

In this paper, then, I have tried rather to show what should be avoided in the treatment of irritability in children rather than to inculcate any mode of cure. For different cases require different treatment. But

no mother can err who sees that her child sleeps warmly, but not in too hot a bed, that the room is quiet and well ventilated, that his food is nourishing and simple, and that real rest is obtained.

## IN AN AIR-LOCK: AN UNDERGROUND EXPERIENCE.

BY HENRY FRITH.



RIDING home on the top of a tram-car one evening in October, I encountered a pleasant-featured navvy—a man of rank amongst navvies; apparently a ganger who was evidently on his way to work. His clothes were clean and tidy; he carried a basket with his supper in it, and seemed ready to undertake some night duty. It was about a quarter to six, and my curiosity was aroused concerning his destination, which I quickly learned was the "Swan" at Stockwell.

A remark concerning the progress of the subway over which our car was running led to conversation.

"Yes," replied my companion to my question, "the river has given us trouble—the Effra, that's it—there's where it runs," he continued, indicating a certain portion of the road.

"You are going down, I suppose?" was my next remark, tentatively.

"Yes; I'm goin' down for seven hours—in compressed air too," he replied slowly.

"Rather trying that, isn't it?" said I, recalling certain experiences of the Forth Bridge.

"Yes, the air-lock ain't comfortable when you ain't accustomed to it. We are."

"I should like to see it," was my reply. "Can I go down?—this evening, for instance."

"Well, I *could* take ye underground for a while," he replied doubtfully, as he prepared to quit the car at the "Swan." "Come along, sir; ye may as well see it."

A suggestion concerning a current coin was not repudiated, though not insisted on; and with this understanding we crossed the road and passed within the hoarding, where an engine, supplied by three locomotive boilers, is incessantly in action pumping compressed air into the workings.

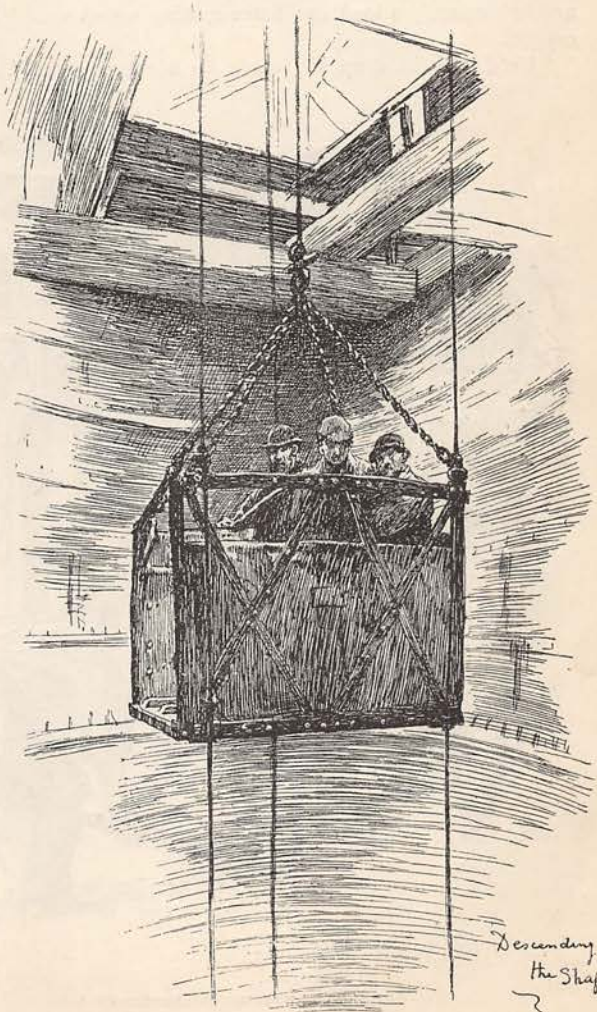
Some curiosity was expressed by the men on the bank as they stood in the flaring light. Certainly a tall hat, town clothes, an umbrella, and a parcel of books were not the best things with which to descend into a railway subway. The cage was coming up as I peered into the pit.

"Not quite so bad as mining," remarked my conductor. "Not so far down, and ye don't get so bumped! Stoop your head, sir."

I bent my back and bowed my head, as directed,

beneath the bar which affords a hold as it passes along the top of the "cage." In a moment we had descended, and carrying a candle stuck in a lump of damp clay, I trudged along the subway towards a group of men who were seated, holding lighted candles stuck on boards, along the wall of the tunnel, waiting for something or somebody.

We had met a gang of men going out; these others were perhaps the "new drift" going in. But whither? And why were they all seated in a line by the ringed





wall of the subway? The tunnel is about ten feet wide, cut tube-fashion in rings of iron made in segments. The effect is that of circular girders bolted together, each ring being equi-distant from its neighbour. We were, in fact, in a tube of horse-shoe shape—almost.

