

## Miscellaneous.

## ABOVE HALF RIGHT.

"Above half right, above half right," exclaimed Mr. Marvin, at the close of a very long reverie, as he sat by the kitchen stove.

"What is above half right?" asked his little wife, who was just entering to call him to tea.

"Oh, no matter, Fanny, but I am glad if tea is ready—the chill has gone outside and that will set me all right within."

"But I insist upon knowing to what that oracular conclusion referred," said Fanny.

Now with the bright face of his wife, and the pleasant prospect of supper before him, Marvin would rather have been excused from telling his previous cogitations; but Fanny insisted.

"Pour me a cup of tea, then, and if you are willing to risk a spoiled supper, you shall know."

"What is the mystery?" said Fanny, as she passed a fragrant cup of tea to her husband.

"No mystery at all. I was only drawing a comparison, as I sat by the kitchen fire between Tom Hughes' home, manner of living, in fact, house-keeping arrangements generally and our own."

"And who is above half right?" asked Fanny quickly, "surely not Tom and Clara—everything at loose ends—perfect carelessness, not to call it slackness, stamped on everything out of doors and in. Such a yard and garden! Sweet flowers, to be sure, but overrun with weeds—walks neglected—borders broken or altogether lost; and inside, oh dear! I could never describe it."

"I know it! I know it! but comfort is what I was looking at, Fanny." And Mr. Marvin laughed in spite of himself, at Fanny's black look.

"More confusion than comfort, I should say."

"Well, it's all as one feels about it. Too much precision is apt to be chilling," and visions of linen cased chairs and ottomans, gauze covered pictures, and darkened windows in his own perfectly kept parlors, would rise up in contrast with the pleasant freedom of his friend's less pretentious and more commonly used rooms.

"O, you got wet to-night, and because I didn't rush, as Clara would have done, and hurry you into the parlor, wet boots and dripping overcoat, umbrella and all, to ruin the carpet and marble hearth, you sat and had all those fancies over the kitchen fire."

"Fanny," and Mr. Marvin's voice assumed a harsher tone than usual, "you would know my thoughts—a man is not responsible to his wife for having them, I take it; so don't be offended if I revealed them at your own request. I believe I love neatness and order as well as any man, but I don't love to be cramped and hampered at every turn, afraid to stay here or set there. A little use and a little less ceremony, a little more wear and tear, and a little less formality, wouldn't it seem more homelike?"

"This letting down of things I never could bear," was the quiet reply. "Now tell me candidly, Edward, would you be willing I should let Alice and Arthur bring their books and dominoes into the parlor, to build forts and railroads on the parlor carpet, or let Susie have her dolls and tea set there; or thump over the piano with her merciless, fat fingers for the sake of a perfect jargon of noise, instead of keeping them in the nursery, and allowing them only to come in the parlor when properly dressed?"

"Candidly, yes: I would really like it!—Dear little things let them be happy in every room and any room, and not have a parlor seem to them, as Sunday used to seem to me; I should not give them an inkstand uncorked to play with, nor allow rude games, nor have them make the piano a 'stamping ground'; but anything short of this which could afford pleasure, let them enjoy."

"And what a beautiful noise there would be should the door bell ring—bustling about, putting back chairs from Arthur's, and stopping to shake him into quiet because he cried that his train was ruined, picking up this, and straightening out that, until you meet your friend with a face flushed to fever heat, and a hearty wish that parlors might never be nurseries."

Edward laughed, and Fanny, unappeased, went on.

"And would you leave the blinds open all day, and the sunshine in, spoiling everything?"

"Rather brightening and sweetening everything."

"And the covers off the furniture, and all worn threadbare in a month! Only yesterday Clara was darning a place in her sofa, where copper toes and high heels no doubt often came down with sufficient force to please the greatest advocate of freedom and unrestrained use! And then you would like such a garden as Tom's! Faded pea vines clinging to the dead brush, and dahlias blooming from the tangled mass. Rose and spearmint, asparagus, growing in lover-like proximity, while the walks are gracefully arched with strong weeds, lacing themselves across the way in a free and easy manner."

Mr. Marvin laughed again in spite of himself, as he thought of his own carefully kept yard and garden, where one weed would be plucked up as an intruder, where not a dandelion, or presuming plantain had for years dared to lift their heads, and where every walk was as precisely straight (since Fanny had been the mistress at least) as the line that divided the glossy tresses of his wife's hair. On the whole, he had grown very, very fond of order; but there were times when his soul felt trammelled, and in his rebellion he felt disposed to knock around, overset and break up stiffness out doors and in with a vengeance.

