

THE GOOD SEED.

BY THE REV. JOHN B. TARD.

The Magdalen to Bethlehem. The house of Bread, and following them. As they lie in the sun and lead To Christ, the living House of Bread.

A pilgrim from the hour of birth. The night-blossom of the earth I traversed, heavenward journeying; A hidden mystery of Spring. My only guide, a lifted blade. My only weapon, till the shade. The light to which I went, my way. Death smitten at the door of day.

O Light! O heavenly Warmth! to you My cup nearest, I quaff'd the dew. The light and the shadow, the sign— Of Life, the mingling first with mine— A spirit in the air—my way. To mingle with the life of Man.

—"Later Lyrics."

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Weakness in Sober Moments.

Madame de Genlis, in a work on "Time," tells us that the famous Chancellor D'Aguesseau, observing that his wife always delayed ten or twelve minutes before she came down to dinner, and reluctant to lose so much time daily, began the composition of a work which has prosecuted only while thus kept waiting. At the end of fifteen years, a book in three quarto volumes was completed, which ran through three editions, and was held in high repute. Madame de Genlis profited by this example. Having to wait at the dinner hour in the Palais Royal for Madame de Chartres, who was always fifteen or twenty minutes late, she utilized the time by copying a selection of poems from eminent authors. It is told of a German critic that he could repeat the entire "Iliad" of Homer with scarcely an error. How many years, think you, did he spend in depositing the immortal epic in his brain? Years he had not to spare, or months, or weeks, or even entire days, for he was a physician in the full tide of practice; but he contrived to store in his memory the twenty-four books of the old Iliad of "Seda's rocky isle." In the brief, disconnected, snatches of time while hurrying from one patient to another, Dr. Mason Good, a celebrated English physician, performed a similar feat, having contrived to translate the whole of Lucretius during his long walks in London to visit his patients.—Success.

The Way to Success.

"Education," wrote John Graham (the "self-made merchant" in George H. Lorimer's book) to his son Pierre-pont at Harvard, "is about the only thing that will succeed in this world, and it's about the only thing a fellow can have as much as he's willing to haul away." In the same "Letters of a Self-Made Merchant to His Son," which contain much good sense on the subject of success, and will amuse as well as shake up every young man who reads them, the old man enquires: "Does education pay? Does it pay to feed in pork trimmings at five cents a pound at the hopper and draw out nice, cunning, little 'country' sausages at twenty cents a pound at the other end? Does it pay to take a steamer that's been running loose on the range and living on cactus and petrified wood till he's just a bunch of barb-wire and sole-leather, and feed him till he's just a solid hunk of porter-house steak and oleo oil? You bet it pays. Anything that trains a boy to get the answer before the other fellow gets through biting the pencil, pays."

Nothing will ever be said in this column to discourage young men from going out and fairly asking their parents to give them. To quote Mr. Lorimer's book again, "College doesn't make fools; it develops them. It doesn't make bright men; it develops them. A fool will turn out a fool, whether he goes to college or not, though he'll probably turn out a different sort of a fool." There is a good deal of knowledge which a man can acquire at any time, but which he probably never will acquire unless it comes to him in the regular course of school and college. Our friends who write about good books and great for what he calls The Republic's Reading Circle published every week a list of authors that everybody ought to know. How many of those authors were known to such of his readers as had not been to college? If they had been to college they would know all of them. So with the fundamental knowledge in all departments of human activity. It is a boy's way to dip into many studies, gaining information which will be of use to him no matter what occupation he follows, and possibly leading him in one of the dippings to come upon the occupation for which he is best fitted. There is no doubt about the value of education.

But it is a great mistake to suppose that because a boy doesn't get on well at school he is discouraged. The chances are by no means hopeless. He is in distinguished company. One of the most famous authors in history was Sir Walter Scott. At the height of his success he went one day into the schoolroom where he had been sent himself when a boy. He asked the teacher to show him the dunce. That worthy was produced, and Sir Walter handed him a half-sovereign, with the remark: "There—take that, for keeping my seat warm." Prof. Andrew Dalzell, Scott's teacher, had said of him: "Dunce he is, and dunce he will remain."

