



THE BARREN APPLE-TREE.

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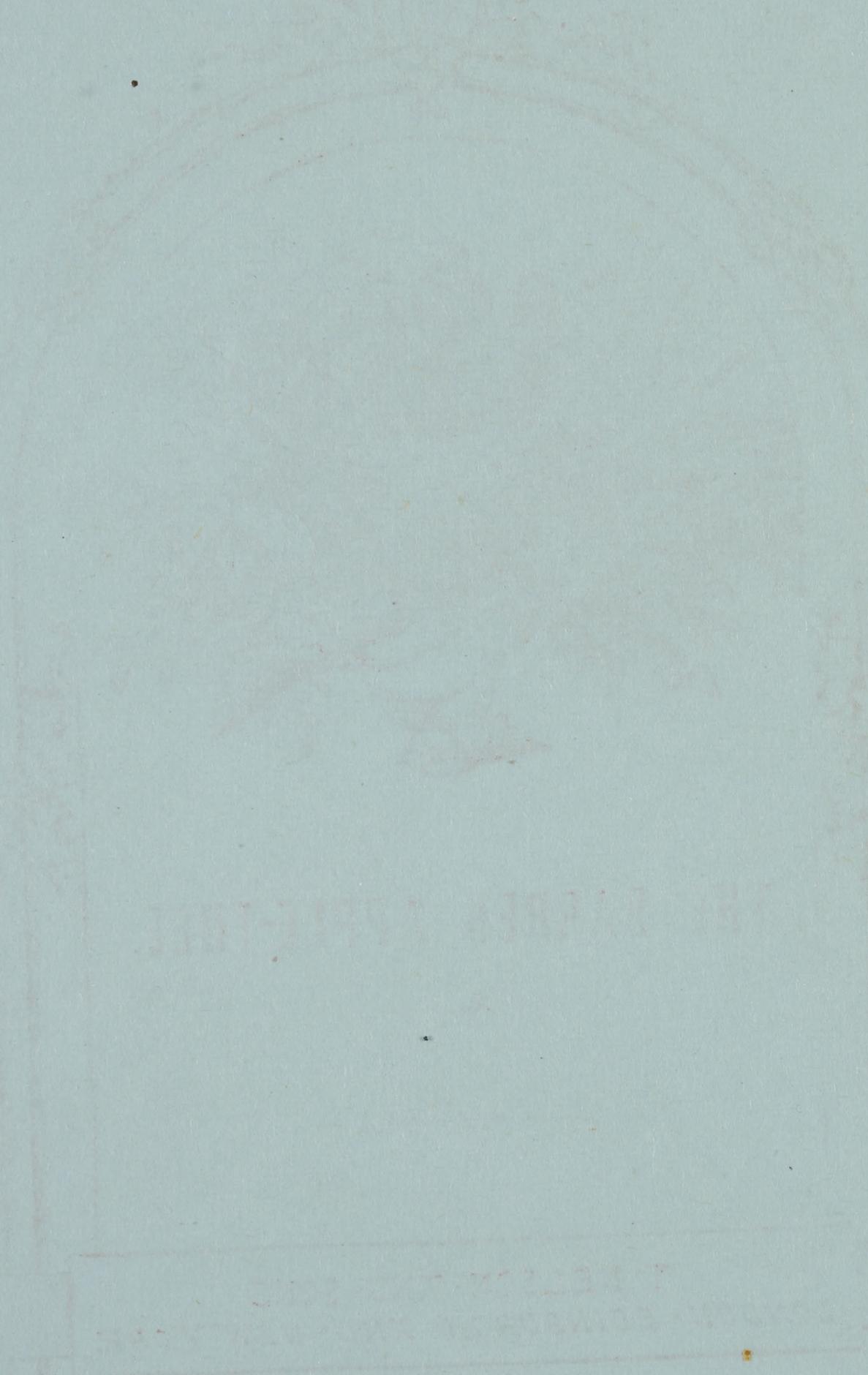