"No, Fanny, I would never have broken borders and weed arches, nor sofas turned into a playground, but I would have less fear of the little use, and more open, Sunday, genial freedom. I would rather bequeath to my great-grandchildren worn furniture, threadbare carpets, and tarnished silver, than portraits wrinkled into railroad maps, from care lines made by the constant strain to keep these things fresh, whole and bright. There are always extremes in everything. If I had but one room below and one above, with a four feet wide yard in front, I would not, like poor Sam Will, have melon rinds and refuse apples, broken glass and bits of earthenware, occupying half the space, and broken chairs and useless traps filling every inch of within. For I would show that a little room could be made comfortable, and at all hazards, homelike."

"Well, you are above half right!" said Fanny, "and you'll see if I don't prove it."

And, sure enough, Mr. Marvin found in less than a week, a sun-lighted parlor, with uncased furniture; and actually heard from its cherry recesses the merry voices of children, who are ever the first to appreciate the blessedness of a true home. Fanny had "a mind of her own," but was proud to yield when convinced that her husband was "above half right."

**A TOUCHING PICTURE.**—In a pamphlet printed by the Rev. Isaac Taylor, incumbent of St. Matthias, Bethnal-green, with a view of showing the extent of the destitution which prevails in his district, he alludes to the "children's trades," which, he says, unhappily flourish in Bethnal-green, and says, "Among these trades the foremost perhaps is the manufacture of lucifer boxes. For this work the payment is twopence farthings per gross, or thirty-two boxes for one half penny, out of which sum the little laborers have to find their own paste. The other day I took upon my knees a little girl who is employed in this manner. She told me she was four years old. The mother said the child had earned her own living ever since she was three years of age. This infant now makes several hundred boxes every day of her life, and her earnings suffice to pay the rent of the miserable room which the family inhabit. The poor little woman, as might be expected, is grave and sad beyond her years. She has none of a child's vivacity. She does not seem to know what play means. Her whole thoughts are centred in the eternal round of lucifer-box making, in which her whole life is passed. She has never been beyond the dingy street in which she was born. She has never so much as seen a tree or a daisy or a blade of grass. A poor sickly little thing, and yet a sweet obedient child, the deadly palor of her face proclaiming unmistakably that she will soon be mercifully taken away to a better world where, at last, the little weary fingers shall be at rest. And this is only one case out of scores and hundreds."—[English Paper.

## ABOUT SLEEP.

Barry, in his work on digestion, has made a whimsical calculation on the tendency of sleep to prolong life. He asserts that the duration of human life may be obtained by the number of pulsations which the individual is able to perform. Thus, if a man's life extends to 70 years, and his heart throbs 60 times each minute, the whole number of its pulsations will amount to 2,207,520,000; but, if by intemperance, or any other cause he raises the pulse to 75 in the minute, the same number of pulsations would be completed in 56 years. Arguing from these data, he alleges that sleep has a tendency to prolong life, as during its continuance the pulsations are less numerous than in the waking state.

This is a very comfortable doctrine for sluggards, but unfortunately it is fallacious. A German philosopher contended that sleep was the state of being most natural to man, and that his waking hours could not constitute more than one-third of his existence. Unlike most theorists he undertook to test the truth of his doctrine upon himself, and dozed away the greater part of his time. The consequence was that he soon lost the small intellectual capacity he had, and lapsed into a state resembling idiocy. Apoplexy at length finished his experiment.

There is an old saying that "six hours are enough for a man, seven for a woman and eight for a fool." It is calculated that one-half of a child's life is passed in sleep, and one-quarter to one-sixth of the adult existence; but for old age there is no fixed period or limit. Old Parr slept almost constantly about the close of his life; while Dr. Gooch records the case of one whose period of sleep was only one-quarter of an hour in the 24. It is well to inure a child to a gradual diminution of its time of sleep, so that at ten years old its period should be about eight hours.

With regard to the necessary quantity of sleep for adults, so much depends upon age, constitution and employment, that it is impossible to lay down rules for general application. As a precept, however, for the regulation of sleep in energetic constitutions, the wise distribution which King Alfred made of his own time into three equal periods, may be recommended—one being passed in sleep, diet and exercise, one in dispatch of business, and one in study and devotion. Jeremy Taylor states that three hours only in the 24 should be devoted to sleep. Baxter extends the period to four hours, Wesley to six, Lord Coke and Sir William Jones to seven, and Sir John Sinclair to eight. With the last of these Macnish is disposed to coincide, and says: "Taking the average of mankind, we shall come as nearly as possible to the truth when we say that nearly one-third part of life ought to be spent in sleep; in some cases even more may be necessary, and in few can a much smaller portion be safely dispensed with. No person who passes only eight hours in bed can be said to waste his time in sleep."

