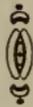
The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is decorated with a marbled pattern of dark brown and gold, featuring a repeating motif of overlapping, scalloped shapes. A solid red spine is visible on the left side. In the center of the cover, there is a rectangular label with a gold border. The label has a dark red background and contains the text "CHARLES B. ALEXANDER." in gold, uppercase letters.

CHARLES B. ALEXANDER.

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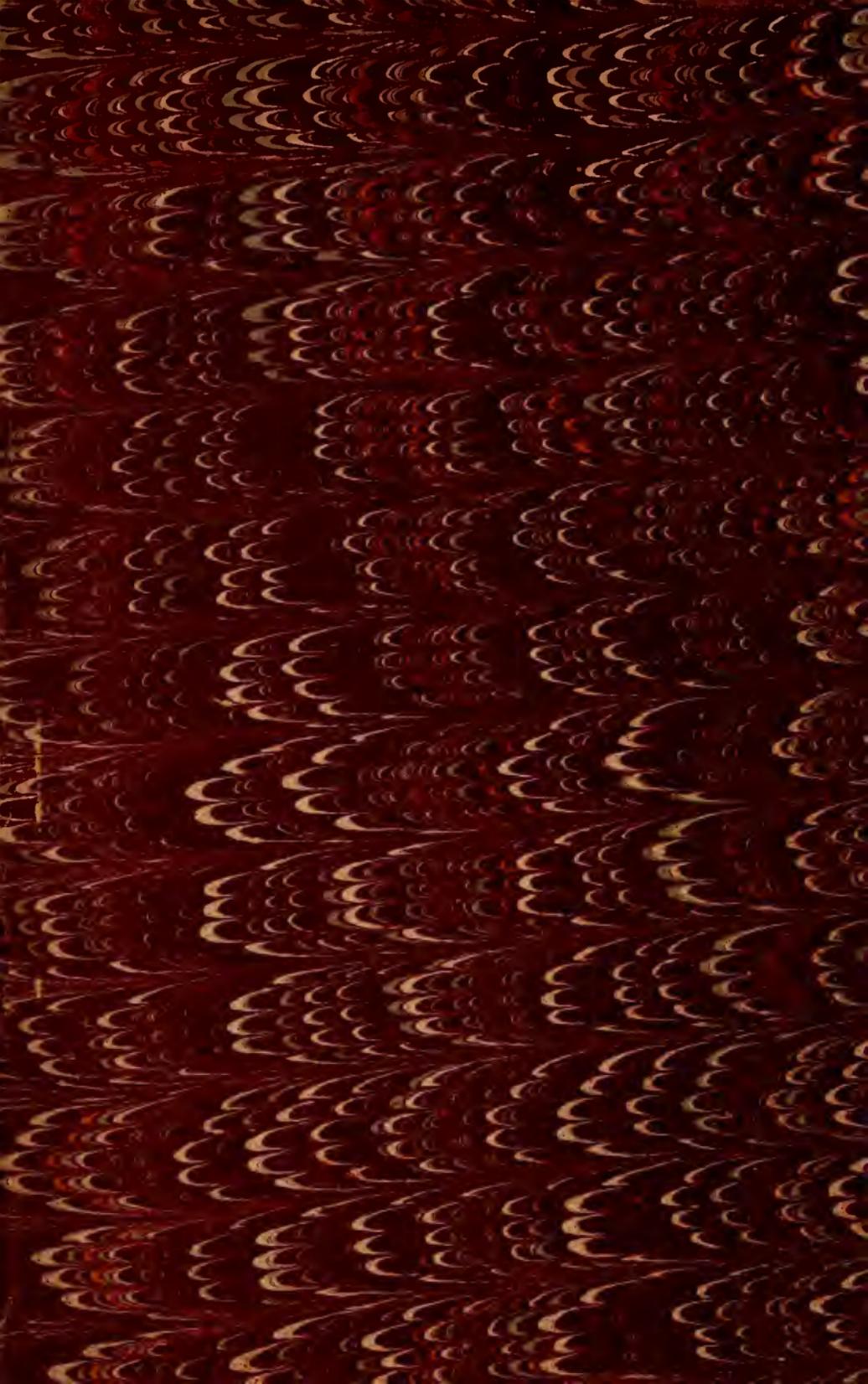


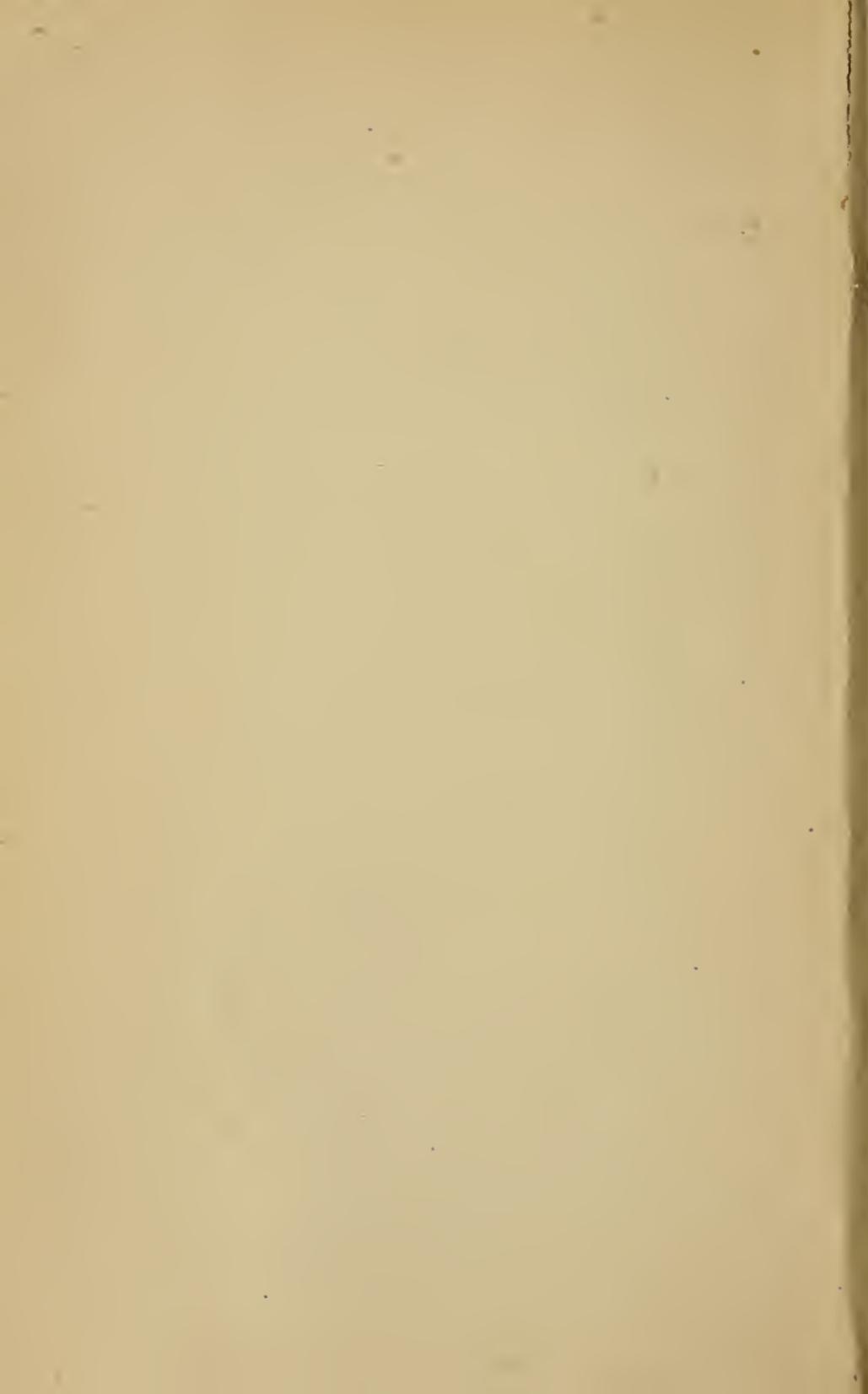
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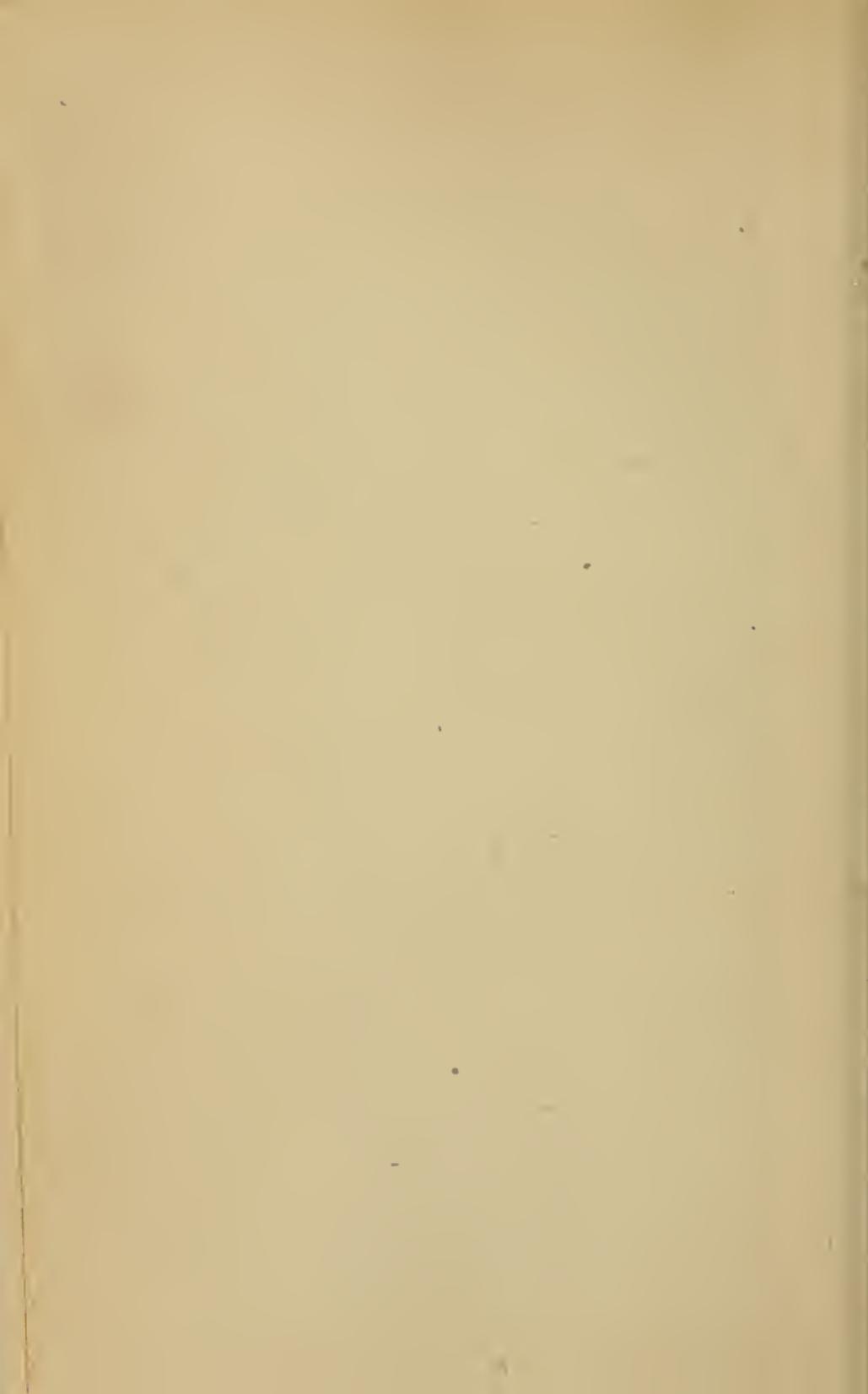
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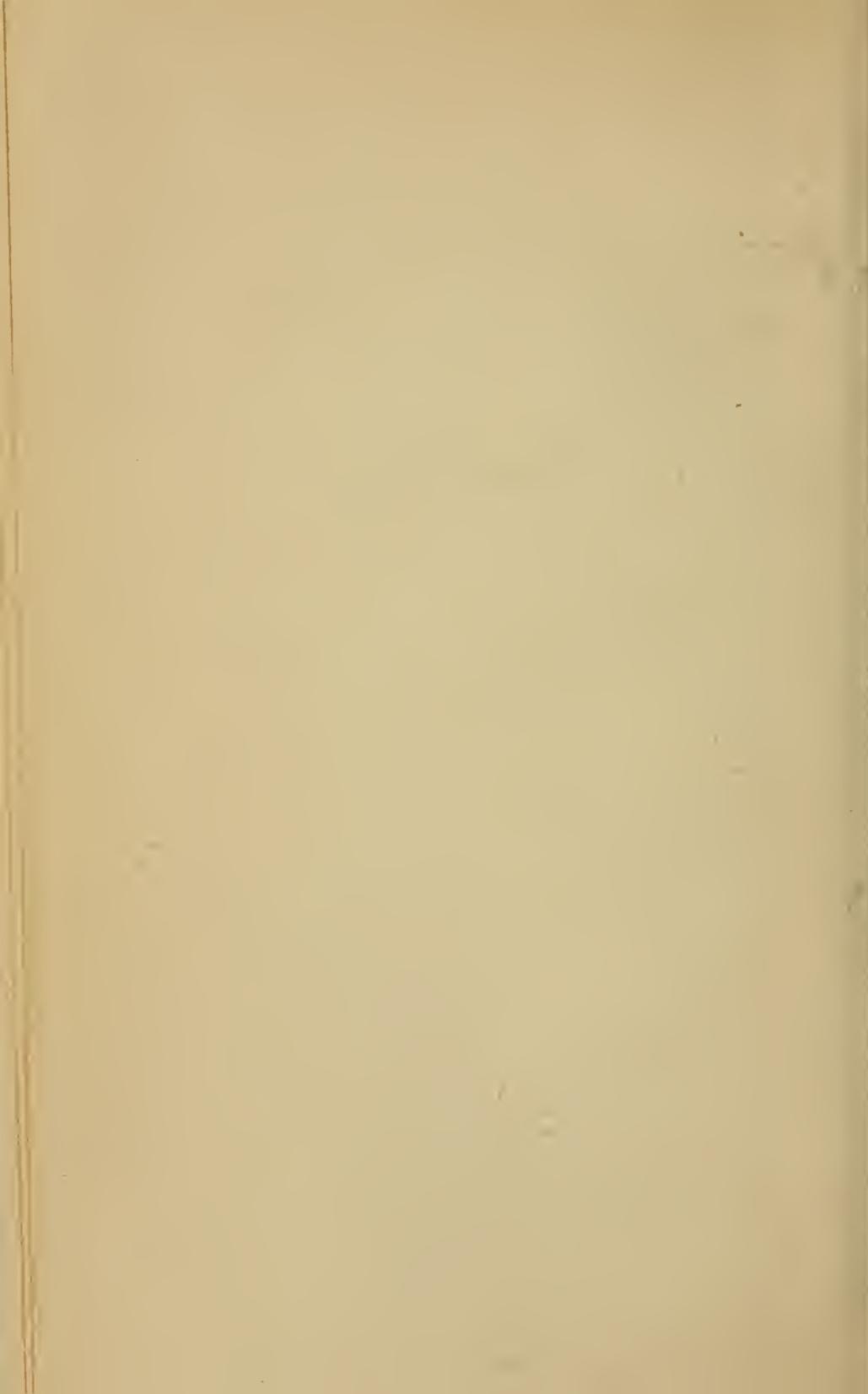




