

HALF-WAY TOWN.

BY FRANK WALCOTT BUTT.

An easy road runs smoothly down to Half-Way Town. For everything that's never done, And everything that's never done, Just roll aside, and one by one, Goes into Half-Way Town.

Half-finished walls are tumbling down in Half-Way Town. Half-finished streets are always lined with half-done work of every kind; And all the world just lags behind in dreary Half-Way Town.

Keep straight along, and don't look down toward Half-Way Town. They say, if every one should try, To keep on moving, brisk and spry, We should discover Half-Way Town. There'd be no Half-Way Town. —Youth's Companion.

Stella's Summer Trip

By Ella M. Hess.

I AM sick and tired of this life! I would rather die now than endure it year after year, without a hope of release!" Stella Monito threw her crochet work to the other side of the small room. "If I could go to the seaside like other girls I might make a suitable match—one that would save me from the bondage of poverty!"

Netta sadly looked up from her lounge. "You have much to be thankful for, dear Stella," she said softly. "Your health—a beautiful face—" "What is the good of my beauty? Whom do I see now? No one but Dr. James, and he is old and stout, and knows our poverty too well to think of me."

At this juncture Mrs. Monito, a quiet, ladylike woman, entered the room, and looked from one to the other of her daughters.

"What is the trouble?" she asked. "Mamma, Stella is tired and wants to go to the seaside," Netta said softly. "Poor Stella is weary of this life, and I think I had better give her Uncle Lorraine's gift, and then she can have her way."

"Netta!" exclaimed the astonished mother. "Yes; my money increases very slowly, and perhaps, after all, I may not get better."

At the girls' last birthday their mother's brother had given each \$100. Stella had bought some handsome finery with her money, but Netta, who had been for years crippled by a fall, laid hers aside, hoping to save enough to take her to some celebrated physician.

Buoyed up with that hope she had painted little pictures for the stores, and saved each dollar carefully, but Stella's constant repining was wearing, and she determined to give up her hope and let her have her long looked for trip.

"Do you really mean it, Netta?" Stella questioned eagerly. "Yes."

"Then I will tell you what I'll do, you dearest of sisters! I shall be sure to make a conquest, and when I am married I will take you to France, to the physician you wish to see."

At that moment some one tapped at the door, and a moment later Dr. James, a tall, rather stout man of about forty-five years of age, with a grave, kind face, entered.

Two weeks later Stella Monito was boarding in an aristocratic resort. Time went by, and her letters home were not very frequent. Finally one morning the postman brought one that ran thus:

"My Dear Mother and Sister—I am about to be married and bid adieu to a life of poverty forever. Mr. Eiland, my future husband, is immensely wealthy. He owns a magnificent residence in the city and one on the Hudson. But there is one thing which I am sorry to mention—he does not wish me to acknowledge my relatives after marriage. Of course I shall not forget you, mother and Netta, and shall return the money which brought me here at the earliest opportunity. My face has been my fortune. Stella."

Mrs. Monito covered her face with her hands. "My child has forsaken me!" she cried.

Netta could hardly utter a word of consolation. What was there to say? She knew her sister worshiped at the shrine of wealth, and cared not how many hearts she broke if she only reached her longed-for goal.

A few weeks later Dr. James made them a visit which was not strictly professional.

"Netta," he said, sitting down beside her, "your sister's summer trip has won her a husband. I read the marriage notice in the paper yesterday. Now, I have a favor to ask of you. I am tired of being alone in the world; I want a wife to take care of, and there is no one else who would please me but you. I have loved you ever since you were that high—with a notion of his hand—and if you will have me I will take you to France to the physician you have set your heart on seeing. If they cure you I shall rejoice; if they do not, I shall love you all the more."

Netta looked up in his kind eyes in surprise—his words were so unexpected.

"No, no!" she cried. "I will not take advantage of your generous offer. I will never be a burden to any man."

And all the arguments he could use would not induce her to change her mind.

