the duties connected therewith, and where children award to parents that honour and obedience which nature as well as Scripture demands. But this can never be attained without a system of strict mental and moral discipline. To secure a happy fireside, it is absolutely necessary that husband

and wife should learn not only to see eye to eye—understand each other, but likewise to know and feel their relative and proper position in the family circle. It is conformable to both nature and Scripture that the husband should be the head of the wife; and it can never be a healthy state of matters when the laws of Scripture and of nature are reversed. It would prevent and save many an unpleasant bickering if the heads and responsible members of a household were to come to a clear and correct understanding on this all-important subject. Both parties must endeavour and patiently learn to exercise self-denial, making sacrifices to please and accommodate each other; and this will be felt to be the more necessary where tastes and dispositions are at all dissimilar. It is a sad and pitiful condition of affairs when a couple, joined together in the bonds of holy matrimony, are, till death part them, constantly pulling in different directions—life all through being a domestic battle for supremacy—the husband estimating the wife as a termagant, and she looking upon him as a tyrant, both being martyrs, not for the sake of principle, but for the exercise of a dogged and indomitable self-will. Might not a little self-denial and mutual forbearance do much to expel the demon of discord, and render the workingman's home more attractive and happy? The government of the tongue and of the temper affect in no small degree the comfort and welfare of home. A hasty and fiery temper is always a troublesome enemy to its possessor, and a source of misery and unhappiness to all who come within the sphere of its influence. It perverts the judgment, and, taking into its service that unruly member the tongue, delights in giving expression to bitter and unreasonable words. Perhaps there is nothing more calculated to sap the foundations of domestic peace and prosperity, and no passion more difficult to curb and subdue. But not only must there be the exercise of personal, but also of family discipline. A family ought to be a model government, existing under the administration of salutary laws, the junior members being taught from their earliest years to yield obedience to parental authority. Solomon, the wise man, has said: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The neglect of this has too often in after years pierced the over-indulgent parent's heart with poignant and remorseless grief, and brought sadness and sorrow into what might otherwise have been a happy, prosperous and united family. It must be a lamentable and deplorable spectacle for a father or a mother to watch the downward progress of a prodigal son or daughter, who has become an outlaw to family government, outgrown home influences, and left the paths of truth and virtue to wander in the paths of sin, shame and degradation. Oh! poor forlorn wanderer, little did thy fond mother think, when she looked into thy innocent face—her own radiant with joy—pressed thee to her bosom, and dandled thee on her knee, when thou wert the light of her eyes and the pride of her heart, that thy future career would yet—sad thought—become the bitterest ingredient in her worldly cup, bringing her, it may be, broken-hearted to a premature grave.

Although home influence has much to do with the formation of the character and the fostering of the tastes and habits of the young, yet they cannot always be under the parental eye and supervision, for at school, or, it may be, at their daily employment, they are often brought into contact with alluring and evil agencies, which counteract and undo much of the good they receive at home. Hence the necessity of taking strict cognizance of the company they keep, and of impressing upon their minds that "he that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Cognizance must also be taken of the amusements and recreations in which they participate. With the younger members of the family mischief and cruelty are sometimes mistaken for amusements, and with those more advanced debasing pleasures are often characterized as amusements and recreations. Among these may be classed theatrical entertainments. The theatre, as it at present exists, is the sure propagator of sensuality, profanity and intemperance. Pandering to the lowest tastes and passions of the mind, it may be termed the "devil's church," a place most unfit for any member of a respectable and well-regulated home. The frequenting of dancing assemblies is also a common recreation among the young of both sexes. Copying the example of what are called the higher classes,