

Family Circle.

Christian Homes.

The human being is like a delicate plant, and needs rest and nurture—needs permanency in its relations—cannot endure perpetual change. The moss will not grow upon the rolling stone or on the mountain top that is swept by never ceasing winds. The moving sands are an eternal desert; but give to these waste places quiet, and little by little, life lays hold upon them, gathers strength day by day, and in process of time the polished rock is clothed with a fruitful soil, the flinty sands are decomposed into richness, and the frightful desert smiles with living beauty.

Life needs permanency and rest. "Build ye houses," therefore, "and dwell in them," said Jehovah to the people of his love—"plant gardens and eat the fruit of them." His counsel to those whom he would preserve was, that they have permanent homes and enjoy the fruit of their own labours. The same great principles lie at the foundation of human prosperity in every age.

To every family then let me say—make your home pleasant, and let the delights of vanity go. Store your little private domain with reminiscences of the past—with mementoes of friendship and affection—with comforts for the body and with books and pictured histories, which shall prove a solace to the heart, and shall furnish an abundance of wholesome food and of delightful stimulus to the mind.

Look for your highest enjoyments in communion with God, in the society of good men and women, and of little children, in converse with the wise and holy dead, who are yet speaking, though invisible; in the service of your Father who is in heaven, and of your brethren and neighbours here on earth.

Have a home—a place of worship—a church to work with, and if you can, a circle of friends, whose natural tendencies, whose education, whose general habits and sympathies, so harmonize with your own, that you all have a mutual understanding and confidence. Be perfectly true to these friends through all changes. Never betray them. Never forget them. Never neglect them.

Establish yourselves in these permanent relations. In these hold fast. "Plant gardens for your soul to gather richness, and sweetness in; in whose cool grottes you may find rest and pleasant shade—in whose private walks you may hold converse with those you honour; gardens that shall have the wholesome herb for you, when you are sick, and poor and miserable; that yield the fruit of entertainment and spiritual strength. The poorest of you is not so poor, but in this Christian land he may have such a garden; and the richest of you is not so rich, that he can afford to do without one.

Give over all these semi-barbarous notions of life, which place its enjoyment in show and vanity, in change and luxury. Take the Christian idea and act on that. Seek for permanency, for those quiet and enduring pleasures—the still and deep delights that are found in home, and in Christian labour; and in open and free communion with the good—in seeking for wisdom by practising it—for truth, by living up to its demands and for righteousness and its reward of eternal joy, in the manifold activities of the life divine.

Let your soul be at peace—heed not the ceaseless jar of a contentious world—regard not its stupid maxims, and its fanciful and wayward impertinence; the demands of fashion, and the examples of idle and simple minded persons, who for sheer want of something to do, and out of the morbid hunger of an empty heart, are making changes perpetually. "Build ye houses and dwell in them; plant ye gardens, and eat the fruit of them." We make great boast of our schools, and to hear some men talk, we should suppose them to be meat and drink, and wisdom, and wealth, and salvation.—But great and excellent as are the blessings of the education which these give, there is an institution older than the school, and to which it is in every sense subordinate. I mean the family—the home. He who

should raise the character of our homes will be a greater benefactor than any one who shall improve our schools merely. The moral principles, the sentiments of patriotism, the habits of order of disinterested sacrifice, the warm affections, the religious awe, the sacred convictions which are born and nurtured in a good home, constitute an education which is a thousand-fold more valuable than the mere knowledge imparted in a school. Look to your hearths and fire-sides; make your homes good—gardens of fruitfulness and beauty, and you will have wrought as excellent a work as it is permitted man to accomplish upon earth.

"Build ye houses and dwell in them; plant ye gardens and eat the fruit of them." Learn how to make your homes each a vineyard of God. It is worth the labour of a lifetime and to many of us it will cost as much. But the reward is richer than wealth, and more honourable than fame, and more blissful than pleasure; a reward worthy of our immortality and enduring as the truth and love of God, for a good Christian home is a vestibule opening into the eternal mansions of the Father's household in heaven.

The Family Altar.

