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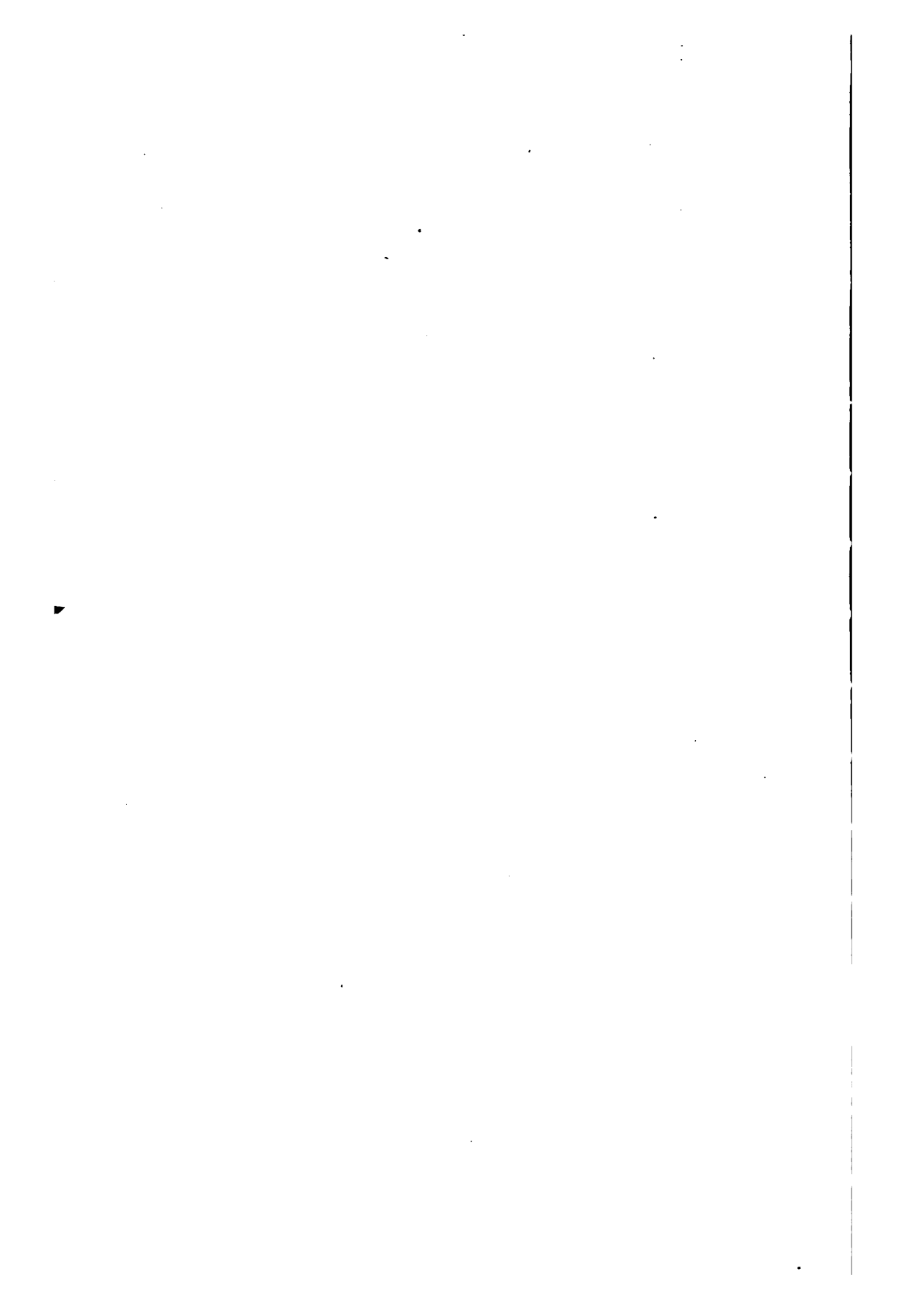
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EAST LONDON





The Mass

A Street Row in the East End.

"EAST LONDON"

BY

WALTER BESANT

AUTHOR OF

"LONDON," "SOUTH LONDON," "WESTMINSTER," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
PHIL MAY, JOSEPH PENNELL, AND
L. RAVEN-HILL



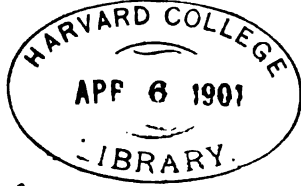
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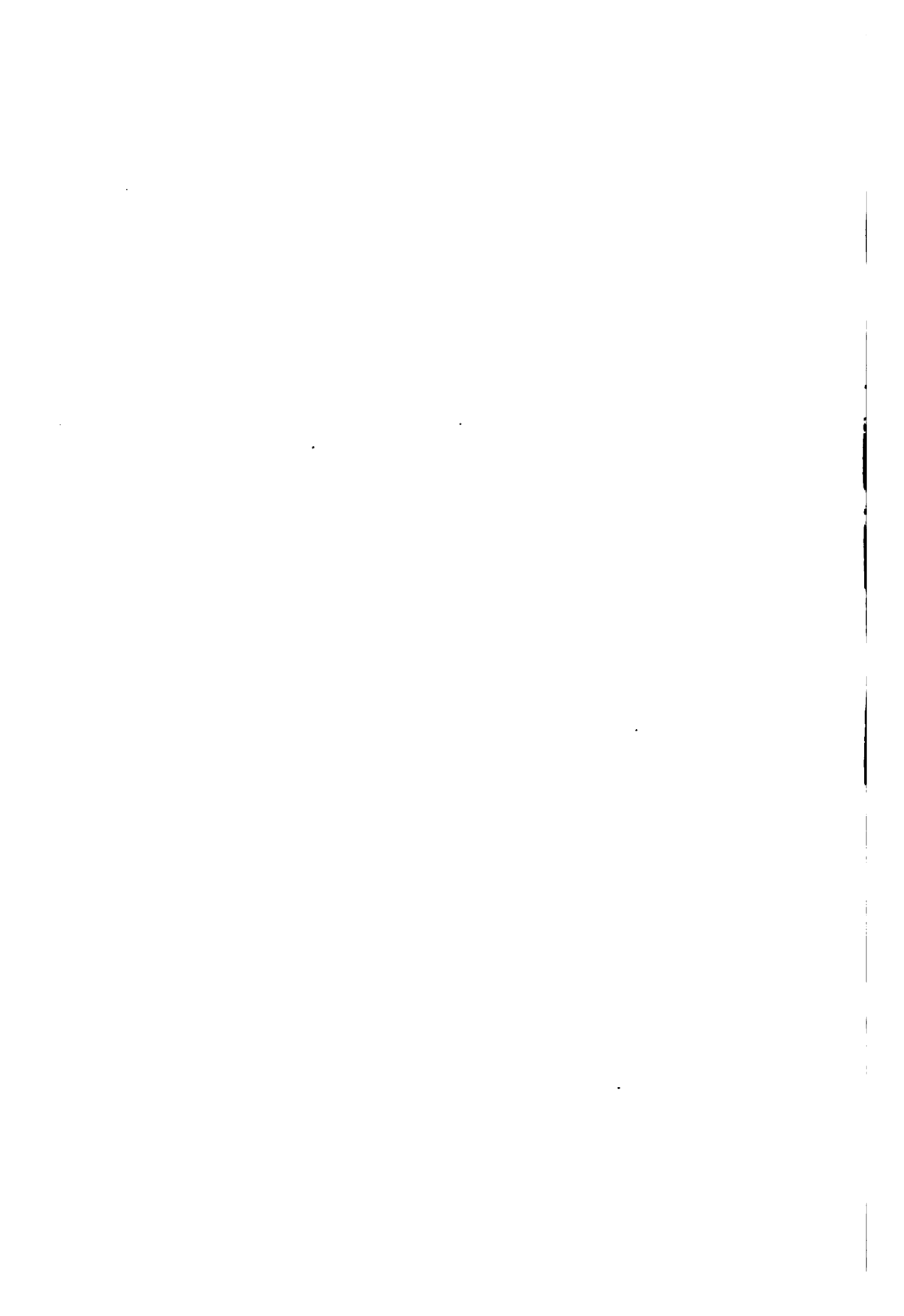
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I