Scott's great fellow-countryman, Robert Burns, got on ill at school; Oliver Goldsmith was the despair of his teachers and family till well into manhood; Dean Swift, author of "Candor," was plucked at Dublin University; Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the dramatist, was set down at school "an incorrigible dunce." Think of the soldiers! Napoleon was "a dull scholar," Wellington's mother said he was only "food for powder." Lord Clive, who conquered the Indian empire for the British crown, was a dunce, and Ulysses S. Grant was potted by his mother under the affectionate title of "Useless" Grant.

Justus von Liebig's schoolmates called him "Booby" Liebig, and one day when he said he was going to be a chemist they howled with laughter. Yet he was

one of the greatest chemists of the last century. Meantime the dunces will be tortured because too many boys do not learn consideration, urbanity, justice toward their companions until they are no longer boys, if they learn those Christian graces ever. But the dunces will not be bodacious. He who laughs last laughs best. The late William E. Gladstone obtained his triumph by hard work, and he spoke more than one word of encouragement to the less brilliant brethren with whom he could sympathize. Said the Grand Old Man: "In some sense, and in some electrical degree, there is in every man the material for good work; not only in those who are brilliant, not only in those who are quick, but in those who are stolid, and even in those who are dull." Wise counsel.—The New Century.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. THE FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE.

BY EUGENE BELLE.

Once upon a time the forest was in great commotion. Early in the evening the wise old cedars had shaken their heads unanimously and predicted strange things. They had lived in the forest many, many years; but never had they seen such marvelous sights as were to be seen now in the sky, and upon the hills, and in the distant village. "Pray tell us what you see," pleaded a little vine; "we who are not as tall as you can behold none of these wonderful things. Describe them to us, that we may enjoy them with you." "I am filled with such amazement," said one of the cedars, "that I can hardly speak. The whole sky seems to be aflame, and the stars appear to be dancing among the clouds; angels walk down from heaven to the earth, and enter the village or talk with the shepherds upon the hills."

The vine listened in mute astonishment. Such things never before had happened. The vine trembled with excitement. His nearest neighbor was a tiny tree, so small it scarcely ever was noticed; yet it was a very beautiful little tree, and the vines and ferns and mosses and other humble residents of the forest loved it dearly.

"How I should like to see the angels!" sighed the little tree, and how I should like to see the stars dancing among the clouds! It must be very beautiful!"

As the vine and the little tree talked of these things, the cedars watched with increasing interest the wonderful scenes over and beyond the confines of the forest. Presently they thought they heard music, and they were not mistaken, for soon the whole air was full of the sweetest harmonies ever heard upon earth. "What beautiful music!" cried the little tree. "I wonder whence it came."

"The angels are singing," said a cedar; "for none but angels could make such sweet music."

"But the stars are singing too," said another cedar; "yes, and the shepherds on the hills join in the song, and what a strangely glorious song it is!"

The trees listened to the singing, but they did not understand its meaning; it seemed to be an anthem, and it was of a Child that had been born; but further than this they did not understand. The strange and glorious song continued all night; and all that night the angels walked to and fro, and the shepherds folk talked with the angels, and the stars danced and caroled in the morning. And it was nearly morning when the cedars cried out: "They are coming to the forest!" And, surely enough, this was true. The vine and the little tree were very terrified, and they begged their older and stronger neighbors to protect them from harm. But the cedars were too busy with their own fears to pay any heed to the faint pleadings of the humble vine and the little tree. The angels came into the forest singing the most glorious anthem about the Child, and the stars sang in chorus with them, until every part of the woods rang with echoes of that wondrous song. There was nothing in the appearance of the angel host to inspire fear; they were clad all in white, and there were crowns upon their fair heads, and golden harps in their hands; love, hope, charity, contentment and joy beamed from their beautiful faces, and their presence seemed to fill the forest with a divine peace. The angels came through the forest to where the little tree stood, and gathered around it, they touched it with their hands, and kissed its little branches, and sang even more sweetly than before. And their song was about the Child, the Child, the Child that had been born. Then the stars came down from the skies and danced and hung upon the branches of the tree, and they, too, sang that song—the song of the Child. And all the other trees and vines and the ferns and the mosses beheld in wonder; nor could they understand why all these things were being done, and why this exceeding honor should be shown the little tree.

