

## The Household.

### Yet a Little Sleep.

MEN in the present age live fast. The amount of competition in every calling renders it necessary for almost every man to exert himself to the utmost to procure the very means of subsistence. Science, art, commerce; all the industries are feverishly busy; the Press teems with multitudinous productions, unapproached before in their variety, number, and the dispatch with which they are sent forth. at least, if not always so sterling and solid as the works of former times; steam and electricity are enlisted in what may truly be called the race rather than the pilgrimage of life. And if, with all this fast living, the term of life is not shortened, it is because science has done her share in counteracting, in various ways, the exhausting tendencies of the age. The growing insight gained into the laws of health, together with the improvements in the healing art, have in a very marked degree diminished the mortality among children and young persons; while the comforts and conveniences of an advanced civilization have contributed not a little to mitigate the attendant evils of luxury on the one hand, and over-strained mental activity on the other. It may have been needful in the past to urge to industry and effort; it is now, we think, more frequently necessary to enjoin rest and relaxation. Amongst other things, in the matter indicated at the head of this article there is often serious misapprehension and error, amongst both the well-meaning and the selfish and inconsiderate, either in what they allow themselves, or what they exact from others.

Sleep is the most efficacious and most essential restorative for the wear and exhaustion of the system, produced by mental, nervous, or muscular excitement and activity. A due amount of sleep is just as important in the preservation of health, as a sufficient quantity of food. Indeed there are many cases in which a large modicum had better be abstracted from the daily meals, than an hour or two deducted from the period of slumber. Early rising is no doubt an excellent habit, but is not unfrequently too indiscriminately recommended. We have all seen or heard from zealous advocates of the practice, very ingenious calculations of the number of years a man may add to his life, as it is called, by an hour or two daily gained in the time of rising. Now, the calculation is often grievously at fault, and the very opposite of the assertion may sometimes be the true statement of the case. A man does not necessarily add to his life in any sense the hours which he takes from his nightly rest. He may shorten his days by thus prematurely exhausting his powers, and he may render his working ability, either of head or hand, less energetic and efficient while it lasts, in the vain attempt to violate Nature's laws, and curtail the season of repose and reparation. Within the limited scope of the writer's observation, this has been exemplified in more than one melancholy instance. One striking case in point especially presents itself, in the short career of a physician, a man of surprising energy and indomitable will, who made it a rule never to retire to rest before two or three o'clock in the morning, supplementing a hard day's professional work with literary labor (for he was a voluminous writer), yet always rising by seven to commence another day's routine of toil. This man's life seemed a perpetual battle against nature, who would often assert her claims in the most unmistakable manner. In spite of all his efforts, he would drop asleep in the saddle, over his meals, and at other most inconvenient times and places. As might be expected, he was perpetually threatened with disease of the brain, and notwithstanding every care and precaution, except a proper amount of sleep, succumbed at length to the avenging malady. Sleeplessness, it is well known, is

a common precursor, and occasionally the cause of mental derangement.

Admitting or passing over these general statements, it may be asked what is an explicit rule in the case? What amount of sleep does a man require? An eminent English divine used to express his opinion thus: five hours for a man, six for a woman, and seven for a hog! This may be a nice and terse way of laying down the law; but give us, nevertheless, the hog's allowance, if not a little more. No exact rule can be given, equally applicable to all. Differences of circumstance, age, temperament, and constitution, require, in this matter, to be taken into account, and vary the needful and healthy proportion between the hours of rest and activity—sleeping and waking. Generally the young require more sleep than the old, the man of active life more than the sedentary, the nervous, excitable temperament more than the phlegmatic. Nature, if only allowed fair play, will commonly prove the safest guide in each case.

We would strenuously advocate early retiring. Then early rising becomes easy and profitable. Late hours, whether devoted to pleasure or to work, are a violation of the laws of health, and cannot be indulged in with impunity. Let children especially go to bed early; they will spontaneously wake when they have had sufficient sleep, and it is cruel to rouse them sooner. Let masters be considerate in this matter; and if they wish their laborers to make an early start in the morning, be careful not to prolong the day's work unreasonably, or rob their dependents in any measure of a healthful amount of sleep. With a slight modification, we commend the Irishman's logic, who, after having indulged in an extra morning's snooze, and commencing his day's work in consequence later, made the circumstance a plea for leaving off earlier than usual, for it would never do, he said, to be late at both ends of the day. We may, at least, take a hint from Pat, and safely lay it down as a general rule, that it is not well to be late at either end of the day.