WHAT EAST LONDON IS



EAST LONDON

I

WHAT EAST LONDON IS

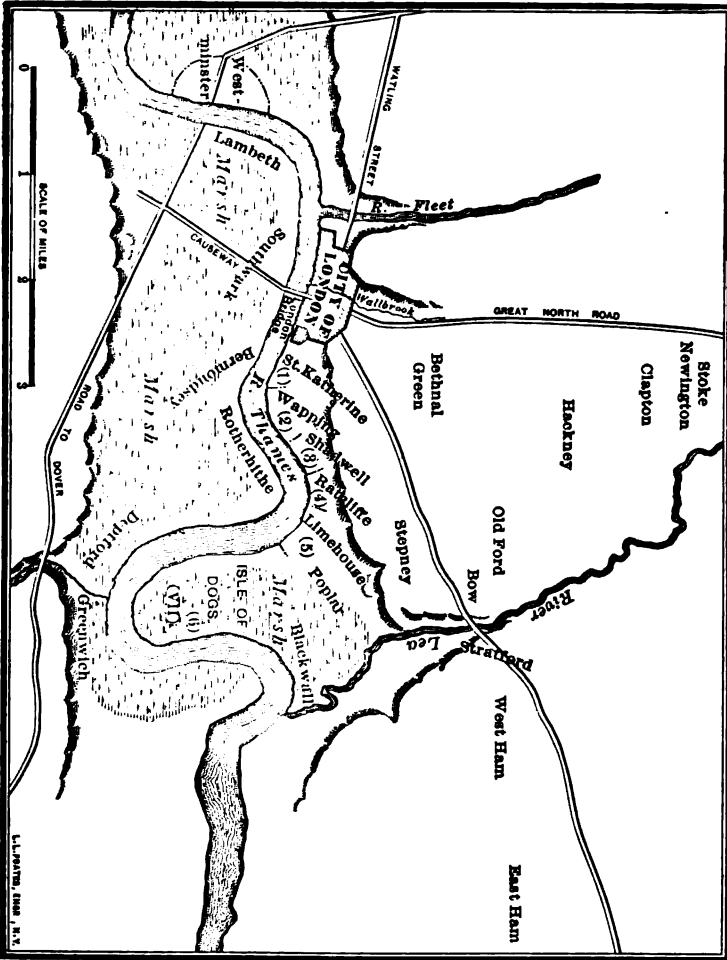
IN my previous books on London I have found it necessary to begin with some consideration of the history and antiquities of the district concerned. For instance, my book on Westminster demanded this historical treatment, because Westminster is essentially an old historical city with its roots far down in the centuries of the past: once a Roman station; once the market-place of the island; once a port; always a place of religion and unction; for six hundred years the site of the King's House; for five hundred years the seat of Parliament; for as many the home of our illustrious dead. But with East London there is no necessity to speak of history. This modern city, the growth of a single century,—nay, of half a century,—has no concern and no interest in the past; its present is not affected by its past; there are no monuments to recall the past; its history is mostly a blank—that blank which is the history of woods and meadows, arable and pasture land, over which the centuries pass, making no more mark than the breezes of yesterday have made on the waves and waters of the ocean.

It is, however, necessary that the reader should understand exactly what I mean by East London. For this purpose I

