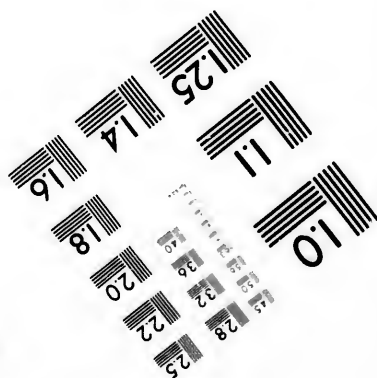
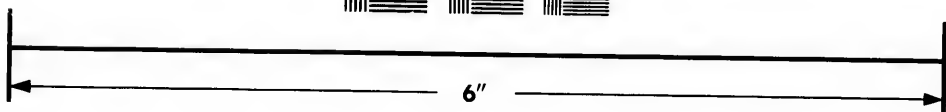
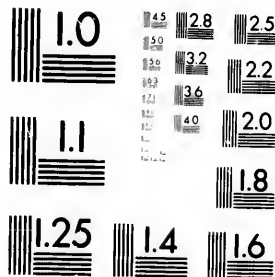


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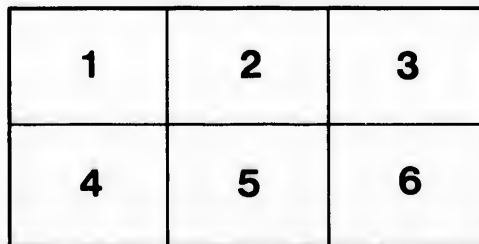
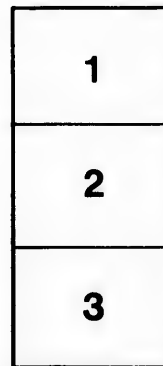
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MONTREAL BY GASLIGHT.

" I WOULD A TALE UNFOLD, WHOSE LIGHTEST WORD
WOULD HARROW UP THY SOUL."

—HAMLET.

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CHAPTER I.

NOT AS WE SEEM.

SURELY there stand few nobler cities than Montreal—surely none more fairly situated. Upon the banks of the St. Lawrence Montreal lifts her thousand roofs toward the faint blue of the Canadian sky, and her sons speak with many tongues of the young nation to whose enterprise and daring she is a living, a growing testament.

To-day Montreal ranks as the largest and most important of Canadian cities. She has a population of two hundred thousand souls—including her suburbs—composed mainly of English and French Canadians. To these add German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese, and it will be seen that Montreal's inhabitants are from every clime and of many tongues.

Not alone as to numbers does Montreal

claim pre-eminence over her neighbors. Her commerce is far-reaching, and for its accommodation she has built the finest wharf-frontage in the world. Come with me to the northern approach of the Victoria Bridge—that monument of engineering skill—and look toward the east. Far almost as the eye can reach are to be seen the ships of many nations freighted with the products of distant lands. The Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific railways here find their headquarters, and Montreal is thus the centre and distributing point of two of the greatest railway systems in the world.

Within the city the traveller meets every evidence of nineteenth-century progress. Let him drive along St. Paul Street, and its solid warehouses must impress him with the wealth and commerce of the city. Escort him to Sherbrooke Street, and he will see on either side the evidences of the good taste and refinement of the Montrealer.

Should he be lucky enough to visit Montreal during her Winter Carnival, let him mark well the fair and smiling faces of her daughters, the stalwart forms of her sons. If, after this,

he would deny to Montreal her many beauties he must indeed be as prejudiced as a Bostonian or as ignorant as a Londoner.

But you, the resident of Montreal, what do you know of your own city? The Parisian prides himself upon his native city, and for hours he can discourse upon her loveliness. "See Paris and die," he says with an air of superiority truly French. Even the Neapolitan—down-trodden, priest-ridden, dirty, and unhappy—was impelled to reply, "See Naples and live." To the New-Yorker there is no street like Broadway; to the Londoner, no park like Hyde Park. Boston, the butt of small wits who prate incessantly of "baked beans" and call her the home of sluggers, still boasts of her culture, and the Bostonian, according to W. D. Howells, is loud in praise of the beauty and refinement of Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue.

What have you, dear Montrealer, to say of your native city?

Nothing.

It is certain as night follows day that the ignorance of the Montrealer, as regards Mon-

trepreneur, is as dense as it is remarkable. A witty king of France once said, after hearing a sermon by the Abbé Maury, "If he knew a little about religion he would know a little about everything. It might well be said of the Montrealer that all he requires to be a well-informed man is an acquaintance with his native city. It is certain that he is lacking in knowledge and appreciation of his own city. Upon other subjects he is at least the equal of his American cousins.

Would indeed that it was the object of this short sketch to open the eyes of the dweller in the Canadian metropolis to the beauties of his native city, or to lead the stranger to visit there and enjoy its hospitality! Fain would we dwell longer upon its public buildings, its parks, its railways, and its people. Another and a less pleasant task is before us.

To Montreal, as to every great city, flows each year the ceaseless tide of immigration. It brings with it the young man and maiden upon the threshold of independent life,—recruits for the great army of wage-earners and breadwinners. Driven perhaps by desperation from the shores

of unhappy Ireland, or, it may be, leaving the quiet of the simple Canadian village, they enter within the city's walls and begin a life to whose hardships they are unaccustomed, against whose temptations, alas! they may not be proof.

Does it not become a duty to warn them? If aught written here should be the means of guiding aright one stumbler's feet, this book has not been written in vain.

"But," say resident and visitor alike, "Montreal is a fairly moral city. It is not like London or Paris; it is different from New York and Chicago. You would not compare it with Boston, where Sin with painted face and gaudy dress nightly walks the crowded streets. It is not St. Louis, where the Lord's Day is forgotten, nor New Orleans, where gambling is carried on with open doors. In short, Montrealers do not seem to be strugglers in that insane race for inordinate wealth which is the moral ruin of so many cities of the New World."

No; Montreal at least wears not its scars upon its face that all may see them. The pharisaical Montrealer ofttimes is thankful that his city is not as other cities are.

The Canadian who judges of New York life through the medium of Lawye: Hummel's book "Danger" or Talmage's sermons on "The Night Side of New York," and whose ideas of Chicago are derived from one of "Pinkerton's Detective Series," who reads in the pages of Gautier, Sylvester, or Zola of the awful vices and shameless profligacy of modern Paris, is justified in believing that Montreal, with all her sins upon her head, is no sink of iniquity like these. But for all her modest face, her moral ways, and her countless churches, the Canadian metropolis is not only to be seen on a sunny September afternoon. There is a reverse to the medal.

Montreal has indeed its seamy side; and the young and inexperienced will do well to read and profit by another's knowledge, else their ignorance may cost them dear.

Back of the well-lighted streets and the open, honest faces are other streets whose lights burn not so brightly, and other faces not so fair.

Come with me, dear reader, and you will see where Sin and Misery dwell together,—where

the gambler behind close-drawn curtains and locked doors is winning the money his victim can ill afford to lose; where gilded Vice in its every form holds high holiday, and every shred of modesty and virtue lies torn and bleeding; to houses of quiet looks and sombre appearance, where is nightly told

“The same sad, wretched story that for ages bards have sung,

Of a woman weak and willing, and a villain's tempting tongue”—

where Virtue at last surrenders, and insane desire with burning eyes seizes upon its prey; where wretched men in stiling pest-holes drink madly their ruin here and hereafter, while near at hand, perhaps, their family, with hunger faint, cry for bread in accents which would melt a statue. Walk with me through factories which know neither air nor sunlight, where children of tender years are forced by cruel parents to work from chill morning to dewy night for wages such as are supposed to be paid only in London or New York.

It may be then that the Canadian will recognize that London is not alone “the modern

Babylon," but that the Minotaur of brutal lust and the blind worshipper of Mammon live in their midst. He will see then that because Montreal has no Haymarket, no Chelsea Gardens, it is not therefore a very citadel of virtue, but that the scarlet woman is our neighbor and flaunts her sin in our faces.

Upon the streets of Montreal are daily seen the cheery faces and oftentimes is heard the merry laughter of the young toilers in the ranks of labor. But behind the smiling lips is there not often the sad heart, and is not the laughter forced and hollow?

Last and greatest of all, think you that the modern plague of London is not known to us? Are we not infected? In the thirteen hundred places where strong drink is sold, one liquor store to every one hundred and fifty inhabitants, can you not find food for reflection—aye, and a field for labor?

Let the Canadian think these things over. Let him come with me, and he will find more things in Montreal than are dreamt of in his philosophy.

What say you?

CHAPTER II.

THE TENEMENT-HOUSE.

OF late years, the fashionable world of London, wearied in its pursuit of pleasure, its sated senses sleeping from excess of excitement, its every conceivable source of enjoyment failing, betook itself to scenes of which it until then had but a shadowy idea. The Park and Rotten Row, Lord's, Hurlingham, Richmond, the theatre and the opera-house, had all been done to death. The parade in the Park, the shooting at Hurlingham, the sports at Lord's, and the drives and suppers at Richmond no longer supplied the devotees of pleasure with their needed stimulant. The stage-management of an Irving, the graces of a Terry, the music of Patti's voice, or the harmonies of Hans Richter's orchestra at the Albert Hall were seen, heard, and admired. But this was not sensation, to stir the feeble pulse and send the patrician blood coursing through shrivelled

veins with new life. Where could the nobility find a relief from the monotony of fashionable London life? Every sight and every scene in society was familiar and wearisome. The person who could find for these—the salt of the earth—a new diversion, one which would prove a pleasure, not a penalty, might claim from them the ransom of a king. He would be honored, paragraphed, interviewed, and his name would be known and famous wherever the English newspapers were read. He might even be given an entire paragraph in the columns of the *Morning Post*. Surely, with such inducements before them, the wise and the witty of London town would find this water of life, this long-sought diversion. The man who could once more supply the bluest blood in England with “one crowded hour of glorious life” must be found.

One fine day he appeared.

Who was he, this benefactor, this Moses who was to prove a leader for the chosen people? Was he already known to fame, noble and rich, or was he only some obscure public-house keeper who had invented a new drink, some

low sporting man who had devised some species of contest more exciting than fox-hunting, more brutal than coursing, more degrading than prize-fighting?

It was nothing of this kind.

The Œdipus who had solved this riddle, or, more properly speaking, had suggested the solution, was only a simple paragraph in a London daily.

What did it say, what secret had it revealed, to so shake fashionable London to its very heart?

Only this and nothing more :

“On Thursday night last, Sir Charles Grandison, accompanied by his wife, Sir Paul Parravicin his cousin, and his two nieces the Honorable Misses Herbert of Herbert House, went through some of the lowest districts of Whitechapel and Billingsgate. Their visit was the subject of much discussion at the reception at Buckingham Palace last night.”

This, then, was the long-sought amusement—the pleasure which could never pall, which age could not wither, nor custom stale. The parade and pomp of the fashionable world, its glitter

and its show, so tiresome and so enervating, must pale its ineffectual fires before this latest and best diversion. The poor, the wretched, the downtrodden, and the starving, with hunger in their eyes and misery written in indelible marks upon their features, could supply an inexhaustible source of pleasure ; and perhaps out of it all some good might come. Maybe some patrician heart, less flinty than the other, would hear the song of sorrow and lend a willing hand to smooth the path of poverty and sin.

Like a storm, the new craze spread over the tight little island. Nothing was heard but "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London." The reviews and the dailies teemed with news from the foulest quarters of the vilest city in the world. Photographs of professional beauties and notorious actresses for a time were at a discount, and in their places shop-windows held "Interior of a Whitechapel Lodging-house," "View of a Tenement near the Docks," and "Group of Men and Women in Little Crooked Street, off Mile-End Road." Night after night the best blood in England thronged to the districts where Comfort and Honesty are un-

known, and where Abject Poverty and Brutal Vice hold high carnival.

Like absinthe to the dram-drinker, like freedom to the convict, the latest amusement came with a novelty and a charm simply irresistible. It gave the pleasure-sated Englishman a new and curious feeling, not perhaps entirely agreeable, but fascinating: it compelled him to think, to ponder awhile upon the sin and sorrow which lay scarce concealed below the surface of Merry England, and which smouldered with a threatening light.

The amusement travelled.

New York, English as she would be, was not to be outdone in the eager pursuit of pleasure. Hardly had the news crossed the water that "The Prince of Wales formed one of a slumming party last Monday," than every would-be chappie in the fashionable clubs and restaurants of the city decided that he too must see those sights and hear those sounds in imitation of "the First Gentleman in Europe."

And so it came about that the beings who prowl about the narrow, dark, and crooked streets surrounding Chatham Square and the

lower end of the Bowery, the unfortunates who live in sky-scraping tenements, stifling alley-ways, and dark, damp cellars on Pell and Baxter and Mulberry streets, were nightly astonished by visits from strangers who peered about, laughed and jested, and departed.

The craze never reached Montreal. It might be that the inhabitants of the metropolis of Canada were not sufficiently loyal to follow in the footsteps of the most distinguished admirer of the sport, or perhaps they read of the misery and poverty of London and New York, and forgot the slums within their own city's walls, and the starving poor at their own doors.

The latter is the true cause.

Montreal tenement-life has its dark and seamy side, for all that it boasts of no nine-story rookeries whose condition is a folly and a shame unto New York. Come with me into the poorer quarters of the city, and you will hear the voice of hunger in accents not less eloquent than would greet you in Mulberry Bend or Mile-End Road. Walk in the streets running up from the St. Lawrence River, and you will see faces which tell of sorrow and privation

not less plainly than if you encounter them on Elizabeth Street or the Old Bow Road.

Some years ago, the *Montreal Star*, as a cheerful subject for Christmas-time, published a series of articles upon the slums of Montreal. Well-written and clever, they excited much attention at the time, and to this day the "Little Windsor" and the "Piggery" are not forgotten.

Upon a much-frequented street in the vicinity of St. Ann's Market on McGill Street is a four-story stone building whose walls seem to have come apart, not for the purpose of admitting heaven's fresh air, but to allow the noxious exhalations from within to escape. Formerly used as a hotel, it is now a low lodging-house, and within its four walls and upon its four stories lived at one time no less than twenty-eight families. In the direst poverty, in abject want, without air, with no appliances for health and decency, in dirt and filth appalling, over one hundred and ten human beings herded like rats in a pit, barely existing from day to day. Small wonder was it that when the awful small-pox epidemic of 1885 visited and devastated the city, it found fair fuel in this

den. From morning to night could be seen the burial-carts of the city standing in front of the door, as if waiting until the pestilence should claim another victim. They seldom waited in vain. Dying of this foul and filthy disease, the child of dirt and uncleanness, the unfortunate lay with others scarcely human in this pest-house in the heart of the city. Slowly upon him would steal the deep stupor, the sure precursor of death; fainter and fainter still the heart would—beat a quiet, almost imperceptible sigh, and another soul had left the house of death. Thrown into a box of unplanned boards, the corpse would be carried down and pitched into the burial-cart, and the slums of Montreal, aided and abetted by dirt and unsanitary conditions, had claimed another victim.

When the plague had stayed its hand, the officers of the law investigated this sink-hole. It was reported unfit for habitation, and the occupants were compelled to move. A few trifling alterations were made to the place, but it still remains, a disgrace to Montreal, but surely taking high rank as a "A Slum."

Upon a narrow and unfrequented street in

the vicinity of McCord Street, and adjoining the Lachine Canal, stands a row of tenement-houses. To the passer-by, their neat and clean appearance without would attract attention in so squalid and poor a district. One thing indeed was more than noticeable: even in summer no open blinds gave the inquiring eyes of outsiders the satisfaction they craved. In winter thick curtains behind the double windows shut out the occupants of the outside world.

What secret is hidden behind those brick walls? What scenes are enacted on the other side of the curtains?

Come with me and see.

Upon the ground-floor of No. 127, the first in the row, live in three rooms two families. Eleven human beings—created in the image of their Maker—eat, drink, sleep, and perhaps wash in these three rooms. In a Christian city is this right?

Upon a bed in the smallest room of all, covered with dirty and tattered blankets, lies the form of a man. The pale face, sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks need no interpreter. Here sorrow, poverty, and hunger speak

in tongue that all may hear and understand. This man, until lately a stonemason upon the works for the new Canal, was seriously injured by the falling upon him of some heavy stones. At first he deemed his injuries trifling, and was glad to accept a paltry hundred dollars from his employer in full of all claims for injuries received while in his employ. But the days moved on, the obstinate flesh refused to heal, days became months, and he was compelled to sell his furniture and move to his present dwelling. His wife earns an occasional dollar, which always goes the way of the corner saloon, and his three young sons sell papers. In this way they exist.

The second family who occupy this tenement are in even a worse plight. They are husband and wife with no children, but they are always drunk. When they cannot buy the liquor they steal it.

In the third room, which is used for bedroom, kitchen, and occasionally as a wash-room, four unfortunates sleep as best they can. They are the young children of a man who deserted his family, and of a woman driven to

death by drink. The kind-hearted neighbors once in a while give them food and drink, and the eldest boy makes enough from odd jobs to pay two dollars a month for rent of his den. Here is squalor and misery ; in a room reeking with vile odors and foul with dirt, he and three sisters lie out upon the floor and sleep as best they can.

Do you still doubt Montreal has no tenements where cleanliness and health are unknown ?

Come with me to the second story, and read another lesson from the Book of Sorrow.

In three rooms whose condition is fouler, if possible, than the apartments downstairs live a husband and wife and nine children. Again eleven persons, where there should be but five. The water turned off, the sink long ago choked up, the floors thick with dirt, and a swarm of children almost naked roll upon the floor, gathering more dirt as they play. Upon a bed in the corner, a drunken man ; in a broken chair, a woman sobbing. It is enough.

Upon the top floor the partitions dividing the rooms have been torn down, and the floor

is piled with rags—foul-looking and ill-smelling. The holes in the roof have been patched up with paper and anything handy.

