

BOOK
OF
TREES.



NEW-YORK:
MAHLON DAY, 374 PEARL-STREET.
1837.

FRONTISPIECE.



Mrs. R. P. Sawyer
BOOK

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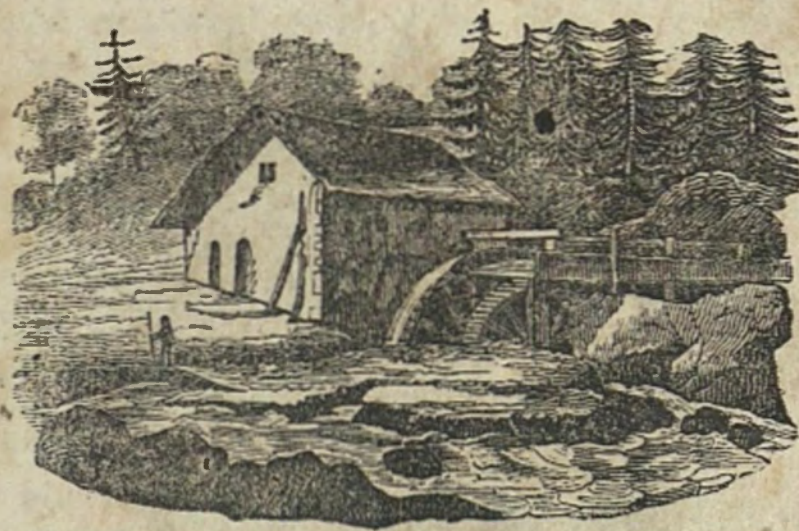
TO CHILDREN.

I hope my young readers are as fond of Trees as the printer of this little book. If so, they will be careful not to injure any that may be planted for ornament or use.

In the city of New-York, we have some places where they grow and look very finely. Who has not been delighted, early on a summer's morning or evening, in walking on the Battery, under the limbs of those noble towers of nature? In the Park also, are a number of beautiful trees, and those of St. John's Park, have grown to a stately size since I first knew much about New-York. On the Boston Common, you may see Elms of stupendous growth, one particularly that spreads over ground enough for a small garden. In Washington Square, Philadelphia, it is said, every forest tree on our continent, is growing.

I hope children will cultivate a fondness for trees. There is something, to my mind, that is worthy in it, to say nothing of its usefulness. I have read of a benevolent man, who made a business to plant trees along the highways, saying, "If they only afford a resting place for beasts or the birds, I am rewarded." But how much more to a weary traveller, and his faithful horse!

M. D.



THE SAW-MILL.

I need scarcely tell the young reader, that most of the wood-work which is used in building, must pass through a saw-mill. To those who have never seen one, the engraving will convey some idea of its external arrangements.

Most of the saw-mills in our country are set in motion by water, which is cheaper than any other method. There are both wind-mills and water-mills, which do the office of sawing wood, with much more ease and rapidity than the hand.

These mills sometimes drive several parallel saws, which are made to rise and fall perpendicularly. But the saw-mills in this country, are generally furnished with one saw only. When ten or fifteen are used, which saw up a whole log at once, they are called a gang.



THE OLIVE TREE.

There is something very graceful and beautiful in the appearance of the Olive-tree. The leaves bear some resemblance to those of the willow, only they are more soft and delicate. The flowers are as pretty as the leaves. At first they are of a pale yellow; but when they expand their four petals, the insides of them are white, and only the centre of the flower is yellow.

The wild olive grows in Syria, Greece and Africa. The cultivated one is easily reared in many parts of the south of Europe. Where

olives abound, they give much beauty to the landscape. Tuscany, the south of France, and the plains of Spain, are the places of Europe in which the olive was first cultivated. The sweet oil of our tables is pressed from the olive.