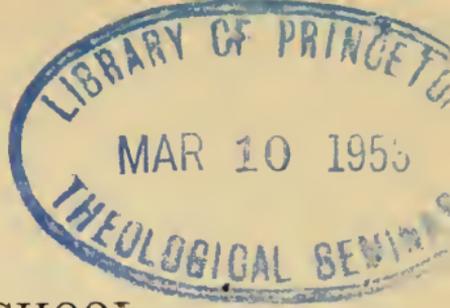








THE



SUNDAY-SCHOOL

ANNIVERSARY.

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WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,  
AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

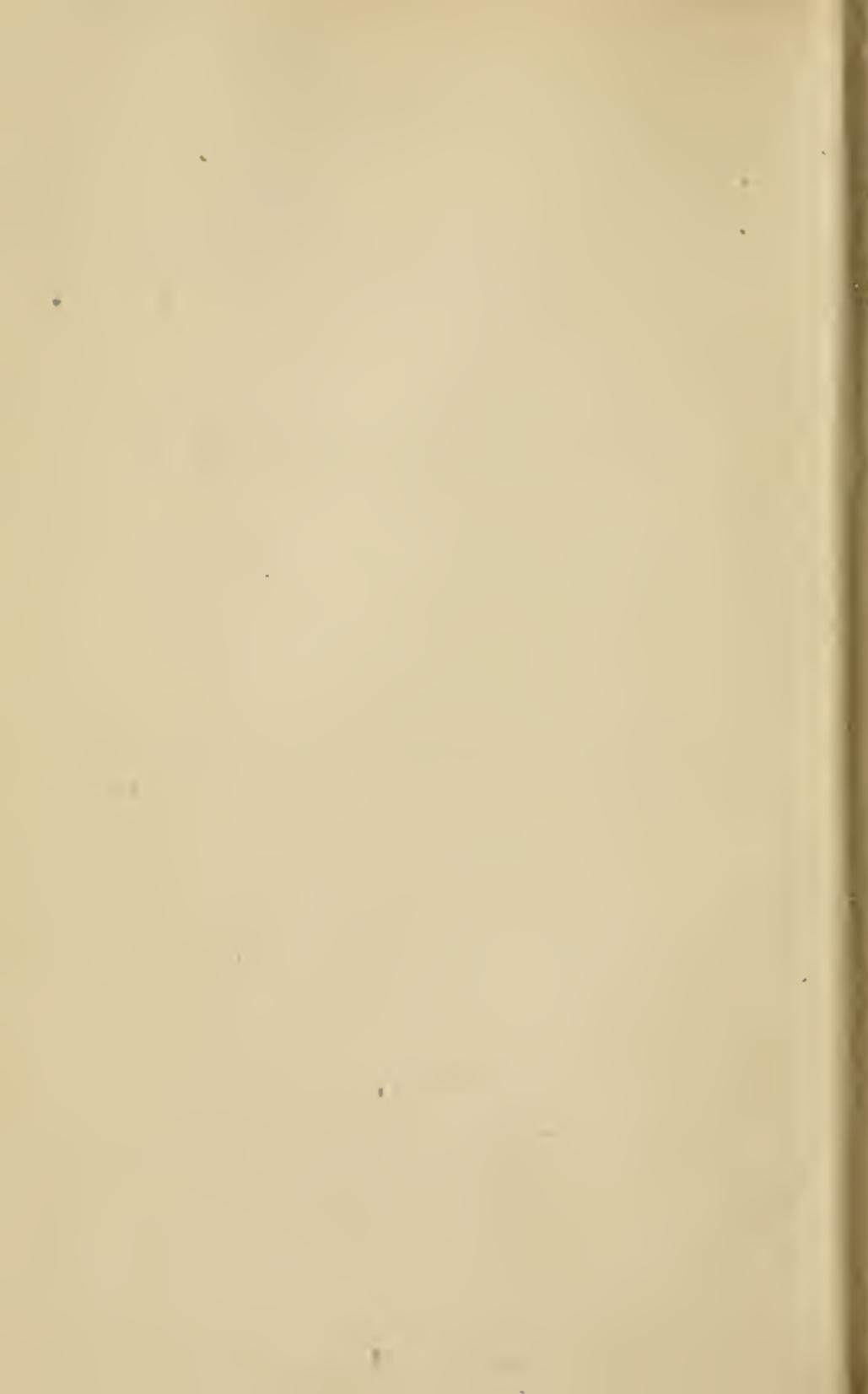
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James Waddell Alexander

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION:

1122 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

375 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.



THE  
SUNDAY-SCHOOL  
ANNIVERSARY.

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IN the middle of October, I received a visit from a minister in the country. He came to invite me to attend the anniversary of the Sunday-schools belonging to his congregation. As I do not wish to let you know exactly where it was, I will call the place of his abode *Coventry*. I am

always glad of an opportunity to do any thing to help on Sunday-schools, and therefore I agreed to go to the anniversary, although I had made up my mind to spend that day in New York.

I have many reasons for loving Sunday-schools. About twenty years ago, when I was a little boy, we began to hear about the Sunday-schools in England, but there were none in our part of America. At last it was determined to set one up in the village where I lived. Accordingly, notice was given, and preparations were made. A room was en-

gaged; and what sort of a room do you think it was? You could scarcely guess. It was the loft above a carriage-house. This, however, made very little difference. Into the carriage-house loft we went, boys and girls together, full of expectation; for children are attracted by every thing new or strange. And we had heard of the red and blue tickets, with verses on them, which used to be given as rewards in those days; and also of beautiful little books which were to be presented to such as knew their lessons.

I well remember that first Sunday-school. I can almost see, at this moment, the crowded room, the long dipped-candles, flaring in the draft of wind which came through the chinks. I can almost hear the hum of boys and girls, like the noise of a swarming hive. It was an evening of excitement. We were all little enthusiasts. Our blue tickets were worth as much to us as so many silver dollars would be now-a-days; and as to the red ones! I am sure we looked forward to the prize as earnestly as we should at this time for a fifty dollar note.

Better things than these also came up in my memory. I recollect tender thoughts of my creator and Redeemer; resolutions to read, and pray, and seek God's favour. And though I am sorry to say, that we were more bent on getting many verses by rote, than on understanding what we got; and more anxious to have a box full of tickets, than to learn the lesson out of the Bible yet some good thoughts were dropped, like seeds, in our minds, which have never been destroyed. This is one of the reasons why I love Sunday-schools, and why

I am always glad to lend my aid in carrying them forward.

Before I tell about the Coventry anniversary, let me give another reason of my attachment to Sunday-schools. There are a great many passages of the holy Scriptures which I have by memory, so that I can repeat them to myself as I walk or ride, or as I lie awake, during nights of pain or sickness. This is a great treasure. I beg my young readers to take notice that every one of these texts is worth more to me than a piece of gold. Now, I can well remember that most of

these verses were committed to my memory, when I was a child at the Sunday-school in the village. And if I had not got them then, I could not, at a later period, have learned half so many; because it is observed, that the memory of youthful minds is like soft clay, in which you can leave any marks and impressions you choose; but the older one is, the harder it is to learn by memory, just as clay becomes solid and unyielding by age.

When I grew up to be a young man, and began to take more interest in religious things, it came

into my mind, that I ought to do something for the benefit of my fellow creatures; and after I had thought about it for some time, I concluded that there was no way in which a youth, such as I was, could be the instrument of doing so much good, as by teaching in a Sunday-school.

There was a neighbourhood of a few houses, about two miles from our village, where the people were very careless and ignorant. A pious young man from Geneva, was beginning a Sunday-school at this place, and I was asked to assist him. It was delightful to

me to hear the request, for I had long wished for just such an offer. Here we had a pleasant little school for about two years. Every Lord's-day morning we used to walk or ride to the hamlet, and return in time for church at home; and the remembrance of the happiness which I enjoyed in being a teacher, makes me love Sunday-schools. But I must return to my narrative.

As I said before, I agreed to go to Coventry, and assist Mr Hunt at the October anniversary. When the day arrived my health was not good. I had been at-

tacked two days before with a painful disease, and my strength was by no means recovered. Yet the morning was so lovely that I resolved to persevere, in reliance on our Heavenly Father, who gives grace as it is needed.