But the room is deserted. Does no one occupy this flat? is it untenanted?

Go there at night, when the horrors of the place are made more horrible by shadows dark and forbidding. Upon this floor, scarce twenty-four feet long and nine broad, are stretched fourteen men and boys. Fourteen, did you say?

Aye, fourteen and sometimes more, for this room is let to a harpy in human form, who in turn sublets it to any man willing to pay ten cents a night. The lowest in this poverty-stricken district congregate there: disease-ridden, loathsome, and drunken lie down side by side, and snatch as best they can a few hours of heavy and unrefreshing sleep.

What need to go farther? Why visit No. 129 or No. 131, and hear again with silent tongue this sad, sad tale of woe? We would but listen to the same story told in other words; we would but feel the same tugging

at our heart-strings and be saddened. We can do no good.

There is no need to visit the tumble-down dwellings in the East End—dwellings, which lie in rows between such streets as Visitation and Beaudry, or Wolfe, or Montcalm. It is not necessary to see the interior of the mean and dirty tenements on the Ruelle Perault or the Rue Labelle. The crumbling houses on Barrack and old St. Paul streets near the river would repeat to us what we have already heard.

Farther east, again, in Hochelaga, in dwellings not fit for human habitation, live the countless workers in mill and machine-shop, in factory and in foundry; their wages reduced year by year by grinding competition and tariff-fattened monopoly, or oftentimes driven out of employment entirely by the arms of fast-toiling, never-wearying machinery. In these districts, not thickly populated like New York, or Paris, or London, the misery is scattered. The tenement-houses do not raise their hideous heads to heaven in endless rows, far as the eye can reach. Often they are semi-de-

tached, or in groups of two or three ; but the misery, the poverty, the sorrow are there.

We will not take the visitor to the dense and stifling lodging-houses of the East End on St. Constant or Jacques Cartier streets, where wretched men and sinful women lease rooms, and live concealed from the public eye. They are there. To describe them all would be a Herculean task.

Some day, it may be, organized charity will see fit to look with searching eyes into this evil so widespread and serious. Individual effort is almost useless. The sad facts must be accepted and sorrowed over.

CHAPTER III.

THE FACTORY.

It may truthfully be said that as most factories are run in daytime except at very busy times, when they are kept running at night, the heading of this chapter is rather at variance with the title of the book. The

reader may thus be reminded of the book by a forgotten author who in beginning a chapter on "The Snakes of Ireland" prefaced it by saying "there are no snakes in Ireland," and he may complain thereat.

Should these objections be carried out to their legitimate conclusion, the title of this sketch would not apply to sundry other chapters. We could make a *reductio ad absurdum* and find that the main streets of Montreal for many years have been lighted by electric light, and much of our edifice so patiently constructed would thus be demolished almost at a word.

The objection would have no foundation in sober earnest. In using the title "Montreal by Gaslight" the endeavor was made to attract attention to the darker side of our city life, to expose its sin, its shame, and its sorrow as with a limelight, and to stir up our citizens to seek a remedy for each particular evil. Had we the spear of Ithuriel, that we might illumine with celestial fire each subject we touched, the heavenly light would be none too bright, none too strong.

The stranger standing upon Mount Royal, and seeing the fair city sleeping at its slope, could not fail to notice the number of tall chimneys rising heavenward in the clear blue of the Canadian sky. Were he a man of observation and thought, he would say to himself:

“Here is a city where Vulcan forges in many places, where Commerce centres and distributes the wares of weary toil. In its thousands of factories and workshops, its mills and its foundries, are crowded the poor of every class, of many nations, and of all ages. Their condition, social, mental, moral, and physical, will be of interest to me. I will visit them.”

It is no subject for congratulation to Montreal that in some respects the state of its laboring population is better than in the larger cities of the world. There are not in Montreal any such human beehives as in the cigar factories and clothing houses of lower New York, but there is a depth of ignorance, of unprogressiveness, in the ranks of the toilers of the East End of London, which would open the eyes of the cultured West-End.

It may sound unfair and biased to speak against the state of the French Canadian population of the Faubourg de Quebec, but the facts are there. By some their condition has been charged to account of the mother church, whose policy of repression in religious thought has caused a positive stagnation in matters secular. It may be that the wishes of the priesthood with regard to the advisability of early marriages has caused this arrest of physical progress. Certain it is that, with few exceptions, the advanced workers, the promoters, the pioneers in lower Canada have been the English, and the classes who compose the manufacturing workers of the East End of Montreal have been left far behind in the race for progress.

Living in the latter part of the nineteenth century as he does, the French Canadian worker of Montreal is still indeed "l'enfant de l'ancien régime." He walks with us and works for us, but his thoughts, his habits, and his ideas are two centuries behind. Living in a land where religious, literary, and moral and mental progress are nearly at the highest point

of development, he does not take advantage of his position, but remains stationary.

Far in the East End of Montreal, an enormous five-story brick building spreads its hideous length along the shores of old St. Lawrence. The hideous noises proceeding therefrom attract at once the attention of the passer by. It is a cotton-mill, created by a protective tariff, and fostered by the care of the capitalist.

Within its bare walls the busy toilers sit in stifling air, and work until nightfall. If it be true that man must work, then work under these conditions is not so hateful. Upon the faces of its many workers can seldom be read the sign of starvation : it is fair at the surface.

But let us look deeper. Here sits a man a shade paler perhaps than his fellows, but not otherwise noticeable. His face, essentially French, marks him a descendant of the original invaders of the land, and it bears the imprint of care. He knows that a reduction of hands is threatened, and, if it comes, he must go. Over-competition has spoilt the business of late years, and the periodical reduction will

likely come around. He will be unprepared. At home a wife and six children wait for him. Upon the wages paid him, his family and himself barely exist; saving is out of the question.

Now and again the question enters his mind: Why is there trouble ahead? If he had not married young, life would be comparatively easy for him. Well, he married early because his father did, and his grandfather before him, and the Church encouraged him. True, his ancestors did not work in a stifling factory, but were tillers of the soil; but he forgot that when he married. Is it the fault of the factory for not paying better wages? Be it as it may, the outlook is far from cheering.

But his case is indeed insignificant when we look deeper and further.

One of the most profitable industries in Montreal is the business of cigar-making. There is little or no tenement-house work done at this date, but what of the factories?

Let us visit them. The attempt, if successful, will not be without interest.

On this head let justice be done first, that no

man may suffer undeserved loss, even in the estimation of humanity. There is one factory in Montreal,—the largest in Canada,—situated not far from the Theatre Royal, where injustice and misery are not known, where cleanliness is as marked a feature of the establishment as its opposite at the majority of similar factories. Its owner is to-day rich and respected, and his money has not been made through the tears and privations of his fellows.

Quite recently a labor commission was appointed to sit in Montreal and sift the evidences of unfairness, injustice, uncleanness, immorality, and unhealthiness of the various labor-employing establishments of Montreal. First upon the black-list of dishonor stood the cigar factories.

Commission was appointed to sit in Montreal and sift the evidences of unfairness, injustice, uncleanness, immorality, and unhealthiness of the various labor-employing establishments of Montreal. First upon the Black List of Dishonor stood the cigar factories.

What four revelations came as a result of that commission,—what heartrending stories

of unfair wages, unjust fines, inhuman overseers, and unhealthy factories! What man can read the sad story of wrong done by employer to employed without realizing the truth of the lines that

“Man’s inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn.”

Aye! did they read of the child-labor and its sad results in Montreal’s cigar factories they would weep their eyes dry. Did they know of the danger to body and mind, to the health and morals of the employees of these Canadian galleys, ground down by grasping employers and abused by brutal overseers, they would have realized that within their own city was a white slavery worse than the darkest hours in the South before the war.

The Labor Commission has done much to improve the condition of the toilers in the many cigar factories of the city. The Cigar Makers’ Union has lent a helping hand, and yet, while much has been done, more remains.

If we can pass the Argus-eyed guardian who watches the factory door, and effectually pro-

vides against violation of the notice which so boldly stares us in the face, "Positively no admittance," we will form ourselves into a commission of two and investigate for ourselves.

Past the door, up two flights of dark and narrow stairs, we hear the sound of machinery and the hum of voices. Ere we have time to fully appreciate the consequences to the employers of a fire in such a death-trap, we see before us one of the work-rooms.

Here, in stifling air foul with odors of tobacco, machine-oil, perspiration, and a thousand other evil-smelling substances, are seated the slaves of the loom. Young and old, women and men, boys and girls, from seven o'clock in the morning until six o'clock at night, with one short hour for dinner, they toil for three dollars a week and sometimes two. There are no toilet appliances, no fire escapes, no facilities for ventilation: there is nothing but work and a brutal foreman to enforce it.

Of the facts brought to light by the Labor Committee, we must take but passing notice. The brutal beatings, the want of privacy between the sexes, and the unjust finings and

imprisonment in the black holes are almost done away with; but the abuses of improper ventilation, the want of fire appliances, and the like, remain unto this day.

It is not alone of cotton-mills and cigar factories that we might write. Hardly any class of manufacturing in Montreal but has its abuses.

Walk through the boot and shoe factories, the houses where ready-made clothing work is farmed out, the type-foundries and printing-houses, and the thousand other industries of the city, and everywhere can be learnt the same lesson. From every branch of toil comes the sad story of long hours, unsteady work, low wages, and improper treatment—in a word, the slavery of labor and ignorance to capital and enterprise.

It does not come within the province of such a book at this to advocate or even suggest a remedy for this sad state of affairs. It should be sufficient that we draw attention to the facts.

But a few words ere closing this subject.

Montreal to-day is growing fast. Within her boundaries are living nearly two hundred

thousand souls. Situated as she is, at the head of navigation, and being, as she is, the headquarters of two of the largest railway corporations in the world, Montreal's manufacturing interests must grow apace. The number of her toilers in the vineyard is increasing daily.

But is their condition improving? Will labor in Montreal throughout the coming years be happy, or will it follow in the footsteps of labor in the United States.

In New York, Boston, and Chicago, the condition of the poor is indeed sad. Crowded by pauper immigration, ground down by the powers of combined capital, and too often aiding in his own downfall by supporting the corner saloon, there are many pitiful tales to be read in the factories over the border.

And yet signs are not wanting that combined labor is beginning to feel that it has rights which even capital must respect. It pleads for them now with hunger-faint voice and plaintive, toil-worn faces.

It may be that some day labor will raise and demand that for which it now pleads. That

demand will mean riot, strike, and even civil war.

America is slowly drifting thither. Why not Canada?

And if Canada, where will the trouble begin but in Montreal?

Think over this.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOUSE OF ASSIGNATION.

It would be idle, if not criminal, to suppose that any city of the size of Montreal would be free from the cardinal sin in its darkest aspect. There are, it is true, no Harpies of the kind read of in American papers as living out their shame in New York or Chicago. In Montreal there are no dens where innocence is sold to evil by guilty and shameless parents, and the sad tragedies of modern London are seldom witnessed in our midst. We have no Minotaurs, like modern Babylon, to be printed

by notoriety-seeking journals of the *Pall Mall Gazette* stamp.

But for all this, shall we say that Montreal has only its ordinary vices?

Such a statement would be far from the truth. Outwardly, Montreal is virtuous—this cannot be gainsaid; but, behind the scenes, strange sights are witnessed.

It may be that in our colder Canadian climate, the young men, occupied as they are all day, and devoted to athletic sports, have often neither the time nor the inclination to devote to those pursuits affected by the young men and old beaux of New York. In Montreal, chippie-chasing has not reached the dignity of an occupation, and its followers are but amateurs. It is well.

Strolling down St. Catherine Street from Peel Street, past the Queen's Hall Block to Bleney Street, the stranger cannot fail to be impressed with the number of young men and young women walking up and down, and chatting as gaily as Parisians. This is the evening promenade of the better classes.

Down Bleney Street to Craig, the wanderer

turns his steps, along Craig (the local New Jerusalem), St. Lawrence Main Street, and over upon that famous thoroughfare, he realizes that he is upon the local Sixth Avenue.

There can be no mistaking the faces of many of the promenaders. They, in the American vernacular, would be called "yellow."

In front of low saloons and cigar stores of questionable repute, are gathered in knots the idle, the ignorant, and the vicious of Montreal's French population. Who are they all?

They are the innumerable members of the family of "ne'er-do-weels," who find here a stamping-ground; petty clerks out of employment, skin gamblers, petty storekeepers, and a hundred other specimens of the wastes and burdens of society.

Of the women who float up and down the pavements of this famous street at nightfall, much might be written, and much more is unreportable. Many are honest, respectable women, the wives of hard-working husbands, shopping, or taking fresh air at the close of the day. The great majority, however, are

either the women whom Mercy Merrick has described as "driven from want to sin," or else young girls who have foolishly preferred the idle pleasure of an hour to the strait and narrow road of virtue.

Around this district are the fashionable "retreats" of Montreal. It is the "Tenderloin Precinct," and the streets which form this section of the city have anything but a savory reputation.

St. Charles Borromeé, St. Dominique, St. Constant, and St. Elizabeth Streets, running north and south, and Vitré, Lagauchetière, and Mignonne Streets, running east and west, contain much of the social vice of the city. The "castles," if not precisely "gilded palaces of sin," as the New York establishments are generally described, are in many cases attractive within, if not inviting without. Seldom or never as in larger cities, on the walls of such places do we see the card bearing the significant legend of "Furnished Rooms," but their reputation is known to police and public for years past.

Upon a certain corner of Dorchester Street,

not far from St. Lawrence Main Street, is a solid-looking brick house. Here for many years, and until very recently, lived the acknowledged queen of the local demi-monde. By a strange fatality, the house is now occupied as a Woman's Sheltering Home. If those walls had tongues, they could a tale unfold which would startle the present occupants.

For ten years past, this woman reigned as the first in that special branch of illegitimate industry. By what merit she has been raised to that bad eminence, does not appear; but certain it is that, had the police cast their nets there any night in the week during her sovereignty, they would have made a rare catch. Fast bank clerks, prominent young lawyers, and well-known French merchants formed the retinue, and drank night into day.

How sad a tale could be told of this house!
How many foolish young women could point
to it with a look that spoke everything! How
many faithless wives played a part herein!

"The same sad, wretched story that for ages bards
have sung,
Of a woman weak and willing and a villain's tempt-
ing tongue."

There is no need to say more. The story is always old and always new.

To-day this woman is mistress of a similar establishment. Free from police or official interference, she flourishes like the green bay-tree of Scripture, within a stone's throw of her former residence.

Another establishment, not less infamous, reared its impudent head to the sunlight, upon St. Lawrence Main Street. A more or less fashionable millinery store occupies the basement, and its signs have the name of the owner of the entire concern.

The millinery business was but a blind. No woman need be ashamed to enter a millinery store. Once there, a few steps toward the rear, an ornamented wooden partition passed, and a flight of stairs led to the fools' paradise above. How many have ascended that stairway in guilty fear? how many have descended in sad regret?

The lady patrons being thus provided for, the gentlemen's wants had to be met. For a man to enter a millinery store on St. Lawrence Main Street might attract attention; and at

night it would have attracted attention to keep open. Thus it came that "madame" be-thought her of a rear entrance.

On St. Dominique Street, near Dorchester, an unpainted and unvarnished door claimed no attention from the passer-by. If noticed, it would only be considered as leading into a yard.

Many knew different. This insignificant and harmless-looking door led into a covered passage running through the yard and into the house of which the millinery store was but an outside blind. Could any contrivance be more simple or more secret—a millinery store in front and a door leading apparently into a yard in rear?

How many of Montreal's bravest and best knew of this notorious spot? How many of the local "four hundred" had entered through that narrow gate? The "madame" alone could tell.

To-day this woman lives in a gorgeously furnished house within a quarter of a mile of her former residence. The back of her house commands a view of a public square, and it

may be that ere long there will be, as on St. Lawrence Main Street, two ways of getting into this home of Messalina.

Some of Montreal's most prominent citizens are not unknown to this abode of Venus. A well-known printer and his brother, an attaché of a foreign service, a prominent merchant and leader in volunteer military circles, a prominent man about town, separated from his charming wife, but still devoted to the fair sex, the light-brained son of a wealthy wine merchant, the two sporting sons of a retired commission merchant, and a lot of card-playing and hard-drinking French clubmen for years supported this house. Its every foot of carpet, its every piece of furniture, is purchased with the wages of sin.

Encouraged by the success of these two establishments, the frail ones moved like the course of empire, and westward took their way.

In a more or less secluded street not far from Bleury Street the first attempt was made. The favorite of a well-known police officer, now lost to sight in the obscurity of the St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary, installed herself as mistress

of a sumptuously furnished, if small, house, and made her bid for public favor. For a time all went well, until one day a nasty piece of scandal about a young, pretty, but unhappily married woman and the handsome and good-natured but useless son of a retired banker got noised abroad. The house had been some time under suspicion, and this was the *coup de grace*. The stout but still charming owner folded her tent like the Arabs, and silently put her effects into an express wagon and departed.

For awhile this house had realized all the hopes of its occupant. Its respectable surroundings and its nearness to the fashionable quarter of the city, as it were, "spoke volumes in its favor." But the neighbors gradually opened their eyes to the facts in the case, the scandal brought it into prominence, and the owner, believing discretion the better part of valor, retired.

But the establishment which was *par excellence* the Mecca of high-toned sinners in Montreal remains to be told of.

On a side street, and an eminently respectable one, in the immediate vicinity of one of

the public squares a simple-looking and unsuggestive two-story tenement stood. Its appearance was as neat without as the seaside cottage of the retired banker, and in summer-time its open windows gathered in the fresh air. Its entire look spoke of its intense respectability, and the children who romped about the little plot of grass in front, and made a playground of its front steps, nodded and smiled at the middle-aged but still handsome woman whose face showed itself at times at the window. Her distinguished bearing and sunny face perfumed the entire neighborhood with the air of honesty, and her fine old Scotch name seemed appropriate to its owner.