The days wore slowly on. A letter came from Stella:

"My Dear Sister—I am ashamed that I have not been able to return your money, but the truth is, though my husband is immensely wealthy, and I am dressed in the richest of

gowns, and waited upon like a queen, I have not a penny of money under my control. Everything I have is ordered and paid for afterward, but by-and-by I shall contrive a way to get it for you."

"Poor Stella!" the mother sighed. "I am afraid that in the end she will think her summer trip a failure."

"And her marriage, too," rejoined Netta, "as all marriages not based on true love prove."

"I have some good news for you!" Dr. James cried, as he entered the room followed by a strange gentleman. "Put away your letter, Netta, and listen."

Netta did his bidding, and the stranger introduced himself as a lawyer. He informed that an uncle of Mrs. Monito's had died and left her heiress to his wealth—a goodly sum.

Several weeks later found Mrs. Monito and Netta en route for England. Dr. James's nephew intended to cross the ocean, and the doctor had intrusted them to his care.

"God grant your dearest wish may be granted, Netta," he said to her when parting.

Months went by, and Netta was on the road to recovery. By degrees she found her old strength returning, and at the end of a year was able to walk about without assistance.

She was very happy, and to crown all, her sister Stella and her husband visited them. They were making a tour, and as her relatives were wealthy now, Mr. Eiland had no objection to his wife's associating with them.

They insisted that Mrs. Monito and Netta should be of their party. "For Stella's sake," Mrs. Monito said, "Netta, I will consent. She is unhappy enough. She sold herself for gold, and only too late realizes what that bargain means."

Another six months passed away. Netta had a number of suitors, but to none did she give encouragement and Theodore Dunscombe, the doctor's nephew, interpreted that sign favorable to himself.

He wrote to his uncle that Netta's health was perfect, and her life was now a happy one; then he hinted that, in time, he dreamed of winning her.

"Theodore is a good boy," the doctor whispered, when he read the letter. "They will be a suitable pair, and I must forget my wild dream."

He went to meet them when they returned, and congratulated Netta on the fulfillment of her dearest wish. After that he called but seldom, and was grave and restrained when they met by chance.

Dunscombe's wooing did not prosper, and at last he begged of his uncle to use his influence for him.

"She thinks so much of your opinion that she will heed you," he pleaded, and the doctor at last consented.

He went to see Netta, and made his errand known. She looked at him with a flushed face.

"I cannot accept your nephew," she said decidedly. "I do not care for him as a woman should for the man she marries."

"But in time you might." "Never! I shall never love but one man, and he has had my heart since childhood."

"Netta, I never dreamed of this!" he said. "Who is he? Tell me!" "Need I?" she asked softly. "Who cared for me when I was poor and afflicted, and would have burdened himself with me then? If he has changed, I—"

"Netta!" He opened his arms to fold her in his embrace. "I never dared hope for this moment!"

Theodore Dunscombe did not stay to his uncle's wedding, but Stella and her husband came to witness it.

"May God bless you, my unselfish sister!" Stella whispered to the bride. And to all appearances her prayer is answered.—Waverley Magazine.

Packed in Plaster. The ingenious Germans have developed a novel method of packing and shipping butter, which may be of interest to American dairymen.

A light wooden case or box is lined thoroughly at the bottom and sides with a layer of plaster of paris a quarter of an inch thick, on which pieces of common glass are laid before the plaster sets.

The edges of the glass slabs are made perfectly air tight by means of gummed paper, and into the perfect-fitting box thus formed butter, wrapped in good water-proof paper, in ten-pound cakes, is placed. The glass top is now put on and made air-tight with strips of gummed paper. A layer of plaster of paris one-quarter inch thick is now run over the glass cover and the lid nailed on the box.

Each case is made to contain about two hundred pounds of butter. The plaster of paris being a non-conductor, very little heat reaches the butter, which arrives at its destination in good condition.

Weird Courtships. Touched with infinite paths, as well as with surpassing weirdness, was the courtship of a young Lancashire miner who wooed his cousin, a girl of nineteen, across the dying bed of the former's father.

