

J.R. Miller:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener" John 15:1

This is a wonderful Vine. It grew up at first, like "a root out of a dry ground, with no form nor loveliness." The soil in which it was planted seemed too poor to produce anything good. But its origin was heavenly, and it grew into luxuriant beauty. By-and-by it seemed that men in their rage had altogether destroyed this Vine, which had in it so much blessing for the earth; however, it was not destroyed – but was only lifted away from earth and transplanted to Heaven. There in the garden of God its roots were fixed, and the Vine itself dropped down to earth again, and began to send out branches in all directions. Every poor little human life which attaches itself to this Vine – is grafted on it and becomes a branch in it, drawing life from the Vine's fullness, and sharing its fruitfulness.

These branches are not left to grow wild and untended – but have wise and skillful cultivation. It ought to be a great comfort to us to know that as branches, we are under the culture of a gardener who is none other than our heavenly Father: "Your Father is the gardener." We are very sure that His care will be both wise and tender. If an ignorant, inexperienced, unskillful man were to enter a beautiful vineyard and begin cutting away at the vines – he would soon destroy them. He does not know what he ought to prune off, or what he ought to leave on the vine.

But if the man who comes to tend the vineyard understands vines, and has had long experience and is skillful – there is no danger that he will do harm in his pruning. Sometimes, indeed, He may seem to be cutting the vine to death; but we know that He understands what He is doing, and that all His prunings are for the good of the branches. By-and-by, we shall see increased fruitfulness as the result of His unsparing work.