The growth of olives and the manufacture of the oil afford a considerable employment to many of the inhabitants of France and Italy. In ancient times, the olive was a tree held in the greatest veneration. The oil was employed in pouring out libations on the altars of the gods, while the branches formed the wreaths of the victors at the Olympic Games. The Greeks had a pretty and instructive fable in their mythology, on the origin of the olive. They said that Neptune, having a dispute with Minerva, as to the name of the city of Athens, it was decided by the gods that the deity who gave the best present to mankind should have a preference in the dispute. Neptune struck the shore, out of which sprung a horse: but Minerva produced an olive-tree. The goddess had the triumph; for it was adjudged that Peace, of which the olive is the symbol, was infinitely better than War, of which the horse was considered as an emblem.

Even in the sacred history, the olive is invested with more honor than any other tree. The patriarch Noah had sent out a dove from



the ark, but she returned without any token of hope. Then "He stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive-branch plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from the earth."



THE EVERGREEN CYPRESS.

We here present our readers with the picture of a limb from the *evergreen* cypress. There are in the world, no less than twenty-two species of cypress.

The evergreen cypress thrives best in the south-eastern parts of Europe, and in Asia. Its timber is more durable than almost any other in the world; perhaps more so than even cedar itself. The doors of St. Peter's church at Rome, were formed of this material in the time of Constantine; and when Pope Eugenius took them down, 1100 years afterwards, to replace them by gates of brass, they are said to have shown no signs of decay. The Athenians buried their heroes in coffins of cypress; and the Egyptian mummies are put in boxes of the same sort of wood.



THE CEDAR OF LEBANON.

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The Cedar of Lebanon is remarkable both for the beauty of its appearance and the durability of its wood.

Anciently it was, indeed, held in the first estimation among trees. The great and wise Solomon speaks of it in his writings in the most rapturous terms of commendation, and in the building of his famous and gorgeous temple he made so great use of this wood, that he almost stripped *Mount Lebanon* of its towering and wide spreading Cedars. Of the extent which Solomon made use of this wood in the building of the temple, we may form some idea from the facts that that vast structure was almost entirely lined with it; and that to supply the necessary quantity of this precious wood, no fewer than eighty thousand men were employed solely in felling Cedars and transferring them to Jerusalem. A Cedar, when seen in the prime of its living beauty, has a grandeur of appearance which would alone be sufficient to account for the partiality which Solomon showed both to the living tree, as a natural object, and to its timber as a material of building.

The appearance of the Cedar derives its

grandeur from its peculiar way of growth as well as from its great height and bulk. Its branches extend widely, and incline towards the earth; and when agitated by the wind, its rows of branches one above the other, look like verdant banks put into gentle graceful motion. The Cedar-tree is very plentiful in New England and many parts of the United States. The trees differ from that represented in the cut. The wood, however, possesses the same qualities of durability and fragrance, as that of the Cedar of Lebanon. The tree is sometimes called the savin-tree; and there is a spot near Boston called Savin Hill, from its abounding with these trees.



STUMP AND KNEES OF A CYPRESS TREE.

STUMP AND KNEES OF A CYPRESS TREE.

The trunk of the Cypress is sometimes as large as a hay stack, at the bottom, and not unlike it in shape; while above, it is only a middling sized and regular shaped tree. The 'knees' are excrescences which shoot up under the shade of the tree, from its roots. Some of them are from one foot to two feet high, and several inches in diameter. They terminate abruptly and smoothly at the top, as you see above.

In some parts of the country, white men generally do the work, and there are very few people of color.—But it is not so at the south. Some white men who are poor, work; but most of the labor, particularly on plantations, and in the swamps is done by slaves, though there are some colored people who are free. The colored people are very fond of working in the Dismal swamp, because they are there under less restraint than on a plantation; and as their task-work, in the swamp, is by no means unreasonable, some of them will make a dollar, or two dollars a week, for themselves.

