

the one, the charming fragrance of the second, and the reviving juices of the third? Was it not in a garden in which that fearful deed was done, which ensured to all his descendants a soil so impregnated with seeds of thistle, and brier, and all manner of weeds, that the cultivation thereof has become a sad and constant toil? Or, descending the stream of time, was it not in a garden that the Redeemer of mankind passed through that supernatural struggle, and suffered those agonies which the Greek litany so wisely words in saying, "By thine unknown sorrows, known indeed distinctly with thee, but not known by us." Was it not in a garden that the new tomb, wherein never man lay, was found and in which his sacred body had its brief sojourn? The Clergy not to care about the garden, sir, we neither can nor dare be indifferent to it.—We would not that the hour should ever dawn when, to our minds, the garden should cease to be a deeply interesting and instructive scene and study. Yes, but you say that is not what you mean. You mean that it is not necessary for us to be well informed in Horticultural matters, in the nature, structure and habits of trees, fruits and flowers. Indeed you sadly misjudge; without such knowledge we could throw but a feeble light upon many a difficult passage in the word of God. Let me give you an instance. Take the 13th verse of the 11th chapter of St. Mark, which reads as follows: "And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came if haply he might find anything thereon, and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves: *for the time of figs was not yet.*" What is the impression, the first feeling that arises in the mind upon reading this passage? Is it not at least a feeling of pain? What, a tree to be condemned for not having fruit, when it is expressly said, that "the time," or season, "of figs was not yet," when we know that as this happened in March or April, the general season for gathering figs could not have arrived. Who would go into the orchard and look for apples in the early cold Spring time, and condemn the trees for not then having fruit upon their boughs. Could the perfect Saviour of the world do this? There must surely be some explanation which will remove so painful a misgiving.—There is, but it is only found in the knowledge of the habits of the fig tree. Possessing such knowledge we can inform you that it is the habit of the tree to put forth fruit before clothing itself with foliage, that although the fig may not be fully ripe it is eatable—eatable while yet very green.—That the very circumstance of the fig tree

having leaves, begets the expectation of finding fruit thereon, and that disappointment would be certainly and properly felt by any who failed to find it. Not only so, there were, if we are correctly informed, some kinds of fig trees which always, in all seasons, bore fruits in that mild climate—both green and ripe fruits. Such trees were always in foliage, one would therefore be warranted to look for fruit from such. Thus, when he says, seeing a fig tree having leaves, and approaching it found none, he was justly grieved and disappointed. It is out of place here to remark upon the figurative teaching of the incident recorded. Again, without some acquaintance with horticulture we should not have been able to point out the beautiful accuracy of scripture in all its allusions to nature in our New Year's Day sermon, upon the parable of "The Barren Fig Tree." In all the advantages described as being enjoyed by this tree—and they were many—advantages of position, of soil, of protection and of care. Nothing is said about pruning. And why? Because, unlike almost every other tree, it is a standing maxim in fig culture, "the more you prune the less the crop." But when we are compared to the branches of the vine, in addition to their necessary connection with the stem, and the constant flowing of the sap, pruning is specially mentioned, (see St. John, 15 chapter, verse 2). And why? Because pruning is necessary to promote the fertility of the vine. "The old wood of the vine is not only of no use," says a good author, "but is a positive injury to the fertility of the plant." Now, who can be so dull as not to see what light and beauty a familiarity with horticulture, sheds upon passages such as these, and how it draws our notice to those slight coincidences of scripture with nature, which does so much to strengthen our conviction of its divine origin. But the objector now says, he does not so much blame our having a knowledge of trees and shrubs, of flowers and fruits, but what ought we to have to do with *Agriculture*? I answer much every way. Most of us have many little mouths to fill, and little feet to shoe, and little backs to clothe, and this cannot be done without means; although the people in general seem to be of opinion that they can. And until they change their opinion and have some little conscience about the matter,—for now they have none, for while they do not for a moment expect a physician or a lawyer to attend them unremunerated, they do look for the necessary attentions of the clergy, "without money and without price" literally—and until this injustice and cruel wrong