Family Circle.

For the American Presbyterian.

TO A FOREST LEAF.

BY JAMES RISTINE.

Bright little leaf,
Have autumn airs traced on thy brow
The dreams that round the aster glow
Beside yon yellow sheaf?

For now the night
Is coming in on silent wings,
And many a tale of fancy brings
To while the void of light.
And as I see
Thee slumbering on the grassy tomb,
And rising as the zephyrs come
From o'er the fading lea,

Methinks, forsooth,
Thou chidest every shivering air
For stealing all thy verdure fair,
And nipping thee in youth.
But ah! no sighs,
No moan of sorrow or remorse
Can palliate thy beauty's loss,
Or light thy faded eyes.

Once thou wert swung
On yonder tree—a quivering lyre,
That trembled to the thunder's fire,
And with soft music rung.
Now thou art here,
Tramped in the forest's misty mould,
Drenched in November's shower, cold
And withered, sad and sere.

But wandering youth
May learn as o'er that path they stray,
How soon life's sweetest hopes decay
And leave but care and truth!

Far in the deep,
Deep woods, where many a lovely flower
Once smiling, looked on summer's hour,
Ye, withered leaflets, sleep.

Weird tablets there
To mark the spot where still in shade,
The little germs are lowly laid,
Swept by the chilling air.

But they shall spring
To life, 'neath far more genial skies,
Where vernal airs shall waking rise,
And buds and blossoms bring.

So from their cells beneath the grassy sod,
The souls of buried ones shall wing to God,
And bloom before
His hallowed eyes, in holy air,
Freed from the pangs of sin and care.

PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 6, 1859.

DEAL GENTLY WITH THE LITTLE ONES.

A little child, when asked why a certain tree grew crooked, replied: "Somebody trod upon it, I suppose, when it was little."

He who checks a child with terror,
Stops its play and stills its song,
Not alone commits an error,
But a grievous moral wrong.

Give it play, and never fear it,
Active life is no defect;
Never, *never* break its spirit;
Curb it only to direct.

Would you stop the flowing river,
Thinking it would cease to flow?
Onward must it flow forever;
Better teach it where to go.

Translated from the German for the American Presbyterian.

ABOUT THE MONTHS. FEBRUARY.

When January has come to an end, then begins the second month—February. He has only 28 days and is the least among his brother months; and like little people he seems always straining to be bigger. For once in four years, it actually happens—by dint of standing, as you might say, on tip-toe, he gains one whole day in length, and numbers 29 days. This is so in the present year, 1860, which, hence, is called *leap-year;* but as for 30 or 31 days he never can reach it; and as standing on tip-toe is tiresome, he is obliged to fall back again to 28 days. Little as he is among his brothers, he does not want for spirit, and he can make a face as ice-cold as the long January himself. In his angry moods he scatters the snow-balls around him most vigorously, and he has given many a rogue of a boy such a settling down upon the ice, as to make it fairly crack again!

Yet in some years he is much more agreeable, particularly in the last few days, before he takes his leave. Then it sometimes happens that in the course of a single night he has swept away the snow and ice quite clean from hill and valley. But that puts the roads and streets in very bad order indeed; hence, they have another name for February in Germany—*Hornung*—which means *the muddy month.* Not seldom, a dry wind or the warm sun comes to help him in the change of attire, which every one is glad to see. Happy, too, are the little birds when February clears away the winter's snow from the fields; they come from abroad whither they have fled to escape the winter's cold, and the air resounds with their joyous songs again; while the long-legged stork attends the departing month to his close, and seems to chatter to him as he goes: "We shall be glad to see you again next year!"

"ALL YE ARE BRETHREN."

"Did you notice that new family at church last Sabbath, Mrs. Ellis?" said her friend, Mrs. Brown, as they were slowly walking down the street together.

"Yes—who are they?"

"Their name is Merwyn—they have just moved out from the city, and intend joining our church, I understand; of course, they are wealthy, as they have bought the "Carlton Place."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Ellis, "I am delighted to hear that we are to have such an addition—how it will encourage our good pastor's heart to have such people join us! We must call on them immediately."

