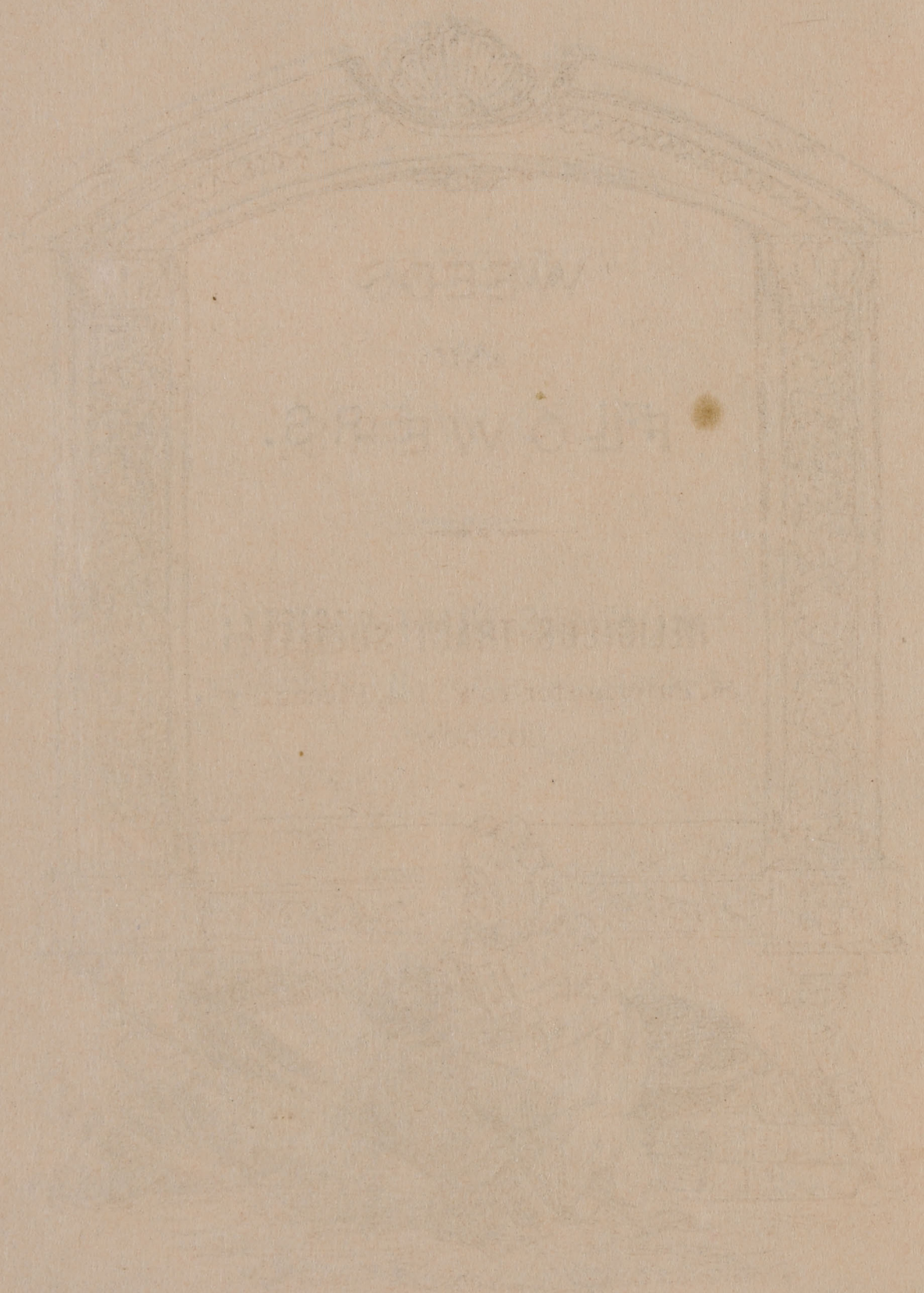


WEEDS
AND
FLOWERS.

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





FLOWERS AND WEEDS.