But alas! for appearances she was but a wolf in sheep's clothing; and behind the smiling mask were the teeth which rend, the hand of steel in the glove of kid.

The sign "Dressmaker," which stood out in bold relief upon the door, was sufficient reason for the free occasional female visitors, and at night no callers, male or female, desecrated the quiet of the neighborhood.

Sham, sham, all sham! The women who

visited her in the day-time, who rushed hurriedly up the steps and through the open door, were but victims of their own passions and follies.

But their companions in sin,—where were they?

A cunningly concealed door in a fence near by, opening into the yard of this house, but shielded from view by a convenient wood-shed, solved the mystery.

Amongst the supporters of this worst, because safest, of the fashionable dens of the city, hers claim particular attention. One, a broken-down stock-broker, whose heavy failure a few years before had caused much comment, was, in the vernacular, "an habitual frequenter." With him came another sweet sample of the same genus, an aged Don Juan, senile and tottering, and yet preserving, even in his decay, the hot blood and passions of youth. In their trail followed some of the younger bloods of the city, and there was often a sound of revelry by night, which, however, did not penetrate farther than the four walls of the house.

There is no space here to record further the houses of this class in Montreal. Nor is there

necessity. The evil would seem to be inseparable from every large city, and Montreal is no exception.

Here, only, the business is pursued more openly and with less deference to public opinion. For years the same houses are occupied for similar purposes and police, interference is unknown.

This is not as it should be.

In this chapter mention only has been made of the better class of establishments which prey upon the sin and shame of their fellow-creatures. Of the others, no word is necessary. From St. Lawrence Street eastward to the boundary line they are without number, and they blot their city's face.

But what of down-town?

Upon St. James and Notre Dame Streets, from McGill Street east to St. Gabriel Street, how many buildings whose rooms and suites of rooms, ostensibly let for offices, are in reality used for immoral purposes? How often are the first flats of these buildings placarded with the signs of "Lawyer," "Notary," or "Finan-

cial Agent," and the upper flats at night given over to scenes of riot and debauchery?

Every Sunday the caretaker of one of these buildings can be seen with immaculate white linen and shining silk hat wending his way with wife and child to mass at the noble parish church. Who, of the hundreds who meet him, could guess that his fine clothing is bought with hush-money wrung from the tenants in his building?

And he is but one.

Hypocrites, hypocrites, hypocrites!

But after thus laying bare the city's sores, what have we to offer? What remedy would we suggest?

Would indeed that we knew one! Then of a surety would we be wiser than all our fellows; nay, than all the human race who went before us to the bright shores of eternity. The problem is no nearer solution than it was in the days when John saw the scarlet woman of Babylon cast down—in a dream.

Man cannot be made virtuous by legislation. It needs no ghost come back from hell to tell us this, nor any brief sketch of city life either.

Man and woman both are born deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

Still, back of this dark picture is the silver lining of hope. Vice, we are told, is a monster of such hideous mien that to be hated he needs only to be seen. It may be that by showing him naked and horrible, by revealing his utter hatefulness and unworthiness, we may save one struggling and tempted wanderer from treading the primrose path of dalliance, and turn his steps aright.

Surely, young people, there is another and a better life.

You, young man, who would pursue with evil wish some weak and helpless woman, remember,

“The pretty toy so fiercely sought
Loses all charm by being caught.”

If you would be a man, think over the unmanliness of it.

CHAPTER V.

THE NIGHT RESTAURANT.

THE American visitor to Montreal cannot fail to be impressed with our essential difference between the Canadian metropolis and any of the larger American cities. He looks on every corner and scans the occupation of every block, but he seeks almost in vain for the well-known, nay, too familiar, sign, "Restaurant."

The Montrealer, as a rule, lives at home, and prides himself upon it. He aims to be English, and therefore insular.

To him—English as the descendant of Englishmen—the idea of taking his breakfast, dinner, and tea in public is unutterably repulsive. He fancies, in his conceit, that people are looking at him and thinking of what he is eating, and he pictures himself the subject of countless jests by the occupants of other tables surrounding him. He imagines that they are

watching his honest consumption of English roast beef as the visitors to the Zoo watch the feeding of the animals, and make mental notes thereof; and he declines the honor of having his appetite or want of it discussed; he refuses to let his fellow-men see the smile which comes across every Englishman's face when he has eaten a well-cooked meal; and he denies them the pleasure of hearing the sigh of satisfaction which involuntarily escapes him as he pushes away his almost empty plate.

There is another and a better reason why the English-bred or English descended Mor-trealer declines to "feed in public," as ¹ phrases it. He has been in that *bête noire* to the Englishman, an American restaurant, and his soul, and stomach, and good taste have rebelled. He has satisfied himself that the American nation, as a whole, not only do not know what to eat, but do not know how to eat.

An unspeakable horror fills his soul at the thought of daily taking his meals at the same table, or even in the same room, with persons who eat their potatoes with their knives, and who empty their tea into their saucers to cool

it before drinking. He has dined in New York a few times, at Parker's, Trainor's, Brown's, or even Delmonico's, and he has seen on several occasions men at table with him or near him whose style of "feeding," as he calls it, was repulsive to his cultured tastes. In his English hastiness of judgment on anything un-English, he condemned the eating-habits of the entire body politic of America, and refuses to allow his judgment to lie.

If perchance he is a married man, the idea of bringing his refined and cultured wife—with her English birth and breeding written indelibly upon every feature of her handsome face—to such a mixed and unpolished circle as would greet her in any restaurant is too laughable for serious consideration. He has time and again seen Americans dining with their wives and children at the restaurant tables of New York, but he is tempted to deny the evidence of his eyes. If he believes it at all, it is verily as he believes in the aerial suspension of a Houdin or a Hoffmann. It looks real, but there is something untrue about it—something unreal somewhere.

No, the home-destroying practice of restaurant-living has not yet invaded the still English land of Canada. If he cannot afford a first-class hotel, the Canadian, bachelor or benedict, goes to a boarding-house, where, if perchance his fellow-boarders do not all eat as prescribed by the unwritten law of society, he has a chance to discover their good qualities and overlook their defects of training.

Down in town, it is true, the restaurants flourish in rows. There is no down-town Delmonico's in Montreal, but where could meals be better served than at Compain's? where can oysters be eaten with more enjoyment than at Freeman's? or where are steaks more tender than at "Johnny, the Fat Boy's?"

The night restaurant in Montreal is not indeed a prominent feature of the city. The gorgeous and brilliant establishments in New York which from ten o'clock at night until dawn are filled with fair women and brave men are almost unknown. There is but one first-class theatre in Montreal, to keep honest people up and out until late; and the other class of supporters of night restaurants in New

York, the demi-monde, are not a sufficiently attractive lot to entice the gilded youth of the city into the extravagance of late suppers.

And yet there is in Montreal, a restaurant as deservedly popular with a certain class as Delmonico's is in the American metropolis—a restaurant whose steaks are not less inviting than Parker's, and whose oysters are in no way inferior to O'Neill's. Need it be said, that this place is Beau's, the famous Occidental?

The Occidental is the one true glimpse of Parisian or New York life in Montreal. Everything about it is foreign. The polite and gentlemanly manager who greets you at the door with a "Bon soir, messieurs!" that is an echo of the Boulevard des Italiens; the white-aproned waiters, whose "*Que prenez-vous ce soir, messieurs,*" is as French as a speech of Coquelin; and the menu or style which would have pleased Vatel himself;—are all signs and tokens by which the traveller may know that he is in a place where gastronomy is looked upon as a fine art, and where good eating is cultivated as a science.

Truly, the stranger who steps from the nar-

row and dimly-lighted street, ill reputed and foul smelling, and finds himself in the neat and tasteful hall might indeed wonder if fancy is not playing him a scurvy trick ; he will think for an instant that perhaps the charming motion of the sleigh has lulled him into sleep, and that he is dreaming of his petit surprise at Paris.

The manager, the waiters, the setting of the table, the menu, and the subdued air about the place are Parisian and Parisian only. It is a restaurant de l'Avenue de l'Opera transported by magic to Montreal.

The visitor to Montreal who has not seen Beau's and tasted its famous cooking has not seen Montreal. Its natural beauties may have been revealed, but here is the art that rivals nature.

Some years ago, the building situated on Vitre street near St. Lawrence Main street was occupied by one Cherel. It was then an obscure eating-house, and its reputation was far from savory. Many were the stories told by the sporting element of Montreal of the

scenes enacted after nightfall within its walls, and it became a by-word and a reproach.

One night the end came. The local police interfered and the proprietor was arrested. Brought before the magistrate, he was committed for trial but released on bail. He invited his immediate friends and patrons to a banquet at the old spot. His acquittal seemed to him a certainty.

Surely, never was such a scene of revelry by night in Montreal. To the banquet came courtesans of high and low degree, politicians of every grade, men about town, merchants of queer repute, divorced women and gay girls of more or less note; in short, the drenchings of the city—the very off-scourings of the metropolis. At this Belshazzar's feast no hand-writing appeared upon the wall, and Cherel and his friends held high revel.

The morrow came. Upon another and a more serious charge than keeping a disorderly house the infamous owner was convicted and sentenced to the Penitentiary, and the once famous "Cherel's" was closed, never to reopen as such.

Some time later a change came over the place. It was rebuilt and refurnished; its every evil association removed, and its doors were thrown open to the gourmet, the bon-vivant, and the lover of good living. Its evil name disappeared with its former proprietors, and to-day its reputation as an orderly and well-kept restaurant is second to none.

It is now eleven o'clock at night; the theatre has been over for half an hour, the promenaders upon the thoroughfares have almost disappeared. Let us go in, have a little supper—a petit souper, and look at this picture of Montreal night-life.

The drive along the dark and narrow street upon which the Occidental is situated does not fill the stranger with any hopes of comfort in the immediate future. Who, he wonders, would try to maintain an eating-house upon so unfashionable and unfrequented a street. But soon his fears vanish.

Before him stands a substantial stone building whose lighted windows and opaque glass-globes, illuminating each side of the entrance, are strangely at variance with the squalid sur-

roundings. He steps into the porch and sounds the bell. The door is opened, and before him stands a short, black-bearded man. He enters the passage, and a voice from upstairs, faint as a muffled bell, is heard.

"Mesdames et messieurs, descends." The black-bearded man politely motions us into the main room, the grand salon. The soft voice the easy gesture is Parisian—this is unmistakable.

The door leading to the passage is closed behind us and we look around.

At the nearest table sit two men. They also are French, but their accent is not Parisian. It smacks of the Faubourg de Quebec rather than of the Faubourg St. Germain.

One, a short pock-marked man, with a nervous and shifty look in his eye, does all the listening, now and then interjecting a remark. His companion, stout and not ill-looking, with a heavy moustache and a pair of expressive black eyes, is talking loud and long. Notwithstanding the publicity of their position, they make no effort to keep the subject of their discussion from the by-standers. To the

Frenchmen standing near by, such phrases as "Trois aces" and "Deux Valets," "Je perd" and "Je gagne," needed no explanation. They were discussing some recent session of the American national indoor game, draw-poker.

Everyone knew them. The little man was by turns gambler, political worker, horse-dealer, and anything else. The other was a well-known figure in Montreal. Born of respectable parents, well educated, and of more than ordinary ability, he began life with every chance in his favor. But, like many others, his beginning was too high. He fell, and later was content to live upon the profits of a gambling house.

While the visitors are glancing over the groups, and ere they have time to see the other occupants, a rustle of skirts is heard. The voices of women, one low and sweet, the other harsh and discordant, falls upon the quiet of the room. A man's strong tones, a closing of doors and they are gone, and we are ushered up-stairs.

Once up-stairs, we find ourselves facing two passages at right angles to each other. Along

each passage are rooms, and through the transom over each door comes the gleam of gaslight and the low murmur of voices. But we are not allowed to investigate further. The polite waiter motions us.

“Ici, s'il vous plait.”

We follow him into a small square room with crimson-tinted walls and an air of neatness and comfort, if not elegance, positively charming. Upon the table, linen of finest quality and snowiest texture; silver whose polished surface reflects the gaslight as with a hundred gleaming darts, and glassware of the latest style. Surely this is Paris.

From the splendid menu we order a filet de bœuf, petit pois, pommes de terre à la crème, and café au lait. In a few minutes we are served. The aroma of the coffee fills the room; the fragrant odor of the meat summons our sluggish appetite. We eat, drink, and are merry.

Here, and in such a place, mortals should indeed be happy. Despise as we will the art culinary, we must remember that the question as to “Where is the man who can live

without dining?" is as yet unanswered. We must bear in mind the saintly Thomas à Becket who, when reproved for his fondness for roast goose, declared that "so excellent a thing was not made only for sinners." And, lastly, we must not forget that "fate cannot harm the man who has dined to-day."

Without the storm raged, and the driving snow of the Canadian winter smote upon the window-pane. Its invisible hands beat upon the glass as if they would fix their cold clasp upon our hearts; but within all is sweetness and light—no sorrow for yesterday, no fear for to-morrow.

With curiosity truly feminine we wonder whose voice is that we hear in soft accents penetrating the walls which separate us from our neighbors on either hand. We long for that Arabian spy-glass which sees through all obstacles, and sets walls and distances at naught. In fancy we conjure up the smiling face, the gleaming teeth, and the fur-clad form whose voice ever and anon reaches us in merry cadence.

On the other side of us is wassail and high

revel. No sweet and feminine accents reach us, but the English of cultivated Canadian manhood. Once in a while the noise is drowned in low and well-bred applause, and the sentences are punctuated with suppressed laughter.

In his review of "Robert Elsmere," Mr. Gladstone has pointed out the license enjoyed by the story-teller, the romancer, and the novelist. He is not subject to ordinary rules of time and space. He may record a conversation of two in an open field, where eavesdropping is impossible; he may follow a beam of subtlest reasoning in the mind of one of his characters, even if the logic puts not on the dress of words. Nay, he may even see into the privacy of an apartment, and tell the story of sighs, kisses, and tears by outside human eye unseen.

May we not claim the same privilege?"

Granted.

Then we will enter unseen the little supper-room on our right, and view at our leisure its two occupants.

At the table, before a half-finished supper,

sit a young man and a young woman. The man's age might be twenty-five or twenty-six. He is tall, not bad-looking, and with that intangible air of birth and breeding so Canadian and so English. The neat clothing, the faultless linen, all showed the gentleman, and his voice was soft and pleading.

The young woman before him was assuredly not of his own station in life. She was pretty, with sweet, smiling eyes and white teeth, and about her was a look of health. When the eyes rested upon her they seemed to seek a perfume of health and honesty which should belong to so fine a creature. And yet, for all her neat dress, her handsome face, and honest eyes, there was something wanting. It was the look of the spiritual—that inheritance from cultured ancestry which money cannot buy, and to which alone, in these degenerate days, money pays tribute.

Their story was a simple one. The young man, a partner through the accident of birth in a wealthy manufacturing house, was a devotee of the fair sex. For the ordinary *femme galante* he cares nothing; but for the

free-lances of society, the privateers who sailed under the colors of honesty and virtue and whose sins were but an excess of passion, and who scorns the ways of sin, he sacrifices his spare time and a little of his spare money. To him, the pursuit and capture of some roving cruiser is a prize worth everything spent in the chase. He was but a sample of a class well known in Montreal.

The girl was another of an equally well-known type. She worked in a store on St. Catherine Street, for, two years ago, her husband had fled from their home in a small Canadian town, and she was thrown upon the world to fight the battle of life alone. It did not take a clever girl like herself long to find out that in a large city like Montreal she need never want amusement. Her employer, himself a married man, had taken a fancy to her, but she soon wearied of him, and now she is listening to the oft-told promises of the handsome young fellow before her.

In the large room upon the left eight young men are seated, in various states of sobriety. Their social position is seen at a glance. They

are gentlemen born and bred, but, as in the present instance, occasionally departing from the strict line of proper conduct. At the head of the table a young man, in appearance the juvenile of the gathering, is addressing them. As the clever words fall from his lips the listeners are alternately amused and interested. The bright expression completes the ensemble of clear, honest eyes, oval face, and white, even teeth. Decidedly, this young fellow is nice-looking, and clever at that; and yet a closer look shows the want of continuity of purpose—the man who can work well, and will work sometimes, but who lacks the plodding, tireless energy which, we are told, is but the higher form of perseverance termed genius.

Who are his companions? The young man occupying the seat directly opposite him at the other end of the table is the son of a prominent capitalist and railway magnate. On the speaker's right is the last member of a wealthy and famous Canadian family, whose name is known to every school-boy. On his left a rising young lawyer, a partner in a prominent

firm, whose partners would have viewed his present condition with grave displeasure.

Again the wine-glasses are filled. A young Englishman, whose whist playing had set the town talking, rose to his feet, and as his clear baritone began, "'Tis all I ask to be with thee," the clink of glasses and the whispering of voices died away. He was receiving the highest compliment paid by any audience—worth more than the loudest applause—deep silence. He finished, and his health was drunk with three times three.

Still further along the passage two men sit together in a gas-heated room and talked earnestly. The grave, earnest face, the keen, black eyes, and the hair worn longer than customary could be recognized at a glance. He was one of the country's political leaders; a self-made man, risen from the ranks by sheer force of ability and the powers of a silver tongue. He was indeed *l'orateur par excellence*, the representative French-Canadian politician of the day.

But who is this ill-dressed and insignificant man who listens as the other persuades? What

has this mean and ignorant-looking person, whose looks bespeak poverty of ideas as of purse, to give for which the other asks?

It is but the old story of a deceitful appearance. Behind the shallow, uninteresting countenance is ability and brains; in the ill-fitting and unfashionable clothing of the minor personage is the man whose clever political articles are read throughout Lower Canada as a second Gospel. His bitterness of invective, his biting sarcasm, are feared and detested. It is he who supplies either party, as it suits him, with their weapons during the session. He is the Vulcan who forges the thunderbolts for the political chieftains of Canada. The man before him may be the head of a party, but he can become the neck. For him the game of politics has few secrets, and to-morrow morning the columns of *L'Etendard* or *La Minerve* will contain some unsigned article to become a power for good or ill.