"Let us go now," said Mrs. Brown—and, suiting the action to the word, they turned off from their original destination, and soon reached and entered the spacious and beautifully arranged grounds of the new comer. "What a lovely place!" exclaimed Mrs. Ellis, as they stood a moment, after ringing the bell; "one ought to be very happy here!"

At this instant the door opened, and the ladies were ushered into an elegant apartment, where, at the time, were seated two ladies. One of them, a tall, dignified, serene-faced woman, arose to receive them, as the attendant announced their names, and gave them a cordial greeting.

"Of course, you are acquainted with this lady," said she, turning to the quiet figure at her side—"Mrs. Morris."

The ladies gave a slight, involuntary start of surprise, and then acknowledged the introduction in the coolest manner, as if to one *almost* beneath their notice. Mrs. Merwyn looked surprised, but in a moment she took in the whole scene. These were, doubtless, some of the aristocratic members of the church, and the poor, but devoted Christian sister was not in their circle at all. Of course, her attentions were politely devoted to the new callers for a few moments—but when Mrs. Morris, as soon as possible, arose to take leave, wishing to slip quietly out, she arose too, and in the kindest manner, in which naught of condescension mingled, thanked her for her call, and begged her to repeat it.

While this was going on, the two ladies exchanged expressive glances, and as soon as Mrs. Merwyn was again seated, Mrs. Brown remarked,

"You may have thought it strange that we should not know one of our own church members, but I assure you, we are obliged to maintain distinctions in the country, as well as in the city. We flatter ourselves that we can boast as select and refined society in our little village, as can be found anywhere."

"Of course," said Mrs. Ellis, taking up the defence, "we esteem Mrs. Morris as a good woman, but we were amazed at her presumption in venturing to impose herself upon you as one of 'our ladies'—I assure you she is very poor, and labors hard to support herself and family."

"I am truly glad, ladies," answered Mrs. M. "to find my own private judgment so ably supported. Mrs. Morris struck me as a singularly interesting woman. One so delicate must indeed possess great energy to perform the labor she does. I never, I think, was more interested than in her remarks and prayers at the female prayer-meeting, this afternoon. I was, therefore, much pleased to find that she lived on the same street as myself, and gladly availed myself of her company home, and then, at my urgent request, she came in with me. I trust if I am ever called to pass through the trials which she has, I may have the same rich grace to sustain me under them, which she has experienced."

The two callers looked rather confused at these remarks of the rich and elegant woman, so far superior to themselves in worldly advantages; and though she with great politeness, endeavored to relieve their embarrassment, and render the call agreeable, they soon arose to leave.

"I am truly obliged for this early welcome," said Mrs. M., "especially since finding that you are members of the church which I hope soon to join. There is nothing, I believe, I prize so highly as Christian society. Those who are united in the bonds of Christ's love, cannot be strangers to each other."

The ladies now bid adieu, and walked down the avenue in silence. "Was there ever such a queer woman?" exclaimed Mrs. Brown, as they turned the corner, and were out of all possible hearing. "I never was so confounded in my life, I confess."

There were tears in her companion's eyes, and a tremor in her voice, as she answered, "I think she has the right of it, Mary. Did we not feel thus in the days of our first love? I feel I have allowed worldliness to get too much power over me, and that I have almost lost my religious enjoyment. I am determined to try to retrace my steps, and mingle again in that society, where our Saviour's presence is sure to be. I thank God for her faithfulness, and that one so capable of doing good has come among us. 'One is your Master, even Christ, and all *ye* are brethren.'"

N. Y. Chronicle.

THE MOTHER'S LAST LESSON.

"Will you please teach me my verse, mamma, and then kiss me and bid me good night?" said little Roger L., as he opened the door and peeped cautiously into the chamber of his sick mother. "I am very sleepy, but no one has heard me say my prayer."