When a man goes into the swamp, he carries food for a week or a month; and then, if he does not wish to come out of the swamp, more is sent to him. His food is salted pork

and corn meal.—Six pounds of pork, and one peck, or twelve and a half pounds of meal, is the allowance of one hand for a week. The pork and meal are usually good, but not invariably.

When the “swamp hands” sleep, they do not undress and go to bed, but lie down on a plank, the head being raised five or six inches, and the feet, near to the fire, which they do not suffer to go out. Many times they do not lie down at all, but fall asleep as they are sitting.—They rarely lie down before midnight, and always rise at the break of day. They spend the fore part of the night as is most agreeable to them; commonly in talking, and often in singing and prayers, in which they are very loud.

Perhaps you would hardly expect it, but it is a fact, that the people who work in the swamp are generally very healthy; and they appear to be as merry and happy a people as I have ever seen.—But they are not uniformly so; and particularly because they are not generally instructed. Very few of them learn the art of reading, well enough to be able to read and understand the New Testament.



BRAZIL WOOD.

This tree grows in many other parts of the world, as well as Brazil. Its trunk is large, crooked and full of knots. At a short distance from the ground, innumerable branches spring forth, and extend in every direction, in a straggling, irregular, and displeasing manner. The branches are armed with short, strong,

upright thorns. The flowers are red. The largest of these trees reach the height of thirty or forty feet.

When first cut, the wood is of a pale red, but becomes darker by exposure to air. It is varied, however, with irregular and fantastical black spots. The bark of the tree, which is extremely thick, and the pithy part, are useless. The heart of the tree, alone, is valuable.

It is a very hard and dry wood. The thickest pieces, with a close grain, are considered the best. Its principal use is in dyeing red. The color which it gives is, however, rather fleeting. The most permanent colors produced by it, are those in which the natural purple red, is changed by acids into an orange or yellow color. Red ink is made by boiling this wood in beer, wine, or vinegar, and adding a little alum.

Nicaragua or Peach wood, is a species of Brazil wood. Though it contains less of the coloring matter than the common Brazil wood, it yields a color which is brighter, more delicate, and more beautiful. It is sometimes sold at \$133 a ton



THE TALIPOT TREE.

THE TALIPOT TREE.

This beautiful tree is a native of the island of Ceylon, and the Malabar Coast, and is said to be found also in the Marquesas and Friendly Islands. The stem of this tree is perfectly straight, and it gradually diminishes as it ascends. It is strong enough to resist the most violent tropical winds. It has no branches, and the leaves only spring from its summit. These leaves, which when on the tree are almost circular, are so large that they can shelter ten or a dozen men, standing near to each other. The leaf is so light that an entire one can be carried in the hand; but as this, from its great size when expanded, would be inconvenient, the natives cut segments from it, which they use to defend themselves from the scorching rays of the sun, or from the rains.

As tents, the talipot leaves are set up on end. Two or three talipot umbrellas make an excellent shelter, and from being so light and portable, each leaf folding up to the size of a man's arm, they are admirably adapted for this important service. The chiefs, moreover, have regularly formed square tents made of them.

Another use to which these leaves may be

put, is that they may be written upon like paper. The Cingalese write or engrave their letters upon them with a stylus, or pointed steel instrument, and then rub them over with a dark colored substance, which only remaining in the parts etched or scratched, gives the characters greater relief, and makes them more easy to read. The coloring matter is rendered liquid by being mixed with cocoa-nut oil, and when dry is not easily effaced.

The oil employed in the writing imparts a strong odor which preserves it from insects, but this odor is changed by age. The talipot, however, appears to have in itself a natural quality which deters the attack of insects and preserves it from the decay of age, even without the oil.

Sago is made from the inner parts of this tree, by beating the spongy part of the stem in a mortar.

Besides all the uses described, the Cingalese employ the talipot leaf extensively in thatching their houses. They also manufacture hats from it; these hats are made with brims as broad as an outstretched umbrella, and are chiefly worn by women nursing, to defend them and their infants from the heat.

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