The girl, who had been summoned to nurse the old man, fell in love with the son through watching his tenderness to his ailing sire, and thus it came about that while the aged life was ebbing away two young lives were converging toward each other.

The father in his final moments guessed their secret and joined their hands, and thus did this remarkable wooing wear to its end. In Germany, where the mortuary system is far more complete than our own, and where both male and female attendants are employed, it is no uncommon thing for courtships to be carried on in these halls of the dead, and many marriages have been planned and arranged amid their surroundings.—Tit-Bits.

Without emulation, competition and comparison there can be no improvement. But in competition there can be co-operation and fair play, remarks the Christian Register.

Australians are already beginning to look with disfavor on the clause in their Constitution which authorizes the exercise of the imperial veto on their legislation. It is becoming evident that this veto right will prevent the passage of desired legislation.

"Anarchy is a kind of despair of the incompetent," says the Brooklyn Eagle. Is it not rather the rage of the lazy? Most assassins have been young men. Young fellows of twenty-eight do not easily despair, but many of them feel hatred, anger, envy and other emotions of the lazy and decadent.

Ribbon makers in Europe say that their industry has suffered greatly because of the popularity of the bicycle. Women who ride the machine wear hats which have no other trimming than the single band, generally of black, and the picture hat is adorned with feathers to the exclusion of ribbons.

The vanity of human intelligence seeks various outlets. One man seeks to devise a perfect government and another is in search of perpetual motion. Neither has succeeded as yet, and both are still hopeful in spite of the strictly practical people who shake their heads and declare it can't be done.

Naturally the ambitious young Canadian, hungry for metropolitan opportunities, goes to New York, or Philadelphia, or Chicago, or Boston. The drift in this direction is as inevitable as that of bright Scotchmen to London. And so Canada loses every year her best brains and her most vigorous energy, says the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post.

The Circuit Court of Baltimore has been asked to decide as to the legality of an affidavit to a bill of complaint taken by long-distance telephone. The case in question is in relation to the appointment of a receiver and the objection is that the signatory was not in Baltimore at the time of the certifying of the paper, but that, on the contrary, he was in Cincinnati.

The population of Norway is about 2,200,000 souls. It was 2,110,000 in 1891, with a probability that 15,000 seamen and fishermen were absent from home on the day that the census was taken, and that there has been a net increase of 75,000 since. This is an average of 16.80 inhabitants to the square mile, showing Norway to be the most thickly settled of all European countries.

The Governor of Jerusalem, Mohammed Djavad Pasha, prevented a drought the past summer by tapping Solomon's Pools, nine miles distant from the city. The water was conveyed from the "sealed fountain," mentioned in the "Song of Solomon," through pipes ten centimetres in diameter. There seems to be almost a suggestion of miracle in applying modern mechanics to sacred history.

Extremes meet. Maine and Florida are geographical extremes, one being the most northerly and the other the most southerly of the Atlantic coast States. In neither can the general average of soil and material resources be compared with the conditions in other States, but Florida is the great winter resort, and Maine is becoming a great summer resort. Some of the keepers of hostleries do, in fact, migrate with the birds between St. Augustine and Bar Harbor, ministering alike in the cold days and the hot days to the pleasure of pleasure seekers.

The professional Anarchists in the United States have almost without exception been of foreign birth. If the family history of the individual forming this body of malcontents could be traced, it is probable that they would prove to belong to a class of unfortunate who have passed through generations of poverty, depravity and perhaps oppression, with the result that they have, perhaps, inherited a bent of mind which is distinctly abnormal. It is possible, even probable, that such a bent would not be recognized by the psychologist, the medical student, or the alienist as a distinct form of mental disease. When the mind reaches the point of depravity at which it is unable to distinguish the difference between right and wrong—may, more, that it mistakes wrong for right, even to the point of conceiving the murder of an innocent and unoffending individual to be an act of heroism—what further proof do we need of mental aberration? queries the Scientific American.

SOCIAL PRETENDERS.