Mr. Jackson, a neighbour of mine, is a native of Coventry, and was kind enough to take me in his carriage. The clearness and freshness of an October morning is good for the health, and I felt stronger every mile we drove. The woods had that dappled appearance which the frosts of autumn produce on the foliage.

Every shade and tint seemed to be sprinkled over the forest. The blood-red of some trees, the orange of others, the varied yellow of still more, and the general softness of the whole, was indeed very beautiful. Some persons are saddened by the fall of the leaf. It has never had this effect on my feelings, for I remember that the change is useful to the vegetable world; and that after the repose of winter, these same branches will be still more freshly and beautifully clad. It also reminds one of the death and re-

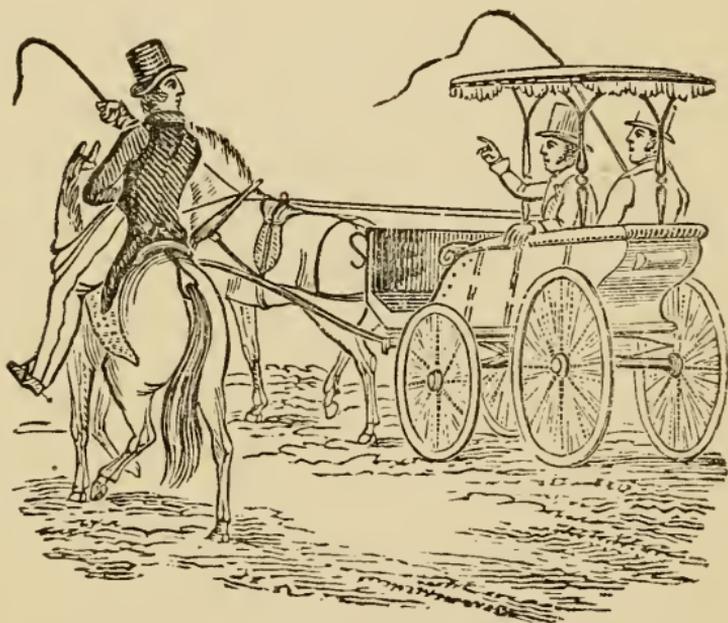
surrection of the believer, which is a pleasing, joyful subject.

As we passed on, through a fertile region, it was gratifying to behold the fruits of the earth rewarding the farmer's labour. We saw, on every hand, orchards laden with golden or blushing fruit; barn-yards crowded with stacks of grain, neatly thatched over to protect them from the storms; and meadows over which sheep and cattle were grazing with delight. Any man who has a heart for Christian cheerfulness must rejoice at such sights, and will think of the boundless goodness

of our heavenly Father. My mind turned naturally to such passages as these: "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth." "O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all!" "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Mr. Duval, a good friend of youth, accompanied us in this little expedition; but for the sake of his health, and in order to en-

joy the prospect, he rode on horseback. Occasionally, as he galloped along by us, he would stop and point out remarkable scenes on the way, and join in conversation. Thus we proceeded with much cheerfulness and comfort. The farmers on our road were busily employed in gathering the Indian corn into little stacks which covered the whole face of the country at certain spots. This useful production gives food to many thousands of men and beasts, and is one of the richest gifts of Providence to America. The young reader





may be pleased to know that it is in Europe called *maize*. In the United States it commonly goes by the name of *corn*. In Great Britain, the word *corn* means all kinds of grain which grow in ears, and not in pods. When we read in English books of corn, we must not think of maize or Indian corn, but of wheat, rye, barley, and the like. Thus, in the gospel of John, our Saviour says, "Except a *corn of wheat* fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." And in Deuteronomy, of the ox that "treadeth out the corn;" and in

the Psalms, of the valleys "covered over with corn;" and in Amos, of "corn sifted in a sieve," and in Joel, of "the withered corn." There are some regions of the earth, however, where maize and rice are more used than wheat. In China and Japan rice is more common than any other grain. In the warmer parts of our own continent Indian corn abounds more than either. Asia is the native country of rice, and America of maize. Indian corn, though so tall and stout, nevertheless, belongs to the tribe of *grasses*.

But I must not forget my anniversary. As we proceeded in our ride, we came to a vale through which a gently flowing brook passes, in which I had often bathed when I was a boy, and over whose frozen surface I had often skated. A large grist-mill and a saw-mill are situated just where our road crosses the bridge. On the rise of the hill beyond, many feet above the water, stands the village church of Bellevue, in which for two successive years I have attended the yearly examination of several flourishing Sunday-schools. But between

the mill and the church, I was surprised to behold the wonderful change produced by a large canal, lately completed. Here, where, in former days, we could see no craft bigger than a canoe, or a ferry-boat, we now see passing every day large sloops and schooners. As I looked at the effects wrought by perseverance, enterprise, resolution, industry, and skill, I asked myself, Why should not Christians accomplish like wonders in behalf of Sunday-schools, by like zeal and diligence? And I took occasion to express this thought

to my good friends in the Co-entry church.

The country became more and more pleasing to the eye as we advanced. On either side of the highway, there were wide-spreading farms, with comfortable dwellings. Sometimes we descended into hollows, through which small streams pursued their silent way; sometimes we were shaded by tall groves, in which the squirrel might be seen leaping down from lofty branches, or the wood-lark hopping in the thick underwood. Then we came out again into the high open country, and could see

at the north-west, on our left hand, the distant blue hills of Sidmouth. My heart rejoiced at the beauty of the scene, rejoiced in the goodness of the Lord. I was ready to say aloud—

“Not content

With every food of life to nourish man,  
By kind illusions of the wondering sense,  
Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye  
And music to his ear.”

I felt disposed to say with the psalmist: “Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for

the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat:" but, what is better than all, "he sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation!"

Of all the people on the face of the earth, we, Americans, ought to be thankful. Blessed, blessed shall we and our children be, if we are rightly affected by the goodness of God unto us.

Towards the middle of the day we began to come into a more thickly settled district; the farms were smaller and nearer together and the houses more numerous. We approached a settlement resembling a village, and the steeple of Coventry church was seen rising above the yellow poplars. We alighted at the door of the pastor's dwelling-house, and he led us in. We could observe from the windows, that the people were already beginning to come in from the neighbouring country-places. And when, after a good plain dinner, and an hour of rest

we went to the church, we were surprised to see the numbers which poured in from the hills and valleys of Sidmouth, and the plain of Coventry. The people were arriving every moment; some in country wagons, some in chaises, but most on horseback or on foot. Clusters were gathering about the church-yard, and all seemed full of the anniversary. The pastor and his assistants were seen distributing the hymns that were to be sung; these having been printed for the occasion. But scarcely any thing gave me so much satisfaction as

to see a number of farm-wagons with light covers, closely seated and filled to overflowing with little, ruddy, smiling boys and girls from the various schools. As this was the first annual examination in Coventry, there was a very great interest felt by all the young people, especially as they were anxious to make proper answers when called upon to recite. Alighting from the wagons, the children walked in a sort of procession after their respective teachers, and then the other persons having entered the church.

we had quite a respectable congregation.

There is something in a rural assemblage of persons which always gives me pleasure. In the rich farming districts, like this of which I now speak, remote from great towns, there is often a remarkable appearance of equality. You do not see so many either of the flaunting rich or of the abject poor, as in cities; but the people are much alike in their manners, dress, and appearance. As I took my place near the pulpit, and cast my eyes around on the congregation, I was gratified

to see the health, the intelligence, the sobriety, and the cheerfulness, which shone in most of the faces before me.

The long rows of red-faced boys and girls were more lovely objects to my eye than so many bags of gold. I look upon them as the jewels of America. All looked full of health, robust, and vigorous. All seemed cheerful and respectful. All were full of the occasion. If one of our city lads had been present, I think it likely he might have laughed at these little country folks. He would be apt to see among them

many a coat or bonnet not in the fashion; he would see many a face burned with the harvest sun, and find almost every hand hardened with labour. He might imagine them to be poor or ignorant. But the city lad would mistake, and if he laughed at the farmers' sons, might be laughed at in his turn. These simple-hearted boys are in many instances the sons of wealthy farmers; but they have been bred to labour with their hands. Some of them may not know the rare sights of a city, or the tricks of a dancing school; but they can manage a fiery

horse, at which the scornful visitor would tremble ; or cut down a hickory in the woods, or swim with rugged strength over the torrent of a river, or drag the raccoon from his high resting place in the old oak.

My childhood was passed in a great city, but I respect the virtues of the country, and look upon the youth of our rural districts as the very hope of America. These boys and girls have many hours for reading in the long winter evenings. And I was delighted to listen to the quickness and accuracy with which they answered

the questions that were proposed to them. They had been well taught. Their teachers seemed to show a degree of pride in the good appearance which they made; and the children were in a state of very high excitement. Scarcely a single reply out of some hundreds was wrong. I rejoiced for my country when I looked at the schools here assembled, and saw the little folks so clean, so neat, so well instructed, and so happy. I rejoiced in the Sunday-school enterprise, which brings such youth together, fills them with divine truth, puts

books into their hands, and fits them for life. And I rejoice this moment in knowing that many thousands of such beloved children are training up in our Sunday-schools over all the face of the land.

After singing, prayer, and examination, it became my duty to make an address to the people; in order to awaken a more lively interest in the good work of Christian education.

When I had ended, Mr. Duval, our companion, made a short discourse to the children. They listened with the greatest atten-

tion, and even earnestness. He related several anecdotes of heathen children, to show how much cause the Sunday-scholars of America have to be thankful to God. And it seemed to me that the tears were swelling in the eyes of several little hearers.

After another hymn, and another prayer, the anniversary meeting was concluded, and I believe all present were much gratified. A new interest appeared to be excited in behalf of the Sunday-school. I thought I could see the eyes of parents sparkling with new hope for their offspring; and

observe in teachers a fresh zeal for their good work. And, therefore, I flatter myself that our visit was not altogether unprofitable. I am sure it was most pleasant.

O with what spirit the wagon loads of children drove away homeward! The examination, for which they had both longed and trembled, was past! As the stouter boys on the front seats mounted, and took the reins, and smacked their long whips over the horses, their manner seemed to say, "Now we feel happy!" And how tenderly the thankful mothers led out the rosy girls,

who had scarcely done blushing from the unaccustomed trial of their modesty. And how pleasantly, the fathers, in groups among the speckled trees, talked about this new way of bringing up their sons and daughters in the knowledge of God.

I am sure these sensible, honest people went home with more love to their families, and greater determination to enlighten their minds. What a different state of things is this, from that which existed in Coventry forty years ago. *Then* there were no Sunday-schools; no questions on the

Bible; no cheap explanations of hard texts; no beautiful maps of Scripture places. Such books were only in the libraries of the learned. *Then* there was no such easy way for young Christians to be helping on the cause of God. The pastor had not then a little army of teachers to aid him in his work; nor a place at which he might meet all the lambs of his flock together.

While I gazed on the lines of carriages, and trains of horsemen, and companies of country people, departing on foot, and as I looked along the three great roads that

meet at Coventry church, I could not but exult and be thankful "What hath God wrought!"

Most of these youth will be *parents* a few years hence. And surely they will be better able to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," for having been at Sunday-school themselves. Some of them will be *teachers of schools* in different neighbourhoods; and surely they will be better teachers for having here learned the best method of instruction. Some of them will be *emigrants* to the far West; and surely they will

be more disposed, for this instruction, to carry far beyond the Mississippi the truth of Christ, and plant churches in the great States that are not yet named. Some of these teachers will be *ministers of the gospel*, and surely they will have that qualification which holy Timothy had; who, *from a child*, had known *the holy Scriptures*, which are able to make *wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. Some of them may be *missionaries* to the heathen; and while they found schools in Africa, or in the islands of the sea, surely they

will remember how they were taught in the schools of verdant Coventry. May *all* of them, through the grace of Christ, become true disciples of the Lord!