For riches, position, or political power this man cares nothing. Had they been his goal, he would long before have arrived there. In

vain the astute chieftain before him seeks a responsive chord. Surely there must be one.

Suddenly his face illumines. He leans forward and whispers in the other's ear, so low that had the walls ears they could know nothing. A smile like that of Satan with Faust in his arms shines upon his face, like the sun upon new-fallen snow. He jumps to his feet. Both men don their overcoats and hats, and without another word they descend the stairs and vanish into the night.

What shameful plot has here been hatched? what confidence betrayed? Ah! for the man who scorns money and power there can be but one inducement which others may offer—revenge. To-morrow morning some enemy's name will be pilloried forever in disgrace, and the price will have been paid.

We need go no further. It is the same scene, and it will be to-morrow night—only the actors will be different.

There are other night restaurants in Montreal, some fair, but most of them unworthy the name. Not far from the Occidental is an eating-house for the lower classes, open all

night, where suspiciously cold and frothy tea is served after twelve o'clock. There is the Palais Royal, on Dorchester Street; Louis, on St. Catherine Street; and the Delmonico—save the mark. But of them little can now be recorded but the commonplace. Their patrons are not the better classes, and about them the romance takes on the garments of poverty, and an occasional odor of onions and garlic.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SALOON.

To many of the readers the heading of this chapter may sound offensive. It will bring with it the odors of the corner gin-mill and the low grog-shop.

To them only this can be said: The heading goes—popular or otherwise. It is the only word coined which fully expresses the contents of the chapter. If the word saloon offends, why then insert gin-mill or grog-shop. It matters not. The article itself remains unaltered.

But if inclined to pay deference to the views of these objectors, there is indeed another heading, more brutal but not less true, not less descriptive.

How would "The Curse of Montreal" do?

Into what depths of speculation would that title lead us! What intricate problems of political economy might we not discuss! Back of the sin, the misery, the poverty, the ruin—social and moral—of the mass of the fallen stands the figure of strong drink.

True, the Queen allows the traffic. It is licensed at so much per shop or saloon, and in many cases the venders are honest, law-abiding men. But what of the majority of the saloons in Montreal and elsewhere?

They are but places where the adulterated and injurious liquids are retailed wholesale to men, women, and children; where the drunkard is made drunker, and the ruin of the individual is begun and ended.

Men prate of the millennium. It will come on the day when strong drink is banished forever.

Labor complains of insufficient wages—of the

daily increasing price of the necessaries of life and the daily decreasing return for the day's work. Let them all abandon their support of the saloon.

Capital complains that it can no longer find investment which will return it fair interest. Let it refuse to employ other than total abstiners; let it organize and establish coffee-houses, where thirst may be assuaged at a nominal price.

The day the saloon-keeper leaves the city—nay, more: the day that the manufacturer of strong drink is prohibited, except under government supervision and for medicinal purposes—that day prosperity will shine upon our Canada with undying lustre.

A clever Frenchman summed the matter up thus:

“In earlier years there were two evils, war and pestilence. We are better off in this nineteenth century: we have only one evil—liquor.”

And such an evil!

The mind shrinks from its contemplation. There is no need to look farther for the sin, the poverty, and the misery of civilization. It

is here, and here only. From this parent source all other evils spring.

With the one possible exception of Chicago, no city in America suffers in this respect like Montreal. She is sore stricken, and maybe will never recover. The cursed traffic has its grip upon the city's throat and is stifling it. Its energy is being sapped away, and the cure must be used ere it is too late.

The population of Montreal and adjoining municipalities is about two hundred thousand souls. It has therefore a larger population than Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Louisville, Milwaukee, Pittsburg, or Washington. But what an admirable thirst its inhabitants can boast of!

In 1887 there were nearly fourteen hundred places—hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, and saloons—where the retailing of liquor was licensed. Think of it! Fourteen hundred. The figures stagger us.

This would mean that there is one saloon to every one hundred and fifty inhabitants. Deduct from this number the women and chil-

dren who may be claimed as non-supporters of this noble institution, and what remains?

These figures stare us in the face. They speak with an eloquence which no man can fail to understand. They tell us of man's daily disobedience and his daily fall--of his progress toward failure, poverty, and crime.

Some day Montreal will awake and see this cancer eating her life away. May that awakening not come too late!

There is no saloon better known to the sporting fraternity throughout the length and breadth of Canada than "The Suburban" on Craig Street. There is no man so long before the public as a sport of every kind, from running a flat wheel at a country fair to managing a city race-meeting, than its proprietor; and it is also safe to say that financially no man stands better before his own class than the famous owner. Few have had so varied a career. True, he is "only a saloon-keeper;" but many a starving man who is on his feet to-day can say that he got a helping hand when down on his luck from the neatly dressed, hard-smoking owner of the Suburban. All the charity in Montreal

is not to be learned from the lists of donors to the hospitals published for the public eye. Some kindnesses never see the light of publicity. Many scenes of kindness have been witnessed around the "Suburban."

The frequenters of this place are a more motley crew than Falstaff's famous followers. All sorts and conditions of men are to be seen here. No sporting man of any note in Canada or the United States visits Montreal without paying his respects here. Horsemen, sporting clerks, gamblers, all the waifs and strays upon life's ocean, have here anchored for a time, if cruising in the vicinity. It is almost a glimpse of "ye olde-time Bowery saloon" in modern Montreal. And yet against this place, evil as is the traffic pursued, not a word can fairly be said. The visitor is not poisoned with bad liquor, nor jostled by thieves, nor can he here procure liquor after hours. If the proprietor cannot guarantee the morals of his patrons, he at least guarantees their conduct while there.

One of the most familiar figures here is sitting to-night watching a game of billiards. His neat clothing, dark and quiet, his white and

tasteful linen, the absence of jewelry or display of anykind, and his modest, gentlemanly bearing, to the casual observer would suggest the confidential clerk or junior partner in a law-firm. He would be entirely wrong. The calm, repressed young man is a gambler, and one of the best known in the country. Sometimes called "Little Johnny" and sometimes "Jack," he is familiar to most Montrealers, and his popularity is very great. It was rumored that last summer he had played the Saratoga races in more than ordinary luck, and that in "going up against the bank" his luck had not forsaken him. Be that true or not, he is always in funds, and seemingly always happy. Should matters run against him, his name is good to any amount with the fraternity. "Jack" is one of the characters of Montreal.

Next him stands a round-faced Englishman with a hearty laugh and rough clothes. He is the proprietor of an eating-house far away, and has sporting aspirations. So far he has been lucky, and it has not cost him much.

On the right two prominent horse-dealers talk and laugh loudly, and against the wall

a couple of well-known "amateur" lacrosse players discuss in an undertone the chances for to-morrow's great match.

"The Suburban" is in truth the rendezvous for the Bohemians.

Of hardly less prominence in Montreal is "The Oxford" on University Street. Situated as it is in the immediate vicinity of the armory of a fashionable volunteer regiment, it has many times assuaged the thirst of the amateur soldiers, and its place in Montreal is unique.

Founded a few years ago by its present proprietor with the immediate help of a then prominent liquor merchant, it illustrates the whirligig of time. To-day its owner, from being a poor man, is comparatively wealthy, the man through whose money the saloon was established has failed and walks the streets of Montreal under a cloud.

Hardly less famous than "The Oxford" is "The Captain's." Upon the corner of two small and comparatively unfrequented streets, its location would not usually be considered of the best, and yet, in sporting parlance, "it is a good and strong game." It has often been

rumored that "The Captain's" was open year in and year out, and that the earlier in the morning you called the earlier you would get served. This was a base slander. Here the homeward-bound clerk, after a night of extra work, stops for a soothing nightcap; and here, with a furtive glance around, the husband stops on his morning trip into town for "a steadier."

No description of Montreal would be complete without a mention of the "Turf House" on St. Lawrence Main Street. Its genial and handsome proprietor is known to everybody, and has given his time and money to the furtherance of the trotting interests of Montreal. One of the principal supporters of the race-track at the foot of Jacques Cartier Square, and a lover of racing in every form, his name is a guarantee of fair trotting and no favor.

So far, it must be confessed the seamy side of Montreal's saloons has not been shown. So far, we have dealt only with those places where not only the letter but the spirit of the law is freely followed,—where the vice has lost something of its evil. We have dealt only with the saloon evil in its minor form, with places whose

proprietors are in every way law-abiding and consistent citizens, and we have seen only the best side of the case.

There is another picture to be drawn.

Some of the vilest, lowest, and most infamous corner gin-mills, low groggeries, and shebeens in the world are licensed by Her Majesty's government to ruin their fellow-men, body and soul. In these places the drunkard's money is never refused—the child is as welcome as the man.

These dens blot the city's face. They are a shame and a disgrace. They must go.

They lie along the river from where drunken sailors, wharf-rats, and sunfish carouse and make merry. They can be found in the dark and narrow streets leading up from the river, where distilled poison and brewed rum are served out over dirty counters to dirtier men. They exist in the vicinity of the two great railway stations, and catch the stranger's money ere he has time to see a lodging-house. Along St. Paul Street dirty hotels are supported on the profits of their bars, and yawning steps lead down to cellar dives—low as to the char-

acter of their patrons, and vile as to quality of liquor sold.

But what of the unspeakable dens which, viper-like, open their dingy doors in the eastern suburbs of the city, and in the Point St. Charles district? What of the abominable saloons which thrive in the vicinity of St. Constant, St. Dominique, and St. Elizabeth Streets upon the immoral frequenters of the dens of infamy in the neighborhood? Many of them, open at any hour, recall the worst days of New York when the Empire, the Cremorne, and the Sans Souci were in full blast. They see no handsome women, no silken gowns: only broken down outcasts and cotton wraps. But the evil is there just the same.

Have the inhabitants of these localities no souls or bodies to save?

Weary and heart-sick, we must turn from this subject. It is with sorrow that we began it, it is without regret that our task is over. In the presence of the liquor evil the legislators are powerless. The power is vested in the local authorities, and they, like Cassius, are

reputed to have "the itching palm." Therein lies the secret.

It may be that the reform will begin some day by having as local legislators and commissioners only men whose position and record place them above suspicion. Then, if the curse of strong drink cannot be entirely suppressed, it can be regulated.

Let us haste the day.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOUSE OF MESSALINA.

WITH sad heart and faltering hand the heading of this chapter is penned. With many readers, this is no doubt expected to be a salacious morsel, which they will roll under their tongues, and read furtively in the recesses of their bedrooms.

They will be disappointed. No subject is easier done justice to in a superficial way—none requires deeper thought. We cannot, from lack of experience and ability do full justice; but we will not treat it lightly.

In New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and the larger cities of the United States books have been published bearing titles similar in some respects to the title of this work. We have had "Paris by Gaslight," "New York before Dawn," "The Night Side of New York," "Low London Life," and a thousand other names to catch the eye of unexperienced youth. These books have a ready sale. They circulate by tens of thousands, and many a young girl has dated her first step in sin from the day when she first read the lecherous and glaringly untrue pages of "The Gay Girls of New York," or some similar mess of garbage. These offscourings of deceased minds,—painting, as they do, a bright side to evil living, have enticed many weak ones from the path of virtue to walk the slippery road to ruin. Of the dark and seamy side, the poverty inevitable, the health sure failing, and the mental and bodily destruction they are silent.

The social evil always has been, and always will be, a problem whose solution in theory is easy, but whose solution in practice is impossible. Men are born with certain traits of the

animal in them. Mr. Edgar Saltus calls it "The beast that is in us all, lashed down and cowering, but waiting for the inadvertent moment when it shall spring to light and claim its own."

Since earliest dawn, it has been a check to man's upward, spiritual, and mental progress. The law and the prophets denounced it; the Messiah preached against it; it entered into the visions of John, and formed part of the Revelation of that famous dreamer.

Ancient Rome reorganized it, modern London teems with it, New York romances upon it, and Paris legalizes it.

What does Montreal do? It legislates against the social evil. But the law is a dead letter. It is seldom put into practice, and to-day in Montreal the vile traffic is presented in twenty different dens, and has been "doing business at the same stand" for ten years.

From present appearances, they will continue unmolested, save by an occasional fine, for twenty years more.

These houses are known to every policeman and detective officer upon the local force. At

night, in front of their doors, can often be seen a half a dozen carriages waiting while the late occupants carouse within.

The question now arises, Is this compromise with vice right?

No! decidedly no!

Should this unlicensed, unlawful traffic be permitted?

No!

The middle ground taken by the authorities of Montreal with regard to this question is illogical and indefensible in law, in reason, and in morality.

It is admittedly an evil. Then it should not be permitted. It should be driven from without the city walls, and the scarlet woman should no longer air her shame and her infamy upon our streets, nor destroy the quiet of respectable neighborhoods.

Granted it is an evil, say some, but it is a necessary evil: it must exist; and as it must, it is better that its headquarters should be known to the local police, for in that way alone can it be kept under control."

If this be true, then it is better to license the

traffic: better to say, as President Cleveland did upon the question of trusts, "It is a condition which confronts us, not a theory." It cannot be denied that in pure theory the licensing of any immorality is contrary to law, reason, and of course, morality; but when our young men are drifting toward ruin, it is no time for theory—action is necessary. The licensing of the "Gros Numeros" in Paris has not diminished the immorality, but it has very materially mitigated its evil consequences from a physical, and therefore from a political point of view. The Parisian has become healthier, and therefore a better citizen.

But in Montreal the evil consequences of the traffic are seen at their darkest. In this respect it is certain that no city is so cursed as that which sleeps in moonlit beauty at the foot of Mount Royal.

If you need proof, go ask the physicians of the city.

In cold blood, each year, a report is made to police headquarters that there are so many houses of evil repute within the city limits, and so many inmates of these houses. The number

varies. It has been as high as eighty; it has fallen as low as forty. Last report made an indefinite statement somewhere in the neighborhood of "forty-nine." This of course refers to well-known, established, so to speak, houses whose inmates are permanent boarders numbering three or more. It does not include the countless smaller places where working girls go at night to add to their insufficient and starvation-breeding wages, nor does it include the numberless houses of assignation. It is only the best known and "wide open" houses.

Take the number of castles in Montreal as fifty—the minimum. It is well known that such houses are compelled by blood-sucking and greedy landlords to pay enormous rent as "hush-money." Take the average rent as \$600 per annum: it makes \$30,000. Allow each such place five persons—a minimum—and we would have two hundred and fifty persons. It costs each one of these an average of \$600 per annum to live. This gives \$150,000.

The grand result is that in Montreal—sanctioned, connived at, or winked at by the police—nearly two hundred thousand dollars is

diverted from lawful uses to the support of immorality.

This is but a trifle—a drop in the sea. These figures, startling as they are, do not represent the case in anything like its hideous truth. Any well-known detective in Montreal will lead you by night to one hundred such moral lazar-houses—will show you one thousand women living in shame upon the wages of sin, and then ask if you want to see more.

And yet this is a Christian country. Sunday after Sunday the Montrealer goes to church and thanks God that he is not as other men are. He reads—and, worse, his family of young girls and boys read—the details of some sad cases of immorality in New York, London, and Paris, and he is thankful that he does not live in any such Sodom and Gomorrah. He travels and sees the painted creatures of the Strand, the promenaders upon the Paris Boulevards, and the street-walkers of Third or Sixth Avenue, and he rejoices that he belongs to a better and more moral city.

Nay, funniest of all, he is called upon from the pulpit to subscribe to the Chinese or Hin-

doo missionary fund, when an immorality so flagrant is at his door, and a depth of ignorance and vice as profound as is conceivable is in his own city.

In the words of Mark Antony, "Men have lost their reason."

Oh for time and opportunity to press this subject and to suggest a remedy! If we can even stir the stagnant waters of Montreal thought for one short day, this book has not been written in vain.

A few facts in this case. Upon the corner of St. Catherine and one of its most notorious cross streets stands a three-story stone building. The corner basement is occupied as a restaurant, but two doors of the cross street give entrance to the house, and a wooden door leads from a yard in rear into St. Catherine Street. The appearance of the house is entirely respectable, and in justice it must be said that the establishment is run honestly, and no swindling of any kind is permitted.

Almost since "the recollection of the oldest inhabitant" the occupation of this notorious spot has been the same. For years in this

house Messalina and Phryne have plied their shameful trade. It is true that on several occasions the local police have fined its landlady the sum of ninety-five dollars and costs for selling liquor without a license, and the fine has been cheerfully paid. This sort of "hush-money" transaction seems popular in official circles, and whenever the civic treasury is low a raid is made upon some of the best known houses, and they are called upon to pay toll. It is pay up or close up. The former course is invariably followed.

For many years this house was owned and run by a notorious woman alleged to be the wife of a more or less prominent gambler, whose establishment, not a hundred miles from Craig Street, will be noticed later. The house, furniture, and good-will of the business are now sublet to another woman, at the trifling rental of seventy-five dollars per week. When an establishment of this kind can pay a rent of thirty-six hundred dollars per annum and have the lessee wear diamonds, the business must indeed be valuable.

Scarcely less notorious than the preceding

is the establishment situated near the rear of St. Lawrence Market. It is ostensibly owned by a namesake of the owner of the house above described, and, while not as large, is still considered "a valuable property." Its red curtains, and the line of cabs which nightly draw up in front of the door after ten o'clock, are familiar to policeman and citizen alike ; but it has reigned undisturbed for years past, and there seems no immediate prospect of any change.

Immediately around the corner, on a dirty and narrow lane, stands another establishment of a similar profession. A few years ago this place started with four rooms : it now occupies a large house. Under immunity from police interference such dives flourish.

Threading our way along this Little Queer Street, and turning the first corner, a large porch, a colored globe, and startling écru curtains meet the eye, and sounds of singing and piano-playing strike the ear in unharmonious power.

