



THE
ROSE TREE.

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;
56, Paternoster-row; 164, Piccadilly,
LONDON.



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20, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

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Not far from the fence in a cottage garden, a pretty rose tree was seen nearly ready to put forth its flowers. This tree was under the care of little Mary.

Mary was more fond of this pretty rose tree than of all the other plants and flowers that grew in the garden. And we do not wonder at this. She had once a dear sister of the name of Ruth, who was taken very ill. One day, when Ruth lay on her bed, and it was thought she would soon die, she said, "Mary, I will give you the little rose tree I planted in the garden. When the roses are in bloom, I shall be with Jesus, whom I love, in heaven. As you see the sweet flowers, then think of me." From that time Mary took charge of the tree, and often sat on her little chair by its side, and thought of her sister's words.

"Father," said Mary one day,

“there is such a nice bud on the rose tree. To morrow you know is your birthday, I will then cut it off, and you shall have it in a little cup by the side of your table.” Poor Mary’s father was at this time very ill, and could not go out to see the flowers, so she thought he would be pleased to have the first bud from the tree which dear Ruth hath planted.

In the evening when Mary went to look at the bud, she saw Kate Smith standing at the garden gate. “Give me that pretty bud from the rose tree,” said Kate to Mary. “No,” said Mary, “I should be glad to give it you, but I want it for father, who is so unwell.” “Oh, never

mind, you can give him the next that is ready to blossom ; so you may as well let me have this one." "I cannot—no, I cannot ; so please do not ask me."

"I *will* have that rose, and to-night, too," said Kate, as she turned away from the fence.

When Mary came the next day to her rose tree, she cried out, "Oh, my rose ! Who has taken away my pretty bud ?" She ran to her father, and with tears told him what had been done. "Do not cry, my child," he said ; "if any one has taken it, you must pray for the person, that God may forgive the sin."

"Where did you get that lovely rose-bud ?" said Kate's mother, as soon as she saw it in

her hand. Kate tried to smile, and said in a careless way "I got it out of a garden, mother." "I heard you say, Kate, there was not a rose ready to blow in our garden," replied her mother: "who gave that one to you?" "The rose bud was not *given* to me at all," said the naughty girl, in a very confused way. "Then how did you get it, child?" again asked her mother. "From Mary at the cottage over the green," said Kate. "You *bought* it from her, of course, or, she gave it to you?" Kate was about to tell a lie, when her mother saw that something was wrong; and after pressing her to tell the truth, she found out what had been done.

“Oh, my child!” she cried; “how sinful you have been! Did you not know that this rose tree was planted by poor Ruth?”

“Yes, mother; but Mary only wanted to give the first bud to her father; of what use would it have been to him?”

“You show a very unkind and unfeeling temper,” replied her mother, “to speak in this way. You have not only done a great wrong to Mary, but you have sinned against God. The Bible says, ‘Thou shalt not steal.’”

“Oh, mother! it is *only* a rose,” said Kate. “Only a rose, Kate! Do you not know that God says nothing about the value of a thing stolen? He who breaks the law is a thief,

in his sight, no matter how small be the thing he steals. It is your duty at once to repent of your sin, and confess it before God. You must look to Jesus, and seek through faith in his precious blood to be forgiven. Ask for the Holy Spirit, to convince you of your sins, and give you a new heart and right spirit." Kate's mother now knelt down with her, and prayed for her.

When they rose, the mother said, "My dear Kate, you have I hope asked God to pardon you, for Christ's sake ; you must now give back the rosebud, and ask Mary to forgive you. We must go at once to her father's house."

"Kate has come to tell you that she is very sorry, for the

wrong she did you last night ; ” said her mother, as she sat down in the cottage ; “ and she hopes you will forgive her. ”