Mrs. L. was very ill; indeed her attendants believed her to be dying. She sat propped up with pillows, and struggling for breath; her lips were white, her eyes were growing dull and glazed, and the purple blood was settling at the ends of her cold, attenuated fingers. She was a widow, and little Roger was her only, her darling child. Every night he had been in the habit of coming into her room, and sitting upon her lap, or kneeling by her side, while she repeated to him passages from God's Holy Word, or related to him stories of the wise and good men spoken of in its pages. She had been in delicate health for many years, but never too ill to teach little Roger his verse and hear his prayer.

"Hush! hush!" said a lady who was watching beside her couch, "your dear mamma is too ill to hear you say your prayers to-night. I will put you in bed;" and as she said this she came forward and laid her hand gently upon his arm, as though she would lead him from the room. Roger began to sob as though his little heart would break.

"I cannot go to bed without saying my prayers—indeed I cannot."

The ear of the dying mother caught the sound. Although she had been nearly insensible to everything transpiring around her, the sound of her darling's sobs aroused her from her stupor; and turning to a friend, she desired her to bring him to her couch and lay him on her bosom. Her request was granted, and the child's rosy cheek and golden head nestled beside the pale, cold face of his dying mother. Alas, poor fellow! how little did he realize then the irreparable loss which he soon was to sustain!

"Roger, my son, my darling child," said the mother, "repeat this verse after me, and never, never forget it: 'When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord shall take me up.'" The child repeated it distinctly, and said his little prayer. He then kissed the cold, almost rigid lips before him, and went quietly to his little couch.

When he arose in the morning, he sought, as usual, his mother's room, but he found her cold and still! That was her last lesson! He has never forgotten it! He probably never will! He has grown to be a man—a good man—and now occupies a post of much honor and distinction in Massachusetts. I never could look upon him without thinking about the faith so beautifully exhibited by his dying mother. It was not misplaced. The Lord has taken her darling up.

My little reader, if you have God for your friend, you need never fear; father and mother may forsake you—the world may seem to you like a dreary waste, full of pitfalls and thorns; but he can bring you safely through the trials, and give you at last a golden harp and snowy robe, like those the purified wear in heaven. He can even surround your death-bed by angel visitants. He is all-powerful, an ever present help in time of trouble. Will you not then seek his friendship and keep his commandments?

"IT IS ONLY HIS WAY."

"Papa, here are some pretty flowers for you," said little Mollie Loring, as she ran to meet her father on his return home. "Ain't they beautiful?" continued she, extending her fingers, and laying their tapering tips upon a half-blown Luxemburg, a Cape jessamine, and a white bud that seemed trying to hide itself amongst the crisped petals of a crape myrtle. "This tea-rose is playing bo-peep at you; ain't they pretty, papa?"

"Yes. Who sent them to me?"

"Nobody. I gathered them for you."

"Pshaw! I thought some friend sent them. Go to play, and don't pester me."

"There were more dimples than one in that quivering chin, and something more than the heat of a midsummer's day had crimsoned the sweet face of the child, as she turned into her doll's house, saying to herself, "I fixed them so nicely, and tied them with my doll's new blue sash, that Aunt Nina gave me yesterday. Ma says it is only his way, but I think it is a mighty bad way; that's all I know about it, and I wish our papa was like Carrie Morton's."

What a pity that papa does not consider it "a bad way!" what a pity that he does not know how such conduct estranges his little ones from him, and throws back upon their warm hearts the sweet affections which they are so happy in offering, and he would be so happy in receiving, if he only knew how to appreciate the love of children—if he only knew how to speak kind words to them! But he is kindly disposed—it is only his way—for even now, while Mollie is regretting her inability to draw from him a word of approval, he is turning the flowers in his hand, and saying, as he admires them: "Well, she certainly has displayed very good taste in putting them together. Nothing could be more tastefully arranged than these verbenas on this lemon geranium leaf; and how beautifully she has dotted this crape-myrtle with heart's-ease and white rose-buds!"

