

# The Telephone

A PAPER DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF TEMPERANCE.

Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.—EXODUS, 14:15.

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For THE TELEPHONE,

## WITHERED LEAVES.

BY "SISTER RUTH."

Crimson, and golden, and brown  
The leaves come shimmering down;  
Down from their lofty place of birth,  
To mingle again with the things of earth.  
How softly they fall on the moistened mold,  
Where soon they'll be hidden from stern  
and cold.

Alas! that such beautiful things grow old.

Nature teaches us no more forcible lesson, none more pathetic, than the one that is to be learned from the falling leaves—never so beautiful as, just before their departure.

"Charlotte Elizabeth," in an old, but very sweet book, called, "Chapters on flowers," makes each favorite flower to represent the character of a much loved friend. Thus, do the Autumn leaves represent, to me, the lives of many loved ones.

That delicate, perfectly formed, but only partly grown leaf, because of its beauty and tenderness, the first one touched by the early frost—clinging to its tender twig, with all the tenacity of young life, quivering and trembling in the summer air, but neither the twig nor the stronger branch can hold it long, for with the first rough wind of Autumn, it must fall. How typical it is of the sweet child, whose short life, had been, all

summer weather, until, one Autumn, when the days began to shorten, her breath grew short, her bright eyes grew more bright; the hectic flush appeared with the first tinting of the leaves, and the little feet grew tired—the feet whose tripping had ever been as the rustling of the leaves,—joyous and frolicsome—when they are gently stirred by the passing wind.

"I am five years old today," she said on her last birthday, "and tomorrow I'll be most six, won't I, mamma?"

When the last leaf had fallen; while the earth was still soft to receive them, the little withered leaf was laid away, with the others, but not like them, to return again in the Spring time.

How many parents' lives are represented by the leafless trees of Autumn; how many mothers who are "only waiting" for the fulfillment of that promise, "Thou shalt know hereafter."

It does seem so hard to understand why these precious lives are given, to take such hold upon our lives; entwining themselves into every heart-fibre, and then, Ah! then.—Mothers, whose grief has only been *quieted*; who still wait to be "*comforted*"—this is a hard season for you; these leafless branches, are so like your empty arms! There is only one place where the fading leaves do quicken—quicken,