

Interesting Miscellany.

THRILLING ADVENTURE.

The following thrilling adventure is from an English Magazine:

“Father will have done the great chimney to-night, won't he, mother?” said little Tommy Howard, as he stood waiting for his father's breakfast, which he carried to him at his work every morning.

“He said he hoped all the scaffolding would be down to-night,” answered the mother, “and that'll be a fine sight; for I never liked the ending of those great chimneys; it is so risky, thy father to be last up.”

“Ah, then, but I'll go and see him, and help 'em to give a shout afore he comes down,” said Tom.

“And then,” continued the mother, “if all goes on right, we are to have a frolic to-morrow, and go into the country, and take our dinners and spend all the day in the woods.”

“Hurrah!” cried Tom, as he ran off to his father's place of work, with a can of milk in one hand, and some bread in the other. His mother stood at the door watching him as he went merrily whistling down the street, and she thought of the dear father he was going to, and the dangerous work he was engaged in, and then her heart sought its sure refuge, and she prayed to God to protect and bless her treasures.

Tom with a light heart pursued his way to his father, and leaving him his breakfast, went to his own work, which was at some distance. In the evening, on his way home he went around to see how his father was getting on.

James Howard, the father, and a number of other workmen, had been building one of those lofty chimneys, which in our great manufacturing towns almost supply the place of other architectural beauty. This chimney was of the highest and most tapering that had ever been erected, and as Tom shaded his eyes from the slanting rays of the setting sun, looked up in search of his father, his heart almost sank within him at the appalling height. The scaffold was almost down, the men at the bottom were removing the last beams and poles. Tom's father stood alone at the top.

He then looked around to see that everything was right, and then waving his hat in the air, the men below answered him with a long loud cheer, little Tom shouting as heartily as any of them. As their voices died away, however, they heard a different sound, a cry of alarm and horror from above. “The rope! the rope!” The men looked around, and coiled upon the ground lay the rope, which, before the scaffolding was removed, should have been fastened to the top of the chimney, for Tom's father to come down by!

The scaffolding had been taken down without remembering to take the rope up. There was a dead silence. They all knew it impossible to throw the rope up high enough or skillfully enough to reach the top of the chimney, or if it could it would hardly be safe. They stood in silent dismay, unable to give any help or think of any means of safety.

And Tom's father. He walked around the little circle, the dizzy height seemed more and more fearful, and the solid earth further and further from him. In the sudden panic he lost his presence of mind, and his senses failed him. He shut his eyes; he felt as if the next moment he must be dashed to pieces on the ground below.

The day passed as industriously as usual with Tom's mother at home. She was always busily employed for husband and children in some way or other, and to-day she had been harder at work than usual, getting ready for the holiday to-morrow. She had just finished her arrangements, and her thoughts were silently thanking God for the happy home, and for all these blessings of life, when Tom ran in.

His face was as white as ashes, and he could hardly get his words out: “Mother, mother! he cannot get down.”

“Who, lad, thy father?” asked the mother.

“They have forgotten to leave him the rope,” answered Tom, still scarcely able to speak. The mother started up horrified, and stood for a moment as if paralyzed; then pressing her hands over her face, as if to shut out the terrible picture and breathing a prayer to God for help she rushed out of the house.

When she reached the place where her husband was at work, a crowd gathered round the foot of the chimney, and stood quite helpless, gazing up with faces full of sorrow.

“He says he'll throw himself down.”

“Thee munna do that, lad,” cried the wife with a clear, hopeful voice; “thee munna do that. Wait a bit. Take off thy stocking, lad, and unravel it, and let down the thread with a bit of mortar. Dost thou hear me, Tom?”

The man made a sign of assent; for it seemed as if he could not speak—and taking off his stockings, unraveled the worsted yarn row after row. The people stood around in breathless silence and suspense, wondering what Tom's mother could be thinking of and why she sent him in such haste for the carpenter's ball of twine.

“Let down the end of the thread with a bit of stone, and keep fast hold of the other,” cried she to her husband. The little thread came waving down the tall chimney, blown hither and thither by the wind, but it reached the outstretched hands that were waiting it. Tom held the ball of string while his mother tied one end of it to the worsted thread.

“Thou hast saved my life, my Mary,” said her husband, folding her in his arms. “But what ails thee? thou seemest more sorry than glad about it.” But Mary could not speak, and if the strong arm of her husband had not held her up, she would have fallen to the ground—the sudden joy after such great fear had overcome her. “Tom, let thy mother lean on thy shoulder,” said his father, “and we will take her home.” And in their happy home they poured forth their thanks to God for his great goodness, and their happy life together felt dearer and holier for the peril it had been in, and the nearness of the danger had brought them unto God. And the holiday next day—was it not indeed a thanksgiving day?

MARRIAGES OF CONSANGUINITY.