"Surely," says the stranger, "I am dreaming, or have been, and I am back in Thirty-first Street."

Nothing is wanting to complete the picture. The garish lights, the open porch, the music, all unblushingly invite the wanderer out of the cold dark, streets into the light. Within the usual sights and sounds—they need no telling.

To investigate further we need not go far. Next door has no open porch, no colored lights, but instead a darkness and quiet not at all reassuring. A ring at the bell, and the usual wicket is opened and the same catechism is gone through.

Upon St. Elizabeth Street, not far from St. Catherine Street, is another such spot—viler than its fellows. Of the unspeakable infamies of this place, prudence commands to silence.

Up St. Constant Street the temples of sin are in rows. One hardly less unfavorably known than any above described stands in a yard back from the street. It is approached by a narrow board walk, and its environments are not calculated to cheer the seeker after illicit pleasure.

There is neither space nor necessity to pursue our investigations farther. It would serve no good purpose to lead the stranger along the narrow and ill-smelling streets in this quarter.

Sanguinet Street, Vitré Street, Mignonne Street, and twenty other streets in this locality contribute their share to the calendar of crime.

It is not the East End alone which suffers. For four years a house on Aqueduct Street was notoriously a subject for complaint on the part of the neighbors. It was strange indeed that this quarter, one of the quietest in the city, should be compelled to submit to such associations, but the providential interference of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which claimed the ground upon which this property stood, and destroyed it, caused a removal. The keeper transferred herself and her stock-in-trade to St. Urban Street, and in a splendidly furnished house whose rear galleries overlook Dufferin Square she pursues unmolested her profitable calling.

St. Antonie Street, staid and respectable, was also invaded by the "horizontales," but their sojourn was brief.

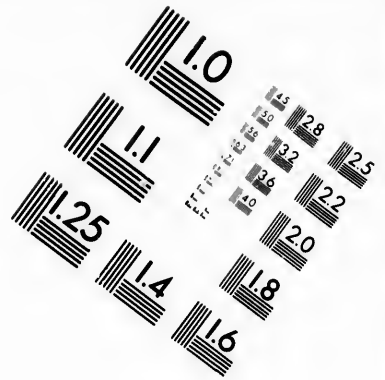
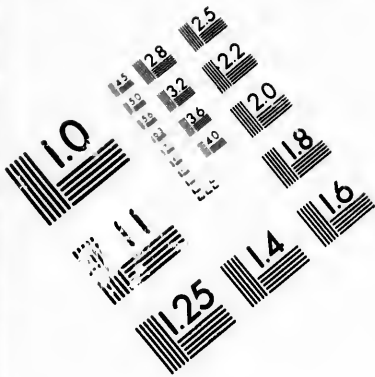
To-day almost within a stone's-throw of the Windsor Hotel is a bagnio of whose existence few are aware. The visitors are few and quiet; no lights gleam through its closely-drawn cur-

tains; no carriages halt at night in front of its door. Its entire appearance is eminently respectable.

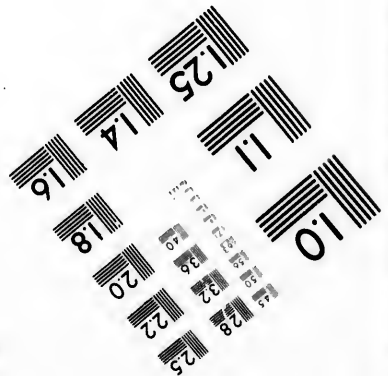
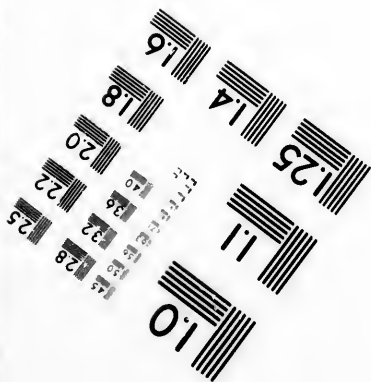
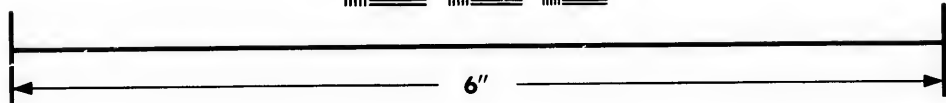
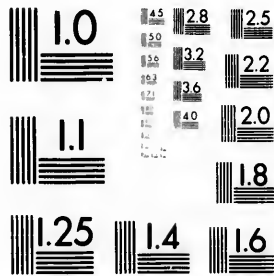
But careful reconnaissance of the fence surrounding it and facing upon an unoccupied plot of ground would reveal a cunningly concealed gate. Opened, a passage is before you and you are swallowed up from the sight of the outside world.

This place is an echo of Forty-first Street and "The Studio." Rich but tastefully chosen furniture ornaments the rooms, delicate perfumes fill the air, and an atmosphere of refinement is about us. Here is danger—here is vice not less vicious because alluring and scented. It is only more pleasant.

The demi-monde of Montreal is the off-scourings of New York and Chicago and the drenchings from our own gutters. Most of its component parts are drunken, uneducated, and low-born. In most cases they have not even physical attraction to plead their sad case. There is no glamour to be cast upon this side of Montreal life. It is vile and repulsive to any



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one with feelings or culture. It holds out no attraction to the better class of young men.

But the middle class must be considered. Only rarely would they enter such places, except when under the influence of the enemy which steals away men's brains; but even to enter once is once too many. These houses are a meeting-ground and a refuge for the low, the idle, the vicious, and the drunken. They have existed too long, and should be done away with now and forever.

We have refrained from writing of the lower end of the city and the awful vice which exists there. We would fain ask the inquiring Montrealer to come with us down Wolfe or Jacques Cartier Street even on a Sunday afternoon. The denizens of this district do not ask the mantle of night to shelter them. In broad daylight they ply their hideous calling. With painted faces they beckon from ground-floor windows, and with liquor-hoarse voices they attract the attention of the passer-by. Old Greene Street, in New York, at its worst presented no viler sight than these streets in Montreal to-day.

Horrible, horrible, most horrible! This is no overdrawn picture to be read by the evil-minded and the evil hearted. It is a sad statement of facts. The localities are given. Seek for yourselves, and you will receive a lesson upon "the sinfulness of sin" as powerful as a Spurgeon sermon.

We might write of the low hotels and lodging-houses on St. Paul Street near the Bonsecours Market and around the two great stations. Such hotels have time and again been raided as "disorderly houses" by the city police. Fancy a hotel licensed by the city, and then raided, and then resuming business!

If we have drawn the attention of one energetic, honest citizen to this sad state of affairs, good must follow as the night the day. If we have warned some headstrong youth from the sin which kills, good has been done. We ask no higher reward than this.

The facts and figures given here speak for themselves. Our city rulers should be up and doing to purge our city from this moral and physical grossness.

What say you?

CHAPTER VIII.

"THE HORSESHOE."

THE New York of ten years ago held no stranger sight, no spot more interesting in certain respects than the quaint old building which stood at the corner of Houston and Crosby Streets. Its interior has seen many dramas.

In many ways, and for divers reasons, "Harry Hill's" was a land-mark. The visitor to the city, before being taken out to "see the sights," was always asked "Shall we go to Harry Hill's?"

Within its walls, from early afternoon until early morning, was gathered as motley a crew as ever the eye of man rested upon. The most dangerous and desperate criminals met here and planned new villainies. The scum of the female sex of lower New York assembled themselves together in this place. Men and women who had done time, who were wanted by the police of London, Paris, and Vienna, swaggered about and aired their rough ways

before the visitor. Upon the walls, the famous verse beginning "Gentlemen, sit at your ease;" at the tables, women who were beyond suspicion; at the bar and in the billiard-room, men of every class. It indeed deserved the name of "Free and Easy."

But alas! one fine day a cruel-hearted and inflexible mayor issued his famous proclamation: "The dives must go." And Harry Hill's went the way which the Cremorne, the Empire, and other shady resorts had trodden before. They will be more or less lamented but not forgotten, and they can well be spared.

To-day the space formerly occupied by Harry Hill's is a scene of busiest toil, and ere long a massive warehouse will rise upon its site.

Montreal as yet boasts no "Free and Easy" of the Harry Hill class. There are no concert halls where immoral women lie in wait for vicious men,—little better than houses of assignation. Montreal will allow vice to any extent, but it must not offend the public eye. It may ply its sad vocation in dark streets and behind closed doors, but it must not walk in the light of publicity. The festering slums of

the Faubourg in Quebec may exist, but the man who would try to run a well-ordered beer-garden in a respectable quarter of the city would have a thorny road to travel.

The nearest approach to the American "Free and Easy" in Montreal is Tommy Boyle's famous Horseshoe on St. Sulpice Street. It is, however, but a feeble imitation. True, there is "beer and music," which Puritan New York has prohibited; the sound of song and dance is heard within its walls, and some of the attendants are in female attire: but here the resemblance ends.

At "The Horseshoe" there are no women patrons, no female performers upon the stage, and few, if any, crooks in the audience.

Upon a dimly-lighted street, and within the shadow of the noble parish church of Notre Dame de Montreal, stands the Horseshoe.

St. Sulpice Street runs from Notre Dame Street for a quarter of a mile down to the river front, and its buildings are devoted to commerce and the pursuits which enrich sailing-men. Tommy Boyle's is the exception.

Leaving the Windsor we stroll along Dor-

chester Street, and the eye is arrested by the magnificent dome of St. Peter's Cathedral rising heavenward in the soft summer moonlight. Truly it is even now, in its uncompleted state, a noble and a picturesque sight.

Still following Dorchester Street, past the St. James' Club and the fine residences on either side, we find ourselves at the head of Beaver Hall Hill. Glancing downward, the lights of the lower city gleam and twinkle like a thousand stars, and speak to us of a busy, ever-toiling world.

Descending the hill, we pass through Victoria Square with its massive warehouses, and the electric lights of St. James Street gleam before us. It is nine o'clock, and but few persons walk its quiet length, and we reach Place d'Armes Square.

Upon the magnificent edifice which arrests and holds our attention we cannot devote much space. Had we a volume to spare, it would give no idea of its imposing entrance, its solid walls, and its heaven-kissing towers. We long for the deep tones of its famous bell,

and we seek to imagine its appearance when illuminated upon a festival night.

Regretfully we turn down the dark and narrow street which sleeps in its shadow, and follow its quiet length until the sound of the slowly-gliding St. Lawrence River reaches our ears, and we breathe with deep draughts the fresh and health-laden breezes which penetrate even here.

Before an open door, which reveals a flight of steps, stands a huge colored gaslight. Upon its colored glass can be traced in many different styles the words :

THE HORSESHOE

TOMMY BOYLE.

And upon it are colored horseshoes such as Joe Murphy surely never made in any performance of "The Kerry Gow" on record.

Before entering through this hospitably open, if uninviting, door we pause. Down the stairs stagger two men, whose garb proclaims the seafaring man, and they are standing alternately to starboard and to port. This irregular course occasions us some misgivings as to the

point to be taken by ourselves. It is worse than two steamboats in a canal.

"Bill."

"Aye, lad."

"Canst tell the way to the ship?"

"Naw, lad; can thou?"

"Maybe if 'twas daylight; but this gas, it 'urt's m' eyes."

"Naw, lad, 'tis the hoose which troubles thee."

A muttered oath, and the two men clinch and roll to the bottom of the steps. The fall sobers them a trifle, and they "make" for the riverside.

Thanking our stars for our caution in waiting till the track was clear before ascending, we set foot upon the lowest step.

The sound of a voice roaring out a song to the monotonous thumping of a piano which, at this distance, sounds like the combination of a fog-horn and the noise of a ships screw, greets our ears. Floating down the stairway, in occasional gusts, like driving snow, comes an odor which once smelt is never forgotten: it is beer.

It may be this latest odor, or the thought that having gone thus far we should push on to the bitter end, that compels us to ascend the short flight of steps; a turn to the right, and the bar is before us.

Before us stands a long counter, and behind it a strongly-built but agile-looking man attends to what seems a rushing business. The man is an ex-prize-fighter of no little ability and undoubted courage, who, had he attended to the job for which nature seems to have built him, would surely have risen to eminence in the ranks of the middle-weights.

From the air of secrecy which surrounds the manners of the two flashily-dressed men who whisper to him during his every spare minute, it would appear that there is mischief in the air. The feud between the ex-Quebecker and another pugilist now in the city is at its height, and many are the rumors around of a settled meeting and "a merry mill."

At the far end of the bar is a desk labelled "cashier;" behind it sits a youth of hardly twelve years, who seems at home and at ease,

and who makes change with a confidence and certainty born of long practice.

This is a son of the proprietor, and a youth whose clever dancing had called the aristocratic patrons of a recent amateur minstrel entertainment to their feet and made the Academy of Music ring with wild applause.

Standing in a corner, and that being noisily with a group of men whose appearance and dress was rather out of character with their surroundings, is the proprietor. He is a short, slim man, with a merry face and a jolly twinkle in his eye, which a sore arm carried in a sling cannot entirely banish.

The famous owner has three hobbies—his boy's dancing, the pugilistic abilities of his bartender and his assistant, a slim but muscular lad whom he addressed as "Fitz," and his reputed "nearness" in money matters. He seems to be discussing matters fistic; for now and then he points to the men behind the bar, and his voice drops.

The two men to whom he speaks are well known. One, the taller, is a gambler on a small scale, and calls himself an "all-around

sport," to the amusement of his acquaintances. He had gained some notoriety as a backer of pugilists and pedestrians, but of late both pugs and peds had flown wide of this city, and the noble sport lagged. His companion was a foot-runner of more than local fame, who listened as the other talked.

"Well, is it a go?"

"Yes," responded Boyle.

"I'll be here to-morrow night," returned the other, in a voice whose Milesian accents were unmistakable; and he walked quickly to the door and, with his companion, disappeared.

The thumping on the piano had ceased, the foghorn-voiced no longer pierced our ears, and above the clink of glasses can be heard scraps of conversation :

"Middle-weight, and a good 'un."

"To-morrow, at five."

"I say I did."

"Isn't she just—"

"Bill, it's six bells."

Let us escape from this room and enter the "concert-hall."

Seated on tables, chairs, benches, and even on

the floor, a hundred or more men are crowded together in an atmosphere redolent of stale beer and vile tobacco-smoke. Surely they must be salamanders, and used to fire, to stand this long. Only a stoker on an ocean steamship would live through an hour of it, it seems to us, and yet all hands are orderly and happy. The place, for all its vile odors of liquor and tobacco, is neat and clean, and drunken men are not in sight.

At the far end of the "hall," a platform is raised a couple of feet above the level of the floor and in full sight of all hands. A young man has just finished a jig, and the applause which greeted his efforts was loud and long.

The master of ceremonies—on this occasion the proprietor himself—steps forward and announces:

"Mr. Wilson will oblige with a song. He's a good 'un—give him a hand, everybody."

He leads the applause himself, and the landlubbers and sailors present follow with vim. A young man with smooth, greasy locks about which there is just the faintest suggestion of salad oil, and a close-fitting frock coat

arises from somewhere in the middle of the crowd, and way is made for him. The "gentleman at the piano" takes an exercise canter over the keys, and a finish fight between piano and singer begins. After a brief struggle, during which we have been possessed of the idea that the man has been warbling "White Wings," the piano subsides; the volunteer "talent" bows to the storm of applause, and his place is taken by a "song and dance artist."

We partake of some fairly good beer at the hands of a black-eyed vestal, who attends to our side of the room, and we take our leave over "The Horseshoe," and wend our way homeward to "think it over."

It is not for us to question the advisability of licensing such places as "The Horseshoe." It is true they are not of a high moral tone nor are they calculated to elevate the standard of social morality in the community; but at least something can be said in their favor. Here the sailor and the wharf-hand is better off than if prowling the streets at the mercy of land-sharks male and female. He is not poisoned with vile liquor, but he can take his beer

and smoke his pipe in peace at little cost. If there were no "Horseshoe," he might spend his money and ruin his health in some low drinking-den along the river-front, or become the prey of some vile lodging-house keeper or female Harpy.

In short, it is not well but it might be worse.

CHAPTER IX.

JOE BEEF'S.

THE travelled pilgrim, whose Mecca is Montreal, when he arrives at that beautiful city usually inquires for the sights of the city. The impression made upon him by guide-books, by friends, and last of all by his own powers of observation while driving up to his hotel, convince him that he has not pitched his tent in the bankrupt land of desolation so untruthfully portrayed in American annexation sheets of *The World* stripe.

Far from it. When he has visited our

bridges, our churches, our residences, our business streets, our factories and, finest of all, when he has stood upon Mount Royal and seen the fair city nestling between himself and the majestic St. Lawrence, he is tempted to ask himself :

“ Is this one of the cities forming part of a ruined and bankrupt country, being rapidly depopulated by the defection of starving, unemployed labor, and deserted by capitalists as an unpromising and barren field? Can these sturdy business men, these dignified matrons, these strong and hardy young men, and these rosy-cheeked and handsome girls with health and intelligence written upon their faces—can these be the same people of whom I have lately read that they are starving inhabitants of a frost-bound and barren country, even now tottering upon the verge of dissolution political and social? Are these massive warehouses filled with merchandise, these busy factories, these splendidly equipped railways but phantoms of my idle brain? Are these houses on Sherbrooke and Dorchester Streets, these stone mansions which remind me of London, are they

but tenanted by the caretakers, the families themselves having emigrated some months ago to Fall River and Haverhill?

After seeking around in vain for the ivy which should be climbing over our buildings public and private, in testimony of their ruin, and after a weary search for the moss which should be growing over our railway tracks and public highways, the idea dawns upon the traveller, if he be an American and possessed of the average American ability, that the reports of Canada in the American papers are not strictly correct.

If he inquires a little further, he will be satisfied that the statements in his enterprising country's sensation-loving journals should be credited to the Father of Lies.