ARTHUR and Jane had each a little garden of their own, which had been given to them by their kind father. He told them that they must take care to pluck out

all the weeds, and to do all they could to make the flowers grow. They used to save some of their money in the winter, and when the spring came they spent it in buying seeds and roots.

When the little leaves and stems began to peep above ground, Arthur and Jane watered them every day; and as the plants grew, they took care to keep them free from all insects, and to shade them when the sun shone too strongly. They made a nice path of gravel between the beds, which they kept quite smooth and clean. In the afternoon, as soon as they came home from school, they used to run into the garden, to see to their sweet flowers.

With all this care the beds looked very pretty when summer came.

But there was one thing which gave them a good deal of trouble. Weeds would spring up. Almost as fast as they were plucked up in one place, they grew in another.

“I do not like those ‘ugly, naughty weeds,’ said Jane to her mother. They must not grow in my pretty garden. I want only sweet flowers to be there.”

“Yes,” added Arthur, “I am sure we have tried our best to keep them out, but they will grow in spite of us.”

“It is just like other little gardens,” said their mother, “in which I wish to see only flowers, but I am sorry to say I have seen many weeds thrive there,

though much labour has been given to keep them out.”

“What little gardens are they, mother?”

“Those over which I have watched, and in which I still hope to see some useful and lovely plants, though I have not yet quite gained my wish. I have often thought I could see a few buds, but they have not come into full blossom. And sometimes where I had hoped to find a flower, I have only plucked a weed.”

“But where are these gardens?”

“These gardens are your young hearts, my dears. You know I have wished to see there what I would call my pleasant flowers. One of these is Kindness; and

a very large and fine plant it is when fully grown; but the weed of Selfishness too often springs up around it, until it is quite covered from our view. This ill weed will spread in all directions, and twine itself about every stalk that comes in its way. Humility is a very pretty flower. It does not make much show, for like the sweet violet it hides itself among its own leaves. If you mark it well, you will see its delicate and sweet-smelling blossoms. But there are tall and showy weeds called Pride and Vanity; which though they please some eyes, are very hurtful to the flowers. Truth is another plant in these gardens, but the hurtful weed of Falsehood

will come up by its side, and cause it soon to wither and die. Then there are other flowers, known by the names of Industry, Contentment, and Peace, which are much admired by all who see them; but the 'naughty weeds' of Idleness, Sullenness, and Anger, often choke the nice plants before they are fully grown."

"Oh, I see, mother, what you mean now. The flowers are good tempers and conduct, and the weeds are our wicked passions and evil ways."

"You are quite right, Arthur; and you should know that the soil of your hearts is friendly to the growth of these hurtful weeds. Gardeners say that it