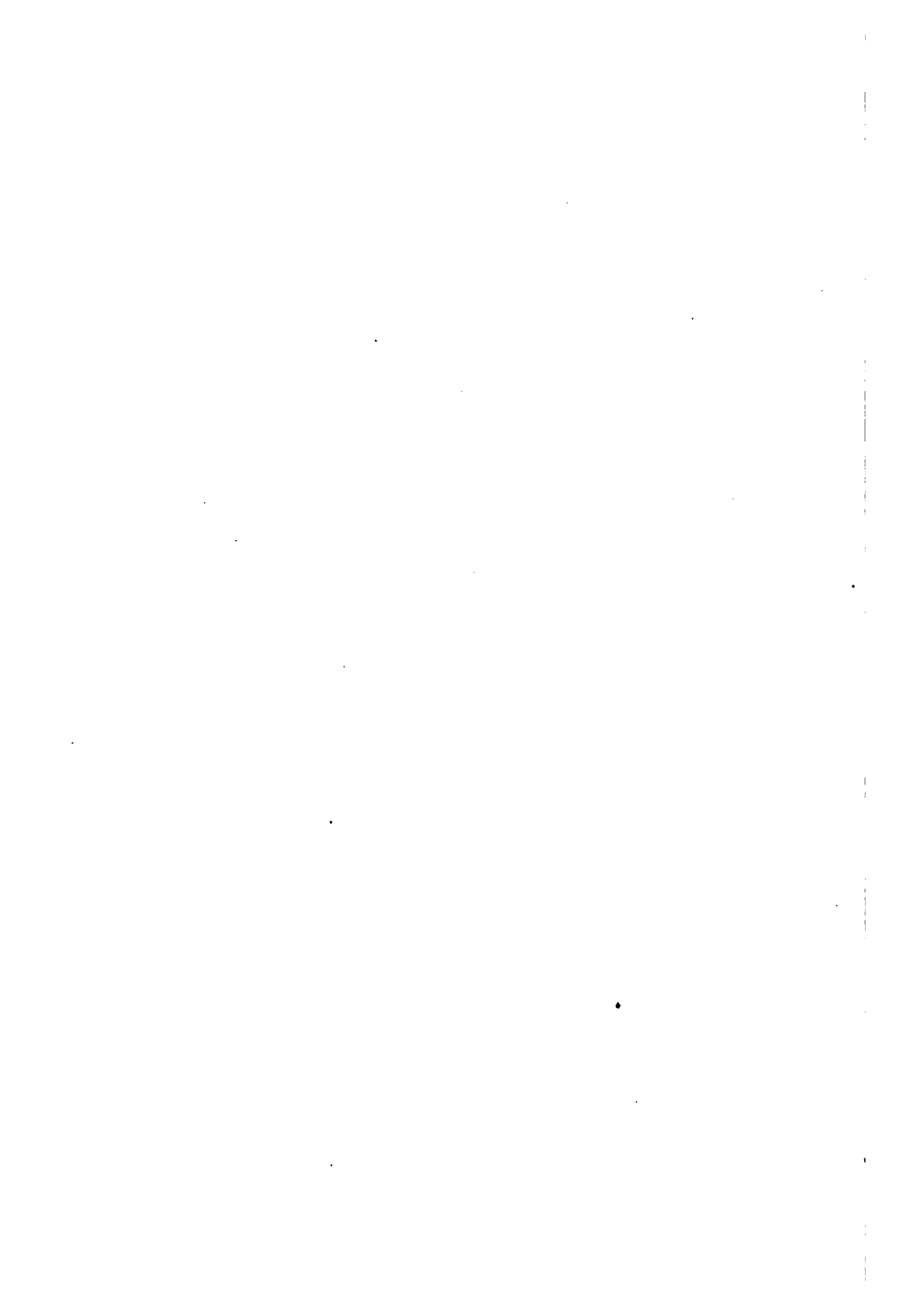
have prepared a small map showing the part of Greater London, which in these pages stands for East London. I include all that area which lies east of Bishopsgate Street Without and north of the river Thames; I include that area newly covered with houses, now a densely populated suburb, lying east of the river Lea; and I include that aggregation of crowded towns, each large enough to form an important city by itself, formed of the once rural suburban villages called Hackney, Clapton, Stoke Newington, Old Ford, Stepney, Bow and Stratford.

In order to save the trouble of a long description, and because the reader ought to know something of the natural features of the ground on which East London stands, I have presented on the map certain indications by which the reader, with a little study, may make out for himself as much of these natural features as are necessary. He will see, for instance, that the parts now lying along the bank of the river were formerly either foreshore or marshland, overflowed at every high tide, and lying below a low, natural cliff, which receded inland till it met the rising ground of the bank of the river Lea. The figures on the map mark the sites of villages successively reclaimed from the river by a dyke or sea-wall; if the reader were to visit these riverside parishes he would find in many places the streets actually lower than the high tide of the river, but protected by this sea-wall, now invisible and built over. North of the cliff was a level expanse of cultivated farms, woods and orchards, common ground and pasture land.

This level ground was a manor belonging to the Bishop of London; the farmers, huntsmen, fowlers, and fishermen occupying it were his tenants; he was jealous over encroachments, and would not permit the City to stretch out its arms over his domain. The history of the manor belongs to the antiquary: to the East Londoner himself it has no interest; and indeed, there is very little to tell. That Captain Cour-



Map of East London.



ageous, Wat Tyler, marched his men across this manor. They came by the road marked "To Bow." One of our kings held a Parliament in the Bishop's Palace; heretics were occasionally burned here; there were one or two monastic houses; a bishop's palace there was; and there was one parish church, for the large parish called Stebenhithe, now Stepney. Farmhouses were scattered about; there were orchards and gardens, lovely woods, broad pastures, acres of waving corn. The citizens of London, though this place belonged to the bishop, had the right of hunting and fishing in its woods and over its low-lying levels; it was a right of the most valuable kind, for the marshes were full of wild birds and the woods were full of creatures fit for man's food. In the year 1504, Sir Thomas More, writing to his friend Dean Colet, then Vicar of Stepney, says: "Wheresoever you look, the earth yieldeth you a pleasant prospect; the temperature of the air fresheth you, and the very bounds of the heavens do delight you. Here you find nothing but bounteous gifts of nature and saint-like tokens of innocency."

The whole of the area between the northern road, which is our western boundary, and the river Lea is now covered with houses and people; the peninsula, marked on the map by the number "VII," consisting of low and malarial ground, long stood out against occupation, but is now almost entirely covered over and absorbed by factories and workmen's residences; what is more, the people of the original East London have now overflowed and crossed the Lea, and spread themselves over the marshes and meadows beyond. This population—not to speak of the suburban villas, which now cover many square miles—represents a movement and a migration of the last twenty years. It has created new towns which were formerly rural villages. West Ham, with a population of nearly 300,000; East Ham, with 90,000; Stratford, with its "daughters," 150,000; and other "hamlets" similarly overgrown. Including, therefore, as we must include, these new

populations, we have an aggregate of nearly two millions of people, living all together in what ought to be a single city under one rule. This should be a very remarkable city for its numbers alone; the population is greater than that of Berlin or Vienna, or St. Petersburg, or Philadelphia. As a crowded mass of humanity alone it should demand serious consideration. In other respects, however, it is more remarkable still. You will acknowledge with me that in these respects and from these points of view, no other city in the world is like East London.

To begin with, it is not a city by organization; it is a collocation of overgrown villages lying side by side. It had, until this year (1900), no center, no heart, no representative body, no mayor, no aldermen, no council, no wards; it has not inherited Folk's Mote, Hustings, or Ward Mote; it has therefore no public buildings of its own. There are vestry halls and town halls, but they are those of the separate hamlets—Hackney or Stratford—not East London. It has no police of its own; the general order is maintained by the London County Council. It is a city full of churches and places of worship, yet there are no cathedrals, either Anglican or Roman; it has a sufficient supply of elementary schools, but it has no public or high school, and it has no colleges for the higher education and no university; the people all read newspapers, yet there is no East London paper except of the smaller and local kind; the newspapers are imported from Fleet Street; it has no monthly magazines nor any weekly popular journals, not even penny comic papers—these also are imported; it has no courts of law except the police courts; out of the one hundred and eighty free libraries, great and small, of London, only nine or ten belong to this city—two of these are doubtful, one at least is actually falling to pieces by neglect and is in a rapid state of decay. In the streets there are never seen any private carriages; there is no fashionable

quarter; the wealthy people who live on the northeast side near Epping Forest do their shopping in the City or the West End; its places of amusement are of the humbler kind, as we shall learn in due course; one meets no ladies in the principal thoroughfares; there is not visible, anywhere, the outward indication of wealth. People, shops, houses, conveyances—all together are stamped with the unmistakable seal of the working-class.