Various Methods Adopted in England to Deceive the Unsuspecting.

The ways of social pretenders are always amusing and often ingenious. The query, "Do you know the Smythe-Hobsons?" and the reply, "Oh, intimately; why I dined with them only two nights ago," are common everywhere, though they deceive no one. In England, however, there are special forms and devices which are particularly interesting.

An Englishman tells of a certain ingenious friend of his who, when writing a letter, invariably begins with "Dear Duchess." Through this he lightly runs his pen, and then proceeds below soberly with "Dear Smith." By means of this simple device he has contrived to advance himself considerably in life.

"In the earlier days of my London career," continues the Englishman, "I remember having been much impressed by an individual who was apparently acquainted with all the carriage folk in town. His hat was perpetually on the move. No sooner had a carriage dashed past than he would leisurely bow, at the same time remarking: 'Why, there's Lady Baltimore. What a charming woman she is!' or otherwise making some such airy comment on the situation. As a matter of fact he was every bit as complete a stranger to the lady as I was myself. I groan when I recall the numerous dinners and other expensive civilities I wasted on this execrable old humbug in those innocent days."

Another self-advertiser had once, and once only, been favored with a brief conversation with a prominent royal personage. Ever afterward he invariably addressed every one as "Sir," occasionally, however, correcting himself and apologizing on the grounds of his long connection with royalty. Still another individual contrives to enter upon his intimacy with great people immediately on learning of their demise. No sooner do the papers announce that "The Right Honorable the Earl of Scattermore" has departed this life than this fellow straightaway adopts the late peer as an old and much-lamented friend. He thrives on these sordid post-mortem intimacies.

The most surprising scheme, according to American notions, is that of Mrs. Somerset Cobbles, a fascinating and ambitious little lady, possessed of pretty eyes and a fixed determination to make her way up in the world. Daily for weeks did a smart single brougham bearing the royal colors and stamped with the royal crest, display itself at her door, and daily for weeks did the envious neighbors grind their teeth thereat. Somehow her secret leaked out. She had, it appeared, bribed the coachman into bringing his master's carriage to do short duty each day outside the door!—Chicago News.

Passengers and the Bell Cord. Time was when the passenger on a surface car who had the temerity to pull the bell cord to stop it was glowered at by the conductor and sometimes abused by that official, but circumstances have changed this, and the other day on a trip from the Postoffice to the Grand Central Station on a Madison avenue car no fewer than half a dozen passengers, some of them women, gave the signal to the motor-man at as many different points.

"Yes," said the conductor in reply to a question, "people are doing that more and more every day, and it's a good deal a case of 'have to.' What with collecting fares, giving out transfers and answering questions, a conductor would need about four pairs of eyes to see every person who holds up his finger when he wants to get off. There really ought to be two men—one to run the car and the other to tend to the fares and transfers—but I don't think the company would stand for that."

"The people can't do much harm stopping the car to suit themselves, as long as they let me start it, and I'd rather have a woman get up and give the cord a pull than to have her scold me hot and heavy for carrying her a block too far."—New York Times.

Muddy, Slushy, Dusty London. In spite of, or possibly because of, Parliament, the London County Council, the metropolitan boroughs, and the lighting and water companies, London is possibly the most inconvenient and most untidy city of Europe. The streets are either muddy, slushy or dusty; they are littered with straw, cabbage leaves, newspaper posters and omnibus tickets; they are constantly being grubbed up for some reason or other; barrels of beer, coals and other goods are delivered across the footways at all hours of the day; omnibuses are allowed to block the streets pretty much as they please, and chalmers are allowed to make the air filthy because they "cannot get Welsh coal."

So long as London is governed by or rather is dependent for its due regulation upon a number of bodies all independent of each other, so long will nuisances of various kinds continue. We make no suggestion as to who should be the governing body, but that there should be one is certain.—The Lancet.

Funerary Historian. Berlin is in possession of a short-hand writer with a unique specialty. He attends all funerals of prominent persons and takes down verbatim the address of the officiating clergymen. Then he prepares highly ornamented copies of the addresses and sells them to the friends of the enlorged dead. His business is so good that he has found it necessary to engage a staff of assistants.