If he be inclined to mercy, he may think that the reports of Canada's ruin are somewhat like the account of the hanging of the Chicago Anarchists in a notoriously unreliable, if successful, New York daily—the story is a trifle previous.

Having satisfied himself as well as possible by all outward and visible signs that Montreal,

at least, is not drifting without rudder or sails, with neither master nor crew upon the sea of ruin, he proceeds to satisfy himself that for the stranger it possesses sights of interest in no way inferior to any cities of the New World.

Well, he has driven upon our Mountain Park road, he has seen our observatory; he has tested our water-supply system and our Canadian whiskey supply; in one of our splendid hired carriages he has rolled along Sherbrooke Street—our local Fifth Avenue; and he has fully understood the pride which the Montrealer feels in the magnificent residences of his city. He has seen thirty brawny Canucks in a hand-to-hand struggle at a game called football in a manner truly British; and on Sunday he has met the youth and beauty of the city taking its afternoon airing upon Sherbrooke Street.

Upon him steals the idea that, after all, Canada may be a country of fair women and brave men; and if he be a poet he is likely to ask,

“Where is the man who would not dare
To fight for such a land.”

But if perchance he has no poetry in him, but

inclined to hard and unpoetic thoughts, he may say,

“I have seen all these things before : handsome residences, splendid railroads, busy factories, sturdy young men, and pretty girls, these are daylight sights in every city. Show me something which will be hard to duplicate elsewhere.”

If it is winter, he might be taken to the mountain-top and shown the city in moonlit beauty below. He could not equal that on earth.

Or if it is Carnival week, he might be taken to witness the fancy drive, the Victoria Rink Carnival. Where could he reproduce these ?

If he still seeks for novelty, let him stand before the illumined glories of the Ice Palace. Even if he be as American as George Washington or Jim Blaine, he will confess that at last his eyes have rested upon a sight which never palls ; which grows in beauty and brings to him thoughts of another world, and which even his great and glorious country cannot equal.

He has feasted his vision upon the sublime ; he will now laugh at the ridiculous.

It is certain that if he remains in Montreal long enough he will be asked,

“Have you seen Joe Beef's?”

The visitor naturally asks,

“What is Joe Beef's?”

The smile of triumph comes into the eyes of the resident. He has found something which in all likelihood the American has never seen before.

“It cannot be described, mon cousin American; it must be seen.”

And so it comes about that one fine night the visitor, armed to the teeth, and his guide meet at a leading hotel and point for the river's bank.

The trip begins.

There is no terror in the sight of the well-lighted and still busy streets of the business portion of the city, and as the American walks St. James' Street his grip upon his “shooting-iron” relaxes perceptibly, and he smiles to himself at his former fears.

But a turn to the left, a few paces down a narrow and dimly-lighted street, and his doubts return. There is a quiet about the neighbor-

hood which sets his nerves on tension ; about some of the buildings on either hand there is an air of physical decay not at all reassuring.

His grip upon his revolver tightens, and he blesses his foresight.

A few steps more and the St. Lawrence, grand and stately, rolls on toward the sea. Far across on the opposite is the gleam of village lights, and in front the electric light marks the magnificent wharf frontage far, almost, as the line of vision, until far away down the river they seem like stars of the summer night.

Behind him he has left the roar of a great city, the murmur of its many tongues, the noise of its numerous feet. Above him, to left and to right, tower mighty warehouses, and in front a countless throng of men, like swarming bees, toil under the searching rays of the white light. His ear is assailed by shouting of busy overseers, by noise of restless donkey-engines, and creak of straining chains. To-morrow morning, ere sunrise, the iron monster which rests so secure upon the bosom of Father St. Lawrence, will be emptied of her costly freight and

refilled with the valuable products of Canadian toil.

Above him to the entrance of the canal, and below him till the eye is strained in its efforts to compass the distance, the scene is the same.

He wonders again if this is the Deserted village, of which his country's dailies are so tenderly solicitous. He finds himself thinking if this is the land of desolation and debt about which he has read ; and he wonders if these sounds of busy commerce are the symptoms of decay.

Having pretty well decided that in future he will seek another gospel of information and truth than his favorite *Gift Enterprise Journal*, he suddenly remembers the object of his trip, and his resolutions are interrupted :

“Well, we are here.”

To his left, upon the corner of the street facing the river front and the narrow street which he has just descended, is a dark and dirty corner “gin-mill.” Its character of occupation is unmistakable.

Even at this distance, an odor unhuman and vile assails his nostrils. He sniffs again :

"Am I on the bounding prairie? for surely I smell buffalo."

His companion laughs for answer.

The American is visibly nettled.

"My friend and Canuck," he says with just a touch of sarcasm in his voice, "that peculiar odor does not belong to a gin-mill. The last time I fainted under it was in a dime museum on the Bowery."

His companion laughed aloud.

"Brother Jonathan," he replied, with true Canadian politeness, "this is better than any Bowery museum, for here you not only see the wild animals, but the human as well; and, better than all, you have a good glass of beer right on the premises. Lastly, it is free."

Lost in admiration of this Canadian institution so cunningly devised, the two enter.

For a second, the American has lost his assumed air of indifference. Manifestly he is astonished.

In front of him is the rarest collection of men his eyes had ever seen. There was not a good coat, nor a hat in even moderate repair, in the entire company. Their garb was of the

poorest, but it made no difference to their spirits—all hands were happy and contented.

Upon a corner of the room, a stack of loaves of bread, piled, if not mountain-high, at least ceiling-high, attracted attention. Around this improvised pantry, the men stood or sat and ate heartily.

In the opposite corner, something black was lying down, but once in a while the ominous rattle of chain warned the inquisitive to keep at a distance. It could not be a dog ; it was too big for a cat.

Suddenly it arose, and a vision of a wide-open mouth—a dream in white and red—greeted the bystanders.

The American's vanity was tickled—his sense of smell had not deceived him ; he had smelt bear.

Behind a counter, a stout man, with florid face, dispensed the ardent fluid to a thirsty crowd. All was quiet and orderly.

The American suggested to his company that possibly to-morrow might be "bear-steak" day at this restaurant ; but the joke was lost upon the night air.

“ You have seen the ‘ tiger ’ and the ‘ elephant ’ in New York. Come down stairs with me, and see the buffalo in Montreal.”

A pale faced-boy is detailed to lead our steps right, and we follow. He beckons us toward a stairway which “ seems the pathway down to hell ;” and with reluctant steps we follow.

In a dark and ill-smelling cellar, a square space has been stoutly boarded off, and within it an object hairy and dark is reclining.

It was the lordly roamer of the Western plains—the animal who has rechristened one of America’s most prominent citizens, the Hon. William J. Cody ; in short, it is a buffalo.

Properly speaking, it is what is left of one ; for captivity has sadly worsted his once noble form and frozen the fiery current of his soul. He is a treed buffalo.

To the left of us, another bear is chained ; but it is unnecessary—his ferocity is gone, and the tenderest Indian maiden in all the forests would hardly tempt his sunken jaws into action.

Upon a bar a huge cage hangs, near the ceiling, and within it two parrots, almost as devoid

of feathers as a broiled chicken, occasionally disturb the vicinity with cacophonous noise.

In remote corners, unlit by the feeble and glimmering light of a smoky lamp, other objects are moving; but the desire for fresh air, in the visitors, is too strong to be resisted. The investigation into this menagerie is not pursued further.

Above the saloon are sleeping-rooms; for no poor man need want a bed while Joe Beef's is open. In the morning he must turn out early and wash himself; this last being a hobby of the strange and eccentric proprietor. There is good wholesome bread in the corner, and he may eat, and welcome. If he has money, he can pay it; if he is penniless, he need not.

Joe Beef's may be low, it is certainly dirty on the cellar and ground floors; and the value of such a place to the city may be questioned. But let one thing be remembered—many a tired head has here found rest; many a hungry mouth has here been filled.

Surely, this charity will cover a multitude of sins.

At Joe Beef's death, quite recently, the Mont-

real *Star* did justice to one who, with all his faults, was the poor man's friend, and gave some particulars of his strange career : He was born in County Cavan, Ireland, in the year 1835, and consequently was 54 years of age at the time of his death. When quite a young boy, he was sent to the School of Gunnery in Woolwich, England. When the Crimean war broke out, he was drafted into the Royal Artillery, and served through the greater portion of the well-known campaign, being raised to the rank of sergeant. When others failed to secure supplies, Joe would start out, and it was very rarely that he returned without a plentiful supply of beef and other eatables ; and from this he received the name Joe Beef. He came to Canada with the Royal Artillery, ordered to Quebec in the year 1864 on account of the Trent affair. He came to Montreal with his brigade in 1864, had charge of the canteen at the Quebec barracks for three years and at St. Helen's Island for two years. In 1868, he then bought his discharge, and started a tavern on Claude Street, named the Crown and Sceptre. When this street was widened, in 1870, he removed to

his present abode, Nos. 4, 5, and 6 Common Street, where he has been ever since. In 1877, during three days of the Lachine Canal strike, he distributed over 3000 loaves and 500 gallons of soup. He also sent two delegates to Ottawa to intercede for the workmen. A few years after this occurrence, the operatives at the cotton-mills at Hochelaga refused to work unless the hours of labor were reduced. Whilst this strike was in progress, Joe advised the people to hold out, and in the mean time had a plentiful supply of bread and soup distributed amongst them. It will be remembered that the operatives got the desired reduction in hours.

Upon this occasion, the Montreal daily *Witless*, which claims the exclusive privilege of being the follower of Him who preached charity to all, followed the dead man even to his grave with vilification and hypocritical abuse. For them the old and honored saying of "De mortuis nil nisi bonum" carries no meaning. The editorial is worthy of reproduction. If its claim to being "the only religious daily" is founded upon such works as this, it will hold its position undisputed.

Read this :

“JOE BEEF IS DEAD. — For twenty-five years he has enjoyed in his own way the reputation of being for Montreal what was in former days known under the pet sobriquet of the wickedest man. His saloon, where men consorted with unclean beasts, was probably the most disgustingly dirty in the country. It has been the bottom of the sink of which the Windsor bar and others like it are the receivers. The only step further was to be found murdered on the wharf or dragged out of the gutter or the river, as might happen. It was the resort of the most degraded of men. It was the bottom of the pit, a sort of *cul de sac*, in which thieves could be corralled. The police declared it valuable to them as a place where these latter could be run down. It has been actively at work over all that time for the brutalizing of youth—a work which was carried on with the utmost diligence by its, in that sense, talented proprietor. The excuse just mentioned for tolerating it, and licensing it annually in the Queen's name, is surely an unspeakable disgrace. Worse than this, under

the principles of our present government, this destructive resort will be held to have a goodwill, whatever that word may mean with regard to embruting young men, and claims will be made for a continuance of this license from her Majesty to carry on this trade on condition of sharing the gains with her Majesty to the extent of two hundred dollars."

Comment upon such charity is unnecessary.

CHAPTER X.

THE THEATRES.

It may be remarked, right at the start of this chapter, that Montreal "does not go much on theatres." It goes to them much, but the drama in Montreal is but the idle amusement of an hour. The impression left by any performance is but temporary; with the majority it is soon forgotten.

Where is the intelligent man who, after visiting one of the larger American cities, will not confess to his astonishment at the devotion

of the public to the drama, and of their intelligent appreciation of the efforts of its artists?

This appreciation, so gratifying and encouraging to its followers, and so creditable to the patrons themselves, finds no place in Montreal.

The play is applauded or listened to in silent condemnation, it is laughed at or wept over; but it is forgotten, and the names of its mimic characters, and of the artists who portrayed them are sometimes not even noticed and almost invariably forgotten.

In no city is the actor's art more evanescent, less permanent, than in Montreal. It is not creditable to the inhabitants.

It is not our purpose to discuss the cause nor to suggest a cure. It may be the want of proper and intelligent criticism to guide the outsiders aright—for Montreal theatrical criticism is notoriously incompetent and partial; or it may be that the dailies do not lead their readers to think upon the art which Shakespeare loved;—but pity t'is, t'is true.

And yet Montreal has been singularly favored in the respect of theatrical performances. Within the walls of the Academy of Music the

actors in the mimic world beyond the footlights have not lacked encouragement from the "sea of faces" not far away; and applause, if not keenly discriminating, is oftentimes hearty and honest.

Upon the boards of the Academy of Music, many famous disciples of the art of Thespis have strutted and fretted their little hour. Here Bernhardt, "La divine Sara," looked with the winning tenderness of her liquid eyes upon *Armand*, and braved the *Princesse de Bouillon*. Over the audiences the thrill of horror has passed when Genevieve Ward, as *Stephanie de Mohrivart*, sees the revengeful Corsican waiting upon the balcony for his victim; and her wild cry of terror still rings in our ears. Lovely, gentle Adelaide Neilson murmured the passion of the love-lorn daughter of the *Capulets* to the crooning and bleating *Romeo* beneath her balcony, and sighed in silver-sweet accents for "A falconer's voice to lure him back again." Statuesque Mary Anderson has chilled the love of the moon-eyed *Orlando* in the forest of Arden, and posed as *Parthenia*. Modjeska, sweetest of them all, more womanly,

more loveable, has wept as the erring *Frou-Frou*, and Montreal's fairest daughters wept with her; and Ellen Terry has flooded over the stage and tried the keen encounter of her wits with *Benedict*. Here, too, Marie Prescott, with fierce strength, has cursed her lying husband in "The Wages of Sin" and shrunk from *Othello's* stormy caresses. Margaret Mather's untrained ability has shown us dimly the sorrows of "Leah the Forsaken," and charming Rose Coghlan has fascinated us with her exquisite comedy, as she joked at poor *Sir Peter Teazle*. Janauschek, grandly tragic, has cursed *Dick Hatterick*; and we have here seen Ristori, voiceless almost and in her wane. Patti and Gerster have sung here; and the last notes of their music still floats around us.

Salvini, grandest of tragedians, has pleaded his cause before the Senate and lifted his wondrous voice in barbaric rage. The skill and stagecraft of an Irving has reproduced "Louis XI." and thrilled us with the abject terror of *Mathias* in "The Bells." We have laughed with *Colonel Mulberry Sellers* and sorrowed with Mantell. The unctuous humor of W. J.

Florence as *Captain Cuttle*, the solemn and quiet fun of Roland Reed, and the drunken antics of George Knight have amused us. The cunning of Keene's hunchback king, the ghastly terror of Mansfield's *Baron Cherial*, and the humanity and pathos of the *Jack Yeubett* of Joseph Haworth have all received their due meed of recognition.

A first night at the Academy of Music is rarely the best for purposes of observation. The Montrealer—insular as a Briton—does not know what is said or written of the piece in other cities; he does not care. Deep down in his mind there is a settled conviction that the American theatrical manager is always "trying it on the dog," and he prefers to wait until his friends have gone. He prefers them to stand the brunt of the fray. Ofttimes it is a trying ordeal, for the Academy has seen some "cruel" shows, of which "C. O. D.," "On the Trail," and "Philopene" remain unto this day in their memories. In view of this, Montreal caution is justifiable—even commendable.

It is a standard of dramatic performance seems

to be the famous "Diplomacy" company of ten years ago. Some members of the cast are still remembered :

Henry Beauclerc, . . Fred. B. Warde.
Julian Beauclerc, . . Maurice Barrymore.
Baron Stein, H. Rees Davies.
Count de Carojac, . Signor Majeroni.
Dora, Miss Annie Edmondson.
Countess Zicka, . . Signora Majeroni.

Mr. Barrymore was then an infinitely better actor than he is now, and it is certain that he then wore a hat two sizes smaller. Fred. B. Warde had not been seized with stellar aspirations. Mr. H. Rees Davies is now with Roland Reed, and the Majeronis are in Australia. Of Miss Edmondson, we have lost track. It must, however, be admitted that it was a notable performance. Ten such stock companies are now on the road.

The Canadian representative of junior "upper-tendom" does not consume his rival with jealousy by taking his loved one to the theatre and filling her with candy between the acts. Canadian etiquette does not permit the

former, and Canadian ideas of health and good manners run contrary to the latter action. To the Canadian juvenile "aristocrat," this Americanism seems a relic of barbarism; so he either goes alone and sits "in the unreserved," or, with a "fellow of his own set," he dons his evening dress and sits solemn and unmoved in the orchestra chairs.

There is much to be said in favor of the non-attendance of young people at the theatres. The young man who goes with his *fiancée*,—actual or would-be,—and has compelled her to listen to the indecencies of "La Tosca" or "A Wife's Peril," or something equally sultry, is in a position not devoutly to be wished for.

There are some first-nighters in Montreal, without whom, it is jestingly said, the Academy would remain unopened. One of these, a prominent politician, portly of form and gray of hair, is known as a devoted admirer of the fair sex, and the sacred lamp of burlesque shines never too brightly for him. From his box, on the left of the stage, his ardent glances fall upon the performers; but,

alas! the attraction is not mutual, and his attentions are seldom reciprocated.

Another familiar figure on Monday nights is the smooth-faced and slender scion of a leading wealthy French-Canadian family. He has figured more than once before the public; but of late he has withdrawn into temporary, if not enforced; seclusion.

Another regular attendant is one of the sons of a wealthy railroad-speculator. His attire is like unto Jacob's coat, and even Solomon in all his glory was not a circumstance to this local Berry Wall. It is well that his dress is his worst characteristic; otherwise he is harmless.

But the time to see a Montreal audience at its best is during an amateur performance—such as are frequently given in aid of some well-known charity. Here indeed, do youth and beauty meet; for the dramatic or minstrel talent of Montreal is recruited from its upper ranks, and the entire house is always sold to the friends and acquaintances of the performers, and tickets to those outside of the "local 400" are at a premium.

To-night there is an amateur minstrel per-

formance for the benefit of "The Home for Incurable Old Maids," and we are informed that the entire house is sold, and that the merit of the performers and the brilliancy of the audience will mark an event in fashionable Montreal.