Perhaps the strangest thing of all is this: in a city of two millions of people there are no hotels! Actually, no hotels! There may be, perhaps, sprung up of late, one or two by the docks, but I think not; I know of none. No hotels. That means, of course, that there are no visitors. Is there anywhere else in the world a great city which has no visitors? It is related of a New Zealander that he once came over intending to make a short stay in London. He put up at a hotel in the City of London itself, on the eastern side; his wandering feet took him every day into Whitechapel and Wapping, which, he imagined, constituted the veritable London of which he had read. After three or four weeks of disappointed monotony in search of London's splendors he sought a returning steamer at the docks. "London," he said, "is a big place; but for public buildings and magnificence and rich people, give me Canterbury, New Zealand."

There are no visitors to demand hotels; there are also none to ask for restaurants. Consequently there are none. Dining-rooms, coffee-rooms, and places providing for the working-men, places of the humbler kind where things to eat may be had, there are in plenty. Most of the working folk take their dinners in these places; but the restaurant of the better kind, with its glittering bars and counters, its white tables, its copious catering, and its civil waiters, does not exist in East London. Is there any other city of the world, with even a tenth part of this population, of which these things would be said? This crowded area, this mul-

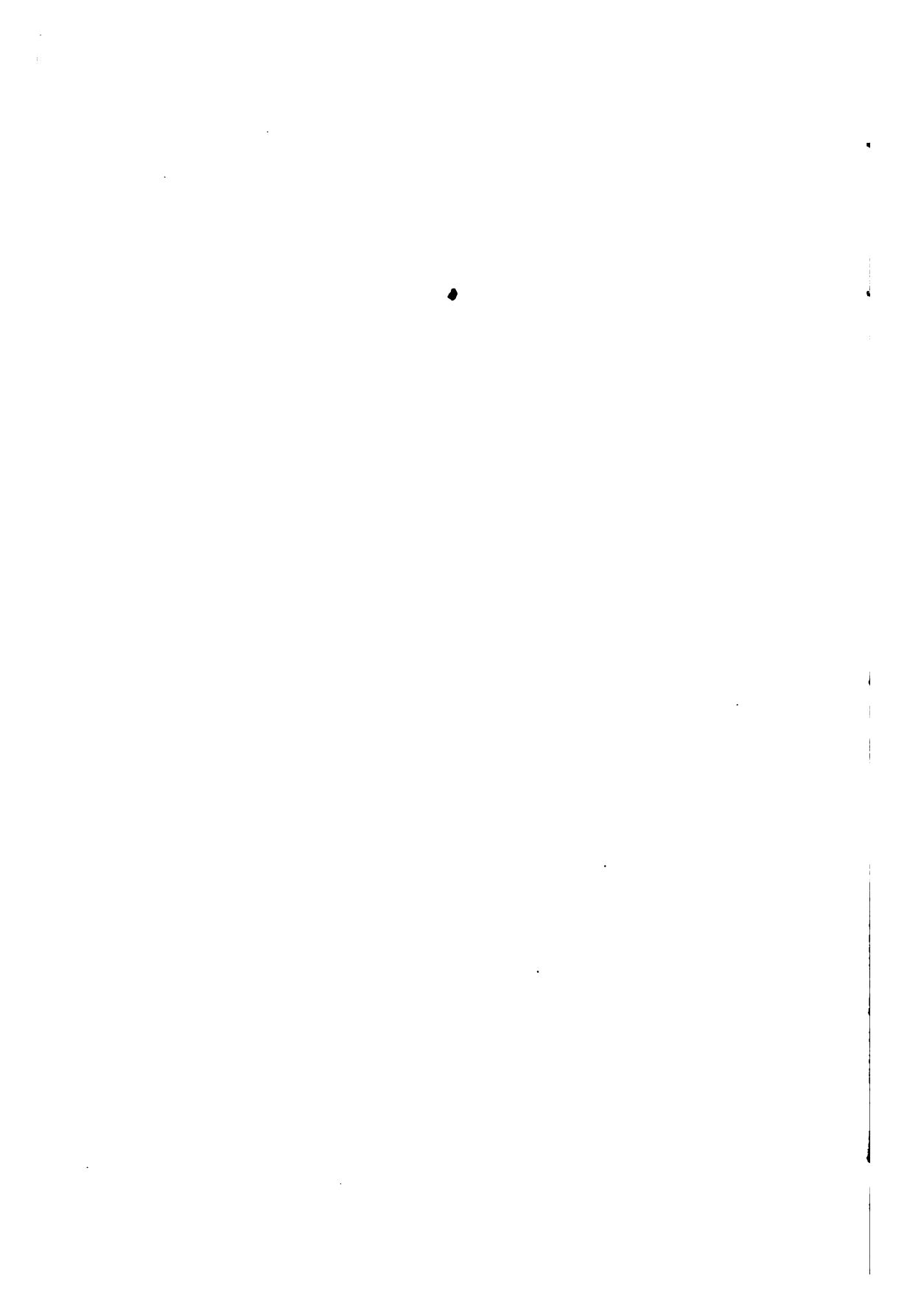
itude of small houses, this aggregation of mean streets—these things are the expression and the consequence of an expansion of industries during the last seventy years on a very large and unexpected scale; East London suddenly sprang into existence because it was unexpectedly wanted. A map of London of the year 1830 shows a riverside fringe of hamlets—a cluster of houses outside the City of London and along the two principal roads marked on my map. For the whole of the district outside and around there are lanes and paths through fields and orchards and market gardens, with occasional churches and clusters of houses and detached country residences.

I have said that there is no municipality, that there are no mayor, aldermen, or wards; one reason is that it is a manufacturing, not a trading, city; the wharves and docks are for the use and convenience of the merchants of the great trading city, their neighbor; manufacturers are not a gregarious folk; they do not require a bourse or exchange; they can get along without a mercantile center; they do not feel the want of a guildhall; they do not understand that they have any bond of common interest except the necessity of keeping order. The city sprang up so rapidly, it has spread itself in all directions so unexpectedly, it has become, while men, unsuspecting, went about their daily business, suddenly so vast that there has been no opportunity for the simultaneous birth or creation of any feeling of civic patriotism, civic brotherhood, or civic pride.