Effect on Property Values.

Do State roads increase the value of abutting property? is a question often asked of the Massachusetts commission. As a partial answer, it can be said that information has been received from distant parts of the State setting forth the fact that certain farm lands which were on the market for some years, without a customer, were sold shortly after the completion of the State road, and at prices above what they had been offered for. As there are neither steam nor electric railways within several miles of some of the pieces of property referred to, it is fair to assume that the judgment of the local informants, who attribute the sale and the rise in price to the State road, is correct.

Although it is difficult to obtain direct evidence as to a rise in the value of property, there is no lack of testimony as to the value of the roads to the users of them. From all parts of the State reports have been received which clearly show a material reduction in time between given points, a decrease in the number of horses on certain stage, mail and milk routes, and large increase in loads with the same number of horses. These results surely mean that the social conditions are improved, the cost of maintaining regular lines of transportation by highway is reduced, and the product of farms and isolated manufacturing is moved in a manner to increase the margin of profit.

Real property is subject to the same laws, whether it be urban, suburban or rural. Its market value is regulated by its earning capacity, its nearness to beautiful or picturesque scenery, and still further by its religious, educational and social opportunities. A rise in value may follow an improvement of any one of these conditions, but it must follow a betterment of all. The commission is confident that the case is not misstated when it says that wherever a State road has been begun, a betterment along the lines suggested will follow its completion.

The Farmer and the Automobile. Ordinarily the chauffeur on pleasure bent takes only scant interest in that branch of automobilism which is concerned with transportation of freight. Nevertheless, there is an intimate and necessary connection between the progress of heavy motor wagon traffic and the pleasures of those who never expect to operate an automobile for utility purposes. These pleasures depend very largely upon the mileage of good roads that are at one's disposal, and the goods roads problem depends for its solution almost exclusively upon the advancement of automobile freight traffic and automobilism for agricultural implements and the general husbandry of the farmer. So long as the farmer is compelled to employ horses anyway, for plowing his fields and hauling produce and provisions to and from town, so long will he be disinclined to purchase automobiles for any purpose, but the moment he can dispense with all horses, save perhaps one team, and can begin to see a saving in doing so, he will also be willing to listen to the financial argument in favor of good roads, and this argument being immensely strengthened when he can measure the traction effort on a poor road in the dollars and cents expended for gasoline (or perhaps alcohol), he will soon be willing to pay his share for road improvement. It might be a paying investment if all automobile manufacturers would endow a special institution for advancing the application of mechanical power to all kinds of work incidental to agriculture. It would at all events be a novel and meritorious departure, and might be made successful under competent leadership, although most other forms of co-operation which look so tempting to the theorist prove so futile in practice.—Automobile Topics.

Farmer's Roads. A dispatch from Warsaw, Ind., to the State Journal says that farmers in the northern part of Wabash County are building gravel roads, independent of the county commissioners, at a rate which will soon leave few of the old road highways in existence, under a system which makes construction easy and cheap. One turnpike of ten miles, extending from North Manchester to Disko, is now being completed, and the burden, under the self-assessment system evolved, has scarcely been felt among the land owners. These farmers entered into an agreement to build the road, every owner of property abutting joining in the pact to pay \$1.50 per acre in work or cash, within three years. Land assessed extends back a half mile on either side of the road. The work is done in dull seasons, and the loss of time is not felt by the farmers, while the construction of the road is pushed rapidly. At the end of the three years the county commissioners are notified of the completion of the work, the county surveyor inspects the road, and if it complies with all requirements, it is accepted, and the commissioners, under the gravel-road repair act, undertake to keep it in good condition.

Always Room For More. "The man who thinks he knows it all," says the Maunyan Philosopher, "generally lives long enough to learn that even the biggest encyclopedia occasionally needs a supplement."—Philadelphia Record.

A NATIONAL MOVEMENT.

