

HOEING AND PRAYING.



AID Farmer Jones in a whining tone,
To his good old neighbour Gray,
"I've worn my knees through to the bone,
But it ain't no use to pray.

"Your corn looks just twice as good as mine,
Though you don't pretend to be
A shinin' light in the church to shine,
An' tell salvation's free.

"I've prayed to the Lord a thousand time
For to make that 'ere corn grow;
An' why yourn beats it so an' climbs
I'd give a deal to know."

Said Farmer Gray to his neighbour Jones,
In his quiet and easy way,
"When your prayers get mixed with lazy bones
They don't make farmin' pay.

"Your weeds, I notice, are good and tall,
In spite of all your prayers;
You may pray for corn till the heavens fall,
If you don't dig up the tares.

"I mix my prayers with a little toil,
Along in every row;
An' I work this mixture into the soil,
Quite vig'rous with a hoe.

"An' I've discovered, though still in sin,
As sure as you are born,
This kind of compost well worked in,
Makes pretty decent corn.

"So while I'm praying I use my hoe,
An' do my level best,
To keep down the weeds along each row,
An' the Lord, He does the rest.

"It's well for to pray, both night an' morn,
As every farmer knows;
But the place to pray for thrifty corn
Is right between the rows.

"You must use your hands while praying, though,
If an answer you would get,
For prayer-worn knees an' a rusty hoe
Never raised a big crop yet.

"An' so I believe, my good old friend,
If you mean to win the day,
From ploughing, clean to the harvest's end,
You must hoe as well as pray."

—Selected.

"MUST" AND "MUSTN'T."

66  FELLOW can't have any fun," growled Tom. "It's just 'must' and 'mustn't' from morning till night. You *must* do this, you *must* learn that; or you *mustn't* go there; you *mustn't* say that, and you *mustn't* do the other thing. At school you're just tied right up to rules, and at home—well, a shake of Mother's head means more than a dozen 'mustn'ts.' Seems a pity a boy can't have his own way half the time, and do something as he likes."

"Going to the city this morning, Tom?" asked uncle Thed, from the adjoining room.

"Why, of course," answered Tom, promptly.

"Going across the common?"

"Yes, sir; always do."

"I wish you'd notice those young trees they've been setting out the last year or two. There's something rather queer, it seems to me. Of course the old trees will die sooner or later, and others will be needed, but—well, you just observe them rather carefully, so as to describe their appearance, etc."

"What about those trees, Tom?" asked Uncle Thed, after tea, as they sat on the piazza.

"Why, they're all right; look a little cramped to be sure, snipped short off on top, and tied up to poles, snug as you please, every identical twig of them; but that's as it should be, to make them ship-shape—don't you see? They can't grow crooked if they would. They'll make as handsome trees as you ever saw, one of these days. Haven't you noticed the trees in Mr. Benson's yard?—tall and scraggy, and crooked, just because they were left to grow as they pleased? The city fathers now, don't propose to run any such risks—"

"But I wonder how the trees feel about the *must* and *mustn't*," remarked Uncle Thed, dryly.

Exit Tom, wishing he had not said quite so much on the subject of trees—and boys.—*Our Sunday Afternoon.*

WHY does sugar sweeten water, or tea or anything it is put into? Because the tea or water *dissolves* it, *i.e.*, separates the tiny, tiny sugar grains. Then we stir them up, and they float about all over the cup, so that when we drink it we get many sugar grains in each mouthful, and so it tastes sweet. If you put a tiny bit of sugar, the size of a pea, into a big cup of tea, you stir and stir, but can't taste it, because there are not enough sugar grains, perhaps only one in each mouthful. You might say, "No sugar in this tea," yet there is a little, only not enough.

Some people say, "I have been abroad—in Africa, India, China—but Missions are doing no good, the people are all heathen still."

It seems so because there are so few missionaries. See China, what a huge country with its millions of people. The Church Missionary Society sends fifty missionaries there, men and women. That is like putting one grain of sugar into a whole teapot of tea. So with Africa, Egypt, Persia, etc. Even India, though we have a good many missionaries there, yet they are only about one to every 250,000 people; something like one grain of sugar to a cupful. How can it sweeten the whole?

There is, however, one great difference. Sugar grains can't make other sugar grains, but each missionary as he teaches the natives is making other missionaries, and so we have hope.