Why did you not say those words to your daughter? She would have embalmed them with a child's precious love, and stored them away in memory's urn, to gladden her heart when friends prove false, and the world unkind—when the sorrow of the present makes her fear the future, and turn for relief to the remembrance of childhood's joys and youth's sunny hours. Fathers, speak kindly, lovingly to the little ones around you. Thank them for their love-offerings; tell them the flowers are beautiful and sweet; point out their beauties and sweetness; tell them in what respects they resemble little children; and thus teach them to "look through nature up to nature's God." If you have adopted a repulsive manner, abandon it, and make home happy by your smiles, that your children may believe you when you say you love them, and know how to understand those who talk to them of fond parents and happy families.

Methodist Protestant.

Miscellaneous.

WHAT CAUSES DYSPEPSIA—AND HOW IT MAY BE CURED.

Were it asked what disease is the most prevalent in the world, a throng of emaciated faces would answer, Dyspepsia. You meet it everywhere, as far as civilization extends; indeed, it may be called the creature of civilization. It is one of the greatest of human afflictions,—bearing directly upon the physical, and complicating the mental and moral condition of mankind, and affecting seriously the affairs of life.

Without enumerating all the minutiæ, I shall note the more prominent, recognised points of the subject, and add such other matter connected with it, but less generally known, as may be deemed worthy of attention.

Properly speaking, dyspepsia is not a disease, though treated as such. It exists, eminently in a *varied degree*, ranging from a temporary ailment, to a protracted, exhaustive disease, unfitting the individual for business or pleasure—a burden to himself, fit neither for life nor death. To this unenviable state is to be added the reproach which attaches to those cursed with this malady. It is thought to argue sensual indulgences—a lack of moral energy in the individual. This, in the main, is unjust, as will be seen when we enumerate the causes which lead to the disease. These are various, and often unsuspected. I will name the most prominent.

Chief is a *sedentary life.* Man is so constituted by habit, that exercise is made a necessity to health. It is a normal condition. A deviation from it is an infringement of the sanitary laws of man's nature. The fluids of the body not having the accustomed stimulus which exercise imparts, lose their *balance* in the system. The agent that sends the blood to the extremities and the skin, being withheld, an internal concentration of fluids takes place, depriving the rest of the body of its due share of the circulation. Among the many laws of our nature, there are certain which require our obedience—effort on our part. One is the necessity of exercise. We *must* act, or suffer the result. The natural state of man is not indolence; hence the odium attached to a life of idleness.

The next thing that most induces the disease, is *excessive indulgence of the appetite.* We not only take too much food in the aggregate, but we overload the stomach, distending that member till its strength becomes lessened and its functions deranged, the whole system sympathizing with this central, most critical and important organ.

The intemperate use of ardent spirits is another source of dyspepsia. It is also brought on by *undue muscular exertion.* This is less generally known as a cause of dyspepsia, and its philosophy still less understood. The fatigue which the muscles undergo, extends to the stomach as well, which, in consequence, loses its energy—thus unfitting it, as well as the other digestive organs, for its requisite performances. The inference is, there is not sufficient digestive and assimilative power to sustain the system. Besides, if persisted in, the *functions* of these organs become not only weakened, but constitutionally deranged, which is a further complication of the difficulty—thus establishing dyspepsia, which always means, however brought about, a *derangement of the organs of digestion, principally the stomach.*

I have thus enumerated the more prominent inducements which lead to this disease. There are others, but they are generally auxiliary to the main causes—such as severe mental exertion, persisted in; strong emotions of whatever kind, often indulged in, and long continued. To name all the symptoms of dyspepsia—and their name is legion—is not necessary. I will mention some, in the hope, more particularly, to relieve those who may be under the harrowing impression that some other and fatal malady is preying upon them,—which in itself may be set down as a symptom of the disease.