Magnitude of the Effort to Change Inauguration Day.

A national movement has been started from Washington by the inauguration committee having for its object a change of the date of the inauguration from March 4 to the last of April. This is not a new movement, but we believe it is the first time it has been undertaken in a way to enlist directly the people's influence. It has been begun sufficiently far in advance of the meeting of Congress to enable the promoters to bring to bear whatever weight the scheme may have acquired from their efforts.

An effort has been made to enlist Congressmen in the fight. It does not appear that the latter are friendly to the scheme. They feel some embarrassment on account of the changes which go along with the alteration of inauguration day, and they are, to some extent, perplexed by the temporary change in the term of the presidency, for if the date is changed the incoming President must either lose two months of his term or he must cut that much from his successor's term. Still, if Congress can be assured that the people desire the change these embarrassments would not prevent it. It is not like some other matters upon which that body is asked to legislate, and which more or less involve their own interests. Legislators are apt to be apathetic concerning almost any question until it is brought home to them that the people demand it.

The arguments for a change have been given so often as scarcely to need repetition. One of the strongest is that the inauguration has become the grandest and most inspiring of national functions, and the American people literally pour out to it from all quarters of the United States. This brings many thousands from climates which are quite the opposite of that which is likely to prevail in Washington on the 4th of March, and subjects them to contrastive very injurious to health. In a measure this applies to all who attend the inauguration. There is apt to be either a down-pour of rain or an atmosphere which is more uncomfortable and more dangerous to health. The people who have the patriotism to attend the inauguration are entitled, it would seem, to have their comfort and health considered in fixing the date of the august event.—Baltimore American.

WORDS OF WISDOM. The richest minds need not large libraries.—Alcott. Dyspepsia is the reverse of a gaily stomach.—A. Kerr.

In all things it is better to hope than to despair.—Goethe. He who wishes to do wrong is never without a reason.—Syrus. Rashness brings success to few, misfortune to many.—Plautus.

Do not yield to misfortunes, but meet them with fortitude.—Virgil. Pride is increased by ignorance; those assume the most who know the least.—Gay. Language was given to us that we might say pleasant things to each other.—Bovee.

Your greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall.—Confucius. Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids. For monuments shall last when Egypt's fall.—Young. On the sands of life sorrow treads heavily, and leaves a print time cannot wash away.—H. Neale. However rich or elevated we may be, a nameless something is always wanting to our imperfect fortune.—Horace.

Men must be decided on what they must do, and then they are able to act with vigor in what they ought to do.—Mencius. The Tiger's Musical Ear. A student of animal habits recently made some interesting experiments with music at the Zoo, says Tit-Bits.

A violin player approached a sleeping tiger, and at the sound of the music the tiger awoke, and raising its head without moving its body, looked for some time with fixed attention at the player. It remained for a while in a fine attitude listening to the music, and then, making a peculiar sound that in tiger language does duty for purring, it lay down again and dozed.

The soft music was played on while the great beast lay as if lulled to sleep. The violin was then put aside for the piccolo. At the first note of the new instrument the tiger sprang to its feet, and rushed up and down the cage, shaking its head and ears, and lashing its tail from side to side. As the notes became still louder and more piercing the tiger bounded across the cage, reared on its hind feet and exhibited the utmost displeasure.

The piccolo was stopped, and a very soft air played upon the flute. The difference in effect was seen at once. The tiger ceased to rush about, and the leaps subsided to a gentle walk, until the animal came to the bars, and standing still and quiet once more listened with pleasure to the music.

Sportsman's Gun. "Half the guns and rifles brought here for repair," said a gun manufacturer in North Twelfth street, "want nothing but a good washing with cold water. When rifle barrels become so foul that they will not shoot true they should be washed and not scraped. It is a good plan for a man going shooting to carry a small syringe, and after every ten shots he should squirt some water into the gun from the breech and shoot a cartridge out of it while it is wet. The water softens the powder that has accumulated in the rifle and the bullet forces it out."—Philadelphia Times.