The effect and the sensation were rather weird. The navvies, silently scanning my appearance and impedimenta, smiled at each other, and wondered, no doubt, why anyone should want to penetrate sixty feet underground, amid mud and dirt, unless obliged to do so.

"You'll go through the air-lock with us, won't ye?" inquired my first acquaintance.

"Yes, if you will bring me back again," said I.

"Oh, I'll put ye through safe enough if ye can stand it. It's compressed air, mind ye."

"Better take an old hat," said one of the men. "Leave yours and your parcels. It ain't over-nice."

In a minute I was equipped, and an iron door cut off the party from any communication with the tunnel outside. In front was a similar iron door, and I now perceived that the men were all seated between these air-tight screens.

The ganger turned a tap in the side of this vault, and immediately a loud and fierce rushing sound succeeded.

"Hold your head up, sir," came a voice from some

far-distant navy, as I thought. "How do you feel?" he added.

"All right," was my reply. But *was* I all right? The men gazed at me steadily, as if in expectation; my conductor still let the air in; then a fearfully painful sensation of deafness came upon me. My head throbbed within iron bands, as it seemed. A plug or wedge was being driven into each of my ears—a singing, surging, rushing sound and sharp pains succeeded—then I was completely deaf, and silence fell on me.

In silence, apparently, the men sat; the candles guttered over our heads as the front door was opened; a faint sensation of hearing returned as we all stepped forth into the distant excavation which had been so hindered by the Effra river. The tunnel is sandy and perfectly dry on the roof and sides, if muddy below.

"Take this and go ahead," whispered a voice in my ear. "Mind ye don't pitch into any holes."

It was impossible to retreat, so taking the flat board offered me, the candle stuck on its lower end, and holding it so as to cast the light at my feet, I proceeded to the end of the tunnel, where the rushing of water behind a palisade told of the river, perhaps.

A machine called a "shield" is used by means of hydraulic rams. This shield is really a cylinder which cuts into the earth, while the navvies shovel and dig out the displaced gravel and sand. A kind of bulkhead

keeps the surrounding earth from falling in, and a door in it is really the centre opening through which the machine works, and by which the men assist in clearing away the soil. The space between the outer edge of the "shield," or cutting machine, and the clay, is filled up with liquid cement—a process technically termed "grouting." When all is firm the men come on, and put in the rings or segments already mentioned.

"Nice kind o' workshop this," remarked one of the men, as he divested himself of his upper garments.

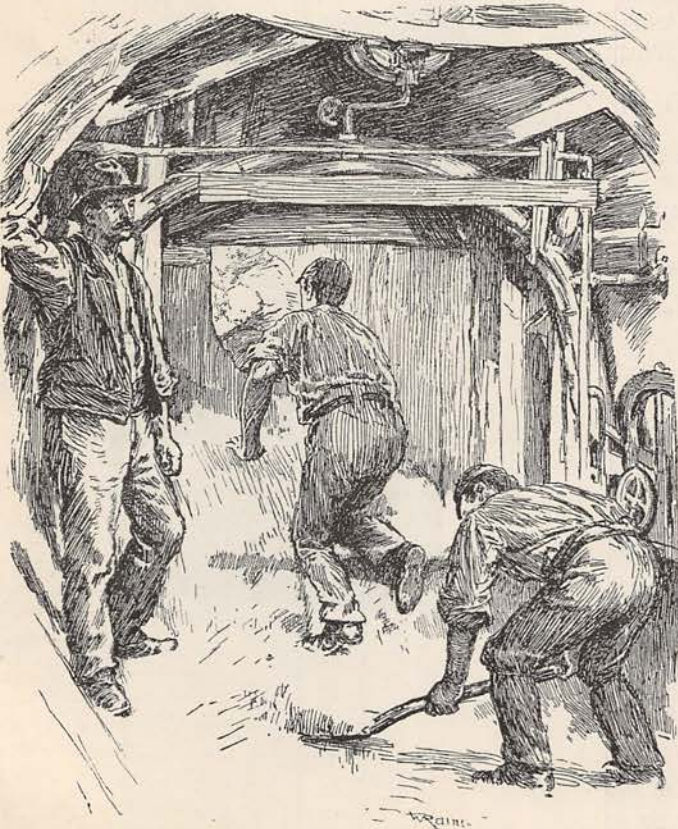
"Are you in for long?" I shouted. My voice surged in my head like a roaring sound of the sea.

"For seven hours," he replied—taking up a pick as he spoke. "Now for it, mate."

The man addressed joined him, and I turned back as they commenced work. Avoiding the "sleps," or trolleys, I found my conductor, who examined me carefully, by candle-light. I was deadly pale; I *felt* so!

"I'll put ye in a fresh candle," he said, "and we'll go back."