The present condition of East London suggests to the antiquary, in certain respects, the ancient condition of the City of London before the people obtained their commune and their mayor. For as the City was divided into wards, which were manors owned and ruled by aldermen, with no central organization, no chief or leader of the citizens, so East London, until the changes in last year's Act of Parliament, consisted of parishes, vestries, boards of guardians, and



London Street, Limehouse.



other boards, with no cohesion, no central government, and, in important matters, such as fire, water, sanitation, police, education, law, subject to external authority.

There are no newspapers, but then their newspapers are published in Fleet Street, only two or three miles away. But their books—where do they get their books? There are no book-shops. Here is a city of two millions of people, and not a single bookseller's shop. True, there are one or two second-hand book-shops; there are also a few shops which display, among other goods, a shelf or two of books, mostly of the goody kind—the girls' Sunday-school prize and the like. But not a single place in which the new books of the day, the better literature, the books of which the world is talking, are displayed and offered for sale. I do not think that publishers' travelers ever think it necessary to visit East London at all. Considering the population, I submit that this is a very remarkable omission, and one that can be observed in no other city in the world a tenth part so thickly populated.

Some twelve years ago I was the editor of a weekly sheet called the "People's Palace Journal." In that capacity I endeavored to encourage literary effort, in the hope of lighting upon some unknown and latent genius. The readers of the "Journal" were the members of the various classes connected with the educational side of the place. They were young clerks chiefly—some of them very good fellows. They had a debating society, which I attended from time to time. Alas! They carried on their debates in an ignorance the most profound, the most unconscious, and the most self-satisfied. I endeavored to persuade them that it was desirable at least to master the facts of the case before they spoke. In vain. Then I proposed subjects for essays, and offered prizes for verses. I discovered, to my amazement, that, among all the thousands of these young people, lads and girls, there was not discoverable the least rudimentary indi-

cation of any literary power whatever. In all other towns there are young people who nourish literary ambitions, with some measure of literary ability. How should there be any in this town, where there were no books, no papers, no journals, and, at that time, no free libraries?

Another point may be noted. Ours is a country which has to maintain, at great cost, a standing army of three hundred thousand men, or thereabouts, for the defense of the many dependencies of the Empire. These soldiers are all volunteers; it is difficult, especially in times of peace, to get recruits in sufficient numbers; it is very important, most important, that the martial spirit of our youth should be maintained, and that the advantages which a few years' discipline with the colors, with the subsequent chances of employment, possess over the dreary life of casual labor, should be kept constantly before the eyes of the people. Such is the wisdom of our War Office that the people of East London, representing a twentieth part of the population of the whole country, have no soldiers quartered on them; that they never see the pomp of war; that they never have their blood fired with the martial music and the sight of men marching in order; and that in their schools they are never taught the plain duties of patriotism and the honor of fighting for the country. In the same spirit of wisdom their country's flag, the Union Jack, is never seen in East London except on the river; it does not float over the schools; the children are not taught to reverence the flag of the country as the symbol of their liberties and their responsibilities; alone among the cities of the world, East London never teaches her children the meaning of patriotism, the history of their liberties, the pride and the privilege of citizenship in a mighty empire.

What appearance does it present to the visitor? There is, again, in this respect as well, no other city in the world in the least like East London for the unparalleled magni-

tude of its meanness and its monotony. It contains about five hundred miles of streets, perhaps more—a hundred or two may be thrown in; they would make little difference. In his haste, the traveler who walks about these streets for the first time declares that they are all exactly alike. They contain line upon line, row upon row, never-ending lines,



A Typical Street in Bethnal Green.

rows always beginning, of houses all alike—that is to say, there are differences, but they are slight; there are workmen's houses of four or five rooms each, all turned out of the same pattern, as if built by machinery; there are rows of houses a little better and larger, but on the same pattern, designed for foremen of works and the better sort of employees; a little farther off the main street there are the same houses, but each with a basement and a tiny front garden—they are for city clerks; and there are dingy houses up squalid courts, all of the same pattern, but smaller, dirty, and disreputable. The traveler, on his first visit, wanders through street after street, through miles of streets. He

finds no break in the monotony; one street is like the next; he looks down another, and finds it like the first two. In the City and in the west of London there are old houses, old churches, porches that speak of age, courts and lanes that have a past stamped upon them, though the houses themselves may be modern. Here there seems to be no past; he finds no old buildings; one or two venerable churches there are; there is one venerable tower—but these the traveler does not discover on his first visit, nor perhaps on his second or his third.

As are its streets, so, the hasty traveler thinks, must be the lives of the people—obscure, monotonous, without ambition, without aims, without literature, art or science. They help to produce the wealth of which they seem to have so little share, though perhaps they have their full share; they make possible splendors which they never see; they work to glorify the other London, into which their footsteps never stray. This, says the traveler, is the Unlovely City, alike unlovely in its buildings and in its people—a collocation of houses for the shelter of a herd; a great fold in which the silly sheep are all alike, where one life is the counterpart of another, where one face is the same as another, where one mind is a copy of its neighbor.

The Unlovely City, he calls it, the City of Dreadful Monotony! Well, in one sense it is all that the casual traveler understands, yet that is only the shallow, hasty view. Let me try to show that it is a city full of human passions and emotions, human hopes and fears, love and the joys of love, bereavement and the sorrows of bereavement; as full of life as the stately City, the sister City, on the west. Monotonous lines of houses do not really make or indicate monotonous lives; neither tragedy nor comedy requires the palace or the castle; one can be human without a coronet, or even a carriage; one may be a clerk on eighty pounds a year only, and yet may present, to one who reads thought and interprets

action, as interesting a study as any artist or æsthete, poet or painter.

Again, this city is not, as our casual observer in his haste affirms, made up entirely of monotonous lives and mean houses; there are bits and corners where strange effects of beauty can be seen; there is a park more lovely than that of St. James's; there are roads of noble breadth; there is the ample river; there are the crowded docks; there are factories and industries; there are men and women in East London who give up their lives for their brothers and their sisters; and beyond the city, within easy reach of the city, there are woods and woodlands, villages and rural haunts, lovelier than any within reach of western London.