"Family prayer," says Cecil, "may be made a vast engine of power to the whole domestic circle. It says there is a God, and inspires a reverence for his character. It proclaims a life to come, and points to the spirit land. It fixes the idea of responsibility in the mind, while it diffuses sympathy through the soul. It furnishes a judicious parent with an opportunity of glancing at faults, where direct admonition might be inexpedient. It greatly conduces to the maintenance of family government and order, while its spiritual advantages are invaluable."

General Miscellany.

Electricity in Diseases of the Heart.

Having tested electricity faithfully in different diseases of the heart, and with very great success, we deem it not improper to call the attention of both the profession and the people to its use. Diseases of this character are prevailing much, and if relief is not to be obtained in the application of this agent, we doubt if the sufferer can reasonably anticipate it at any source. For their encouragement, and the consideration of the profession, we will briefly cite a few from among many cases which have come under our observation, assuring the reader, that the name and address in each case shall be given to those who take sufficient interest in the subject to investigate the particulars.

Mrs. D—, of Charlestown, called on me in June 1848, with disease of the heart, with which she had been afflicted several years, and which for some months had been very troublesome. Excitement or exercise induced violent palpitation, and on falling asleep, which she could not do when reclining upon the left side, she would be suddenly aroused by a sense of suffocation and great distress. She was subjected to the electrical treatment for four weeks only, and permanently relieved.

Mr. C—, of Boston, about 36 years of age, was submitted to my treatment in May 1850, for a disease of the heart, of many years' standing. He was often seized with paroxysms so violent, that life was with much difficulty preserved. Medical aid had been often called at such times, and with no other success than to restore him to a state of consciousness, and to a realization of one of the most insufferable and alarming diseases with which mankind can be afflicted. At the time I first saw him, he was subject to spasmodic attacks of the heart, which was attended with convulsion of the whole system. Having been a sufferer for many years, and often informed that he could find no relief, he had given up all expectation of being restored.

From the first application of electricity he was much relieved; and with eight applications only, fully restored. He may now be seen in Boston, in the full enjoyment of health.

Mr. B—, in December, 1850, was suf-

fering from an affection of the heart which was much aggravated by exercise, and from which he had apprehended the most fearful consequences, as his father had been afflicted as he was, and instantly died from the disease. Electrical treatment was at once instituted, and with immediate relief. In one month, during which it was applied ten times, he was completely restored, and is now well.

Cases of this kind might be multiplied; but we have cited enough for our present purpose, which is to call attention to the subject, and afford encouragement to those who have been taught to believe, that for diseases of the heart there never can be a cure.

Electricity directly controls the circulation. It may be so applied by different means as to at once affect the action of the heart. An understanding application may be made at any time with perfect safety. In some cases, insulation is only advisable. In other instances, interrupted currents may be passed from the magnetic machine; and in other cases, uninterrupted currents, directly through the heart.

An electrical examination of the heart always detects a degree of tenderness or weakness not experienced by those in health. Such examination should always precede a direct application of an agent so active and immediate in its effects, as by too powerful an application, the most fatal results would follow.

One other suggestion may perhaps be proper. Diseases of this character should be attended in their earliest stages. There are always admonitory symptoms, which should lead at once to self-preservation. Perhaps in this more than in any other disease there is danger in delay, as it often so happens that the sufferer is able to keep about, and hardly thinks himself in danger until the very hour of his death, or even the very instant. With a sense of weakness and distress through the region of the heart with palpitation from slight effort or a little excitement, the sufferer should take counsel, and at once obtain relief. This may be done.—*Independent Medical Gazette.*

Moonlight in the Tropics.

