

The Growing Time.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

I returned recently from a short auto trip through the adjoining township, and was pleased indeed with the prospect that everywhere unfolded before me. The trees, the lovely maples, and elms were putting on their greenest foliage; the corn was stretching up under the warm glow of the sun, the fields of grain were looking fine, the fall wheat already heading out, while the clover fields—(ah, that was the crowning attraction!) with their sweet odor and variegated blossoms were a delight both to the sense of smell and sight. As we sped along the winding road, getting a view every now and then of the quiet river, with the cattle peacefully grazing by its side, I thought of the poet's lines: "What so fair as a day in June." My companion and I didn't talk about the war. We drank in the beauty of the scene and were satisfied. It was the time of promise, the growing time, when everything out of doors, aided by gentle rains, warming sun and fertile soil was nearing the time of rich fulfillment.

And now I think of the growing time in human lives and of the forces there that retard or develop growth. How thankful we should be in this time of fearful wastage for the tens of thousands of happy, healthy boys and girls rapidly reaching up to manhood and womanhood in our fair Dominion. And just as the fields of grain, sheltered by the trees of the forests, are not beaten to earth by driving storms, or as plants protected by coverings are uninjured by frosts, so these boys and girls of ours need shelter and protection—the shelter of good homes, the protection of wise guardians, if they are to develop aright in this their growing time. There are plenty of men who are more careful in looking after the grain, plants and trees on their farms than they are in protecting the young lives entrusted to their care. They treat their grain that smut may not develop, and cut out the weeds from around the plants and carefully bind up trunks of fruit trees that the mice may not girdle them in the winter, yet wholly neglect or leave to someone else the work of safeguarding the human plants—by far the most precious of all. We are busy people, we tillers of the soil, and we must of necessity leave some things undone, but let us not neglect the work of safeguarding our growing boys and girls. It is work that will well repay us for our labor and bring forth good fruit in the years to come.

We take it as a matter of course that the tree and plant will reach their full development, yet in the human family how many cases there are of arrested growth, how few indeed there are who reach the highest state of growth and development. Amos Wells, in that beautiful poem "My New Birthday," reveals the fourfold aspiration of the true man: "To achieve, to enjoy, to develop and grow." But we don't achieve the highest good, nor do we enjoy the greatest pleasure if we fail to develop and grow.

"Glory of warrior, glory of statesman,
glory of song,
But the greatest of glories is the glory
of going on."

How much there is for the tree-lover to admire at this season of the year, especially in the southern parts of the Dominion where there is such a variety of trees. Personally, I love the maple best of all, and when returning to Old Ontario from the West, where I spent a number of years, I felt like a neighbor who on seeing the first maple after being for some time on the prairies said he felt like putting his arms around it and kissing it. Near my place there are two fine rows on either side of the road, and almost in front of the house a beauty that I would not cut down for anything, even if it does throw some shade on the crops and makes the plowing close to its roots a somewhat trying job. It is so stately and shapely! I love the maples because of the beauty of their leaves and because they are generally formed so straight and symmetrical; a leaning or lop-sided tree is not so pleasing to the sight and is more apt to be blown over in a storm. I know of a big elm, the giant branch of which came crashing to the ground the other day in a storm. It was lop-sided and now presents a sorry spectacle. The wind struck it on its weak side and down it came. So in the



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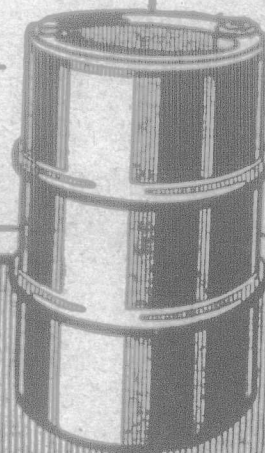
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