

THE SOWER.



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SOI ALSO BY J. NISBET, BERNERS-STREET.

THE SOWER.



Child. FATHER, what is that man doing yonder?

Father. He is casting seed into the ground.

C. What seed is he casting in?

F. The seed of wheat; we will go to him and ask him to show you a few grains. See, this is wheat.

C. And what is it for?

F. These grains, when ground in a mill, become flour, of which bread is made.

C. Then, why does the man put them in the ground?

F. That they may spring up and yield corn for another year.

C. But it is corn now, is it not?

F. Yes; but by putting it in the ground it will increase: every one of these seeds that spring up will produce many such seeds; perhaps thirty, or sixty, or a hundred.

C. How can that be, father? how can one seed make a great many?

F. I cannot exactly tell you how.

C. Then, how do you know it will be so at all?

F. Because I know that when the great God created the world, he caused

the earth to bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed of its own kind: and ever since, by his mighty power, the seeds again committed to the earth have every year brought forth herbs for the service of man. Do you not remember my reading the account of the creation, in the first chapter of the Bible?

C. Yes, father: but it did not seem as if God cast any seed into the ground, but he only spoke, and then it grew up at once.

F. True, but in that first act of creation, the great God provided for a future succession by causing everything naturally to produce its own likeness; and thus it is that the world is still furnished with corn, herbs, flowers, trees, and animals. In a little time these seeds will spring up,—first, small and green like grass, then they will become fine tall plants, and bear full ears of corn, each containing many seeds.

C. But I wish I could know how this

one little dry seed can grow into a tall green plant, and bear ever so many seeds; does it keep growing larger and larger from the first that it is put in the ground?

F. No; this very seed will not come up itself, but will decay and waste, and the new plant spring from it.

C. And are you sure it will be the very same kind of plant as this came from?

F. Yes; for "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; and to every seed his own body."

C. Father, I heard the minister say those very words when my grandmother died, and was going to be put into the ground; do you remember it?

F. Yes, my dear, quite well; do you know what was meant by it?

C. No, father, that I do not; will you please to tell me?

F. You know we were all in great grief and trouble at parting with your dear grandmother, and that beautiful

chapter was read for our comfort. You know it was a chapter in the Bible?

C. Yes, father; I thought it was from the Bible.

F. Well, it teaches us that we need not grieve for our dear Christian friends as though they were lost and parted from us for ever; for that, because Jesus died and rose again, their souls are safe with him in heaven, and their bodies shall be raised again to life at the last day. So we commit them to the ground in believing hope and assurance, that as the seed of corn, though at first it decays and dies, afterwards springs up in greater perfection and beauty, so shall these bodies, after having lain in corruption, be raised by the Redeemer's sovereign power, in a form and to a state far more perfect, noble, and glorious. You remember your dear grandmother was often ill and feeble; she was obliged to sit in her easy chair whilst her medicine was brought to her; and she could not go out for months together?

C. Yes, father; and when she did go, she was so deaf she could not make out what we all said.

F. Well, all these evils, and many others which she lamented, are for ever



done away. When that mortal, corruptible body which we committed to the grave is raised up again, it will be perfect

in health and strength, and beauty and activity: always able to join the soul in the delightful work and worship of heaven; and then it will never die any more.

When the children of God shall be raised at the last day, they shall be "as the angels of God in heaven." The angels of God never sin: they are never proud; for with the deepest reverence and humility they veil their faces as they praise God. Angels love God, "and do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." Now you know how prone we are, whilst in this state, to forget God's commandments, how the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and how cold our love is. But when we are like the angels of God, we shall not have to complain of want of love as we now do; for we shall never be weary in praising and loving him.

C. I am very glad to hear all that, father, and I hope when you and I come to die, we shall be thus happy.

F. I trust so, my child. Let us learn to prize the precious Bible that tells us these glorious truths, and let us pray to know and love the blessed Saviour who died and rose again, "that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

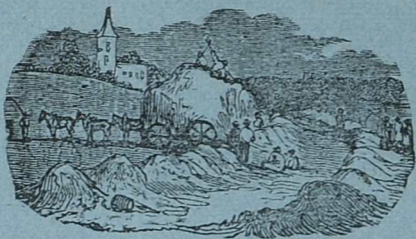
When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond the cage,
And long to soar away.

'Tis sweet to rest in lively hope,
That when my change shall come,
Angels will hover round my bed,
And waft my spirit home.

There shall my disembodied soul
Behold Him and adore;
Be with his likeness satisfied,
And grieve and sin no more.

Soon, too, my slumb'ring dust shall hear
The trumpet's quick'ning sound;
And, by my Saviour's power rebuilt,
At his right hand be found.

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THE grass and flowers which clothe the
field,

And look so green and gay,
Touch'd by the scythe, defenceless yield,
And fall and fade away.

Fit emblems of our mortal state :

Thus, in the Scripture glass,
The young, the strong, the wise, the
great,

May see themselves but grass.

Lord, help us to obey thy call ;

That, from our sins set free,
When, like the grass, our bodies fall,
Our souls may spring to thee.