Our American blood is up. We will see that performance and that audience if we have to bankrupt ourselves to get tickets and leave our trunks "as security" at our hotel.

We are saved this sad fate. The "gentlemanly" (always gentlemanly in print) hotel clerk, after superhuman efforts, has got us two. He says that his attempts in our behalf would have done justice to a sporting-man on the trail of a prize-fight. We believe him—it is easier than disputing; we dress with extra care, and duly at eight o'clock we present ourselves.

The house was not half full yet, and we marvelled greatly thereat. We had not yet learned that in Montreal, as elsewhere, no amateur performance begins at the advertised time.

Soon we hear the rattle of the tambo and

bones, and for the first time we venture to cast our eyes about us. The house is full and we are surrounded by the "youth and beauty" of Montreal.

We are not disappointed. There are pretty young girls of from eighteen to twenty-two and handsome women of thirty. The men in evening dress are what might be termed "fine young fellows."

One thing is especially noticeable—there is an air of distinction about the audience which seems to say, "Our refinement and our position does not date from last generation." The women do not talk loud—that quality of voice so commended by the Sweet Swan of Avon. Their English pronunciation is of the best; and there is no slang, no nasal drawl, no "ain't;" better than all, no blazing of diamonds, so noticeable in the regular and parvenu audiences of New York. Of this, my American friends shall be duly informed.

There is a tinkle; instantly we settle back in our seats, prepared to be bored and to look happy.

There is nothing for the old-timer to object

to in the stage setting, revealed as the curtain rolls up. The fifty young men upon the stage are well posed, the end-men look confident, and the scenery and gas-jets fill up a charming picture.

The fun begins. An admirably played overture raises in our minds the hope that perhaps the show will not be unendurable, and three times we have caught ourselves laughing at the antics of the young man on the bones end. Then the jokes are sprung, and we have not recognized a single old friend. We marvel at the easy manner of the end men and the self-possession of the clear-voiced interlocutor. Once, an end man for an instant only seems shaky, but the interlocutor, with the readiness of a professional, guides him over the rough spot. It is admirably done, and it passes almost entirely unnoticed. The solos are admirably sung, and the chorus attach with the certainty of veterans.

The curtain goes down upon the first part, and we Jonathans are enthusiastic in praise of Mr. Canuck.

"Charley," said I, "this show is good enough

to travel on its own merits, with no charity attachment."

My friend agrees with me, and we listen to the favorable comments of the audience around us.

The second part is surprisingly good. There is a capital quartette, a banjoist almost up to Billy Carter, and the end-man who was so witty in the first part is screamingly funny in the after-piece. Decidedly, he is an artist.

We wait in the lobby as the audience file out. Our good impression is renewed, and we admire the rich, soft furs so much in fashion.

The next night we prepare ourselves for a trip to the Theatre Royal, which, we are informed, is similar to the Third Avenue Theatre in New York.

Its popularity is undoubted ; to that, the entering crowds bear witness. With difficulty we squeeze in, and, paying fifty cents apiece, we lord it, over the common herd, in a box seat.

"My Partner" is most excellently performed. The man who acts *Joe Saunders* is an artist. Gilfeather is his name, if I remember aright, and Miss Mary Brandon is sweet and refined.

In the audience is no silk and satin, but only fustian ; but all seem to be happy and enjoying themselves. Above all, everything is orderly. Again we are favorably impressed.

Montreal at present supports but two theatres. The Queen's Hall, a fine, roomy, and well-lit hall, has no scenery and is the home of concert proper. Albani, Scalchi, and Campanini have sung here.

The theatre is only indirectly an educator ; but, if it amuses, its mission is fulfilled. Provided the amusement be pure, education will follow.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SPIDER'S WEB.

THE passion for gambling seems implanted within the human breast. Ouida, in "Moths," remarks that it is the passion which outlasts all the others. Nearly every man and woman has at one time or other left the decision of some more or less weighty question to the Blind Goddess. In the dawn of time, had we their

records, it would probably be found that the earliest civilized races were victims. We are certain, from the Old Testament, that "they cast lots."

Upon this subject the once-famous O. B. Frothingham wrote an essay, which he entitled "The Ethics of Gambling," which vice he rather wittily defined as "trying to get the start of Providence." A well-known American monthly publishes some curious statements upon the most fascinating sin, which age cannot wither nor custom stale—the darling alike of hot-headed youth, staid middle age, and senile decay.

The passion for gambling, of which betting is only one form, was developed very early in the history of man. The Greeks and Romans were fond of laying wagers. One of the wildest bets ever made was that of the physician Asclepiades, who wagered against Fortune that he would never be ill in his lifetime, staking his reputation as the greatest medical authority of his day. He won his wager, although he could not enjoy it, for at

an advanced age he fell down-stairs and received injuries from which he died.

The Romans invested betting with much solemnity. Each party to the contract took his ring from his finger, and gave it into the keeping of some third party until the bet was decided. We see here a foreshadowing of our modern stakeholder. The *lex Titia* and the *lex Cornelia* forbade betting on any games unless they were trials of courage, bodily strength, or skill.

In the Middle Ages, various legal restrictions were placed upon betting. In Rome, wagers on the death or exaltation of the popes and on the promotion of cardinals were forbidden. In Venice, wagers on the election of all public officers were forbidden; and Genoa carried the restriction to bets on the success of military expeditions, the revolutions of states or kingdoms, the arrival and departure of vessels, and proposed marriages. A statute passed in Paris in 1565 made it illegal to make any woman the subject of a wager.

In the year 1725, a banker named Bulliot ruined himself by trusting to a popular supersti-

tion. The English say that, if St. Swithin's Day (July 15) be rainy, the rain will continue for forty days. St. Swithin's Day of that year was rainy, and Bulliot offered to bet that the saying would hold good. His takers were so many and eager that the terms were reduced to writing, as follows: "If, dating from St. Swithin's Day, it rains more or little during forty days *successively*, Bulliot will be considered to have gained; but if it ceases to rain for only one day during that time, Bulliot has lost." Bulliot was so confident of success that he placed money against all articles of value—gold-headed canes, snuff-boxes, jewels, even clothes. When his cash was exhausted, he issued notes and bills of exchange to the amount, it is said, of one hundred thousand crowns. He found himself suddenly famous: verses were made in his honor, a play was produced of which he was the hero, all England was for the moment supremely interested in the weather. For twenty-one days, more or less, rain fell. The twenty-second opened bright and cloudless and continued so. Bulliot had lost his bet; but he was ruined so completely

that he was unable to meet the notes and bills that bore his name.

A notorious gambler of the last century, whose name has not yet descended to posterity, was playing for high stakes with Lord Lorn, until finally, exasperated by a run of continuous ill luck, he jumped from the card-table, and, seizing a large punch-bowl, cried: "For once I'll have a bet where I have an equal chance of winning! Odd or even, for fifteen thousand guineas?"

"Odd," replied the peer, calmly.

Crack went the bowl against the wall. When the pieces were gathered up and counted, the number proved to be odd. The gambler paid his money, but tradition asserts that it was only by selling the last of his estates.

Heidegger, Master of the Revels to George II., was considered the ugliest person in England. A courtier wagered that he could produce an uglier. He was allowed a few days to unearth his champion, and, after exploring all the worst slums of London, brought forward an old woman from St. Giles's. The umpire, with Heidegger's approval, was about to award

the palm to her; but Heidegger, in response to a suggestion, donned the old woman's bonnet, and with this added ugliness he carried off the palm.

A not dissimilar bet was made in 1806, in the Castle Yard, York, between Thomas Hodgson and Samuel Whitehead, as to which should assume the most eccentric costume. Hodgson came before the umpires decorated with bank-notes of various values on his coat and waist-coat, and a row of five-guinea notes and a long netted purse of gold round his hat. The words "John Bull" were written on his back. Whitehead was made up like a negro on one side, like a woman on the other. One half of his face was black, the other was rouged; one half of his body appeared in a gaudy long-tailed linen coat, leather breeches, and spurred boot, the other half in woman's dress, with a silk stocking and a slipper. The judges awarded the stakes to Hodgson.

The violinist Vieuxtemps used to be fond of relating the following story. As he was walking on London Bridge, a poor wretch threw himself over the parapet. There was a rush of

eager spectators. "I'll bet he drowns!" shouted one. "Two to one he'll swim ashore!" "Done!" Vieuxtemps, meanwhile, had jumped into a boat and ordered the waterman to rescue the unhappy creature. But a roar came from the bridge, "Leave him alone! there's a bet on." The waterman, with the true British love of sport, at once refused to interfere, and the unhappy man was drowned. It will be remembered that Dumas has used this incident in one of his novels.

True to his country, the Canadian is a gambler. From his British ancestor he has inherited this vice. From his American cousin he has received much encouragement, and the American national indoor game was never so popular as it is in Montreal to-day. The number of "sessions" being held upon any given night at draw-poker cannot be fairly estimated nor even approximately estimated.

This particular form of gambling has burst like a storm over Lower Canada, and finds its headquarters in Montreal. The enterprising Canuck is an apt pupil and the city which some years ago was fair game for the adven-

turers from over the border is now pretty tough plucking. Its experts can now hold their own, and often some of their neighbors'; for in them is combined the cunning of the Scotchman, the stolid persistence of the Englishman, and the audacity of the American. Small wonder is it that, as a Montreal sport lately stated, "game is scarce."

Draw-poker holds sway at the hotels. Not a night passes but half a dozen amateur sports, from the six hundred-a-year clerk to the flourishing grain-merchant and the railway magnate, slowly, and one at a time, glide upstairs and are seen no more.

Of rooms for this purpose there are many in every quarter of the city. They are splendidly patronized, and "the little lady in the centre," otherwise called "the only winner" and "the best player," must be well attended to, for the proprietors walk St. James Street in purple and fine linen, and their diamonds sparkle in the sunlight.

In company with two others, we were "steered"—this I believe is the proper term—

to several of the most prominent and best known. Our trip was not without interest.

In a fine three-story building on Craig Street, not far from St. Lambert's Hill, is the finest establishment for the delectation of "the fancy" in the city; and thither one Saturday night we bent our steps.

Descending Beaver Hall Hill, we turned our steps eastward along Craig Street, and presently found ourselves opposite a wooden door forming part of a porch attached to a handsome stone building. Pushing open the door, a flight of steps rose before us.

Arrived at the top step, our upward progress is barred by a massive nail-studded door. A ring at the bell, and we find ourselves the objects of surveillance through an eye-hole. The result of the investigation seems satisfactory; a sound of bolts withdrawn is heard, and we find ourselves in a large passage.

Through two open doors, a room running the entire depth of the house is seen. It is neatly carpeted, and the furnishings, if not costly, are at least complete and comfortable.

In the far corner, placed diagonally, is a handsome sofa.

In the corner opposite to the sofa is a table, the general appearance of which is familiar. At the side, but behind it, is the elevated chair of the lookout.

Plainly, the gamblers' game known to outsiders as "faro," but to the sport as "de bank," is not in fashion just now. No stacks of checks ornament the layout; no innocent-looking and open-faced box is visible. The sports have deserted it, and at the far end of the room are gathered together in the name of "stud-poker."

Seated over a large table and facing the dealer are the sports. The look of the players does not carry with it any assurance of financial prosperity. Amongst ten players there are two clean collars, six unclean, and two without. This would be a bad average for a jury. There are but three well-dressed men in the lot. But of money there appears to be no lack. Stacks of checks and rolls of bills appear, disappear, and change owners with startling frequency and suddenness.

To men used to American gambling-houses there is more noise and talk than usual. All hands laugh, chat, and occasionally mutter a curse, not loud but deep; but there is no quarrelling, no dispute of any kind. An admirable order prevails.

The dealer is an old hand, and he "rakes off" with a liberality which would suggest to even the most inexperienced that he gets "a bit" of the "kitty,"—in French, "cagnotte." He is a big stout man, with a round head and closely cropped hair, but there is about him an air of sturdy honesty and good-humor, and withal, a keen shrewdness. We are informed that he is a contractor, and that this is but a side-issue with him. We are pleased at this charmingly indefinite statement,—we have to be,—and we mentally wish for a share in so profitable a side-issue ourselves.

The first man upon his left is young, stout, and almost guiltless of mustache. He owns a prosperous grocery, left him by his father. Next him is a small man with keen black eyes, who rarely speaks. He is a Frenchman, and evidently a rare good player. His neighbor is

a rather good-looking young man ; but he is no veteran, and he nervously fingers his checks. The others are much of a kind, with one exception.

A strongly built man of about thirty-five attracts attention. He sports a heavy black mustache, his linen is of the finest quality, and upon his little finger a diamond of outrageous size sparkles. He is the talker of the party, and what his conversation lacks in wit, it atones for in Irish brogue and wild disregard of grammar. He is the ostensible owner; these others are silent partners.

This house is famous. In days gone by a firm of Western sports ran it, and at its roulette wheel large sums were won and lost. In its loft a prize-fight of some quality was decided; and there is an air of mystery about the premises, entirely in accord with fights, tips, wins and losses.

But is this game never interfered with. It has been; but the coming event had cast its shadow before, and no serious results followed. It will be again, but unless the present *entente cordiale* is severed no good will ensue.

From this it might be surmised that "the pull" in Montreal is just as useful and as strongly used as in New York. The surmise, I am informed, would be correct.

Taking our leave of here, we descended the narrow stairway, and the cool air strikes our faces. Along Craig Street we walked, and up what seems to be a busy street in daytime, but is now silent and almost deserted.

A short distance up, and we stop at a door between two stairs, and evidently opening on a stairway to the rooms above. Ascending the stairs no iron-bound door bars our upward progress, no lookout surveys our respectability through an eyehole. Everything is wide open. Here do they fear no enemy—neither winter, rough weather, nor meddling police. In two large rooms, separated by folding-doors, two groups of men sit around tables, at draw-poker engaged. Three men are standing up looking on. Upon a sofa in the corner of one of the rooms a man is stretched sleeping.

The air in these rooms is simply stifling. It would have weakened those undaunted salamanders of Scripture who scorned the petty

terrors of the seven-times-heated fiery furnace, but it produces no impression upon the Canadian converts to America's game, who nightly assemble here. All are too busy—the losers trying to get even, the winners trying to hold their own.

And what a motley collection! The question at once enters our minds, "Who are they all?"

Fortunately one of the party is posted, and he whispers to us the players' story.

The little man with tiny hands and short black beard bears a historical name. At one time he was rich, he failed in business many years ago, and since then he has no visible means of support. Still he finds money enough to play and to pay. He looks at variance with his surroundings—this gentleman by birth and education, if not by profession. Next him is a short stout man with a shifting expression of face and a whining voice. He claims to be a horse-dealer. His neighbor is a handsome man, whose appearance bespeaks him the man of business. He is a prosperous hardware merchant; but he has the fever, and judging from the pile of checks in front of

him he appears to have the luck. A stout young man, who speaks admirable French, but with an English accent, has just left his seat: he is cleaned out; but his place is quickly filled by a blond young man with a gentlemanly manner and a smooth voice.

The proprietor is playing at the other table. He is stout and dark, with a heavy mustache and large hands and feet. He talks continuously and curses loudly. Born with considerable brains and well educated, he has not seen fit to turn his ability to anything better than "*le jeu et les femmes.*"

This place, like the other, is quiet and orderly. There is no unseemly noise, no quarrel, and much talk. All appears fair and above-board. The pigeon may be getting plucked, but his money is not stolen.

Along St. Joseph Street and not far from a prominent hostelry is another but less savory spot. Over a store, its entrance is upon the main street and up a flight of stairs. At the head a gas-jet burns and an open door reveals the inside of a scantily furnished room.

This game is run by two Frenchmen, whose

reputation is none of the best even in their own set. They are looked down upon as a refutation of the proverb of "honor amongst thieves." The better class of gamblers will have none of them, and their patrons are principally men who would not be admitted in any of the respectable games.

On St. Catherine Street, East, over a billiard-saloon is run the biggest poker-room in the city. Four tables in one room, and that room no bigger than an ordinary drawing-room! Surely love of poker is stronger in a Frenchman than love of fresh air.

The gambling fever has certainly struck Montreal. It is epidemic and very contagious, and, unless nipped, it bids fair to become permanent. The day when faro is run with open doors, as in Chicago some years ago, may be far distant from Montreal. It may never come, but the city is drifting in that direction. Unless checked it may ultimately reach that bad eminence.

Who will inaugurate the crusade?

CHAPTER XII.

THE STREETS.

WHAT ideas are conjured up by these words—the streets!

“The Streets of New York” is of course the first if we are of a dramatic turn of mind, and the exciting scenes of that lurid melodrama again pass before us. From that we think of Broadway with its endless crowd of strollers, its pretty women and handsome men. We are carried in fancy back to Sixth Avenue at night, or the noisy and crowded Bowery with its gin-palaces and its dives.

Paris then, and its brilliantly lighted boulevards, and London with its hideous Strand.

But soft! we have left Montreal behind, and we must retrace our steps.

Sherbrooke Street with its promenaders in soft clinging furs can hardly be accorded a place in “Montreal by Gaslight.” Seen at night, it is lonely and quiet. An air of aristo-

cratic repose is upon it and its gas-lamps twinkle with subdued light. Occasionally a private carriage with closely-drawn windows rolls smoothly by, and the muffled-up faces of its occupants bespeak the return from ball or theatre. Over the street hangs a haze; the noise of busy strife in the city below comes to it, but its rest is undisturbed, and in the shadow of Mount Royal it reposes in grateful seclusion.

But three streets below a change comes over the spirit of our dream. There is a bustle and stir different from what we last saw. It jars upon our quieted nerves. We can now see that we have left rest behind, and that here is felt the first breath of toil.

On every hand is life, active and aggressive; stores with goods alluringly displayed; brilliant electric lights; and crowding, bustling humanity.

Upon a corner a group of young men are standing. Some of them, athletic and well built, are engaged in heated dispute.