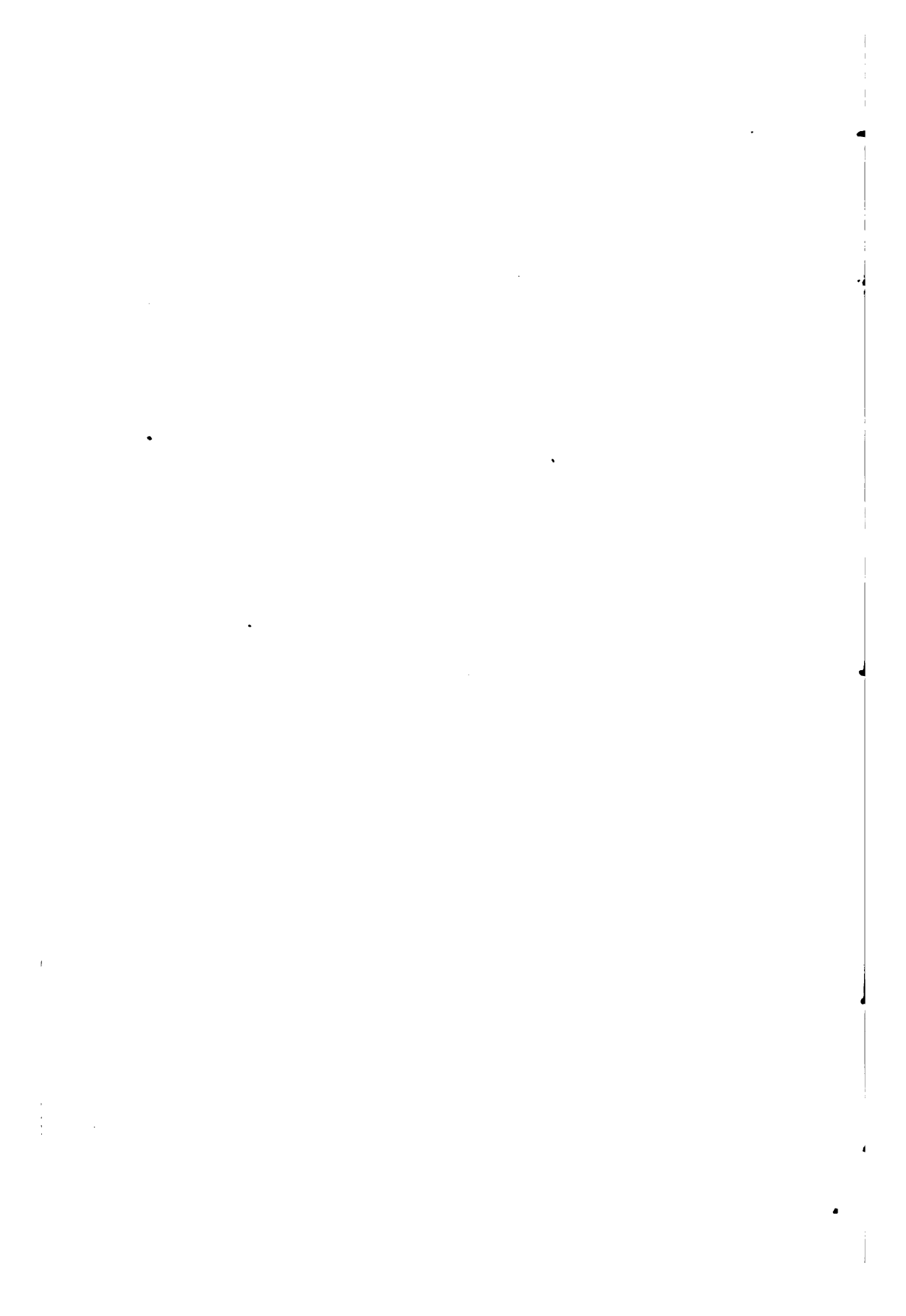
It will be my task in the following pages to lay before my readers some of the aspects of this city which may redeem it from the charges of monotony and unloveliness. Do not expect a history of all the villages which have been swallowed up. That belongs to another place. We have here to do with the people; humanity may be always picturesque; to the philosopher every girl is beautiful because she is a girl; every young man is an object of profound interest because he is a man, and of admiration because he is young. You have no idea how many girls, beautiful in their youth; how many women, beautiful in their lives; how many young men of interest, because they have their lives before them; how many old men of interest, because their lives are behind them, are living in this city so monotonous and so mean.

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II

THE CITY OF MANY CRAFTS



II

THE CITY OF MANY CRAFTS

SOME time ago I compiled a list of the various crafts carried on in London during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, simply using for the purpose the more accessible books. It was a time when everything wanted for the daily use of the people was made or prepared by the craftsmen of the City, always excepting the things of luxury in demand only by the richer sort, such as foreign wines, silks, velvets, fine weapons, inlaid armor, swords of tempered steel, spices and oil and carpets. The London weaver sat at his loom, the London housewife sat at her spinning-wheel, the London cutler made knives for the Londoner, the "heaumer" made helmets, the "loriner" made bits and spurs, and so on. Yet the number of the crafts was only between two and three hundred, so simple was the life of the time. Then I made another compilation, this time for the eighteenth century. In the interval of four hundred years many new inventions had been made, many new arts had come into existence, many new wants had been created—life had become much more complex in character. My list of crafts and trades had actually doubled, though many things were made out of London. At the present moment even, when dependence is largely necessary on outside industrial centers and when no great city is sufficient to herself in manufactures, when whole classes of manufactures have been localized in other parts, when one might fairly expect a large reduc-

tion in the number of trades, we find, on the other hand, a vast increase. Especially is this increase remarkable in East London, which, as a home of industries, hardly existed seventy years ago. It is now especially a city of the newer wants, the modern crafts, the recent inventions and applications.

East London is, to repeat, essentially and above all things a city of the working-man. The vast majority of the people work at weekly wages, for employers great or small. But the larger employers do not live near their factories, or among their people; you may find at Mile End and elsewhere a few houses where wealthy employers have once lived, but they have long since gone away. The chief difference between the present "City," properly so called, and East London is that in the City everybody—principals, clerks, servants, workmen, all go away as soon as the offices are closed, and no one is left; in East London the employers go away when the factories are closed, but the employees remain. There is therefore no sensible diminution in the population on Saturdays and Sundays; the streets are never deserted as in the City. The manufacturers and employers of East End labor live in the country or at the West End, but for the most part in the suburbs beyond the river Lea, on the outskirts of Epping Forest, where there are very many stately houses, standing in their gardens and grounds, occupied by a wealthy class whose factories and offices are somewhere about East London.