A gloomy atmosphere is the inheritance of the dyspeptic, with now and then sharp glances of sunlight, both the gloom and the light unnatural—the former weighing down the spirits to a morbid degree, the latter elevating them to a feverish excitement. This is not the worst phase of the disease: that takes place when all is gloom, and no bright moments enliven the horizon. Hence, to the confirmed dyspeptic, life is a dreary existence. He sees things in a false light, his impressions are erroneous, his judgment, in consequence, becomes unreliable. His bright moments—which eventually return—reveal this, which adds another pang to the many that annoy him, as it touches his character for sanity. All this, as before stated, leads to the worst evil that results from dyspepsia—*imaginary misfortune*—appearing in as many forms almost as the subject of the patient's thoughts.

Physically he has many evils to contend with; pain in the chest, and other parts of the body, particularly the left side and the sternum. The muscles of the body become weak and flabby, manifesting soreness on the least unusual exertion, with lameness in the limbs, &c. There is tenderness in the region of the stomach and the hips, felt upon pressure. The extremities are cold and rigid; the skin dry, rough and pale; hands and feet especially are cold, sometimes hot and burning. The patient at times is distressed with night-sweats, bad sleep and worse dreams. He seems heir to a thousand evils, changing in their nature—old ones vanishing, new ones appearing. Some of the most alarming to the sufferers, are palpitation, cough. He is troubled with vertigo, ringing and other sounds in the ears. Sometimes he hesitates in his speech,—has uncertain action,—is pleased with nothing,—pleases nobody, has abundant occasion for regretting blunders of manners, and morals. Moral power he seems greatly to lack: he has lost self-control, follows this whim and that, but never the doctor's prescription to the end—he cannot remain in the mood long enough, hence the disease is prolonged, especially as time is necessary to a cure. He has no patience for that, he is so moody, so wavering. In a word he is only the shadow of himself.

But, happily, dyspepsia is a curable disease. The cure rests in the observance of three prominent requirements, namely: the *removal of the cause, diet,* and *exercise.* These may be aided by other means—but, alone, they are sufficient to cure the disease.

Intemperance, in its widest sense, is the true cause of dyspepsia—excesses of all kinds that bear upon the stomach, as already remarked. Correct these, and you will remove the gyves that bind down the recuperative energy. This done—which meets the first requirement—the system, which is in a debilitated condition, needs aid, needs nursing.

Experience shows that a given quantity of food can be more easily digested in four than in three meals—it shows that quantity is of more importance than quality. The patient in general will be his own best judge in what agrees best with him. He should avoid all excitement immediately before and after, as well as during his meals, which should be enjoyed at his leisure, that the appetite may appreciate the measure of food, and time be afforded for its thorough mastication. Rest,—or better, a mild passive exercise,—should follow each meal. It is also important to keep regular hours. Food taken at unusual seasons produces headache, and temporary disorder of the digestive process. Most of all, avoid a surfeit.

In general, tea may be indulged in to some extent. Coffee should be avoided, or taken sparingly. If used occasionally, it may serve to stir up the dormant energies, and in a measure prove a revulsive agent. It is best to give up entirely tobacco and ardent spirits—the latter gradually, where habits of intemperance exist. In no case should strong habits be broken up abruptly, as the system can ill endure the shock, as well as shocks of any kind: hence the cold bath should generally be avoided.

With regard to the third and last, but equally important point—exercise—a wide field is open. Perhaps the best exercise is in the saddle. It affects equally the whole system. The patient *acts* in his effort to retain his position, and is *acted upon* by the motion of the horse. The internal organs, as well as the limbs and muscles of the body, receive the invigorating benefit.

Walking is the most ready mode of exercise; but many others, the writer is convinced from experience and observation, are preferable, because in walking the legs and back are taxed disproportionately to the rest of the body.

It is most important that exercise be regular and continued, as well as equally affecting all parts of the body. Several hours in each day, at least, should be devoted to it—devoted to thorough action, short only of great fatigue.

A conformity to only one, or even two, of the three general requirements, will not cure dyspepsia. It requires a faithful observance of them all to remove what even then will be found most discouragingly persistent. As the disease is not formed in a day, so it cannot be cured in a day.