This done, we again entered the "air-lock," as it is called. The doors were closed, the other tap was turned, and ordinary air admitted. In a moment or two the intense pressure was removed from my ears. Something



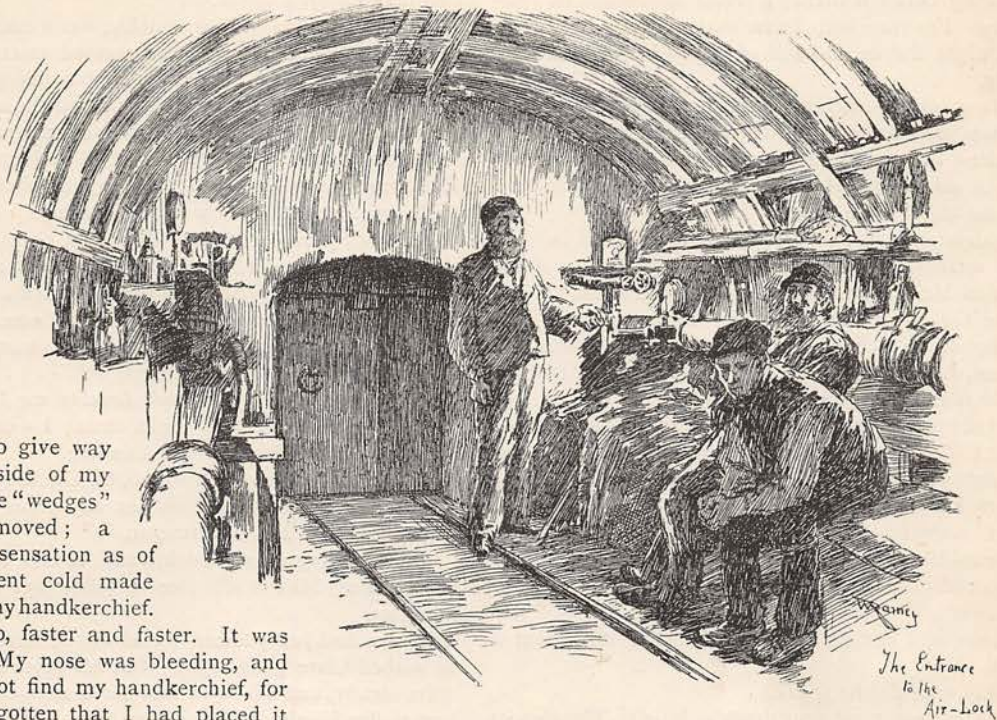
THE SHIELD—WORKING BY COMPRESSED AIR.



seemed to give way in each side of my head. The "wedges" were removed; a trickling sensation as of an incipient cold made me seek my handkerchief. Drip, drip, faster and faster. It was blood! My nose was bleeding, and I could not find my handkerchief, for I had forgotten that I had placed it on my head within the hat that had been lent to me.

"Never mind," said my conductor; "let it run a bit; or put your nose on my sleeve. I don't mind a drop or two."

This kindly suggestion was not adopted. The door was soon opened; and, still rather deaf, I quickly made my way back to the cage. By the time I had resumed my impedimenta and hat the bleeding had ceased, and nothing remained but to ascend. This was accomplished after some preliminary negotiations not altogether unconnected with the coin of the realm; for if the gentleman in charge of the cage had refused me passage, it might have resulted in "another mysterious disappearance!"



The Entrance  
to the  
Air-Lock

However, the negotiations were quite successful. I parted with my conductor upon friendly terms, and gained the bank, where another "solicitor" required some attention. But he was soon appeased, and, led carefully along the boards, and amid timber struts, where the engine was still throbbing loudly, I emerged into the high road—half deaf, very muddy, but otherwise little the worse for my adventure underground.

I may add, for the benefit of intending visitors to "air-locks," that I am still deaf to a certain extent, and suffer from headache, induced apparently by pressure on the frontal bones. This is the sensation—and it is not pleasant, but, perhaps, as my friends say, it "serves me right!"

## TO BE GIVEN UP.

By KATE EYRE, Author of "For the Good of the Family," "A Step in the Dark," &c. &c.

### CHAPTER THE NINTH. LOVE OR HONOUR?

**T**HE tall figure, of whose presence Mabyn had suddenly become aware, as she stood bemoaning her fate on the verandah at Southfields, was that of a man of about thirty, with a grave, bearded face, and steadfast eyes. Not a handsome man by any means, but still, one at whom most women would glance a second time.

Philip Dacre and Miss Eastabrook were still at the piano together; and the man was watching them

intently. As he watched them, his mouth became firmer, and his eyes graver—but not less kindly.

It was Frederick Charrington—he who had, so short a time before, told Miss Eastabrook that her existence was to him the one great reality of life.

Mabyn started as she recognised him, while he looked towards her. Whether or not he had noticed her before she could not determine.

Then he advanced to within a yard of where she was standing; and their eyes met.

No word was spoken on either side—at least, not