“He will.”

“He won’t.”

The discussion waxes warmer. The question is left to a third.

"Will Charley run in the steeplechase tomorrow?"

Only this and nothing more; and we pass on disappointed. Evidently we are in an athletic quarter.

A little farther down another group obstructs the sidewalk.

"You will."

"I won't."

"I say you will."

The discussion ends with both men moving toward a red light not far away. We think of Rip Van Winkle and again move away. Evidently there is a saloon in the vicinity.

Farther down St. Catherine Street we stroll, and at the corner of Bleury Street a halt is called. Again we listen.

"She looked at you."

"Well, what if she did? I am the handsomest of the party."

This pleasantry causes roars of laughter from the knot of young fellows, rather loudly dressed, who stand upon the curb and keep one

eye open for the policeman and another for the females.

This must be "Where the Sparrows and Chippies Parade" in old Montreal.

Truly the observant man may gather some information about his neighborhood from the scraps of conversation about him.

St. Catherine Street is a sort of local Sixth Avenue for Montreal. At night it is a parade for the clerk, the servant, and any one whose business calls them from the West End to the East or vice versa. It is shoddy and unfashionable at night, but in the afternoon it is the promenade of the "nobility, gentry, and bank clerks of the city," and also for the rising society belles. Not to "do" St. Catherine Street at least one afternoon in the week, especially Saturday, is to admit an unfamiliarity with the manners and customs of good society in Montreal.

This does not apply to Sunday afternoons. On this day St. Catherine Street is given over to Jane and Bridget, who walk up and down from Bleury to Mountain streets and meet "'Arry" and "Jeames."

But here we are forgetting that this is becoming a story of daylight, and that the gas-light part is overlooked.

St. James and Notre Dame streets upon any night but Saturday are almost deserted. The electric light's cold rays fall upon closed doors and dark entrances. The huge retail stores on either side are closed, the offices silent and deserted. A twenty years' sleep has fallen upon the street.

Eastward there is some change. Here the prowlers and night-hawks of every kind and both sexes loiter and lie in wait, like Satan, seeking whom they may devour.

Around the post-office and the Bank of Montreal is fast becoming a miniature Strand. It is a stamping-ground for men and women of the lowest class. They walk St. James Street from St. François Xavier Street at the post-office corner to St. Lambert Hill and repeat, in trotting phrase. The eye of the police should be turned toward this and the street cleared. The evil must be nipped in the bud.

St. Joseph Street on a Saturday night is assuredly one of the sights of the city. Here

are to be seen the belles of Goose Village, otherwise called Griffintown, dressed in their Saturday-night best and looking sweet and Irish. The promenaders here are as Irish as Paddy's pig, and in addition have often the traditional beauty and virtue of the dwellers in the Emerald Isle. Here the masher and the chappie do not promenade, for the hunt for prey would most likely be unsuccessful. In and around this district the Shamrock Lacrosse Club holds sway in the hearts of the inhabitants thereof. Shamrock victory is a reason for wild demonstrations and inordinate consumption of the smoky product of Milesian distilleries. But a Shamrock defeat brings a short season of sackcloth and ashes, but always the same whisky.

Upon this street are fine retail stores and dirty, insignificant shops, a magnificent hotel, the Balmoral, and a countless number of small and more or less respectable houses. But always and ever is to be seen "the gin-mill." Along St. Joseph Street they run about four to the block. It is a stronghold of John **Barleycorn.**

St. Joseph Street is one of the main arteries of the city. It runs the entire length of the city from St. Henry, the southwestern suburb of Montreal, to Hochelaga the southeastern suburb, and it can proudly boast that upon two sides are lined twice as many saloons as on any other street in Montreal. This at least entitles it to consideration, if not distinction.

But the street par excellence where Montreal is to be seen *au naturel*; the boulevard whereupon strolls the *grand flaneur*; the street where walk the pimp and the prostitute; where saloons, museums, confectionery and retail dry-goods stores form almost the entire length; where ground-floors are used for business purposes, and the upper flats for gambling and vilest debauchery; where tobacco-stores and candy-stores, ostensibly respectable, are but dens of infamy, where liquor is sold after hours and on Sundays without even the aid of the little side door—that street is St. Lawrence Main Street.

Here is a taste of spicy immorality. In such a field will surely be found food for reflection.

We begin at the foot of the street, and with open eyes and ears take in the sights and sounds.

In reversal of the ordinary ideas, the fashionable side of St. Lawrence Street is the East Side. The West Side is all very well for the man of business, or the busy wife hurrying home from market; but for the visitor who would study the street and its characters, the East Side is the only one his wandering steps should mark.

Not far from the lower end is a saloon kept by the protégé of a notorious woman who keeps a brothel not many blocks away. Her money started the "business," and, although the place is occasionally closed owing to the "illness" of the proprietor, it does a flourishing trade.

A little higher up is a saloon whose violation of the liquor laws is flagrant and persistent. No side door is necessary, the front door being deemed good enough. It is a pretty tough spot, but no tougher than its patrons, and not one half as tough as the liquor it dispenses.

Above this saloon is a gambling-house, also in full blast with open doors. There should be a fortune in these two places.

Across the street is a most notorious saloon, "The Frog." The origin of this name is lost in the mists of antiquity, but the frequenters of the little back parlor of this cloister are of the lowest class. It has not been decided as to whether the men or the women are the toughest. The visitor would likely call it a stand-off.

A dry-goods store on a very prominent corner is respectability itself; but the floors above, to which entrance is gained by a side street, are occupied for purposes better left unsaid. The convenience of such an arrangement as having an immoral house upon a main thoroughfare cannot be denied, but its advisability from a moral point of view may be questioned.

A little higher up, on the other side, is a small and neatly fitted up tobacco-store. Behind its counter a faded but still handsome woman attends to our wants, and from her comes no sign of anything uncanny about the

store. But presently from behind the partition dividing us from the rear of the shop comes a sound of female laughter.

We look at the woman inquiringly and smile.

The smile is reflected, and she asks,

“Would you gentlemen like to step inside?”

The gentlemen having “been there before, many a time,” upon the Bowery and elsewhere, decline and express a preference for the outside and leave.

Still higher up is a large and quiet-looking hotel. Its innocence, we are informed, is in its looks, for it answers the purpose of the “Parsley,” the “West Side,” or some similar choice spots known to the resident of Gotham.

In our interest and curiosity as regards the buildings and their occupation, the people upon the street have passed almost unnoticed. We recollect **f**ourselves.

There is a decided Third Avenue look about them. No silk or satin rustles past us—it is cotton and fustian; no diamonds—only jet and coral, and imitation at that, if our untrained

eye does not deceive us. Some of the women pass us without a look; some indeed need to bestow no looks upon us, for their profession is written in their brazen faces. Others young and pleasant-looking if not pretty, smile at us. In many cases, if we consider her deserving, we return the young lady's smile. But we pass through the furnace unscathed.

The men do not call for special notice. They are of the very lowest middle class—French dry-goods clerks out on the loose, or bar-room loafers, with here and there a fine, respectable-looking Frenchman. Two groups of young men are standing on the corner. They are Englishmen, evidently, doing the town. They will soon have enough.

With pleasure we turn from St. Lawrence Street into St. Catherine Street and move eastward.

On either side the cross streets are dark and unfrequented. There is an air of mystery about them, and from occasional glimpses, sights, and sounds we reason to ourselves that this is the "Tenderloin Precinct."

Our reasoning once more is correct. Sud-

denly a tall, handsome church rises before us; above and below runs a fine, wide street. It has an air of distinction and quiet about it, so different from the streets we have left behind us that we wonder. Surely this street is an oasis in the desert.

Again we have guessed aright, for on this street live many of the leading French families: it is the Faubourg St. Germain in miniature.

From a hasty observation of Montreal's streets, it must be admitted that they are orderly and, as far as can be expected in a large city, unobjectionable. There are no sights to offend the eye of modesty; no disturbances. Montreal at least keeps her vices hidden. Her seamy side is not seen in her orderly, well-kept, and peaceful streets.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STATION-HOUSE

IN every city there is at least one place in which the novelist or the philosopher may find food for reflection, if not character for reproduction. In his habitation in the simple village, the provincial town, or the cruel and pitiless city, he has one spot where he may cast his drag-net and be certain of a catch.

And what a sight does he view there! The waifs and strays of humanity; the idle, the vicious, the unfortunate—all the wastes and burdens of society. Some are there because of their offences against the laws of society, but some also are there because they have nowhere else to lay their heads. Often it may be that some innocent lies upon the hard floor, while the criminal for whom he suffers is sleeping at his ease under the same roof as honesty and virtue. All unhappy, all wretched, but some hopeful.

"Poor children of man, said the pitying spirit,
How dearly ye pay for your primal fall!"

Surely no one knows it better or feels more keenly this sad truth than he who has seen his fellow-men—brutal and drunken it may be, but still men—driven by stern necessity to the cold and uncharitable walls of "the station."

In various cities it is known under different names, and the small wits of the lower classes have outdone themselves in their efforts to extract humor from the subject. But after all, would it not take a Dickens to see the funny side of "the stone jug"—would not Sydney Smith himself forget to joke if "pinched" some night and sent to "the cooler."

What impression the first sight of a police station leaves upon its unwelcome and unsatisfied guest! Do human hearts beat under those uniforms? Does this strange silence which surrounds him mean that he is by the world forgot. Are these damp walls weeping for him and for his sad fate?

In sheer despair he remembers that walls have ears, and to them he drones the pitiful story; but they will not hear. Even the echo

of his own voice frightens him, and he sinks in stupor, if not slumber upon the hard floor.

Every night in Montreal sees within its station walls the acts, be they initial or closing, of some sad tragedy. The officers witness such scenes of terror, of shame, and of vice as would melt a heart of stone. It is true that constant repetition has inbred in the police official a certain stolidity : he sees a crime and a criminal—an offence and the offender ; but often he forgets the sad story back of it all.

And yet if he sees only the act and the actor is it not true that the dual life exists which he does not or will not see ?

Has not the criminal before him a sister who will henceforth walk with lowered head ; a mother whose heart will never seem young again ; a brother whose face will blanch at the disgrace to an honored family ?

Surely it is so.

A visit to any of the smaller police stations in Montreal will not be devoid of interest. We shall see the drama of humanity acted as it never was on any stage ; we shall see a piece

staged with a realism which defies the skill of an Irving or a Daly.

And the actors who will take an unwilling part in this performance—who are they?

They are unknown to fame; the world has never seen them before—never perhaps heard of them. They are unheralded with gaudy, posters and fraudulent advance notices, and but a few lines in the next morning's paper will reward their performance.

But what perfection of detail, what intensity of purposes, what completeness of effect!

Tears and grief such as Haworth never gave; drunken humor which the genius of a Knight in vain attempts to copy; tricks of manner, inflations of voice, to baffle the experience and study of a Coquelin.

Ah, my friends, it is here that we remember Hamlet's saying that

“The play's the thing

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.”

The conscience of the subject can be caught by the drama, as seen at the police-station. There are no footlights, no applause, and but few

spectators ; but the performance has a sad perfection, not to be found elsewhere.

At this minute in one of the branch police-stations one of these scenes is being enacted. We cannot see the entire play—the four acts, the prologue, and the epilogue ; but one scene is offered for our instruction, and we will not refuse to grace the occasion by our presence.

The rolling and the rattle of wheels is heard, and a carriage drives up to the door of the station-house, and an officer in uniform alights. There are still two occupants remaining in the cab, and the conversation strikes our ears.

“ Let me go, will you ? ”

“ Come out.”

“ Let me go—for God’s sake let me go, and I’ll never—”

“ Come out.”

“ Oh, please let me go. I’ll give you ten—twenty—”

“ Come, now, or I’ll make you.”

“ Hit me, would you ? You won’t club me, I tell you. There, take that.”

“ Oh—h !—”

The sound of what follows is dreadful. The

blows of the policeman's baton are falling upon the head and shoulders of the untamable prisoner. Then the noise becomes faint, and only a low moaning is heard.

From the cab another officer alights. The scene has not occupied ten seconds, yet it seemed an age. Two strong policemen issue from the station-house and assist their companions to carry the senseless man into the cell. As he is borne within, a stream of blood trickles down from his nerveless hands and leaves a crimson trail.

What is his story? What are the first acts of this sad drama?

This man is no common criminal; he has a wife and family, money and position, and his present plight will cause his social ruin. He has been found beating a low woman half to death in a common brothel. His shameful passions are costing him dear.

But stay! a noise is heard without, and seven young men like Eugene Aram "with gyves upon their wrists." Some with shamefaced air hide themselves behind their companions in misfortune, and look as if a second fate of

Sodom and Gomorrah would be welcomed by them to Montreal. Others put on a bold front; they laugh and jest in a feeble way, but their laughter has a hollow sound like clods of earth falling upon a coffin. These low classes have not yet served their apprenticeship in wrongdoing, and at this first glimpse of justice they falter and tremble.

Not so with some of the others. They have been there before—many a time: they know the penalty and are prepared.

They are not common loafers, arrested in some low East End dive and awaiting confinement and sentence as “habitual frequenters of the same.” Their entire appearance, even with their present surroundings, speaks the gentlemen.

This same night they have been strolling through the unclassic regions about St. Lawrence and St. Catherine Street, East.

Secure in their numbers, they had made more noise and created a greater disturbance than even the St. Lawrence Street policemen would allow, and after a short chase they reposed safe in the arms of the posse parading that district.

To-morrow morning they will appear before the Magistrate or the Recorder, be accused of creating a disturbance on the public streets, and fined. In triumph they will return and tell their adventures to their own select set.

But some of them as yet do not see the bright side of the case. They are thinking of the long night in the cold, dark cell, the hard floor, the bread and water, and, worst of all, the publicity next morning.

A shuffle of feet at the doorway attracts attention. A female voice, harsh and unmusical, grates upon the hearing.

"I won't go it."

More scuffling, a few choice expressions, and a woman, half carried, half dragged in by two constables, comes into view.

She is not altogether ill-looking, but there is a brazen stare and an evil look in her eyes which spoils what might otherwise be a pretty face.

"Please, mister, do let me go. I tell you how it was. You see it was just this way: I wanted to know how far it was to Johnny Kegan's saloon, so I went up to a nice, kind

gentleman and asked him, and the cop came up and pinched me for street-walking."

All this is rattled off with a volubility simply amazing; but the officer in charge is unimpressionable. There is a sort of "old offender" air about the woman which makes him suspicious. He asks:

"Well, and what business had you at Johnny Kegan's saloon at such an hour?"

The assertion misses fire. Either the woman is prepared or she is ready-witted.

"Well, you see, mister, the young man as keeps company with me he sometimes goes up there of an evening, and then, your honor—"

"There, there, that last expression makes me suspicious. You can use it to the Recorder in the morning. Some one down there may recognize you."

And she also disappears in the depths of darkness in the rear.

A frightful din assails our ears. It is monstrous. Over all the noise of scuffling feet, of something being carried along and dropped every yard or two. Once in a while oaths and cursing.

Two men, each with a policeman on either side, stagger into the room. Of their condition there is no chance to doubt. They are drunk on vile whisky, and dangerous at that. An indescribable odor permeates the room into which they enter. It is more nauseous than the exhalations of a corpse.

The livid skin and starting eyes, the trembling hands and quaking knees, all tell their tale. They are upon the verge of *delirium tremens*, and ere long the snakes and the blue monkeys will trail over them.

One glance at them, and their history is read. They are of that numerous class who cumber the earth—too lazy to work, too cowardly to steal; living in foul dens and reeking brothels, and issuing like bats only in the night-time. They have been born vicious, and their early training has not been of the kind to set their feet aright.

In face of these criminals, society to-day is powerless. True, it imprisons them, and they are lost to sight and out of harm's way, but they are a burden upon the tax-payers. If they are sent down to do a term, ten others are born to

take their place—born in ignorance, dirt, and the vilest immorality, with no steady means of support, but their wits and their dishonesty. They are the creatures born of crowded tenements and hideous and unnatural social conditions.

The next customer walks in with the ease and grace of a dancing-master. He needed no club to persuade him that the way to the station-house was the same in which the policeman was directing him. His clothes were neat and quiet, and his general appearance was prepossessing. There had been a fire that night, and he was caught red-handed with his hand in a gentleman's pocket.

Upon the man's face the disciple of Lavater might dwell awhile. There was no look of dissipation, no red eyelids, no unkempt hair; the man was neatness personified; but a nervous movement of his hands, and a restless, hunted look in his eyes spoke against him. He was in all probability one of those whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him.

Once only he started, when a prominent city

detective came into the station just as he was being put into a cab to be driven to Police Headquarters. But the scrutiny did not result in anything satisfactory to the official. He shook his head slightly and turned away.

A gleam of satisfaction shone for an instant in the eyes of the handcuffed man, and his lips moved. Even a sigh seemed to escape him. One would have sworn that he had said to himself, "That was a close shave."

But he has smiled too early. Next morning we read that one of the smoothest and most dangerous crooks in America has been captured and that for a while he will be lost to sight in the quiet of St. Vincent de Paul.

We have seen some of the play and a few of its actors, and we can meditate.

Right in Montreal is sin and sorrow, poverty and crime. The vile purlieus of London or the slums of New York it cannot reproduce in quantity. There is not as much vice, for there is not as much room for it; but vice is vice in Montreal, as in New York or London.

Montreal has no seven-story rookeries which raise their hideous heads to heaven from Mul-

berry and Baxter streets ; but poverty is cosmopolitan. and it is just as grinding in the low cellars and dirty tenements of the Faubourg de Quebec. For these unfortunates organized charity and education are necessary and claim immediate attention. Who will begin this Augean task ?

If we have directed the notice, intelligent and charitable, of one man to the faults of his native city, and to the ulcers upon her surface, and underneath, this book has not been written in vain.

We await the result with anxiety not unmixed with hope.

THE END.