In the National Medical Association, at its late session at Washington City, a very able report was submitted by Dr. S. M. Bemis, of Ky., upon the influence of marriages of consanguinity upon offspring. Dr. B. says: “My researches give me authority to say that over ten per cent of the deaf and dumb, and over five per cent of the blind, and nearly fifteen per cent of the idiotic in our State institutions for subjects of these effects, are the offspring of kindred parents.

Aside from the facts which I have gained by corresponding with gentlemen who have given close attention to these points, a curious but perfectly legitimate process of computation confirms me in the opinion that these estimates are very nearly correct. Five classes in the schedules prepared give 787 marriages of cousins, 246 of which have given issue to deaf and dumb, blind, idiotic, or insane children. Admitting the same ratio to prevail, the Ohio report, which contains 151 marriages of cousins, followed by deaf and dumb, blind, idiotic, or insane offspring, would indicate the existence of 332 other marriages of cousins in the same population, not followed by such defects. The counties which furnish these 151 marriages, as above, are supposed to comprise in their limits 332 unreported marriages; making a total of 483, contained in 1850, in a population of 1,528,238. If the same ratio be supposed to exist throughout the Union, there would be found to the twenty millions of white inhabitants, six thousand three hundred and twenty-one marriages of cousins, giving birth to 3,909, deaf and dumb, blind, idiotic and insane children, distributed as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Deaf and dumb (1,116), Blind (648), Idiotic (1,854), Insane (299).

Then if the figures of the last United States census still applied to our population, there would now be found in the Union, 9,136 deaf and dumb, of whom 1,116 or 12-8 per cent are the children of cousins. 7,978 blind, of whom 648, or 08-1 per cent, are children of cousins. 14,257 idiotic, of whom 1,844, or 1-29 per cent, are the children of cousins. 14,971 insane, of whom 299, or 0-29 per cent, are children of cousins.

Speaking Well of Others. If the disposition to speak well of others was universally prevalent, the world would become a comparative paradise. The opposite disposition is a Pandora-box, which, when opened, fills every neighborhood with pain and sorrow. How many enmities and heart-burnings flow from this source! How much happiness is interrupted and destroyed! Envy, jealousy, and the malignant spirit of evil, when they find vent by the lips, go forth on their mission like foul fiends, to blast the reputation and peace of others. Every one has imperfections, and in the conduct of the best there will be occasional faults which might seem to justify animadversion. It is a good rule, however, when there is occasion for fault-finding, to do it privately to the erring one. This may prove salutary. It is a proof of interest in the individual, which will generally be taken kindly, if the manner of doing it be not offensive. The common and unchristian rule, on the contrary, is to proclaim the failings of others to all but themselves. This is unchristian, and shows a despicable heart.

Ludicrous Incident. A minister was preaching to a large congregation in one of Southern States, on the certainty of a future judgment. In the gallery sat a colored girl, with a white child in her arms, which she was dancing up and down with commendable effort, to make the baby observe the propriety of the place. The preacher was too much interested in his subject to notice the occasional noise of the infant; and soon, right in the midst of his discourse, threw himself into an interesting attitude, as though he had suddenly heard the first note of the trumpet of doom, and looking toward that part of the church where the girl with the baby in her arms was sitting, he asked, in a low, deep voice: “What is that I hear?”

Before he recovered from the oratorical pause, so as to answer his own question, the colored girl responded in a mortified tone of voice, but loud enough to catch the ears of the entire congregation: “I do no, sa, Ispecs it is dis her chile; but indeed, I has been a doin' all I could to keep him from 'sturbin' you.”

It is easy to imagine that this unexpected rejoinder took the tragic out of the preacher in the shortest time imaginable; and that the solemnity of that judgment day sermon was not a little diminished by the event.—Methodist Protestant.

RIGHT AND WRONG. If I were a voice, a persuasive voice, That could travel the wide world through, I would fly on the beams of the morning light, And speak to men with a gentle might, And tell them to be true.

There are many troubles which you cannot cure by the Bible and Hymn Book, but which you can cure by a good perspiration and a breath of fresh air.—Becher.

Man's chief good is an upright mind, which no earthly power can bestow nor take from him.—Kames.

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THE INNER VOICE. There is a voice within me— And 't is so sweet a voice That its soft lipspings win me, Till tears start to my eyes. Deep from my soul it springeth, Like hidden melody, And ever more I singeth This song of songs to me: “This world is full of beauty, As other worlds above, And if we did our duty, It might be full of love.”

THE SPIRITUAL AGE. DEVOTED TO RATIONAL SPIRITUALISM AND PRACTICAL REFORM. THE NEW ENGLAND SPIRITUALIST AND BRITAIN'S (NEW YORK) SPIRITUAL AGE UNITED. A. E. NEWTON and S. B. BRITTON, Editors, L. B. MONROE, Associate Editor and Business Agent.

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