

AN UNCOMFORTABLE BED-FELLOW.

A dog may be man's best friend, but one can have a bit too much even of a friend. At least, such was the conclusion Mansfield Parkyns came to while travelling in Africa. He tells his experience in "Life in Abyssinia." The whole country was moistened by rains; in the low plains the deep mud was highly disagreeable to bare feet, softening the skin and rendering it more easily penetrated by thorns.

The reader may ask how we managed to sleep on the sloppy bosom of a bog. It was quite simple. We got hydropathic treatment gratis. Our mattresses were pieces of wood and stone placed on enough stones to keep them out of the mud. These, with pieces of tanned hide spread over them, formed our beds.

When the rain came the hide was our covering, too. Now this may not seem a comfortable sort of a couch; indeed, it is not luxurious, and requires a knack of turning round like a dog, and an adapting of the body to the risings and hollows of the bed. One couldn't sleep well if he rested his hipbone on the apex of a conical pebble.

My dog did not like rain, so when it stormed he came whinnying, determined to get under cover. He was a good, friendly beast, but he was rather large for a bed-fellow, being as big as a Newfoundland. His long, thick, coarse hair when wet was odoriferous. The day's tramp through the mud did not tend to cleanse him, and he was never very choice in his dirt. So, when he would attempt to force his way in, I would say, "Naychah, so far as board goes you shall share my last crumb, but, really, my bed is just large enough for me."

But he would never listen to reason. He would seize the corner of the leather in his teeth and tug away at it, letting on to me a few quarts of water. As the best of a bad job, I would at last let him in, but he would not be satisfied until he got the best place.

Fifty times, roused by some sound, he would plant his great paws on my nose, eyes, mouth, anywhere, bark with fury, dash off, dragging the comforter with him, and then come back, wet and reeking, and demand to be taken in again.

This was a sample of my nights.

NEVER SAY DIE.

I saw this on a calendar: "Don't whine. What if you have had a knock out? Tighten your belt a hole, and go at it again."

Pretty good. I just read in the daily paper that a man shot and killed himself in his room at a hotel. Reason, financial reverses. Why, some of the best men in the world fall flat financially. But they need not get discouraged, whine, give up, kill themselves. An honest failure is no disgrace. To give up is. To murder oneself is. Black disgrace, and sin.

A fine young man told me he taught a school when quite young and made a failure of it. "But I'm going to try it again. I learned a lesson. I can do better." Of course he can. Fools fall over failures, and give up. Wise men step up on them and reach success, that before was too high for them.

A farmer failed by reason of a drought. He moved to another section, when the crop was good, and another drought hit him. He moved to a third section, when the crop was good that year, and a third drought hit him.

Then he moved back to his original neighborhood and they had made good crops every year since he left. If in a good section, one had better stand and take the average. Complaining, one can't run fast enough to outrun failure.

Wasn't it simple-minded Barnaby Rudge that taught his pet raven to say, "Never say die," whatever hard knocks they ran against? Hard knocks are healthful, if laughed at; but spoil the liver, if whined over.—(Selected.)

THE LITTLE RED BUSH.

O, the little red bush, it was brave, it was gay,

On the hilltop so dreary and bare!
When summer was over, and skies were dull grey,
And the cold winds were fighting for victory there,
In the midst of the stone
And the stubble alone,
Flamed the little red bush.

Thought the little red bush, "Down below where it's green
May be easier living than here;
'Twould be pleasant to grow there where one must be seen
And not have to make every bit of good cheer
For yourself all alone
In the midst of rough stone—
Just one little red bush.

"But it's here I've been set by the planter, who knew
Where a little red bush ought to be;
So instead of complaining, the best thing to do
Is to flame, O so brightly! that someone may see,
And be glad that alone
With the stubble and stone
Grows one little red bush."

WOMEN WHO WORRY.

There are few miseries in life greater than the companionship of a worrying woman. Nothing is too small for her to make into a gigantic evil and to be offended accordingly.

The wind is in the east, and she is personally injured. The rain has come on a pleasure day, and she frets grimly and makes every one about her fret, as if the weather were a thing to be arranged at will, and a disappointing day was the result of willful mismanagement. Life is a burden to her and all about her, because the climate is uncertain and elements are out of human control.

Worrying women never have done with their prey, be it a person or a thing, and they have the art of persistence that drives their poor victims into temporary insanity. Their total indifference to the maddening effect they produce is the oldest part of it all.

