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Gathering Tares.

Most of my readers understand that tares so often referred to in the Bible, are troublesome weeds that abound in the Eastern Hemisphere. They were more especially obnoxious because in growing they so closely resembled wheat that the difference could with difficulty be discovered until the wheat matured.

So wheat and tares were allowed to grow together until the harvest, then, as the parable teaches us, the tares were gathered first and bound in bundles and burned, for they were worse than worthless. But the wheat was put in barns to nourish man.

What would be thought in that Eastern country of toilers of the soil who, at harvest time, gathered only the tares, leaving the precious wheat to go to decay? The reply methinks I hear is:

"We cannot imagine people so foolish."

But look about you, and on every hand you will see tare-gatherers—those who overlook the wheat of life's lesson, and cherish tares only.

If you will pardon a personal mention, I will make my meaning plainer. In my childhood, I formed a habit of looking only for faults in people, and overlooking good qualities. I had arrived at that know-it-all-age (which comes to every know-nothing sooner or later) when I thought it smart to detect an error in the speech of those especially who assumed to teach.

One Sunday I listened to a sermon on the wheat and tares, from one whose early education had been neglected, but one whose sweet Christian character, I learned later in life, was above rubies.

On my return home, I made no mention of the text or subject, but in a joking way repeated some grammatical errors made by the speaker, when I was cut short by the voice of my father, which came from an adjoining room:

"Child, come here."

As I entered his presence in a crestfallen manner, he said sadly:

"My child, you gathered only tares from the sermon; but where is the wheat?"

Then he talked to me kindly, telling me that the one I ridiculed was one of the most godly men he ever knew, and how he had struggled with poverty and reverses from early life, deserving respect instead of ridicule.

The lesson went home, and has never been wholly forgotten; and to-day, in other young people I often see my foolish self of long ago, as they wisely (?) try to show their superior knowledge by criticisms. As I listen, wafted over the vanished years I seem to hear, "You have gathered the tares, but where is the wheat?"

It is well to remember that, if you will, you can gather "wheat" from

association with those who [may] be ignorant of some things familiar to you. Experience or age may make valuable instructors of those who may be lacking in book-lore.

John Ruskin expressed this thought in the following lines:

"In every person who comes near you, look for what is good and strong. Honour that; rejoice in it, and as you can, try to imitate it, and your faults will drop off, like dead leaves when their time comes."

If you look for "tares," as you pass along life's highway, you will surely find them; but if you gather them you store your mind with what is worthless, instead of "wheat," which is on every hand, if you will but garner it.

The Robin at Church.

"It was the night before Christmas in England," says an exchange, "and snow was falling. A little robin, cold and hungry, hopped about wearily, seeking shelter and food. Our robins fly away south before snow comes, but this was across the sea, where the robin stays all the year."

"After a while an old man came along in the path that led up to the village church. Robin hopped behind him, and when he opened the door birdie was close by and went in without being noticed."

"The Sunday-school children had been there with their teachers, trimming the church with holly and mistletoe, and singing Christmas carols. The fire was to be kept all night that the church might be warm for the Christmas service. The old man put on fresh coal and went home."

"Birdie hopped about in the firelight, picking up some crumbs he found on the floor. Some cakes had been given to the children. How welcome their little supper was to the hungry robin you can guess. Then he perched on the railings of the stair, tucked his head under his wing, a very sleepy and happy bird. In the morning his bright eyes espied, first thing, the scarlet holly berries. There was, indeed, a royal feast in robin's eyes, enough to last for many weeks of wintry weather."

"The hours flew on, and the happy children came and sang their Christmas carols."

"Just as the first verse was finished, a clear, rich, joyous song burst from birdie's little throat, high above, among the green branches, a true Christmas carol."

Every Day a Little.

Every day a little knowledge. One fact in a day. How small is one fact. Only one. Ten years pass by. Three thousand six hundred and fifty facts are not a small thing.

Every day a little self-denial. The thing that is difficult to do to-day will

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be an easy thing to do three hundred and sixty-five days hence, if each day it shall have been repeated. What power of self-mastery shall he enjoy who, looking to God for grace, seeks every day to practice the grace he prays for.

Every day a little helpfulness. We live for the good of others, if our living be in any sense true living. It is not in great deeds of philanthropy that the only blessing is found. In "little deeds of kindness," repeated every day, we find true happiness. At home, at school, in the street, in the neighbour's house, in the playground, we shall find opportunity every day for usefulness.

Every day a little look into the Bible. One chapter a day. What a treasure of Bible knowledge one may acquire in ten years!

His Views of Girls.

He was a little boy who lived in the house with his father and mother, without any brothers or sisters. Like a good many other little boys, he thought girls were not good for much because they could not play baseball, did not like to fish, and cried when they fell down. This winter he was greatly annoyed because he had to go to dancing-school. He did not like dancing; was sure he never would; did not see any use in dancing. But to dancing-school he must go; that was the decree.

He went to dancing-school, and when he came home he said:

"Our teacher doesn't think much of girls, anyway," as though that gave him a higher respect for the teacher.

"Why do you think that?" asked his mother.

"Because she never let the girls once ask the boys to dance; they just had to sit still and wait until the boys asked them, and some little girls didn't dance at all, 'cause they weren't asked;" and just a little look of sorrow for the little girls who did not have a good time came into his face.

I heard the other day of a little knight who watched for the little girls who were not asked to dance by the other boys, and always danced with those little girls.

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**SURPRISE
SOAP**

BEST
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EVERY DAY.