When the morning came the angels left the forest—all but one angel, who remained behind and hovered near the little tree. Then a cedar asked: "Why do you tarry with us, holy angel?" And the angel answered: "I stay to guard this little tree, for it is sacred, and no harm shall come to it."

The little tree felt quite relieved by this assurance, and it held up its head more confidently than ever before. And how it thrived and grew, and waxed in strength and beauty! The cedars said they never had seen the like. The sun seemed to lavish its choicest rays upon the little tree, heaven dropped its sweetest dew upon it, and the winds never came to the forest that they did not forget their rude manners and linger to kiss the little tree and sing its prettiest songs. No danger ever menaced it, no harm threatened; for the angel never slumbered through the day and through the night the angel watched the little tree and protected it from all evil. Oftentimes the trees talked with the angel;

but of course they understood little of what he said, for he spoke always of the Child who was to become the Master; and always when thus he talked, he caressed the little tree and stroked its branches and leaves and moistened them with his tears. It was also very strange that none in the forest could understand.

So the years passed, the angel watching his blooming charge. Sometimes the beasts strayed toward the little tree and threatened to devour its tender foliage; sometimes the woodman came with his axe, intent upon hewing down the straight and comely thing; sometimes the hot, consuming breath of drought swept from the south, and sought to blight the forest and all its verdure; the angel kept them from the little tree. Serene and beautiful it grew, until now it was no longer a little tree, but the pride and glory of the forest.

One day the tree heard someone coming through the forest. Hitherto the angel had hastened to its side when men approached; but now the angel strode away and stood under the cedars yonder.

"Dear angel," cried the tree, "can you not hear the footsteps of someone approaching? Why do you leave me?" "Have no fear," said the angel; "for He who comes is the Master."

The Master came to the tree and beheld it. He placed His hands upon its smooth trunk and branches, and the tree was thrilled with a strange and glorious delight. Then He stooped and kissed the tree, and then He turned and went away.

Many times after that the Master came to the forest, and when He came it always was to where the tree stood. Many times He rested beneath the tree, and enjoyed the shade of its foliage, and listened to the music of the winds as it swept through the rustling leaves. Many times He slept there, and the forest was still and all its voices were hushed. And the angel hovered near like a faithful sentinel.

Ever and anon men came with the Master to the forest, and sat with Him in the shade of the tree, and talked with Him of matters which the tree could never understand; only it heard that the talk was of love and charity and gentleness, and it saw that the Master was beloved and venerated by others. It heard them talk of the Master's goodness and humility—how He had healed the sick and raised the dead and bestowed inestimable blessings whenever He walked. And the tree loved the Master for His beauty and His goodness; and when He came to the forest it was full of joy, but, when He came not it was sad. And the other trees of the forest joined in its happiness and its sorrow, for they, too, loved the Master. And the angel always hovered near.

The Master came one night alone into the forest, and His face was pale with anguish and wet with tears, and He fell upon His knees and prayed. The tree heard Him, and all the forest was still, as if it were standing in the presence of death. And when the morning came, lo! the angel had gone. Then there was a great confusion in the forest. There was a sound of rude voices, and a clashing of swords and rattling of armor appeared, and uttering loud oaths and cruel threats, and the tree was filled with terror. It called aloud for the angel, but the angel came not.

"Alas," cried the vine, "they have come to destroy the tree, the pride and glory of the forest!" The forest was sorely agitated, but it was in vain. The strange men plied their axes with cruel vigor, and the tree was hewn to the ground. Its beautiful branches were cast away and cast aside, and its soft, thick foliage was strewn to the tender mercies of the winds.

"They are killing me," cried the tree; "why is not the angel here to protect me?" But no one heard the piteous cry—none but the other trees of the forest; and they wept, and the little vine wept, too.

Then the cruel men dragged the spotted and hewn tree from the forest, and all the forest saw that beautiful thing no more. But the night wind that swept down from the City of the Great King that night to rattle the bosom of distant Galilee, carried in the forest awhile to say that it had seen that day a cross upon a hill—stretched the body of the dying Master.—From a Little Book of Profitable Fables.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

THAT TRUE COMFORT IS TO BE SOUGHT IN GOD ALONE.