There are other things to be observed. The hours of sleep should be held sacred against intrusion. It is important that the patient have some employment or recreation to occupy his time, which would otherwise make him a prey to gloomy thoughts, and aggravate his distress. Travelling agreeably diverts the attention. Any change which occupies the mind is beneficial, especially if it affords exercise to the body, which, as much as possible, should be made a pleasure instead of a task. This may seem unimportant, but is really a matter of consequence. Cheerfulness is an efficient medicine, though its extreme, hilarity, is too great a strain upon the nerves, which, in dyspepsia, are very weak. Great heat and cold should be avoided; the one enervates, the other unduly taxes the system;—intense cold is too great a stimulant. Extremes should always be avoided, and moderation be the watchword.

In general, medicines are of little avail, and then only as aids. The bowels may be regulated by a judicious diet, embracing the aperient fruits, or food containing astringent properties where a relaxing agent is required, though in the great majority of cases, costiveness is the rule. This may be best treated by a resort to regular stool hours. The patient should have a stated time in each day which should be inflexibly adhered to. Only urgent or obstinate symptoms should call in the aid of the physician.

One of the greatest difficulties in the cure of dyspepsia, is a *lack of moral power,*—energy to overcome, to persist, resolutely, unflinchingly, in the course prescribed. The patient will be led into excesses almost ere he is aware, and sometimes under the impression that he is sufficiently recovered to indulge his appetite without danger. Nothing can be more delusive. Dyspepsia is the most fickle of diseases; a strong hand and a firm mind alone can carry out what will eventually insure success, namely, an unremitting course of treatment—and this should fall upon another, not upon the patient—at least, not exclusively; as well leave the inebriate with his cups. It is this *persistence* in the treatment that is so generally neglected; and without its observance, not a case of dyspepsia can ever be cured.

In conclusion, let me once more refer to exercise. Too much stress can hardly be put upon this point. In no case does the patient so generally err, so easily become a delinquent. Ease not only, but weakness, and an indisposition to act, cause this dereliction. Not only is the inclination lasting, but the will, the power to do. We are, therefore, not surprised at neglect in this important particular.

Let me also again warn the individual against the tendency of feigning himself afflicted with other and dangerous diseases. It is difficult—almost impossible—to successfully combat these morbid insinuations. Unless the patient succeeds in arresting this tendency, he will seem in turn to be attacked by almost every malady, and suffer the consequent effect of such imaginings, heightened by the already existent gloom of the mind. Hence the necessity of another's aid to *enforce* these observances.

Medicus.

Effect of Artificial Light on Vegetation.—In answer to an inquiry on this subject, a correspondent of the London Builder states: "I planted vegetables in a place where daylight could not penetrate, over which I suspended a paraffine oil lamp, with a reflector to throw the light upon the plants. They have grown up a beautiful dark green. I have also lighted a green-house with lamps every night, and find it not only increases vegetation, but gives a beautiful deep tinge to the plants."

The Prince of Wales is now of age, and could ascend the throne of England if it was vacated by the death of his mother—the universally popular Queen Victoria.

THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND GENESEE EVANGELIST,

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER,

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Devoted to the promotion of sound Christian doctrine and pure religion, especially as connected with the Constitutional Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

D. C. HOUGHTON, EDITOR,

ASSOCIATED WITH

ALBERT BARNES, THOMAS JAMISON, HENRY DARLING, GEORGE DUFFIELD, JR. JOHN JENKINS, THOMAS J. SHEPHERD.

THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN was commenced three years ago by a company of benevolent and pious men, who loved the Church and desired to promote its interests. One year later, at the mutual consent of the friends of both papers, and by the publicly expressed concurrence and endorsement of the Genesee Synod, the *Genesee Evangelist*, for ten years published at Rochester, N. Y., was united with and merged in the AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, published at Philadelphia. The union of these papers has contributed greatly to the circulation influence, and usefulness of the UNITED PAPER. Measures have been taken to improve the paper, elevate its religious tone and character, and render it every way worthy of its increased and rapidly increasing circulation and usefulness.

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Editor of American Presbyterian,
Philadelphia, Pa.

WHAT IS SAID OF IT.

Attention is requested to the following opinions with regard to

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