According to Gorget, a woman should sleep a couple of hours longer than a man. For the latter he allows six or seven hours, for the former eight or nine. I doubt, however, if the female constitution, generally speaking, requires more sleep than the male; at least it is certain that women endure protracted watchfulness better than men, but whether this may result from custom is a question worthy of being considered.

It is certain that strength or energy of brain will, when aided by custom, modify the faculty of controlling the disposition to slumber. Frederick the Great, and Hunter, the great surgeon, slept only five hours in the 24, while Napoleon seemed to exert a despotic power over sleep and waking even amid the roar of artillery. An engineer has been known to fall asleep within a boiler while his fellows were beating on the outside with their ponderous hammers; and the repose of a miller is in nowise incommoded by the noise of his mill. Sound ceases to be a stimulus to such men, and what would have proved an inexpressible annoyance to others, is to them altogether unheeded. It is common for carriers to sleep on horseback, and coachmen on their coaches. During the battle of the Nile some boys were so exhausted that they fell asleep on the deck, amid the deafening thunder of that terrible engagement.

The faculty of remaining asleep for a great length of time is proposed by

some individuals. Such was the case with Quinn, the celebrated player, who could slumber for 24 hours successively; with Elizabeth Orvin, who spent three-fourths of her time in sleep; with Elizabeth Perkins, who slept for a week a fortnight at a time; with Mary Lyon, who did the same for successive weeks; and with many others, more or less remarkable. In *Bowyer's Life of Beattie* a curious anecdote is related of D. Reid, namely: That he could take much food and immediately afterwards as much sleep as were sufficient for two days.

The celebrated Gen. Elliot never slept more than four hours out of the 24. In all other respects he was strikingly abstinent; his food consisting wholly of bread, water and vegetables. In a letter communicated to Sir John Sinclair, by John Gordon, of Swiny, Caithness, mention is made of a person named James Mackey, of Sherry, who died in Strathnaver, in the year 1797, aged 91; he only slept, on an average, four hours in 24, and was a remarkably robust and healthy man. The celebrated French General Pichegru informed Sir Gilbert Blanc that during a whole year's campaign he had not above one hour's sleep in the 24. Macnish knew a lady who never slept above an hour at a time and the whole period of whose sleep did not exceed three or four hours in the 24; and yet she enjoyed excellent health.

**GYPSIES IN TEXAS.**—A correspondent of the *Galveston News* gives an account of some Gypsies that he came across in the interior of Texas. He says:

The first detachment of a tribe of Gypsies has arrived. I have myself seen them; and with interest have watched their progress to the interior. Four weeks since they started from Victoria, avowedly to go to San Antonio—three men, four women, and eight children, with ambulance, a light wagon and buggy, with a number of horses and many dogs, leisurely traveling, camping in lanes near plantations, tinkering enough on leaky coffee-pots to dignify their condition with the name of work. Their main support and emolument has been from the fortune-telling of the women. The credulity of the negroes is amazing, but that of our white people is beyond belief. Black and white crowd eagerly round these tawny sybils, with their hard-earned specie half dollar or ten dollar, to be invested in a farago of absurd predictions, as likely to be fulfilled as Miller's prophecies. At last accounts the Gypsies had reached Peach Creek. At this rate of travel they may arrive at San Antonio by midsummer.

**REMARKABLE CASE OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.**—A remarkable case of circumstantial evidence has lately been developed in Brooklyn, which is described by the *Brooklyn Union* as follows:

Henry Jones, indicted for burglary in the first degree—breaking open the house of Hugh Allen, No. 60 Harrison street, Brooklyn—was brought before Judge Dikeman and Justices Voorhees and Hoyt, in the court of sessions, and tried. The evidence against the prisoner was purely circumstantial, and embodied the following: Mr. Allen, on discovery of the burglar—at 12 o'clock at night—immediately raised the alarm and the block was immediately surrounded by police. Jones was found in an out-house in the block at 3 o'clock A.M. On his person was found a match-box. In the house of Mr. Allen was found a match-box cover. The two, on comparison, were found to contain each a portion of the same revenue stamp. The rend across the stamp on opening the box was made across the letter "V" on his left hand side, through the wing of the eagle, at the same place. A slight fibre of the paper from the bottom part extended up into the top part in a laminated form, and the rend continued to the right hand side exactly under the letter "B." The two fragments were found thus to perfectly match. District Attorney Morris enlarged upon this piece of circumstantial evidence as being the one most remarkable in his experience, and as equal to that mentioned in Lord Hale, where the wadding of a pistol found in the wound of a murdered man compared with the paper found in the pocket of the accused murderer. The jury found a verdict of guilty without leaving their seats. If the indictment had been murder, the same verdict would likely have followed. Jones was sentenced to Sing Sing State prison, at hard labor, for the period of 10 years.