When we had spent a little time in the parsonage, with Mr Hunt's family, we found that the day was declining, and, therefore, prepared to return. As we drove off, the sun, near its setting, was immediately before us, and the crimson curtains of cloud seemed to hang in the west, just over our beloved home. There was not a mile of our way which

did not present something agreeable to the eye, or some matter for useful thought. As we passed the farm-houses, we saw the labourers coming in from their day's work, ready to enjoy their evening meal with zest, and still more ready to lie down in gentle, refreshing slumber, for *the sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much.* Eccl. v. 12. The cows from their pasture were slowly returning, and the tinkling of the bell was heard far off among the woods. The fowls of the air were silently ga-

thering to their resting places ;  
and man and beast preparing for  
repose.

These are common sights ;  
and to many it may seem trifling  
to mention them. But is not the  
glory of God seen in these ordi-  
nary occurrences ? Do we not  
discern in them his wisdom and  
goodness ? The psalmist thought  
so. Many of his beautiful hymns  
are framed in the view of just  
such common scenes. Read the  
104th psalm, and you will be  
taught that the every-day sights  
and events are proper to be min-  
gled with our devout tribute of

praise. *The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted, where the birds make their nests as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies. He appointed the moon for seasons, the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.*

**O LORD,** *how manifest are thy*

*works! in wisdom hast thou made them all!*

It was dark when we arrived at home. God had prospered us through the day, and now we were bound to render him thanks, I trust it was not insincerely, that, in our several families, we knelt before the Lord our maker, to praise him for his goodness. A day spent in the service of Christ is always a day of enjoyment. O that the idle and the worldly knew this! Then, instead of running from one amusement to another, and tasting every pleasure without satisfaction, they

might find every day happier than that which preceded it, and all their enjoyments preparatory for heaven.

Reader ! The Lord Jesus Christ has work for *you* to do Believe in him, receive him as your Saviour, bow to him as your master, confide in him as your elder brother; and he will be your support, delight, and portion for ever and ever.

**THE END.**

THE  
LITTLE STORY BOOK.



WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND  
REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

James Waddell Alexander

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AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION:

1122 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

375 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.



THE  
LITTLE STORY BOOK.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PLAY-GROUND.

I AM sure the little boy who is reading this book is fond of play. All children are fond of play; and there is nothing wrong in this, if they play at the right time, and when their parents or teachers give them leave.

Mrs. Truman had one little son, named Thomas. One day, after he had been working several hours, helping his poor mother

to get some yarn ready for the weaver, she called him and said, "Now, Tommy, you may run out



and play at blind man's buff or cricket. Here is the nice new ball I have made for you. But you must be sure to come back before dinner."

“Yes, ma’am,” said Tommy, “I shall not stay long.” And the little fellow jumped out of the door, and ran off to the green, where John and Joseph Thompson were playing cricket. His good mother looked after him, and was pleased to see her little son so rosy and happy.

Mrs. Truman was very poor, and had to work hard for her living, but she feared the Lord, and this was enough to make her contented. She loved her little boy, and tried to teach him every thing that was good. And Thomas was always glad to read in

the Bible, and to near about the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I must tell what happened at the play-ground. After the boys had played ball for more than an hour, they began to be tired. John Thompson was the son of a gardener, and his father had a great many fine plants. So, when they had done playing, John said,

“Come, Tommy, let us go to our garden, and see the beautiful flowers. We can play there all the afternoon.”

“Oh, no,” said Thomas, “I cannot go, for mother said I must

come home before dinner, and she cannot do without me."

*John.* She does not care about your coming home so very soon. I am sure she can do very well without you.

*Thomas.* No, she cannot, indeed; for she has to work hard for her living, and she has no one but me to help her. And she wants me to take some yarn to Mr. Reed, the weaver, so that we may get a little money.

*Joseph.* I know why Tommy will not go with us. He is afraid of getting a whipping from his mother.

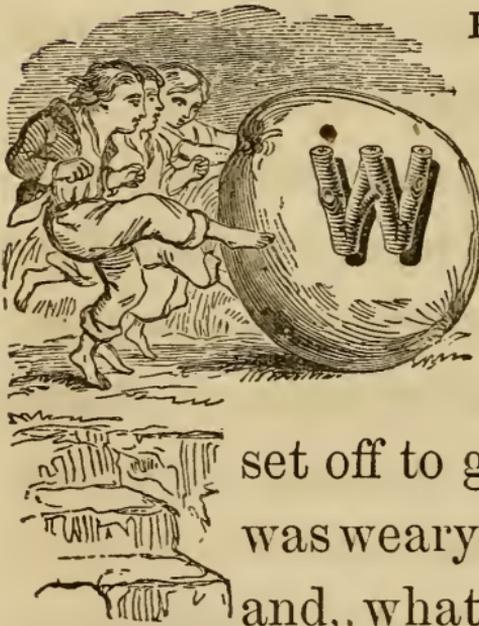
When Thomas heard this, he began to be ashamed. He was so foolish, that he chose to do wrong rather than to be laughed at by these bad boys. So he disobeyed his mother, and went with them to the garden.

When they got there, they saw a great many fine plants and shrubs, and little Sally and Jane Thompson filled a basket with beautiful flowers. There were roses, and pinks, and lilies, and tulips, and peonies, and many others; and they were all tied up in little nosegays. Tommy wanted some of these very much, but

he did not know how to get them. At last he thought he would give his ball for some of them. Now his mother had given him this ball upon his birth-day: it was covered with green and red leather, and was very pretty. Mrs. Truman was poor, and she had no other present to make her son on his birth-day, and Thomas had promised her that he would not barter it away.

At last he was so desirous to have the flowers, that he gave the ball to Sally Thompson for a basket full of them, and promised her that he would bring the basket back the next morning.

## CHAPTER II.



WHEN it began to be dark, our Tommy took his basket of flowers, and set off to go home. He was weary and hungry, and, what was worse, he felt very badly, because he had been doing wrong.

As he walked home, something within him seemed to tell

him that he was a bad boy, and that he had committed sin. This was his *conscience*. He was almost ashamed to see his mother's face. He knew that he had made her very sorry, and he thought that perhaps she had gone, herself, to the weaver's with the yarn. Then he wished he could get the ball back again, and that he had not gone to the garden, and that he had not played with these idle boys. Tommy was almost ready to cry at the thought of all this.

When he got almost home, the thought came into his head, that he would just tell his mother how

bad he had been, and ask her to forgive him. Mrs. Truman was sitting by the door, sewing some clothes for him. As soon as she saw him, she said, "O, Tommy Tommy, you do not know how unhappy you have made me. I did not know what had become of you, and I was afraid you had met with some accident."

When Thomas heard this he began to weep, and hid his face in his mother's lap. "Oh, mother," said he, "I ask your pardon: I am a wicked boy, for I have disobeyed you, and broken my promise; and I have given away

the ball which you made for me.” Then he told his mother all that had happened.

Mrs. Truman kissed her little son, and said, “Tommy, I am glad that you have confessed the whole truth of your own accord. I would rather lose a hundred balls than that my son should be a liar. If you are really sorry for being so undutiful, go and confess it to the Lord, and ask him to forgive you, for Christ’s sake. And be sure, my dear boy, never to do so any more.”

Now, my little readers, I wish you to learn from this simple sto-

ry, never to let bad companions lead you into disobedience. Never break your promises ; never disobey your parents ; and if, at any time, you have done wrong, never deny it, but confess the whole truth. Confess it to those whom you have offended, and confess it to God. This will make you feel easy in your mind, and if you are sincere, you will be forgiven

## CHAPTER III.

## THE HOLIDAYS.



ook at the  
coach stand-  
ing at the  
gate. It is  
in good time.  
And what is it  
there  
for?

It has  
come to  
take the boys  
home from school  
to spend the holi-

days. Little boys are always glad when the vacation comes, for then they can go home, and see their dear parents, and brothers and sisters. But who is that going out of the academy door, with his cap in his hand? That is young Frank Bell, who is going home in the coach. He is taking leave of the little boys who are not to go away from school.

Now the driver has cracked his whip; the horses are trotting along, and the wheels are going round. The coach drives on so fast, that the trees and fences

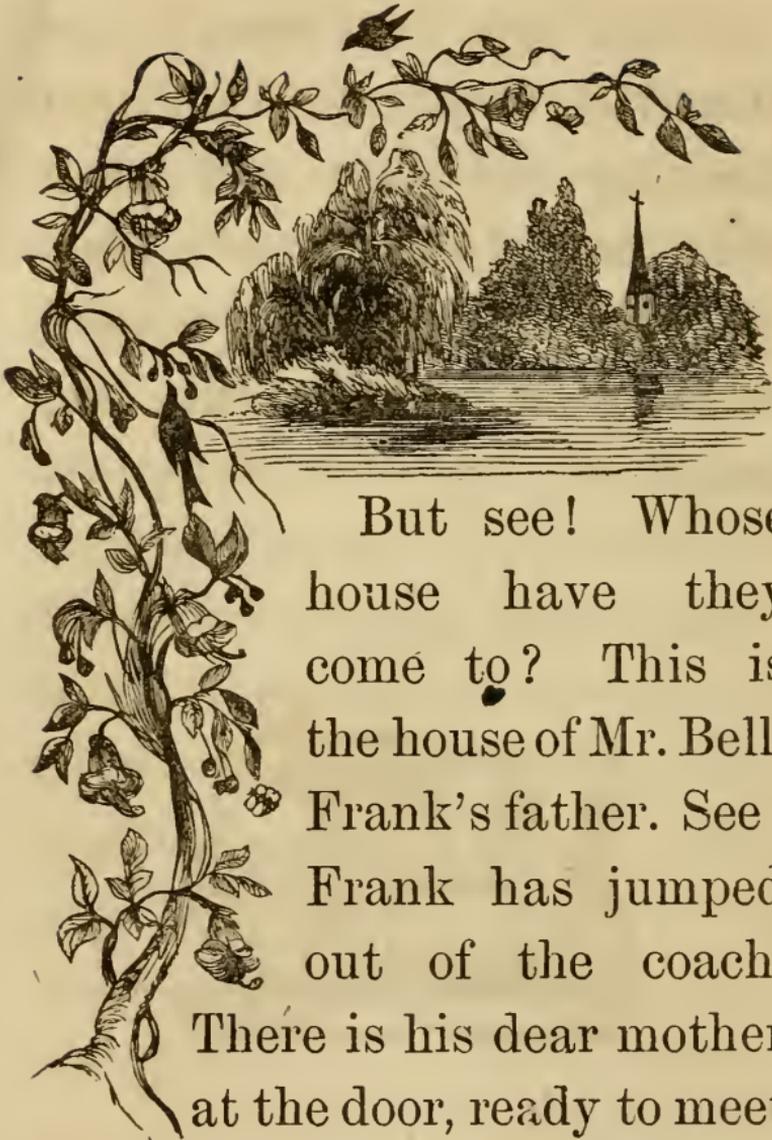
seem to be sliding back. O, how delighted the little fellows are. Every thing fills them with pleasure. They look out at the fine houses, and woods, and green meadows, and grain-fields; the streams and bridges; the flocks and the birds. They pass through pretty villages, and every few houses some one of the scholars gets out at his father's door. The boys laugh and talk about the pleasant times they shall have when they get home, and how glad they shall be to meet with their dear friends once more.

The little fellows laughed and

sang so much, that Mr. Carson, who went along to take care of them, had to tell them they must be quiet. He said to them, "Boys, you must not keep such an uproar, or the people along the way will think you are a parcel of drunken sailors. And, besides, when we stop at the door of any house, you must let the good people see what quiet, well-behaved young gentlemen you are"

So the boys were more peaceable, but they could not help shouting out now and then, when any of them saw a place with which he was acquainted, or came in sight of his own home.