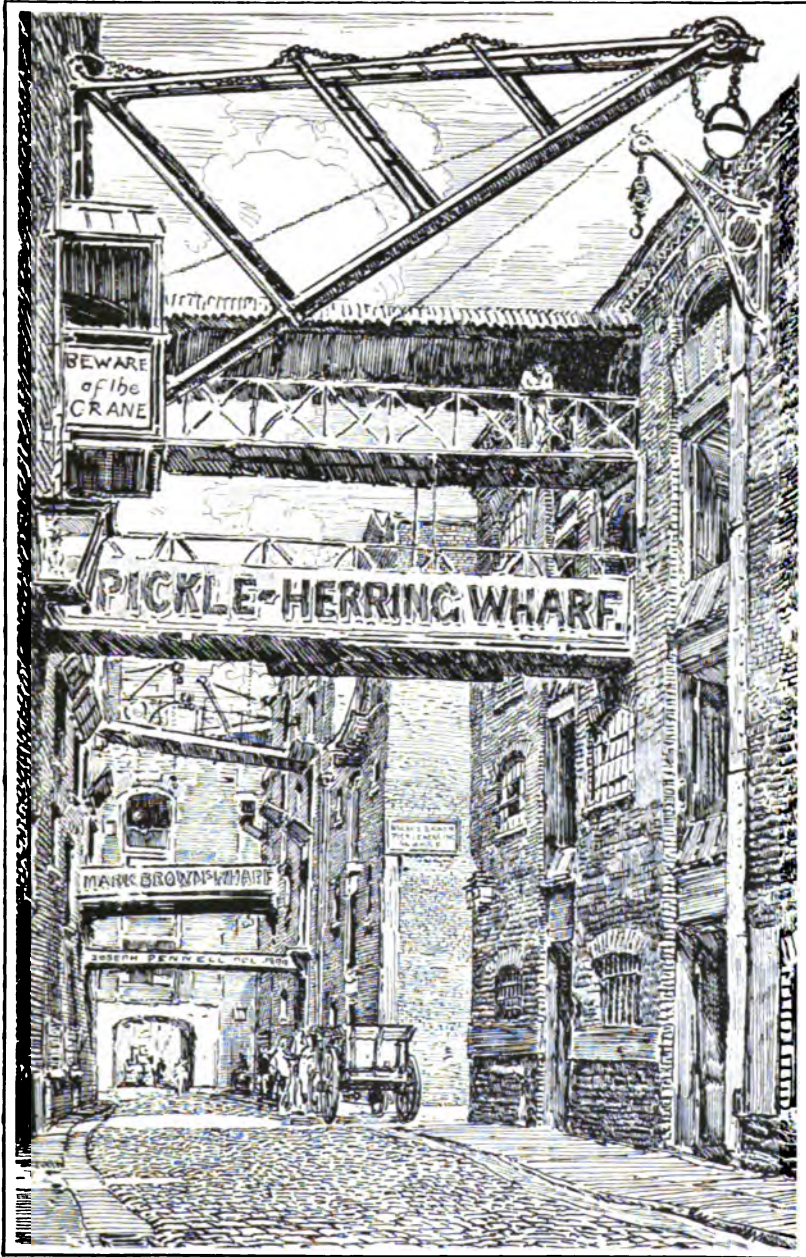
The distribution of the trades curiously follows the old mediæval method, where the men of each trade inhabited their own district for purposes of work and had their own place recognized and assigned to them in the great daily fair or market of Chepe. In Whitechapel, for instance, we may find gathered together a very large percentage of those, men and women—Polish Jews and others—who are engaged in making clothes. In Bethnal Green and in Shoreditch are found

the followers of the furniture and woodwork trade; the riverside gives lodging to those who live by work in the docks; bootmakers are numerous in Mile End, Old Town, and Old Ford; the silk trade still belongs especially to Spitalfields and Bethnal Green. The large factories which turn out such a boundless collection of useful, if unlovely, things line the riverside of the Isle of Dogs, and the factory hands have their houses in newly built streets near their work; in Hoxton there is carried on an entirely different class of industries, chiefly of the smaller kind, such as fur and feather dressing; their number and the number of their branches and subdivisions are simply bewildering when one begins to investigate the way in which the people live. In watch-making, which belongs to Clerkenwell, a man will go through life in comfort knowing but one infinitesimal piece of work—how to make one small bit of a watch; so in these East End trades a man or a woman generally knows how to do one thing and one thing only, and if that one piece of work cannot be obtained the man is lost, for he can do nothing else. In cigar-making, for instance, there are many women who do nothing all their lives but take out of the tobacco-leaf the mid rib; this must be done so that the stalk will be pulled out readily without disturbing or abrading the surface of the leaf. It is work, too, which is well paid, a “stripper” getting from twenty-three to twenty-five shillings a week.

The division of labor among the population can be arrived at from a study of certain tables prepared by Mr. Charles Booth for his great work on the “Life and Labor of the People of London.” For his purpose he takes a population of nearly a million—to be accurate, 908,958—inhabiting the area which he defines as East London and Hackney. My own definition of East London, however, includes a much larger area, and when we add West Ham, with its large population of 270,000, nearly all sprung up in the last quarter of a century; that of East Ham, with 90,000, where, twenty

years ago, there was but a hamlet and a church in the fields; and Stratford, with Bow, Bromley, and Forest Gate, with about 200,000 more, and Walthamstow, with Leyton and the suburbs south of Epping Forest, we have a population nearly amounting to two millions. Nor does he include the Isle of Dogs, now very thickly populated. Let us, however, take Mr. Booth's figures as applicable to his district, which is that with which we are most nearly concerned. He has ascertained, partly from the last census and partly from independent research and investigation, the main divisions of the various industries and the number of people dependent upon each. Thus, out of his solid million he could find only 443 heads of families, representing 1841 souls, and 574 women, representing 1536 souls, who were independent of work—that is to say, only one person in 600 lived on accumulated savings either of himself or his father before him. This percentage in an industrial town is extremely small. The whole of the rest live by their own work, the greater part by industries, but a few by professions. Thus, of the latter there are 4485 persons—a very small proportion—supported by the professions, meaning the clergy, the medical men, the lawyers, the architects, etc. Of clerks and subordinates in the professions there are 79,000 persons maintained, there are 34,600 persons supported by shops of all kinds, there are 9200 persons supported by taverns and coffee-houses; this accounts for less than 140,000. The whole of the remaining 726,000 live on the wages earned by the breadwinner.

