

to my own vigorous nature? Why am I so basely and unjustly treated, and all the shoots I send up into the light cut off directly they appear?

"Why am I always to grovel down here in the darkness when I have as much right to freedom as the proud upstart who lives upon my blood? Oh! to be free from this hateful tyranny! To realise one's aspirations, and to live according to one's own sweet will!"

At last it happened, just as if he heard their prayer for freedom, that the tyrant,



man, left these complaining and rebellious plants alone, free to grow in their own way, and to live according to their own desires. And what was the result?

The rose, that had always bewailed her limitations and repression, was left undisturbed and unchecked to enjoy her freedom, and do just as she liked. Yet, before she could realise her new independence, the discontented briar sent up such a forest of strong suckers into the sunshine, that the poor, proud beauty was completely smothered, and after a few weak attempts to lift her

once beautiful crown of blossoms, she struggled and straggled but for a little while, and then most miserably perished.

The briar, meanwhile, grew in strength, strangling and killing all the tender plants that stood in her way. Blossoming in her pride of power, into a profusion of gay flowers, she filled the air with enticing fragrance, and offered an abundant crop of bright, red berries as a tempting banquet for bird and beast.

Rejoicing in her new found freedom, the hardy briar continued to spread until the ground around was covered with its dense and thorny thicket, a curse to the land it should have blessed, and a haunt fit only for pigs and all uncleanness.

And the discontented vine, what became of it?

As soon as it was free from the restraining and guiding hand of man, it sent out a great many new and vigorous shoots, first helplessly creeping, then tenderly clinging to some friendly branch, it lifted itself aloft into the light, rudely asserting itself until it overspread the topmost trees with its leafy canopy, when, stealing the sunshine from its kind supporters, it rejoiced over them as if it were indeed the sovereign lord of the forest.

Its once promising fruit now shrivelled and perished, it gloried in its crown of leaves, and swung its branches from bough to bough, caring not by what means it rose into the light; but remorselessly strangling the friendly stem that helped it upward.

Thus the arrogant parasite flourished in its vanity and selfishness, until with one stroke the bushman's axe cut through its twisting stem, and then the mass of wild and useless leafage withered where it grew, and the famished trees rejoiced in their delivery from their cruel oppressor.

SCENE V.

From the old garden, the traveller now crosses to the opposite side of a stream, where he finds a perfect contrast to the scene he has just quitted, for here an enterprising