But see! Whose house have they come to? This is the house of Mr. Bell, Frank's father. See! Frank has jumped out of the coach. There is his dear mother at the door, ready to meet him. There is his little sister Jane. And there is his dog Tray.

When Frank had got into the parlour and sat down, he began to tell them every thing that came into his head about the school. He asked a hundred questions about the servants, and the neighbours, and his playmates, and while they were preparing his dinner, he walked out to meet his father, who was coming home from the farm. Mr. Bell was rejoiced to see his son so much grown, and looking so well.

“Father,” said Frank, “I have a letter in my pocket from the teacher, which will tell you how I have behaved myself.”

“Very well,” said his father, “let me have it; I hope you have been a good boy.”

Mr. Bell read the letter, and found that Frank had been very diligent, and that the master considered him one of the best boys in the academy. And Frank blushed, and was full of pleasure, when he saw how much his dear father was delighted.

There is hardly any thing which gives parents so much pleasure as for their children to behave well, and to learn diligently. And if little boys and girls would only think of this, it

would make them careful to avoid every thing which is wrong.

Mr. Bell went in with Frank to dinner, and after dinner he took his son into the garden, and talked with him a long time; for he wished to see whether Frank had been learning what was useful, and especially whether he had remembered the religious truths which he had been taught by his parents. He was pleased when Frank told him that he had not forgotten these things.

“Have you been careful to read your Bible, Frank?” said Mr. Bell.

*Frank.* Yes, sir. Here it is. I always carry it with me in this little silk case, which mother made, to keep it from being soiled.

*Mr. Bell.* How much of it have you read?

*Frank.* I have read through the whole since this time a year ago.

*Mr. Bell.* I hope you have committed some of it to memory.

*Frank.* Yes, sir. I have learned the Sermon on the Mount, and eleven chapters of the gospel of John, and several of the

psalms of David. And we have studied a great deal with the Sunday-school Questions.

*Mr. Bell.* My dear Frank, have you been careful to pray to God?

*Frank.* I have always tried to pray every morning and evening.

Mr. Bell then talked about good things till the tears came into his little son's eyes. And when they went into the house again, he told Frank that he must get up very early in the morning, and come into the summer-house, where he would find something to please him.

In the morning, Frank was up betimes. He hastened down to the garden, and went into the summer-house. There he saw a



number of beautiful presents, which his father had prepared as the reward for his good behaviour.

There was a little ship, and a rocking-horse ; a beautiful book, and a large kite, covered with pictures.

While he was looking at these, his father came in, and said, "My dear Frank, your mother and I do not wish to bribe you. We are sure you would be diligent without these gifts. But we have given you these things to encourage you, and to show you how much pleasure it gives us when you are diligent, industrious, and obedient. Continue to be so. And above all things, love and serve God ; believe in

the Lord Jesus Christ, and strive to do whatever you find commanded in the Bible.”

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE LITTLE LIARS.

MRS. GOODLOVE and her daughter Helen were one day sitting at their work, when the little girl stopped sewing, and said,

“Mother, is it not wicked to call any one a *liar*?”

*Mrs. G.* Yes, my dear, we should never call anybody by any bad name. But it is worse a great deal to BE a liar.

*Helen.* Mother, what is a liar?

*Mrs. G.* A *liar* is one who tells lies. A *liar* is a person who tells what he knows is not true.

A *lie* is a wilful falsehood. And the Bible says some dreadful things about liars.

*Helen.* Tell me, if you please, some of the things that the Bible says about liars.

*Mrs. G.* It says the Lord hates a lying tongue. God says, "Lie not one to another;" and, "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." The devil is a liar, and the father of lies. And the Scriptures declare that "Liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."

*Helen.* Oh, I hope I shall

never be so wicked as to tell lies. Are there not some little children who are liars ?

*Mrs. G.* Yes, my dear, I am sorry that there are. Would you like to hear a story about two such children ?

*Helen.* Yes, ma'am ; please to tell me.

*Mrs. G.* There were two little children, named George and Mary Gray. Their father and mother were rich, and gave them fine clothes, and a great many presents ; but they never taught them to fear the Lord, and the little boy and girl learned more

wickedness than I should like to mention.

One morning Mary came to her mother, and said, "Mother will you please to let me go upstairs and play with my doll?" "Yes," said Mrs. Gray, "but take care and do not let the old cat follow you into the room, for my tame robin is hopping about the floor, and puss would be sure to kill him." Mary promised that she would take good care, and not let the cat in. She went upstairs, and took her doll out of the drawer. She undressed it and dressed it again, and played with

it till she was weary. At last she thought it would be very diverting to put the doll's cap on the cat.

*Helen.* Did she not remember what her mother had told her ?

*Mrs. G.* No; she was a careless child, and she forgot all that her mother had said. She was foolish enough to let puss come into the room, where she behaved very well all the time that Mary was undressing the doll. But as soon as Mary tried to put the cap upon puss, she ran off to the corner of the room, where little

Robin was picking up crumbs. She sat very still for a few minutes, and then jumped suddenly



upon the poor bird, and killed him in an instant.

*Helen.* Poor Robin! what a pity! But what did Mary do then?

*Mrs. G.* Mary was very much

frightened, because she knew that her mother would be displeased. She ran out of the room, and the cat ran too, carrying the bird in her mouth. Mary saw this, and tried to make puss drop the bird.

*Helen.* Did Mary tell her mother ?

*Mrs. G.* No, she was wicked enough to begin to make up a falsehood. So she took the bird and laid it in the entry. Then she went into the back parlour, and sat down to her sewing. When her mother came into the house, she was surprised

to find her little pet bird lying dead. She asked Mary whether she had not let the cat come in, but Mary denied it. But just as Mary was telling this great falsehood, her brother George came running in with the cat, which still had the doll's cap on. As soon as Mrs. Gray saw the spot of blood on the little white cap, she knew how it had happened; and Mary had to confess the whole truth.

*Helen.* What a wicked child!

*Mrs. G.* Yes, my daughter, it was a grievous sin against God. For God sees us, and

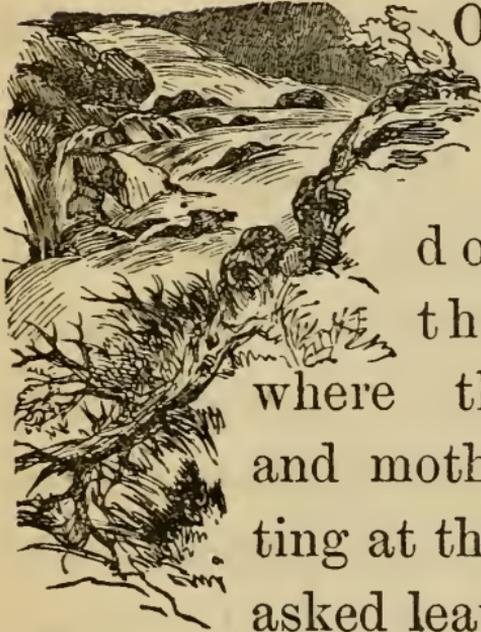
hears us whenever we say a word that is untrue, and he is greatly offended with all liars.

*Helen.* Please to tell me something more about this little girl

*Mrs. G.* I will do so ; for I wish to teach you about another kind of falsehood. I mean the breaking of our promises. If you were to promise to stay in the house all the morning, and then were to go out of doors, it would be breaking your promise to me.

*Helen.* Yes, I know that.

## CHAPTER V.



ONE morning George and Mary came down into the parlour where their father and mother were sitting at the table, and asked leave to go and play in the garden. Now, there was a fish-pond in the garden, which was quite deep enough to drown these little children, and Mrs. Gray was very careful to

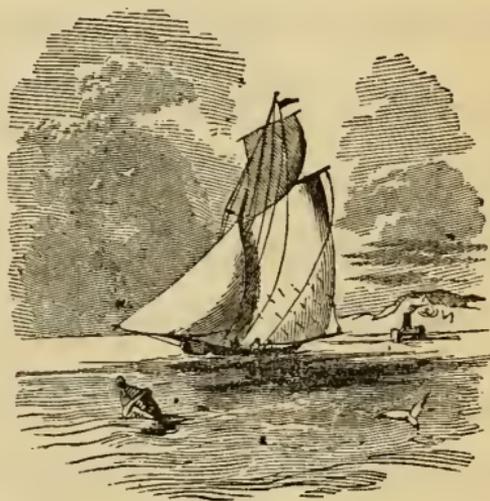
keep them from going too near it. She therefore made them promise that they would keep away from this part of the garden. The children declared that they would not go near the pond, and then ran out to play. After a little time they began to be tired of running up and down the walks, and picking flowers from the borders. Then George said, "I do not think there would be any harm in our just looking at the fish in the pond."

"O," said Mary, "but you know we said we would not go near it."

“Yes,” said George, “but nobody will know it, and we will come right back.”

So the little girl consented to do this evil thing, to break her word, and to disobey her parents. There was a very small boat in the pond, which was not much larger than a large washing-tub, and was made more to look at than for any thing else. The foolish children got into this boat, and sat in it for some time. At last George said he would just put his foot out and push against the bank, to make the boat move a little. But as soon as he did

this, the boat went away off on the pond, and George fell sprawling into the water.



*Helen.* Oh, I hope he did not get drowned!

*Mrs. G.* No. But he was wet from head to foot; and there was poor little Mary in the boat,

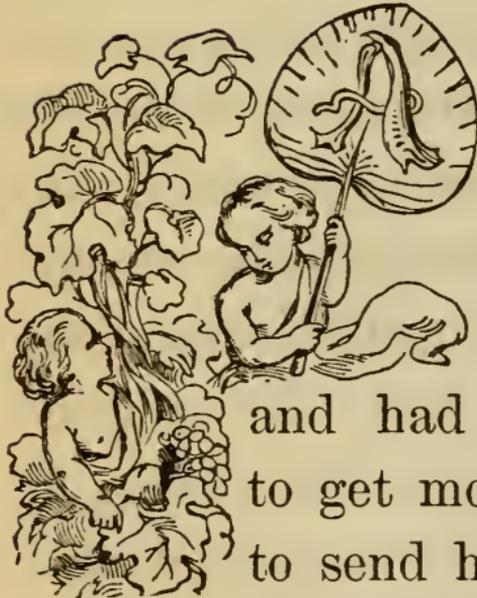
so far from the shore that she could not get out; and George could not reach her. They both began to cry. George was afraid to wade out into the water, for he did not know how deep it might be; and Mary did not know how she was to get out of the boat. But they cried so loudly, that their father heard them, and ran to their relief. When they came into the house, they were very much ashamed of having been so wilful and disobedient.

*Helen.* I think they deserved to get into trouble, for being so bad.

*Mrs G.* Yes, we always deserve to suffer when we commit sin; and it is a great mercy that the Lord does not send judgments on us whenever we disobey his commandments. I hope my dear little girl will always speak the truth, and remember that God hears every word you say; and that you must give an account of every wrong word in the day of judgment.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE IDLE BOY.



ALFRED SIMS was an idle boy. His father was a poor man, and had hard work to get money enough to send his little son to school. But Alfred thought it was a great hardship to get his

lessons, and was glad to get a chance to stay away from school. Sometimes he would pretend to be sick, to keep from going; and when he was at school, he was hardly ever looking at his book.

Almost every day his teacher had to correct him, but he did not seem to become any better. At last he learned to play truant, and used to stay away from school whole days. Then, when he came home in the evening, he would pretend that he had been studying hard with the other boys.

Once he ran off, and ran a

whole morning through the mud, after a company of soldiers who were parading through the streets. When he came home, he was hungry and tired, and in the night he was taken sick with a fever, and was confined to bed for two weeks.