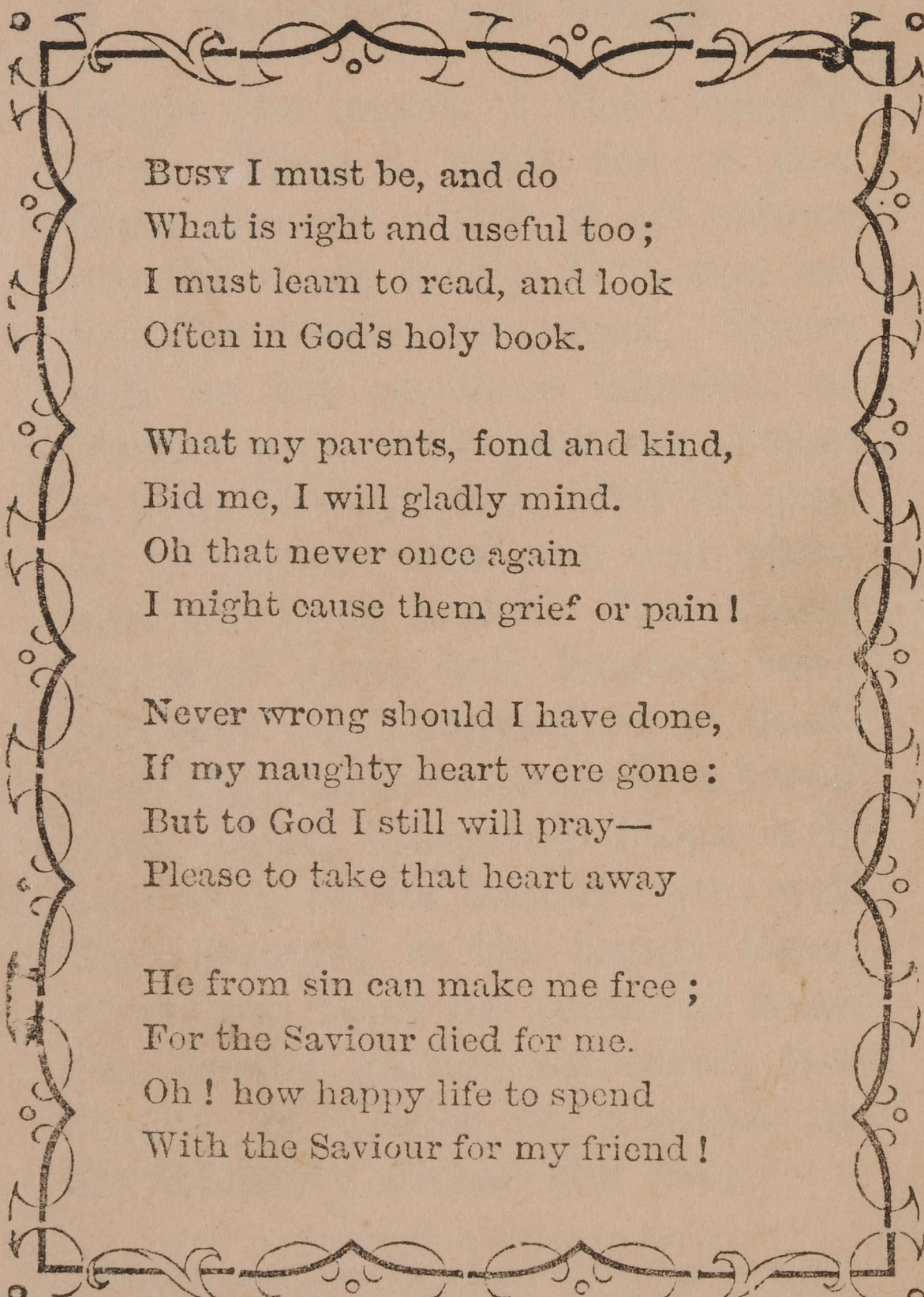
is always needful to keep young plants clean from all weeds, which twine round the roots, and stop their growth. You see, then, why I have tried to root out all evil which I have seen in your conduct, or to cut it down; but I have felt that the Holy Spirit must renew your hearts. We must watch, and pray, and labour; yet only the Spirit of God can so change these little gardens of your hearts, as to make 'the plants of grace' grow and flourish in them.

"You said to us, dear mother, that if we ask God to give us his Holy Spirit he will hear, and answer our prayer."

"Yes, I did, Jane; and I hope you and your brother will not

forget the lesson I then taught you. Then I shall see in you those flowers which of all others are the most lovely that can be found in the human heart. There will be the precious blossom of Faith: you will look to Jesus as your Saviour, who died for you on the cross; and you will make him all your trust. The sweet plant of Love will flourish too: you will yield yourselves to God, and love him because he first loved you. And blooming Hope will appear in all its beauty; you will look forward to the happy time, when you shall be removed from the Lord's garden on earth, the church of Christ, to flourish in his heavenly courts for ever.

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Busy I must be, and do
What is right and useful too;
I must learn to read, and look
Often in God's holy book.

What my parents, fond and kind,
Bid me, I will gladly mind.
Oh that never once again
I might cause them grief or pain!

Never wrong should I have done,
If my naughty heart were gone:
But to God I still will pray—
Please to take that heart away

He from sin can make me free;
For the Saviour died for me.
Oh! how happy life to spend
With the Saviour for my friend!