### How to Act when the Clothes take Fire

THREE persons out of four would rush right up to the burning individual, and begin to paw with their hands without any definite aim. It is useless to tell the victim to do this or that, or call for water. In fact, it is generally best to say not a word, but seize a blanket from a bed, or a cloak, or any woollen fabric—if none is at hand, take any woollen material—hold the corners as far apart as you can, stretch them out higher than your head, and, running boldly to the person, make a motion of clapping in the arms, most about the shoulders. This instantly smothers the fire and saves the face. The next instant throw the unfortunate person on the floor. This is an additional safety to the face and breast, and any remnant of flame can be put out more leisurely. The next instant, immerse the burnt part in cold water, and all pain will cease with the rapidity of lightning. Next, get some common flour, remove from the water, and cover the burnt parts with an inch thickness of flour, if possible; put the patient to bed, and do all that is possible to soothe until the physician arrives. Let the flour remain until it falls off itself, when a beautiful new skin will be found. Unless the burns are deep, no other application is needed. The dry flour for burns is the most admirable remedy ever proposed, and the information ought to be imparted to all. The principle of its action is that, like the water, it causes instant and perfect relief from pain, by totally excluding the air from the injured parts. Spanish whiting and cold water, of a mushy consistency, are preferred by some. Dredge on the flour until no more will stick, and cover with cotton batting.—*Scientific American*.

BEWARE OF BENZINE.—From the facility with which it removes grease spots from fabrics, this substance has come to be regarded almost as a household indispensable. But few persons, however, realize the explosive character of benzine or the dangers attending the careless handling of the liquid. Being the most volatile and inflammable product resulting from the distillation of petroleum, it vaporizes with great rapidity, so that the contents of a four-ounce vial, if overturned, would render the air of a moderate-sized room highly explosive. The greatest care should be exercised in handling this substance, in proximity to fire, and it is important to remember that the vapor escaping from an uncorked bottle will cause a flame to leap over a space of several feet.—*The Scientific American*.

## Hints to Housekeepers

**HOW TO WASH GRAINING.**—Take clear warm water, a clean, white cloth, and wash a small place and wipe dry with another clean, white cloth. Do not wet any more space than you can dry immediately with your cloth, as it must not be left to dry in the atmosphere; it must be rubbed dry, hence the necessity for clean white cloths. If the paint has been neglected until very much soiled with greasy fingers, or specked with a summer's growth of flies, a very little hard soap may be put in the first water, and then rinsed off with clear water, but avoid soap if you possibly can, as it dulls the varnish, however carefully used. On no account must it be rubbed on with a cloth.

**WHITE PAINT.**—As little soap as possible should be used with this, and that in the water and not on the cloth. It not only makes the paint yellow, but, after a little while, removes it altogether. A friend of mine, noted as a housekeeper, would never allow either soap or hot water to be used on paint, except in case of grease. Cold water and a scrubbing brush were her weapons of offence in waging warfare with dirt, but I should rather pay for painting once in a while, than expend as much strength and time as such a process requires. However, it gives a very fresh look to paint, and saves soap and fire if one is inclined to try it. For greasy spots I prefer a very little soda (carbonate), in the first water, to be immediately rinsed off and wiped dry.

**FURNITURE.**—Mahogany may be washed in very weak suds made of hard soap, and immediately rinsed and rubbed dry with a clean cloth. Some think water must never touch furniture, but once or twice a year; this method may be used to advantage. It makes the articles look as if newly varnished.

White spots made by heat on varnished furniture, may be removed by rubbing with a flannel cloth saturated with coal oil. I have often done so with perfect success. It is much easier than the old hot-paper plan.—"R."—*Journal of Agriculture*.

## Poetry.

### Trees.

BY BENJAMIN GOUGH.

O ye beautiful trees, softly fanned by the breeze  
As it languishes past,  
Or swept by the wintery hurricane blast.  
In forests and woods, and wild solitudes,  
Or standing alone,  
Like sentinels, far in the desert, unknown.  
When Adam and Eve trod the garden of God  
On the flower-spangled glade,  
Trees of Paradise spread in foliage and shade,  
And in glory and light, on Lebanon's height,  
Grand cedars of old  
Grew and flourished, God's planting, for men to behold.  
O ye beautiful trees, of thousand degrees  
All over the world,  
I sing to the praise of your beauties unfurled;  
Where the dark Indian roves, or in clustering groves,  
Fresh, verdant, and free,  
Wherever we wander, we welcome a tree.  
The wonderful Oak, when Creation awoke  
From chaos and night,  
Stretched out his broad arms to feel for the light;  
A monarch art thou, with a crown on thy brow,  
Thou glorious old Oak,  
A king whose sceptre can never be broke.  
And the Birch and the Beech, how beautiful each!  
With Holly and Yew,  
And Fir, in endless variety, new:  
Tall Poplars in rows of Sabbath-repose,  
And fruit-bearing trees,  
By turns our sight and our senses to please.  
O chorus of trees, stirred by tempest or breeze,  
Break forth into songs,  
Sweet chorales of joy from millions of tongues:  
Every leaf has a tongue, God's praise to prolong,  
The Giver of Good;  
Clap your hands and rejoice, O ye trees of the wood!  
O ye musical trees, sing your Song of Degrees,  
Te Deum divine,  
No minster has psalmody equal to thine;  
Through the months of the year, your hymns fill the ear:  
By day and by night,  
God's beautiful trees in anthems unite.

Mark Lane Express.