Another time, he told his father that he was going to school. But instead of this, he went to a public stable, where they used to hire out horses. Here he saw a little pony which the hostler was rubbing down. It was not much larger than a small colt and Al-

fred wished very much to get on his back and ride. The hostler told him that he was afraid the pony would throw him, but Alfred insisted upon trying to ride. So he mounted the little horse and rode off. But he had not gone a hundred yards, before the pony kicked up its heels, and threw him off against a fence. He was very much hurt, and was carried home, bruised and bleeding.

This cured him of playing truant, but still he did not love his books, and was almost as idle as before. His poor father used to

talk to him, and try to make him learn but Alfred was careless and disobedient. At length his father told him plainly, that if he did not learn, he must be bound out to a shoemaker. Alfred did not like the thought of hard work, and he promised his father that he would be a better boy. But his idleness was not yet cured.

Some of the little boys and girls in the same school used to get beautiful books as premiums for diligence; but while they would be sitting and reading their new books, Alfred would be out on the green playing at ball. Yet

these good children were much happier than he was. For when people do wrong, they never can



feel altogether comfortable or easy in their minds.

There was a little fellow, named **John Boatman**, who lived

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next door to Alfred's house. This boy often tried to persuade Alfred to learn, but his words seemed to be of no use. At last John thought he would try and get him to go to the Sunday-school; for Alfred had never been to Sunday-school in his life. One Sabbath morning John met Alfred just by the door of the Sunday-school, and asked him to go in. At first, he pretended that he had a headache, but finally he consented to go in. He was more pleased than he expected to be. He heard a great many things which he never knew before; and the

singing was very delightful to him.



The next Sabbath he came again, of his own accord. The teacher gave him a little book with pictures in it, and showed him how to get his lesson. Al-

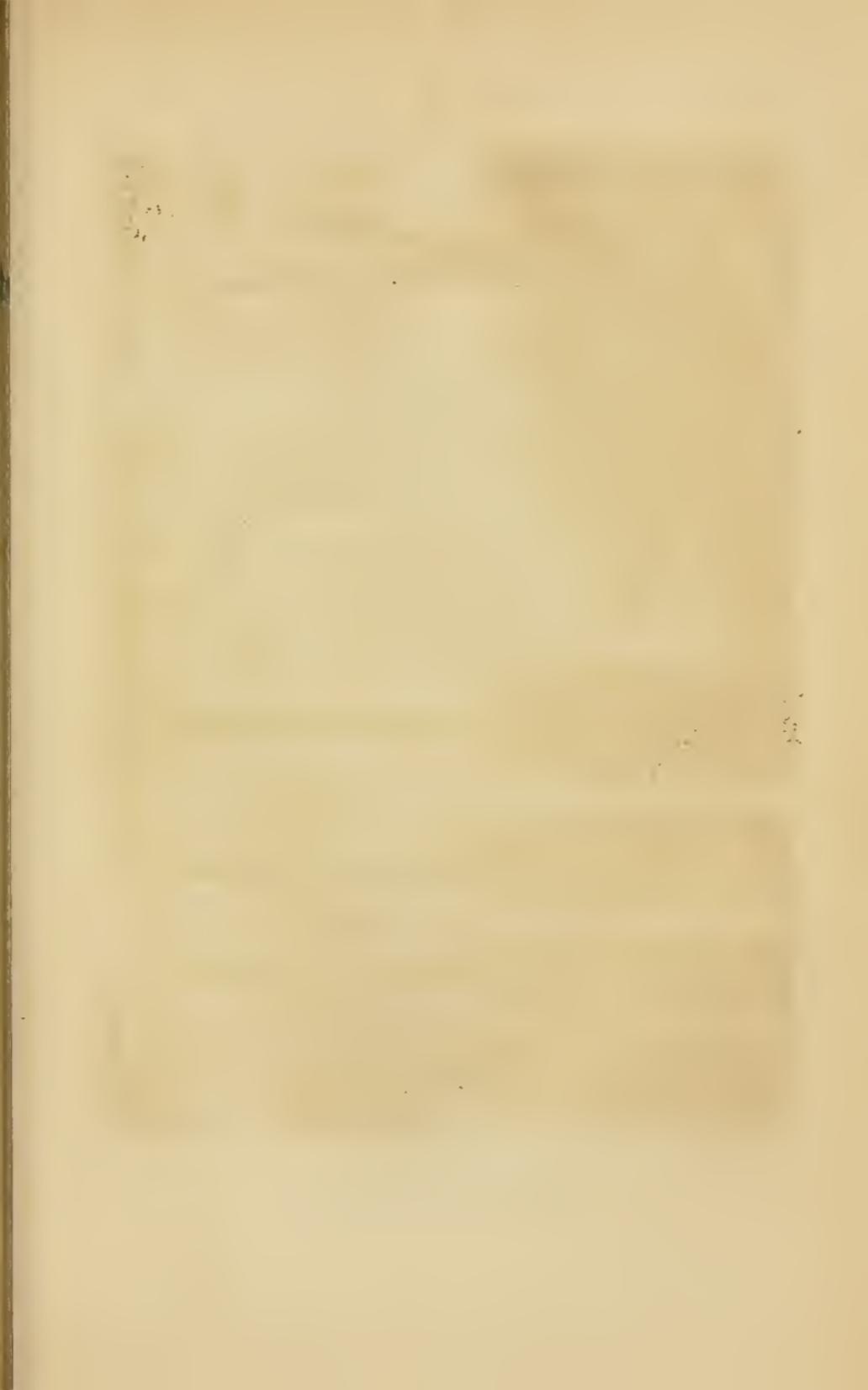
fred wondered to see how busy all the children were; and this too without any scolding or whipping. He began to think it was worth while for him to study also. And it was not long before he became a very diligent scholar.

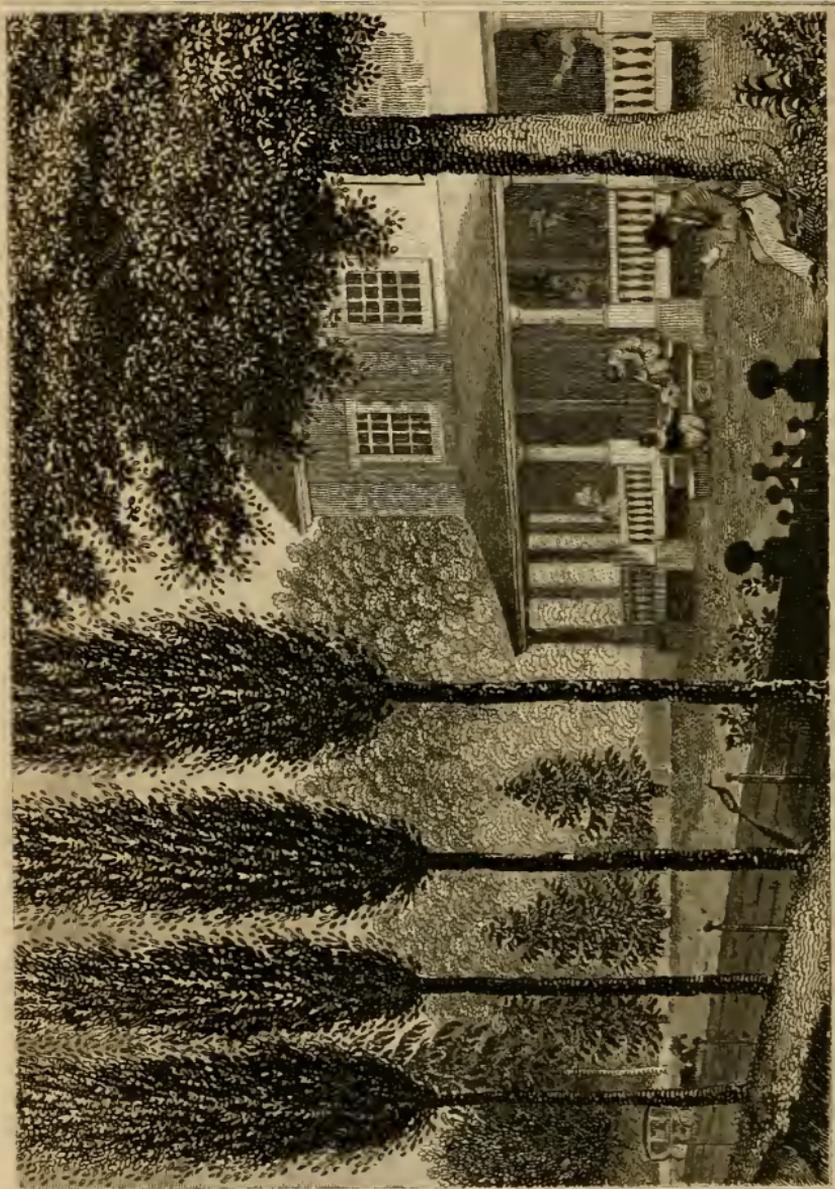
Alfred found so much pleasure in getting his Sunday lessons, that he made up his mind to learn his week-day lessons too. All the boys saw that there was a great change in him, and the teacher was so much pleased, that he called at his father's, and told him that Alfred had got to

be one of the best boys in the whole school. Mr. Sims was very much rejoiced to hear this, and when he spoke to Alfred about it, he found that it had all come from his going to the Sunday-school.

Alfred learned a great deal out of the Bible, and especially about the history of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was no longer the *Idle Boy*, for he had become quite industrious. And his lessons were so far from keeping him from work, that he did more to help his father than he had ever done before. And besides

this, the things which he learned out of the Scriptures did good to his soul. He grew up to be a sober, kind, honest, pious man, and was for many years a Sunday-school teacher himself.





Drawn and Engraved by J. B. Langhorne.

"It was a happy day at the farm-house when Capt. Wells came home." p. 5

# HARVEST.

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WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND  
REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

James Waddell Alexander

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AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION:

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school Union, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the  
Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THIS dialogue is an attempt to answer the following ends.

First, to suggest a method of connecting natural scenes of every-day life with scriptural truths, and thus to encourage religious meditation.

Secondly, to show how full the Bible is of imagery drawn from common affairs.

Thirdly, to communicate some facts in Biblical Antiquities.

It is intended for the elder scholars in Sunday-schools.



## H A R V E S T.

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It was a happy day at the farm, when captain Wells came home. He had been absent more than two years. While he was in France or England, his brother, Mr. Wells, had removed to the country. The little children had grown a great deal, and every thing was changed. But they were all glad to see the captain. He was fond of his nephews and nieces, and always brought them something pretty and useful from Europe.

The children of Mr. and Mrs. Wells were five in number. Arthur, the eldest son, was a young man. He had just come home from college. Caroline was sixteen years of age

Delia was eleven years old, and Edward and Frank, who were twins, were not more than nine years of age.

It was a very warm day in July when he arrived. The family were scattered in different parts of the house. Mr. Wells had been in the field, looking at his reapers, and Mrs. Wells was sewing in the porch. Edward and Frank were sitting upon the steps, making a wagon out of pine boards. Caroline and Delia were fanning themselves in the hall, and Arthur was reading in the court-yard, under a large elm.

Just as the clock struck four, they heard a stage-coach drive up to the opening of the lane, and saw a gentleman get off the box. They knew it was their uncle Charles, for he turned himself round and waved his hand to them. As soon as he came in, the children were all around him, asking him questions. He was a kind man, and answered them with great

patience Then he opened his large trunk, and took out his gifts. There was a large Bible, with pictures, for Arthur, two beautiful



globes for the girls, and a box of tools for Edward and Frank. They all seemed to be very happy, and conversed with much good humour, until the hour came for their evening meal. While they were at tea, a shower came

on, which greatly cooled the air, and gave a freshness to the whole landscape. As they looked westward, they could see that the yellow fields appeared more lovely; the long line of trees along the brook was clean and bright, and the patches of Indian corn had a clear and shining green.

Mr. Wells said to his family, as they viewed the pleasing prospect, this puts one in mind of David's beautiful and pious words, "Thou visitest the earth and waterest it; thou preparest them corn when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, thou causest the rain to descend into the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills are girded with joy on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys

also are covered over with corn : they shout for joy, they also sing.”