There is something exceedingly romantic in the nights of the tropics. It is pleasant to sit on the landing place at the top of the flight of steps in front of Bluefields House, after night has spread her "purple wings" over the sky, or even to lie at full length on the smooth stones; it is a hard bed, but not a cold one for the thick flags, exposed to the burning sun during the day, become thoroughly heated, and retain a considerable degree of warmth till morning nearly comes again. The warmth of the flat stones is particularly pleasant, as the cool night breezes play over the face. The scene is favourable for meditation; the moon "walking in brightness," gradually climbing up to the very centre of the deep blue sky, sheds on the grassy sward, the beasts, lying down here and there, the fruit trees, the surrounding forest, and the glistening sea spread out in front, a soft but brilliant radiance unknown to the duller regions of the north. The babbling of the little rivulet, winning its seaward way over the rocks and pebbles, comes like distant music upon the ear, of which the bass is supplied by the roll of the surf falling on the sea-beach at measured intervals—a low, hollow roar, protracted until it dies away along the sinuous shore, the memorial of a fierce but transitory seabreeze. But there are sweeter sounds than these. The mocking-bird takes his seat on the highest twig of the orange tree at my feet, and pours forth his rich and solemn gushes of melody, with such an earnestness as if his soul were in his song. A Tival from a neighbouring tree commences a similar strain, and now the two birds exert all their powers, each striving his utmost to outstrip the other, until the silence of the lonely night rings with bursts and swells, and tender cadences of melodious song. Here and there over the pasture, the intermittent green spark of the firefly flits along, at the edge of the bounding woods scores of twinkling lights are seen, appearing and disappearing in the most puzzling manner. Three or four bats are slightly winging along through the air,

now passing over the face of the vertical moon like tiny black specks, now darting through the narrow arch beneath the steps, and now flitting so close over head that one is tempted to essay their capture with an insect net. The light of the moon, however, though clearly revealing their course, is not powerful or precise enough for this, and the little nimble leather wings pursue their giddy play in security.

For Farmers.

Practical Agriculture.

Agriculture is the oldest of all the pursuits of man. Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the soil. It is one of the most honourable pursuits and one of the most useful. It is the most healthful, the most independent, scientific and erudite. A thorough farmer cannot be such without a knowledge of many sciences. The fore-castle hand on shipboard knows how to handle the sails, but he knows no more of the art of navigation than a tailor on his shop-board, or the physician in his laboratory. So a farmer may, by practice, learn how to handle the plough and the hoe, but a great deal more knowledge than this is included in the art of the husbandman. So much, that the man who knows it is truly a learned man.

Bulfinch caused on his statue to be inscribed, "a genius equal to the majesty of nature,"—"but," says a learned botanist, "a blade of grass was sufficient to confound his pretensions." A farmer may find a field of science in every plant on his broad acres, whether it is raised by his sweat and skill, or by the despised weed which he seeks to destroy. If he will master all the science of the old oak tree beside his barn, or the pig-weed beneath his feet, he will have a stock of learning that will forever afford him a fund of most agreeable contemplation, and at once enable him to improve his farm as it has not yet been improved. The whole vegetable economy furnishes matter for mental food vastly greater than its supply of corporeal nutriment, and not less agreeable.

The structure and function and uses of the vegetable world, what is known and what is unknown of it, can never fail to furnish either most pleasant knowledge or curious matter for research. But the science of vegetable physiology, enough in itself to make a wise man, is only one of many included in the thorough knowledge of agriculture. Geology, botany, and chemistry, all must be known, or let a man boast as he may of his knowledge or skill, a blade of grass is sufficient to confound his pretensions. This it is that makes the farmer's pursuit honourable, and if he produces enough for his consumption, no man is so independent and happy. And he is a most useful citizen to the State. No man, it has been said, is so useful, as he who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before.

Most frequently a great error is committed by young men, who revolting from the labour of the farm, and seduced by the fancied road to luxury and wealth, which each dirty street of a city seems to their dazzled senses, quit the plow and resort to the counter, in the delusive dream that they have found the highway to wealth and ease. How many of such are there now in this city, in the decline of life, not only without the anticipated fortune, but destitute of a home.

Green-houses in Winter.

A writer in Downing's Horticulturist communicates the following important information respecting the treatment of plants in green-houses during winter.

"Very few persons appear to know the value of the sponge in the green-house. I mean for the purpose of washing the leaves of all those plants with leaves broad enough to admit of it. I took the hint five years ago from a neighbour, the most successful plant grower I have ever had the good fortune to know. His plants were always so especially fresh and healthy, that I was for a long time puzzled to understand his secret. But early one morning I caught him with a pail of water, slightly warm, by his side, sponging off the leaves of all his choice