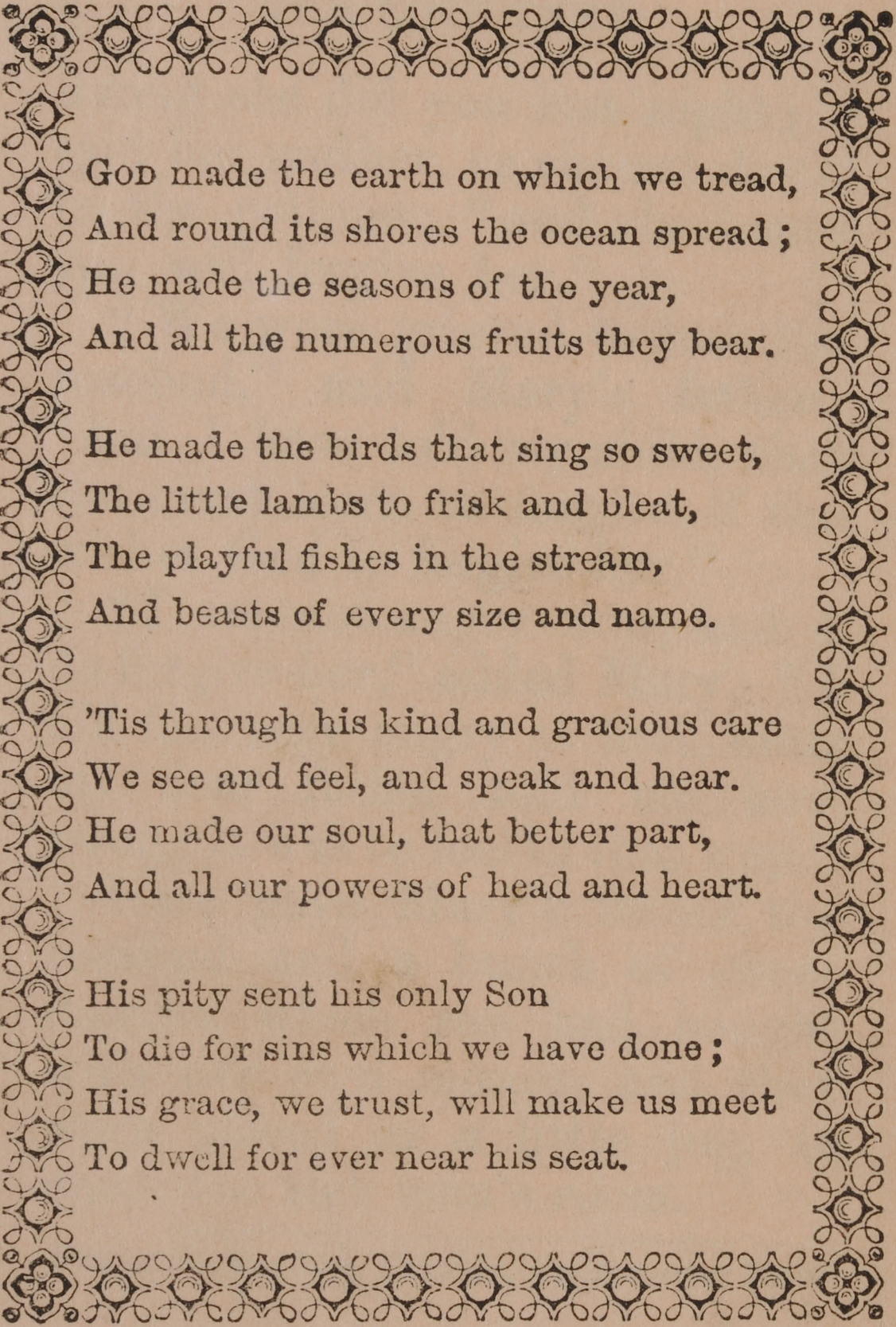
“ We were grieved to lose the rosebud, ” said Mary’s father ; “ but I have told my child, that she must learn to forgive, if she wishes God to forgive her. ”

“ I am not angry now, and I do forgive her, ” added Mary. “ I did feel very angry at first, until my dear father told me how wrong it was to feel in that way. ”

Kate gave Mary’s father the rosebud and a bunch of sweet flowers, which she had bought with her own money, and they were placed in a little jug, to cheer the sick man’s room.

God made the earth on which we tread,
And round the shores the ocean spread,
He made the seasons of the year,
And all the waters of the deep;
He made the birds that sing so sweet,
The wild beasts of the forest and the plain,
The fish that swim in the deep blue sea,
And all the powers of the air and earth;
He made the sun to give us light and heat,
The moon to give us light at night,
The stars to give us light in the dark sky,
And all the beauties of the world to see.

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God made the earth on which we tread,
And round its shores the ocean spread ;
He made the seasons of the year,
And all the numerous fruits they bear.

He made the birds that sing so sweet,
The little lambs to frisk and bleat,
The playful fishes in the stream,
And beasts of every size and name.

'Tis through his kind and gracious care
We see and feel, and speak and hear.
He made our soul, that better part,
And all our powers of head and heart.

His pity sent his only Son
To die for sins which we have done ;
His grace, we trust, will make us meet
To dwell for ever near his seat.