Whatever I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it in this life, but hereafter.

For if I alone should have all the comforts of this world and could enjoy all its delights, it is certain they could not last long.

Wherefore thou canst not, O my soul, be fully comforted nor perfectly delighted, but in God, the comforter of the poor and the support of the humble. Wait a little while, O my soul, wait for the divine promise, and thou shalt have in heaven plenty of all that is good.

If thou desirest to immoderately these present things, thou wilt lose those which are heavenly and everlasting. Let temporal things serve thy use, but let the Eternal be the object of thy desire.

Thou canst not be fully satisfied with any temporal goods, because thou was not created for the enjoyment of such things.

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THE SULPICIAN.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF A GREAT WORK.

Devotion to the purpose of clerical education is the leading motive in the life of a Sulpician. The life is not rigorous in the sense of suffering from severe flagellation or other penance or in enduring the asceticism of long fasts and trying vigils. The Sulpician takes no vows aside from those of an ordinary priest; he only makes the promise of obedience to his Society. He may even leave the order if he chooses. Such instances are, however, so rare that it scarcely can be thought of as an ameliorating circumstance in the life. But the rigor of daily doing a duty of a severe type, in a severe way, is the part of a Sulpician in a high degree.

The Sulpicians and their pupils get up at 5 or 5:30 in the morning. After rising they have three-quarters of an hour for meditation, then they attend Mass and retire to their rooms for a short time. From breakfast until noon they are either studying or in the lecture hall. They read the New Testament at noon and undergo the religious exercises known as "particular examination of the conscience." Though the students are privileged to take a short recreation period after dinner till 2 in the afternoon, they may not leave the seminary grounds for this purpose, or at any other time. Again, they study and attend lectures from 2 till half-past 4, after which comes another short recreation period, followed by more study and the religious exercises of recitation of the beads and spiritual reading. There is a short recreation period after supper, then the gathering for night prayers, and at 9 going to bed. Such, at least, is the day as a seminarian of St. Mary's remembers it, and it is substantially the same in every institution of the order. Only three holidays were allowed some years ago in the term, lasting from September to June, but this strictness has been relaxed to give a week's vacation in the course of a year. So the days go for the seminarian through his course of study, lasting five or six years. It is only for a term of years for the pupil, but it is life service for the teacher. Two years of the course are spent in philosophy, comprising logic and metaphysics, and from three to four years in the study of theology, dogmatic and moral philosophy and of Church history, the scriptures, the liturgy and ceremonies of the Church. The Sulpician's work does not differ much from that of a professor in any higher institution of learning, excepting as the discipline of his order confines him. He lectures, conducts recitations, and attends to his devotions.

Jean Jacques Olier, founder of the order, was a man with an ideal. A disciple of St. Vincent de Paul and of Pere de Condren, he made his mission the revival of religious zeal among the clergy of France. Though there is no such striking change in his life from soldier to priest as in the case of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, he underwent a conversion that changed him from a worldly priest to almost a mystic. He was well born, the son of Jacques Olier de Verneuil, secretary and maître de requetes to Henry IV, later Governor of Lyons under Louis XIII. Madame Olier was ambitious for her youngest son, Jean Jacques, and put him in the Church to secure advancement. Young Olier, a vigorous lad, went through the course of training at the Sorbonne, and at the age of eighteen secured a priory in the diocese of Nantes and an abbey in the diocese of St. Flour. Preaching fashionable sermons in Paris and making a social display he promised to fulfill his mother's hopes. After a severe illness, however, his attitude changed, and he thought of joining the Carthusians. He did not carry out his purpose, but for a time became a missionary in the country under the orders of Pere de Condren, secretary and maître de requetes to Henry IV, later Governor of Lyons under Louis XIII. Madame Olier was ambitious for her youngest son, Jean Jacques, and put him in the Church to secure advancement. Young Olier, a vigorous lad, went through the course of training at the Sorbonne, and at the age of eighteen secured a priory in the diocese of Nantes and an abbey in the diocese of St. Flour. Preaching fashionable sermons in Paris and making a social display he promised to fulfill his mother's hopes. After a severe illness, however, his attitude changed, and he thought of joining the Carthusians. 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