

Children's Department.

The Boy who Couldn't Run Away from his Harvest.

Did you ever know a boy who had a little corner of the garden given him to plant just what he pleased in? Did you know such a boy? Well, he is not the boy whom this story is about, though no doubt you could tell just as good a story about the boy you know. Did you ever know a boy who had a whole farm, a very large and rich estate, to plant just what he pleased on?

No? Well, this is the boy about whom I am writing, whether you know him or not, and I am not so sure that you don't.

Of course people gave him advice about what to sow; people always give boys advice. But boys are not always taking advice—that is, of one kind; though they are always taking advice in another way; for they are doing what they see older people do, and that is taking their advice, if they only knew it.

When people said to this boy, "I wouldn't do that; you'll be sorry," he said, "I can do as I please, I guess;" and so he did it.

When they warned him that something would harm him, he said, "I'm going to try it and see." He didn't know then that, if he tried it, he might be obliged to see more of it than he might want. When his mother urged him, "if you get such and such a thing started on your farm, it will be hard to root it out," he thought to himself, "Maybe I shan't want to root it out."

So he got ever so many things started that people said he would be sorry that he had planted; but he thought, "If I am sorry, that will be time enough to be sorry." He thought that being sorry was one of the things he could get rid of just as easy as he proposed to get rid of anything he did not like on his estate.

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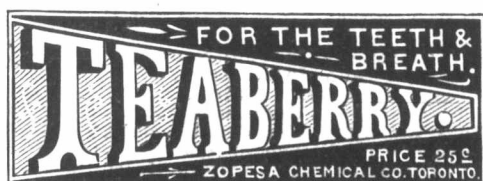
Mrs. Amanda Paisley

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For quite a while this boy's farm did not look so bad—to some people, any way. You know a field of young weeds looks almost as green and pretty as a field of grass, except to the eye of the farmer, who sees in them all they will be by and by.

People laughed at some things and thought them very funny in this boy's farming, when they knew, or ought to have known, that they wouldn't be funny by and by. But what could the boy think but that he was getting along pretty well farming? He was having fun at it, any way, and he did not see that it was going to be too serious business to make fun of by and by. He didn't believe much in the "by and by" people were telling him of.

But "by and by" began to come. It looks to be so long away off to boys, that they think, when they hear people telling about it, it surely will never come. That's what this boy thought at first, but it did begin to come.

One day the boy pricked and hurt himself on one of the things he had planted on his estate, and then he saw what an ugly thing it was to have around. He said: "I will not have such a thing on my farm. Just see how easily I shall pull it up." But no one saw him pull it up. He pulled at it, but it only pricked him again, and made him bleed worse than before. Then he got a knife and stooped down to cut it off near the roots, but it only struck him in the face, and wounded him there. Oh, dear! there was nothing funny now about laughing at people's advice who had been farming ever so much longer than he had; he felt more like crying.

But this was only the beginning of his trouble with his estate. Other things that he had planted began to get old enough to vex him. People

who used to think it very funny now shook their heads and passed him by on the other side, and told other people to look out for him; he had a very ugly lot of thorns and briars on his place, and he might have some of them sticking in his clothes.

This made the boy feel bad and when he went home, he tried again to root up the things that made others dislike him so, and stood in the way of his happiness. But he found that rooting a thing down was different from rooting it up. He had been a good while rooting these pests of his down when they had been his pets, and now he was likely to be a great while longer rooting them up. He tried as hard as any boy could to get rid of them; but people who laughed at him when he was trying to give them a start did not see anything funny in it now. They scolded him. They said it was a shame that a young fellow should be allowed to make himself such a nuisance in the community by the things he had cultivated; but still this did not keep them from laughing at other boys who were trying the same kind of things on their farms.

At last, when this boy could stand it no longer to be thus talked about and made to suffer on account of what he had sown on his farm, and when he gave up discouraged at ever trying to root them out, he resolved that he would run away from it all, and leave it behind him. But do you think he could do it?

Not a bit of it! What! a farm that one could not leave when he wanted to travel? It must have been a sort of prison then.

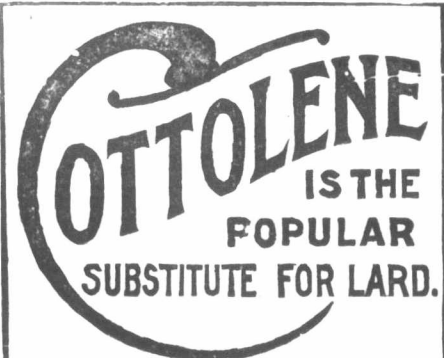
No, it was not a prison. The boy could go where he wanted to, but he couldn't go without taking the estate along with him; and wherever he went, there were the things he had sowed, ripening now for a harvest, and there seemed no other way but that the one that sowed them must reap them, harmful and disgusting as they were.

I might as well tell you what this boy's estate was. It was just such a one as every boy has—himself: his nature, in which he could cultivate good habits or bad; evil dispositions, or honorable and kindly ones; selfish or unselfish thoughts and actions.

And on this estate of his, this boy had sown only the kind of things that it naturally pleased a boy to do, and had sown none of the things which a boy is told are manly and honorable and Christian; and now the harvest he had to reap was habits of carelessness that shut him out of employment of any one who knew him; tempers so hasty and domineering that no one wanted his companionship; and, worst of all, appetites so demoralizing that he could himself see they were making a frightful wilderness of that once fair estate of his boyhood.

And of course he could not run away from his farm and the crops he had sowed on it, because his estate was himself. There was only one thing he could do, and that was to let it out to some one strong enough and kind enough to root out everything that vexed and marred it.

And now I am sure that I need not speak in riddles any longer. You have seen the meaning, and see the rest. There is no one who can do that for our natures which was needed by this boy, except the Lord Jesus Christ, and He can give us new hearts and desires. But remember, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap;" and it is as true of a boy as of a man; and every



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boy has an estate on which he is sowing something every day which he will have to reap by and by.

A Girls' Literary Club.

A club for girls with the aim of mutual improvement and profit, may be organized in some such manner as this: The girls need not necessarily be of equal capacity or identical tastes. In fact, some diversity in these respects would be for the general advantage. But all who take part should be interested in reading and study, and have in some measure the desire and capacity to produce. The meeting may be held weekly or at longer intervals. The time occupied in reading, studying and discussing the vari-