They begin again for the twentieth time, just where they left off, as fresh as if they had not done it all before, and as eager as if one did not know exactly what was coming.

It makes no difference to them that their worrying has no effect, and that things go on exactly as before—exactly as they should have done had there been no fuss about them.

Imbued with the unfortunate belief that all things and persons are to be ordered to their liking, they think themselves justified in flying at the throats of everything they dislike, and in making their dislikes peculiar grievances.

The natural inclination of boys to tear their clothes and begrime their hands, to climb trees and poles at the peril of their necks, is a burden that is laid especially upon worrying women, if they chance to be mothers of vigorous, healthy, robust boys.

The cares of their family are greater than the cares of any other family; no one understands what they go through, though everyone is told pretty liberally.

Hint at the sufferings they inflict on others, and they think you unfeeling and unsympathetic. Unless you would offend them for life, you must listen patiently to the repetition of their miseries.

These women may be good Christians theoretically. Most likely they are, according to the law of compensation, by which theory and practice so seldom go together. But the elementary doctrine of peace and good-will are beyond their powers of translation into deeds.—(Selected.)

To cultivate good thoughts is to be loyal to one's better self.

Obedience is the price of spiritual knowledge.—Joseph D. Burrell.

COUSIN EFFIE'S LAWN PARTY.

BY MARTHA H. ABBOTT.

Meribah lifted a very distressed face. "Must I go, mama?" she said.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Carlton, "Cousin Effie would feel offended otherwise. Besides, you must go into company more."

An invitation to a lawn-party would have delighted most little girls. But Meribah did not know the people at the Lower Village, where Cousin Effie lived, and she was always unhappy among strangers.

So, in spite of her dainty white gown and pink rosebud sash, Meribah was a very unhappy little girl as she stood at the door waiting for the carriage, on the afternoon of the party.

Miss Connor, Meribah's teacher, came along, with her hands full of river-pinks, and stopped to greet Meribah. "What a good time you'll have!" she said brightly. "Big folks miss so much! I think a friend of mine will be there who will be wanting a favor. If you can help her I shall be very grateful."

Then papa drove up with the colt that did not like to stop for people, and they were dashing down the road before Meribah remembered that Miss Connor had not told the name of her friend. How provoking it was! She loved Miss Connor, and would have liked to do a kindness to a friend of hers.

When they reached Cousin Effie's, the guests were arriving. In the dressing-room, the girls were retying ribbons and smoothing crumpled dresses. Meribah almost fell over a little girl on her hands and knees under the table.

"It's my beads," she wailed. "The string broke and they're all over the floor, and nobody minds."

Miss Connor's friend! Meribah was so glad, and she joined in the search till all the pink treasures were found and the little girl was happy.

Under the maple was the lemonade well, a big tub covered with vines, from whose cool depths Aunt Clara served the refreshing drink. Meribah was sipping her glassful on a rustic seat, when she heard Aunt Clara say anxiously to the girl who assisted her: "We're almost to the bottom, now. There's another pail in the ice-house, but nobody is here to bring it. John is up at the stable and I can't get word to him. What shall we do?"

Perhaps, after all, it was Aunt Clara whom Miss Connor meant. It was not best to run any risks, so Meribah offered her services to find John, and Aunt Clara gratefully accepted them.

Meribah saw so many people who wanted things done for them that she smiled to think Miss Connor had expected her friend to be known in that way. So she helped them all, lest she should miss the particular one.

Effie's grandmother had been invited to the party. She sat on the veranda, and she looked so lonely in the midst of the gay company that Meribah, whose eyes had suddenly grown very sharp, noticed it. So when the guests paired off to go to supper, she invited grandma.

Meribah had dreaded most of all to sit at the table with strangers, and be expected to talk. But she was so busy helping grandma that she did not think of herself. She helped her to goodies and told funny stories, till the old lady laughed like a girl, and Effie, from another table, looked gratefully over to Meribah.

When the party broke up, there were six people who came up to thank Meribah again for some little kindness done them, and grandma whispered, "I haven't had such a good time since I can remember." "I enjoyed it so much," Meribah said, when she was at home again, "and I never thought of my hands all the time. But I can't make out which one was your friend, Miss Connor."

"All who needed help," said Miss Connor. "You've found out the very best way of forgetting yourself in company." Have you?—Sunday School Times.

"Covet earnestly the best gifts" and develop them.