T. NELSON AND SONS  
LONDON. EDINBURGH. AND. NEW YORK.



BARREN

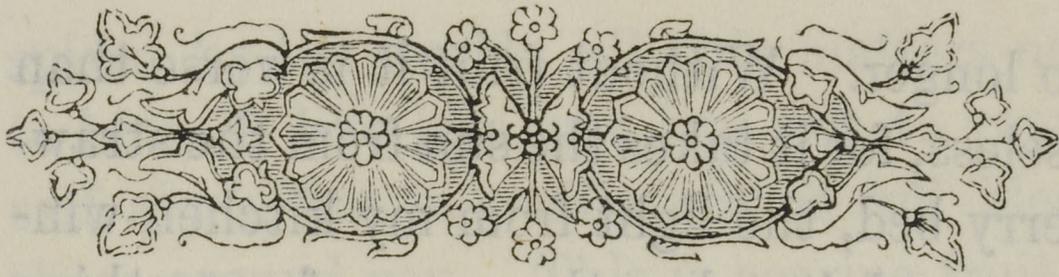
Childrens Books  
Collection







"CUT IT DOWN."



## THE BARREN APPLE-TREE.

**T**WO men came with their axes to cut down a tree in our garden. They looked around, but saw none to spare. "That is it," said the owner, pointing to a noble apple-tree. "You don't mean to have that cut down," cried one of the men; "why, it is the handsomest tree in the ground. I'd sooner thought of that," turning to an ugly-looking dwarf-pear.

"I set more value on that dwarf pear-tree than anything in my garden," said the owner; "it yields the finest fruit. As for the apple-tree, it bears nothing but leaves. I have waited and hoped something from it year after year, and can wait

no longer. Without fruit it is worse than useless, for it takes the sun from the strawberry-bed, the light from my kitchen window, and it takes the room of something more profitable ; so cut it down."

With that the men took their axes and began hewing the trunk. Did the poor tree know its fate ? How proud and secure it looked that morning, with its strong limbs stretched out on every side, and every leaf sparkling with dew-drops ; and it made me think of the garden of our Lord, and how the great Master comes to find fruit there. Looks are not enough for him. The proud and the strong find no favour in his sight on account of their strength. Beautiful as we may appear to others' eyes, if that is all, it is, alas ! " nothing but leaves."

He says, " Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit ;" and what does that mean, but that a life of usefulness is the only life that will satisfy the Master ? You may be crooked and deformed ; you may be poor and lowly ; you may be de-

spised by the world ; all this matters not to him, if, like him, you live not to yourself alone, but in such a way as will bless those around you. This is bearing fruit.

Can a little child do that? Oh yes, for a *penitent tear* is fruit he loves. The bended knee and heart-felt prayer, a willing mind, a tender conscience, and little kindnesses—all these are dear to him. Truth and love and fidelity blossoming in each hourly duty are precious in his eyes. And youth is no hindrance to these. You may grow up and be rich, or powerful, or learned ; but keep always in mind that nothing deserves the name of success, nothing is a success in life, but bearing in your life the good fruits of true love and obedience to your Heavenly Father.

Mark what else our Lord says : “ Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.” There is no spot in all his kingdom for *uselessness*.

## CHILDREN'S SONG OF FREEDOM.

To Him, the bounteous giver,  
What songs of praise should rise,  
From home, and hearth, from church, and  
school,

Beneath our British skies;  
That none in all our toiling towns,  
On all our moorlands wild,  
May sell the father from his home,  
Or the mother from her child!

There may be want among us,  
There may be crowds untaught,  
But no man for his colour,  
In our land is sold or bought,—  
Then let us strive, and let us pray,  
That, whether black or white,  
All men throughout the world may share  
The good old rule of right!

God bless our own brave country!  
With all her fields and towns,  
Her sailors on the utmost seas,  
Her shepherds on the downs;

God bless her lands where'er they lie!

And let it ever be,

That when a slave sets foot thereon,

That moment he is free!

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## THE KIND SISTER.

PASSING one day along the street, my attention was attracted by two little girls, bright and gay as butterflies, who came bounding down the steps of a house on my way. Lightly and merrily they danced and tripped along the street, leaving their maid at a respectable distance behind, evidently bent on some errand of importance to them.

At length they stopped, and entered a confectioner's shop. Their errand was evident now—they had got a few pence to spend. In a few minutes they came out again. The elder was holding a large piece of barley sugar in her hand, which she broke in two. One piece was much larger than the other, and she held out

the largest piece to her little sister, saying,—

“ Here, Amy, I will give you the largest piece because you are the youngest.”

Dear little girl! what a disinterested spirit was shown in these simple words. May this spirit continue with her through life—to deny herself, to think of others first, to yield to the younger and weaker—not to battle for her own rights, but generously to prefer others to herself.

Children, is this your spirit?



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