

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

ABOUT SEEDS AND TREES.

IN the spring of 1861, while going across lots to visit some of the people of my charge, I came to a gentleman who was setting out an apple-tree nursery. He had removed the stumps and stones from the ground, had also plowed it deep and fine, harrowed it well, and made straight drills some three feet apart, into which, aided by a boy, he was setting the tiny young trees. He told me that they were all grafted, and that he and his wife had put three thousand grafts into as many stocks or roots during the previous winter.

"And *where* and *how* do you get the stocks?" said I.

"We go," said he, "to the cider-mills and get the seeds; we then sow or plant them, and after one year's growth we take them up, cut off the little trees near the roots, and put the roots into the cellar; then we get our grafts from the best bearing trees and of the best varieties, and in February, March, and April do our grafting."

Now, little readers of the Advocate, I do not mean to tell you all the conversation I had with this nurseryman; but I wish to tell you some of the thoughts which it suggested. And first, I thought that all those little roots came from the worst kind of apple-seeds, for people do not usually make their cider of apples that are very good for any other use. I also thought that the grafting them with good varieties, and setting them out into nurseries, and caring for them there with pruning-knife, and plow, and hoe, and generous culture, would not, *could not*, make them fruit-bearing trees. No; they must be set out into orchards and cared for there.

Then I thought, so is it with good men and women. They were all very bad once; they had bad tempers in bad hearts; but God in his good providence sought them out by religious nurserymen, and they were brought and set in the Sunday-school, the Church's nursery, where the principles of religion were instilled into their minds, and the "engrafted word" began to grow and bear fruit to God's glory, and beautiful for the eyes of angels to look upon.

And again I thought, as trees in the orchards die the demand for trees from the nurseries continues. So with the Church—God's orchard. As the fathers and mothers in it pass away, this orchard can only keep its numbers good by demands upon its nurseries.

Little brothers and sisters, you are now in the nursery. God and good men, and women too, are laboring to cultivate you into healthy, vigorous trees. You were not designed to be in the nursery forever, but to become "trees of righteousness." *Where will you go when you leave the nursery?* Many of you have been in it long enough to go into the orchard. The trees there are dying and you are needed there. You will soon go into the Church or into the world. Which shall it be? Little trees have no choice, but you have. *Make it*, then, asking God and the good to help you, and may a blessed eternity of fruitfulness be yours "in the Eden above." Amen. S*****

TURNED OUT OF HEAVEN.

LITTLE EDDIE is a smart boy of seven summers. One day, after being in a thoughtful mood for some time, he said:

"Mother, did God ever turn any one out of heaven?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"What for?" was the next question.

"For being wicked."

"Well," said Eddie, "if I ever get there I am afraid he will turn me out some time."

Eddie's reply showed that he felt the evil in his heart. He did not know, however, that Jesus stood ready to give him a new heart which would not want to sin either on earth or in heaven.

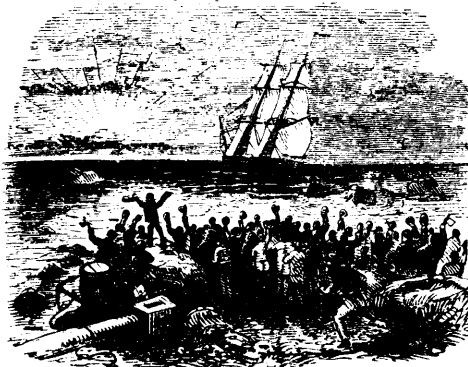


EARLY RISING.

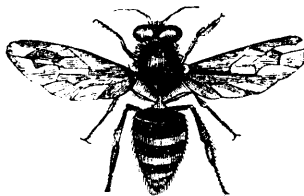
"Up! up!" cries the wakeful cock,
"Did you not hear the village-clock?
I have been up for an hour or more,
Crowing aloud at the stable-door.
Dobbin has gone with the boy to plow,
Betty has started to milk the cow;
Sure there is plenty for all to do,
And all are up, young friend, but you."



"Up! up!" cries the soaring lark,
"Only sleep, my young friend, in the dark.
O let it never, never be said
You wasted the morning hours in bed.
Out of the window glance your eye,
And see how blue is the morning sky;
Open the casement, your slumber spare,
And smell how fresh is the morning air."



"Up! up!" cries the busy sun,
"Is there no work, little friend, to be done?
Are there no lessons to learn, I pray,
That you lie dozing the hours away?
Who would give light to the world below
If I were idly to slumber so?
What would become of the hay and corn
Did I thus waste the precious morn?"



"Up! up!" cries the buzzing bee,
"There's work for you as well as for me.
O how I prize the morning hour,
Gathering sweets from the dewy flower.
Quick comes on the scorching noon,
And darksome night will follow soon;
Say, shall it chide you for idle hours,
Time unimproved, and wasted powers?"

THE LION AND HIS KEEPER.

THERE was in the menagerie at Brussels some years ago a large lion called "Danco," whose den happened to require some repairs. The keeper brought a carpenter to mend it; but when the workman saw the lion he started back with terror. The keeper entered the animal's cage and led him to the upper part of it while the lower part was re-fitting. The keeper then amused himself for some time playing with the lion, and, being wearied, he soon fell into a sound sleep.

The carpenter, having full reliance on the vigilance of the keeper, pursued his work with rapidity, and when he had finished it he called him to see if the repairs were properly done. The keeper made no answer. Having repeatedly called in vain, he began to feel alarmed for his situation, and resolved to go to the upper part of the cage, where, looking through the railing, he saw the lion and the keeper sleeping side by side. From the impulse of the moment, the astonished carpenter uttered a loud cry. The lion, awakened and surprised by the sudden yell, started on his feet and stared at the mechanic with an eye of fury, and then, placing his paw on the breast of his keeper, lay down to repose again. At length the keeper was awakened by some of the attendants, but did not appear the least apprehensive for his own safety, but took the lion by the paw and then quietly led him to his former residence.

"I FEEL BAD."

A LITTLE boy who had seen but four summers ran to his father a few Sabbaths since and, overcome with grief and his eyes full of tears, said to him:

"Papa, I feel bad!"

"And what is the matter, Frankie?" said the father.

"I have been a naughty boy. My mamma told me not to play on the holy Sabbath day for it was displeasing to God. I did play, and I feel bad because I hurt God's feelings?"

"But how do you know that you have hurt God's feelings?" said his father.

"Because," said the little boy, "my conscience bites my little heart."

"I SPOKE TO MY HEAVENLY FATHER."

A LITTLE girl gasping for her last mortal breath, said, "Father, take me!"

Her father, who sat dissolved in tears by her bedside, lifted her into his lap. She smiled, thanked him, and said, "I spoke to my heavenly Father," and died.

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