*Captain.* I perceive, brother, that you still have your old way of repeating the Bible. Every thing seems to remind you of the Scripture. It is certainly a good habit, but I never could bring myself to think of the words of Scripture so naturally as you do.

*Mr. W.* The art is easily learned, if one begins early enough. The great thing is to read the Bible very frequently, and to commit some part of it to memory every day. Then if a man loves it, he will be reminded of it by all that he sees and hears.

*Frank* Perhaps uncle Charles would like to take a walk before the sun goes down. Shall we get our hats and bonnets ?

*Mr. W.* I am quite willing. What say you tother Charles ?

*Capt.* With all my heart. I am fond of the country. I have been so much at sea lately, that it has been a long time since I saw any thing rural. When I sailed from Liverpool, it was far too early for harvest in England. I shall be glad to see how your grain is coming on.

*Arthur.* Let us walk then. I think, sir, you will be pleased, for Providence has smiled upon my father's farm this summer. We have seldom had the prospect of such crops. By keeping in the lane and along the road we may walk, without getting wet. Come, girls, we are waiting for you.

*Capt.* Harvest-time seems to be a joyful time, all over the world. When I was in Germany. I used to see a great merry-making among the people at this season. And in England, they frolic rather too much, sometimes, at Harvest-home.

*Edward* I suppose that it makes people glad to see such good crops, and to think that they will have something to eat in the winter.

*Arthur.* The Israelites used to rejoice, with psalms and shouting, when they took in their harvest. I remember that it is said in the prophecy of Isaiah: “They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest;” and in another place, where the prophet is mourning over the evils that were to come upon Moab, he says, “the shouting for the summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen; and gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting.”

*Capt.* The words are very beautiful. It is much more expressive than to say that the country is laid waste. By the by, I should like to know at what time of year the harvest came in Judea.

*Arthur.* Travellers are not agreed, sir. I can only answer your question by saying, that the beginning of barley harvest in Judea is about the first of April. It was some time, however, before this was over. The wheat harvest came later. The two harvests extend from the beginning of April to the middle of June. But at Aleppo the wheat harvest is commonly over by the twentieth of May. The season, called by the Jews *Harvest*, lasted from the beginning of April till the end of May. The country is said to be as much parched in May, as it is with us in August. And Isaiah seems to allude to this, when he compares God's favour to *a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest*.

*Mr. W.* We have had a shower this afternoon, and for several days past there has been thunder. But this is never the case in Palestine during the season of harvest. Although thunder and lightning are very common there, they come almost always in winter; so, when

Samuel wished to show the Israelites that he was sent by the Lord to them, he prayed that there might be a thunder shower. This convinced them that he was God's prophet. It is in the 12th chapter of 1 Samuel; "Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain, that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel."

*Arthur.* This fact explains the first verse of the 26th chapter of Proverbs. "As snow in summer, and as *rain in harvest*; so honour is not seemly for a fool." Honour is as much out of place when conferred on a fool, as rain would be if sent in harvest.

*Delia.* Now I see how much good it does

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to know something about the climate of Judea I never understood that so well before.

*Mr. W.* I hope, my daughter, this will make you more diligent in learning every thing which you can find about the manners and customs of the Israelites. You will find enough for your use in Nevin's Biblical Antiquities.\* But I wish to ask you a question. Is it certain that we shall always have the summer and the harvest? How do you know that a year may not come with such seasons that nothing will ripen?

*Frank.* Because the Lord promised Noah! "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

\* This is a very useful and entertaining book, published by the American Sunday-school Union. The first volume gives us a history of the manners and customs of the Israelites, and the second volume of their religion and government.

*Mr. W.* People often forget that it is God who does all this. In Palestine the grain would never ripen if it were not for the regular rains. The Lord reproves the ancient Israelites for not remembering that he gave them their rains and harvests. They ought to have feared God, because if he had not given them these things, they must have perished. He says that they are ungrateful, "neither say in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in its season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of harvest."

*Capt.* Well, I begin to think I have done wrong in the same way. I love the sight of a fine yellow field of wheat, waving in the sun. I would rather see it than a flower garden; yet I believe I never thought much in all my travels of its being given by God.

*Caroline.* I have read in the Bible about

offering a sheaf of the harvest to the Lord. Will you please to tell me more about it, sir?

*Mr. W.* The passover was the time when they did this. On the second day of the pass-over week, the Israelites used to take the first sheaf of barley which they reaped, and wave it before the Lord. (Levit. xxiii. 10—14.) From this day they counted seven weeks, and at the end of this time Pentecost began. *Pentecost* signifies *fiftieth*. It was fifty days after the day of the wave-sheaf. At Pentecost they offered to God the first-fruits of the wheat-harvest. (Lev. xiii. 17.)

*Arthur.* I suppose this was meant to keep them thankful. Our pastor always remembers to give public thanks to God when the harvest is taken in. We are all too apt to forget the bounty of God.

*Mr. W.* True, my son. "Nevertheless, he hath not left himself without a witness, in that

he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts xiv. 17.)

*Caroline.* You have mentioned the *Passover* and the day of *Pentecost*. Which of these is called the *feast of harvest*?

*Mr. W.* The *feast of weeks*, or *Pentecost*, is often called the *feast of harvest*, because it was a season of thanksgiving for the blessings of the year. The first-fruits of the wheat were then offered. They were not brought, however, in a sheaf, but were made into loaves. These were presented in the name of the whole congregation; and I suppose that every pious Israelite rejoiced and praised God in his heart, when he saw them carried up to the house of God. Just so we ought to feel when we look at yonder harvest field.

*Capt.* A beautiful sight, indeed! Here are a great many fields ready for the sickle, besides

those where your men are at work. The breeze that comes over them makes the tops wave like the sea. I dare say, brother, you have some text to apply to them.

*Frank.* I have one, uncle. I got a verse about it this morning.

*Capt.* Well, my little man, let us have it?

*Frank.* In the gospel according to Luke, tenth chapter, and second verse: "Therefore said he unto them, 'The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.'"

*Mr. Wells.* Now, my son, we must see whether you understand what you learn. Who said these words?

*Frank.* Our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Mr. W.* When did he say them?

*Frank.* When he sent the seventy disciples into the places where he intended to go himself afterwards.

*Mr. W.* Very well. But what did our Saviour mean ?

*Frank.* He meant that there were a great many to be taught, and very few to teach them.

*Mr. W.* Right. But what do you think ? Is it so now ?

*Frank.* Yes, sir, I think it is. There are not half enough preachers of the gospel ; and we cannot get teachers enough for one Sunday-school at Chestnut Valley

*Mr. W.* What ought we all to do then ?

*Frank.* We ought to go ourselves, and do as much as we can, just as the seventy disciples did ; and while we are working hard, we ought to pray for more to help us.

*Capt.* Why, you are a little preacher. I am astonished at Frank's knowledge.

*Mr. W.* You need not be. I should be sorry if he should think himself an extraordinary child. He is indebted for all that he knows on these subjects, to the fact, that he has, ever since he was old enough, committed to memory a verse of the Bible a day.

*Capt.* Only a verse!

*Mr. W.* One verse. A single text well learned, is worth a hundred rattled over. But mark, in getting one verse, he has often to learn half a dozen more to explain it. But now we have come to the field where our men are at work. See, how earnestly they are engaged!

*Edward.* And they do all the work without a single drop of liquor.

*Capt.* Now that is just what I like to see

stout men at healthful work. If they are honest and temperate, they are the very bone and sinew of the country.

*Mr. W.* Yes, it is an honourable employment. These men, by their labour, procure what supports all the rest of us. We can do without your teas and broadcloths, brother Charles, but we cannot do without our bread.

*Frank.* Adam was a farmer, was he not, father?

*Mr. W.* I suppose we may call him so. He tilled the ground. It was part of man's punishment; but God has made it also a part of his happiness. Idle people are always unhappy.

*Caroline.* Yes, sir; for there is lazy Lewis. See him lying under the tree in the corner of the fence.

*Edward.* His dog seems more awake than he is; he watches while Lewis sleeps.



*Frank.* He puts us in mind of a text which Delia got the other morning. What is it, sister ?

*Delia.* "He that gathereth in summer is a wise son ; but he that sleepeth in harvest, is a son that causeth shame." Prov. x. 5.

*Mr. W.* Yet, the lazy fellow thinks that he is of more account than these honest men who are at their work. Their fathers were not

rich, but they were industrious, and taught their children to be industrious. These strong and ruddy young men will perhaps be rich in the course of a few years. The two men who are reaping in the front row are more than sixty years old. Yet, how hale and robust they are. Each of them does more work in a day than two slaves commonly do.

*Frank.* They cut it very close and even.

*Mr. W.* Yes, they do indeed. In these days it is not the custom for the poor people to glean, as they used to do in old times. In Judea they always left something for the poor to pick up. It is possible that some of you remember a passage to this effect.

*Arthur.* In the 19th chapter of Leviticus, it 's commanded: "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. **You all**

remember how Ruth gleaned in the field of Boaz. Let us go under this stately tree, and look in our Bibles at this history of Ruth.

*Caroline.* Here, I have found it; it is in the second chapter. When Boaz came into the field, he spoke very kindly to the reapers. He said unto the reapers, “*The Lord be with you; and they answered him, The Lord bless thee.*”

*Mr. W.* It was the beautiful custom of those times. Harvest, you know, was a season of joy. Among good people, this was pious joy; and they blessed one another in the name of the Lord.

*Arthur.* The Psalmist alludes to this in the 129th Psalm. He is there comparing the enemies of Zion to grass on the house-tops, “which withereth before it groweth up: wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom; neither do they

which go by say, *The blessing of the Lord be upon you, we bless you in the name of the Lord.*”

*Caroline.* Let us go on about Ruth. In the next verses I see that she asked leave to glean. And then she gleaned all day. And then Boaz invited her to stay near his young women, and to drink what the young men had drawn.

*Frank.* Drink! Why, did they use strong drink in those days?

*Caroline.* I cannot tell you what they drank; perhaps Arthur can.

*Arthur.* They had vinegar and water to quench their thirst. I suppose this is what is meant in the 14th verse; “And Boaz said unto her, At meal-time come hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar.” It was not uncommon to use this drink, for if you turn to Numbers vi. 3, you will see that

it is said of the Nazarite, “ he shall drink no *vinegar* of wine, or *vinegar* of strong drink.”

*Mr. W.* This is not so strange as you might think. The common drink of the Roman soldiers was vinegar and water.

*Caroline.* The reapers left a good deal on purpose for Ruth, and she gleaned an *ephah* of barley.

*Arthur.* An ephah is between three and four pecks.

*Frank.* Did the Hebrews cut their grain with a cradle, or with a sickle ?

*Capt.* Not with a cradle, I dare say ; for in the greater part of Europe, nobody ever saw what we call a cradle. The reaping-hook or sickle is what they use. I have been in Wales during harvest, and have seen them reaping with a very large sickle. They gather grain

in the arm, and cut it more neatly and quickly than in the common way.

*Arthur.* What you say about the gathering of the stalks in the arm, explains a verse in the 17th of Isaiah: "And it shall be as when the harvest man gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm."

*Mr. W.* Perhaps the prophet means something else. He says the harvest man *reapeth the ears with his arm*: perhaps he means to say, that they pulled up the grain by the roots.

*Delia.* I have seen them pulling up flax in that way, but I never saw them pull wheat. Why should they do so?

*Mr. W.* It is the most common way in the east. All the eastern travellers tell us so. They have so little fodder for their cattle, and so little fuel, that they save every inch of

straw, and leave no stubble in the field, yet they sometimes use the sickle.

*Frank.* Now, uncle, look at the field on the other side of the brook. It looks something like a camp. The shocks look like tents. I suppose it is the practice in most countries to put up sheaves into little stacks or shocks.

*Mr. W.* After the grain was cut down or pulled up by the Israelites, it was formed into sheaves; but the sheaves were never set up into *shocks* as with us, although they are mentioned in our translation of Judges xv. 5. Job v 26: for the original word signifies neither a shock, composed of a few sheaves standing in the field, nor a stack of many sheaves in the barn-yard, but a heap of sheaves laid loosely together, in order to be trodden out as quickly as possible.\*

\* Brown's Ant. vol. ii. p. 591 Lond. ed

*Frank.* Now they have done working Roger is putting on his coat.

*Delia.* Yes, see brother Arthur, how pleased they all seem to be with your barrel of molasses and water. They like it as well as spirits; and what is better, they will not quarrel with their wives when they go home.

*Caroline.* I almost envy these hard-working men. They are so hungry, that they will enjoy their supper. They are so weary that they will be ready to sleep sweetly.

*Capt.* A little hard work would soon cure you of your envy, Caroline. Yet there is some truth in what you say: Solomon says the same: "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." Eccl. v. 12.

*Mr. W.* The clouds begin to gather in the east, and it grows dark. We will return

While we are on our way, let me remind you of some lessons which we may all learn. Can you tell me what kind of grain this is ?

*Delia.* It is wheat.

*Mr. W.* What kind of grain was sown here last autumn ?

*Delia.* Wheat, sir ; of course.

*Mr. W.* How is that ? Do people always reap the same kind of grain that they sow ?

*Delia.* Certainly, sir.

*Mr. W.* What should this teach us ?

*Delia.* It should teach us to be careful to put good things into our minds, that we may reap the benefit of them in time to come.

*Mr. W.* Does it teach you any thing else ?

*Edward.* It teaches us that we must be faithful and obedient, and then we shall be hap-

py. I know a text about it. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of his flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 7.

*Frank.* I wish to reap life everlasting.

*Delia.* Then you must take care what you sow. I am afraid I have been sowing nothing at all in my heart.

*Frank.* Perhaps you have sowed tares. I remember that I heard a minister say that when we are idle, we are letting the devil sow tares in our minds.

*Mr. W.* The prophet Hosea spoke to the wicked Israelites, who lived more than twenty-five hundred years ago, saying, "Ye have ploughed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity:" and again, "Sow to yourselves in right

eousness, reap in mercy." Hosea x. 12, 13  
 And he also spake thus: "For they have sown  
 the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."  
 Hos. viii. 7. All this teaches us that we must  
 not expect to be happy in this world, or in the  
 world to come, without trying. No one ex-  
 pects a harvest without sowing the grain. Sup-  
 pose I sow the seeds of cockle, all over a  
 field?

*Delia.* Then, sir, you will have a fine crop  
 of cockles for your pains.

*Mr. W.* Just so. Solomon says, "He that  
 soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity." Prov. xxii.  
 8. Do you see that house with the barrels  
 by it?

*Frank.* Yes, sir, it is Mr. Smith's distillery

*Mr. W.* Mr. Smith is selling the whiskey  
 he makes to thousands of people; little think-  
 ing, perhaps, how much anxiety and suffering

it will bring upon mothers and children, when it has passed through the hands of the keepers of stores, grogshops, and taverns. It is to be feared, that he “plows iniquity, and sows wickedness, and shall reap the same.” Job iv. 8.

*Delia.* May I tell another thing which we learned from this harvest?

*Mr. W.* Certainly, my child.

*Delia.* I think we may learn here to be charitable.

*Mr. W.* How so?

*Delia.* Because, if we give to the poor, we sow seed that is not lost, but which we shall reap again.

*Capt.* Where do you find that, my dear?

*Delia.* In the ninth chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians: “He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and

he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.”

*Capt.* What has that verse to do with giving to the poor ?

*Delia.* The apostle Paul was exhorting the good people at Corinth to be liberal to the poor saints at Jerusalem ; and he said these words to them, to persuade them to give.

*Mr. W.* And you may observe in the same chapter that the apostle says that God is able to give us enough to be charitable with, and teaches us that charity will never make any man poor. 2 Cor. ix. 8, 9, 10.

*Caroline.* The comparison is very striking. The sower throws his grain on every side. An ignorant person would think he was throwing it away. And then it all seems to rot in the ground. Yet it springs up, and grows, and brings forth a great deal more.

*Arthur.* This ought to make us charitable.

The money which we give to support the Sunday-schools, or to help the widow and the orphan, or to send the Bible to those who have not got it, seems almost to be thrown away. And then for a long time it may seem to be lost, like the seed which rots in the ground; yet it does good to others, and then does good to ourselves.

*Mr. W.* They that sow in tears sometimes reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Often we undertake duties in great sorrow, and yet have great joy in the end; and persons who are afflicted, if they believe in God, often have their afflictions changed into gladness. This we find in the 126th Psalm.

*Capt.* One of the little boys said just now, that the fields, which were full of shocks, looked like an encampment. I think that these on

our right-hand look like a field of battle. After the reapers have cut down a great deal, they bind it into sheaves, and let it lie for a while. These sheaves are like the piles of dead men after a battle.

*Arthur.* Yes, sir ; and while we were looking at the rakers, I could not help thinking how the generations of men are cut down, one after another, just as one harvest is cut down after another. War, and famine, and pestilence cut down mankind very rapidly.

*Mr. W.* “ One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh.” Eccl. i. 4. The prophet Jeremiah must have had the same thought, when he foretold how the people of Judea should be cut down by their enemies. “ Speak, thus saith the Lord, Even the carcasses of men shall fall upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvest-man, and none shall gather them.” Jer. ix. 22.

*Arthur.* Does not the Lord somewhere liken his judgment to reaping?

*Mr. W.* Yes. As the farmer puts in his sickle when the harvest is ripe, so the Lord threatens to destroy the wicked, when the cup of their iniquity has become full. He says by his prophet Joel: "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe"—"for the wickedness is great." chap. iii. 13. It is an awful thought. Men are sometimes left till their wickedness is great, and they are ripe to be cut down. If they do not repent, God cuts them down, and casts them into unquenchable fire.

*Capt.* But do not the good die, as well as the bad? All kinds of people seem to be cut down together sometimes.

*Mr. W.* Look at that field near our house. The reapers have not yet touched it. You see a great many flowers and stems among the wheat. These are useless and injurious. They

are like what are called in the Bible *tares*. Now, I do not go through the field and pull out all these weeds or tares, but when it has all been cut down, we can easily separate the wheat, and throw the other away. Just so it is with the wicked. They are tares: they are suffered to live. Both the righteous and the wicked are reaped down together. But the righteous are taken to heaven, and the wicked are cast into hell. Read the parable of the tares and the wheat, Mat. xiii. 24—30. “ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field ; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field ? from whence then hath it tares ?

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

*Frank.* Will you explain this to me, if you please?

*Mr. W.* Our blessed Saviour has made it plain, Mat. xiii. 37—43. "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers

are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire ; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity ; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

*Caroline.* There is another parable of the same kind in the gospel of Mark. The kingdom of God is like the sowing of seed. First comes the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in ear. It grows without our knowing how, while we are asleep. When the grain is ripe and yellow, the farmer prepares and " immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Mark iv. 29. Our superin

tendant explained it to us at Sunday-school last Sabbath.

*Mr. W.* Did you ever think of the *harvest of the world*, brother ?

*Captain.* Not so much, perhaps, as I might have done. I begin, however, to feel more interest in these things.

*Mr. W.* The apostle John had a glorious vision of it; he says: "And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in the sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped" Rev xiv. 15, 16.

*Caroline.* Father, the book of the Revelation is so dark, that I cannot understand half of it.

*Mr. W.* It has great difficulties. Yet you know what is said at the beginning of it: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." Rev. i. 3. Though much of it is hard to be understood, yet the verses I have just now repeated, plainly refer to the end of the world.

*Capt.* It is a thought that ought to make me tremble, that there is a day coming, when I must be judged! The tares are to be burned up, and I have reason to fear that I am not of those who deserve to be called the wheat. I have been a careless man. I know that I am a sinner. On a dark night at sea, I have often thought of my sins. People think me a brave

man, but I am afraid to die. What is such a one as I am to do ?

*Mr. W.* My dear brother, I rejoice to hear you ask the question. It is the most important of all questions. If you were to gain the whole world, you might still lose your soul. And I am afraid you are in more danger than you think.

*Capt.* God forbid ! I know I am in danger. I know I deserve to perish. I was taught to read the Bible and to pray by our dear mother, but I have been full of the world. I have had my share of blessings too. Few have been more prospered. Providence has guarded me in more than thirty voyages, and I am well off, as to earthly goods.

*Mr. W.* Alas, my brother, this adds to your danger. It adds immense blackness to your guilt.

*Capt.* Guilt! I feel ready to say I am the chief of sinners. What can I do?

The little company had now returned to the farm-house. The children were much affected at what their uncle said. Arthur and Caroline retired into the parlour. The little ones were surprised to see the big tears roll down the cheeks of Captain Wells. Delia took hold of his hand, and while she looked up into his face, she wept. The two younger boys sat upon the step and looked very solemn. At last little Delia could no longer contain herself. She clasped her uncle's hand and said to him,

O dear, uncle Charles, I think the Lord will forgive you. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief. I know he will forgive you.

*Capt.* Ever since you began to talk about texts relating to harvest, I have been thinking

of one : It alarms me very much. I heard a sermon preached from it many years ago.

*Mr. W.* Pray what text do you mean ?

*Capt.* I mean those awful words : “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” Jer. viii. 20.

*Mr. W.* Those words are often applied to the case of impenitent sinners. Perhaps it is right so to apply them ; I have heard our minister say, however, that he was convinced that the whole chapter relates to the invasion of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. Yet I cannot deny that the words may be used with regard to those who have outlived all opportunity of pardon. At the end of the world many will wish they had never been born.

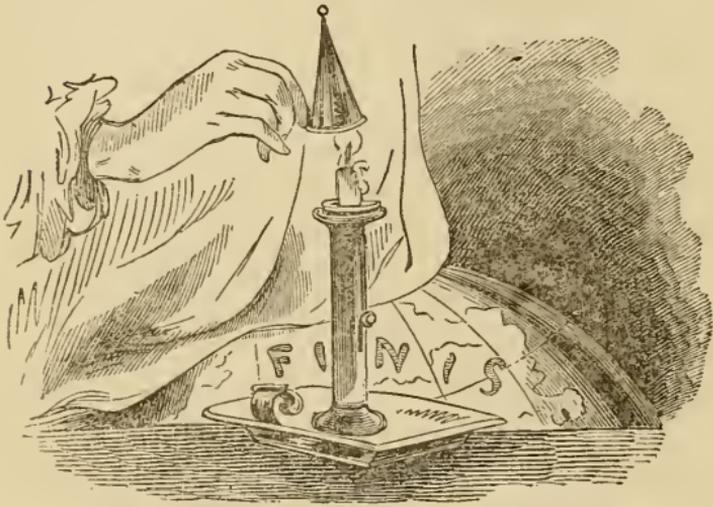
*Capt.* Ah ! the harvest is past !

*Mr. W.* Nay my dear brother. Christ

still lives. He is still a gracious Saviour. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. If you will turn, you may live. As good Mr. Baxter says, Deliver up yourselves to the Lord Jesus as the physician of your soul, that he may pardon you by his blood, and sanctify you by his Spirit. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There is no coming to the Father but by him, nor is there any other name under heaven whereby you can be saved.

There was a great deal more said, but as this dialogue was meant to be about harvest, we may as well stop here. I think I can see the little company now, as they looked that evening in the porch. The Captain sat on the bench, with his face covered by his hand. Mr. Wells stood before him, earnestly talking. Edward and Frank were seated on the steps, with their hats off. Delia was close

to her uncle, looking up in his face with much affection. And now, let us take leave of this interesting and pious family.



**THE END.**