It is, in fact, altogether an industrial population. If, again, we take Mr. Charles Booth's figures in greater detail there are seventy-three thousand who depend upon casual employment; there are the railway servants, the police, the road service, the sailors, and the officials. There are, next, those employed in the main divisions of trade—dress, furniture, building, and machinery—and there are the significant items of "sundry artisans," "home industries," "small trades,"



An East End Wharf.



and "other wage-earners," amounting in all to the support of about eighty-five thousand persons. It is among these "sundries" that we are to look for the astonishing variety of industries, the strange trades that our complex life has called into existence, and the minute subdivisions of every trade into branches—say, sprigs and twigs—in which one man may spend his whole life. We are now very far from the days when a shoemaker sat down with the leather and his awl and worked away until he had completed the whole shoe, perfect in all its parts, a shoe of which he was proud as every honest workman should be, with no scamping of work, no brown paper instead of leather for the heel. The modern system leaves no room for pride in work at all; every man is part of a machine; the shoe grows without the worker's knowledge; when it emerges, not singly but by fifties and hundreds, there is no one who can point to it and say, "Lo! I made it. I—with my right hand. It is the outcome of my skill." The curse of labor, surely, has never been fully realized until the solace of labor, the completion of good work, was taken away from the craftsman. Look at the list, an imperfect one, of the subdivisions now prevailing in two or three trades. Formerly, when a man set himself to make a garment of any kind he did the whole of it himself, and was responsible for it and received credit for it, and earned wages according to his skill. There is now a contractor; he turns out the same thing by the score in half the time formerly required for one; he divides the work, you see; he employs his "baster, presser, machinist, buttonholer, feller, fixer, general hand," all working at the same time to produce the cheap clothing for which there is so great a demand. In bootmaking the subdivision is even more bewildering. There are here the manufacturers, factors, dealers, warehouse men, packers, translators, makers of lasts, boot-trees, laces, tips and pegs—all these before we come to the bootmaker proper, who appears in various departments as the clicker, the

closer, the fitter, the machinist, the buttonholer, the table hand, the sole maker, the finisher, the eyeletter, the rough-stuff cutter, the laster, the cleaner, the trimmer, the room girl, and the general utility hand. Again, in the furniture and woodwork trade there are turners, sawyers, carvers, frame makers, cabinet-makers, chair makers, polishers, upholsterers, couch makers, office, bedroom, library, school, drawing-room, furniture makers; upholsterers, improvers, fancy-box makers, gilders, gluers, and women employed in whichever of these branches their work can be made profitable.

If we turn to women's work as distinct from men's, we find even in small things this subdivision. For instance, a necktie seems a simple matter; surely one woman might be intrusted with the making of a single tie. Yet the work is divided into four. There is the woman who makes the fronts, she who makes the bands, she who makes the knots, and she who makes the "fittings." And in the match-making business, which employs many hundreds of women and girls, there are the splint makers, the dippers, the machinists, the wax-vesta makers, the coil fillers, the cutters down, the tape cutters, the box fillers, the packers, and so on.

It is not my intention in this book to enter into detail concerning the work and wages of East London. To do so, indeed, with any approach to truth would involve the copying of Mr. Charles Booth's book, since no independent single investigator could hope to arrive at the mass of evidence and the means of estimating and classifying that evidence with anything like the accuracy and the extent of information embodied in those volumes. I desire, however, to insist very strongly upon the fact that the keynote of East London is its industrial character; that it is a city of the working-classes; and that one with another, all except a very small percentage, are earners of the weekly and the daily wage. I would also point out that not only are the crafts multiplied by the subdivisions of contractors, but that every

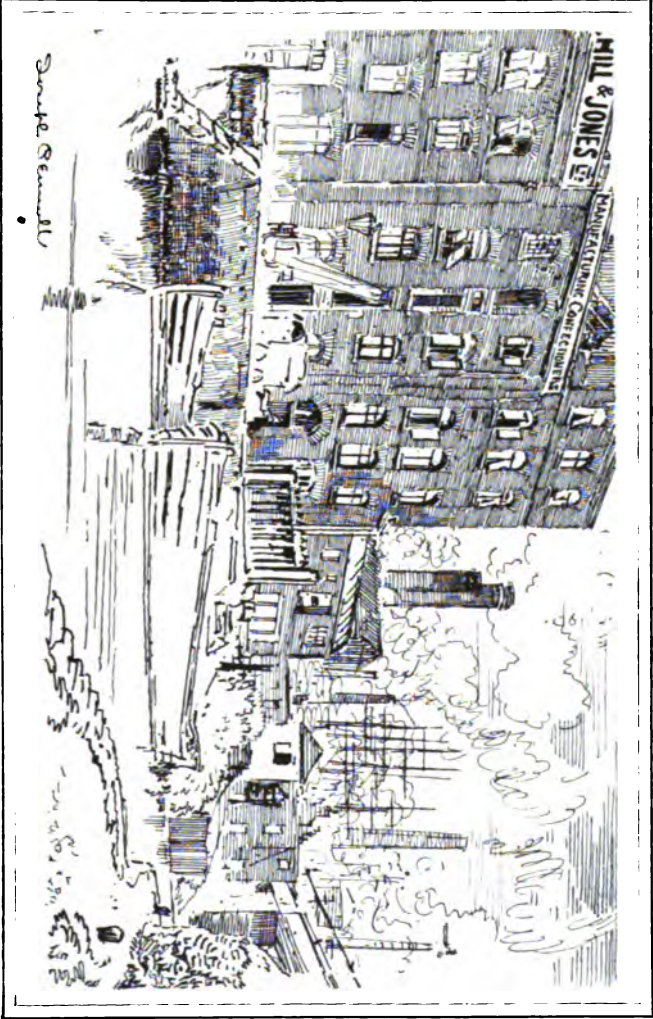
new invention, every new fashion, every new custom, starts a new trade and demands a new set of working folks; that every new industrial enterprise also calls for its new workmen and its skilled hands—how many thousands during the last twenty years have been maintained by the bicycle? As for wages, they speedily right themselves as the employer discovers the cost of production, the possible margin of profit, and the level of supply and demand, tempered by the necessity of keeping the work-people contented and in health.

Another point to observe is the continual demand for skilled labor in new directions. A walk round the Isle of Dogs, whose shores are lined with factories producing things new and old, but especially new, enables one to understand the demand, but not to understand the supply. Early in this century the general application of gas for lighting purposes called for an army of gas engineers, stokers, and fitters and makers of the plant required. The development of steam has created another army of skilled labor; the new appliances of electricity have called into existence a third army of workmen whose new craft demands far more skill than any of the older trades. Consider, again, the chemical developments and discoveries; consider the machinery that is required for almost every kind of industry; the wonderful and lifelike engine of a cotton mill, which deals as delicately as a woman's fingers with the most dainty and fragile fiber, yet exercises power which is felt in every department of the huge mill; consider the simple lathe driven by steam; consider the new materials used for the new industries; consider the machinery wanted to create other machinery; and consider, further, that these developments have all appeared during the nineteenth century, that East London is the place where most of them, in our country, were first put into practice. If, I say, we consider all these things we shall understand something of the present population of East London.

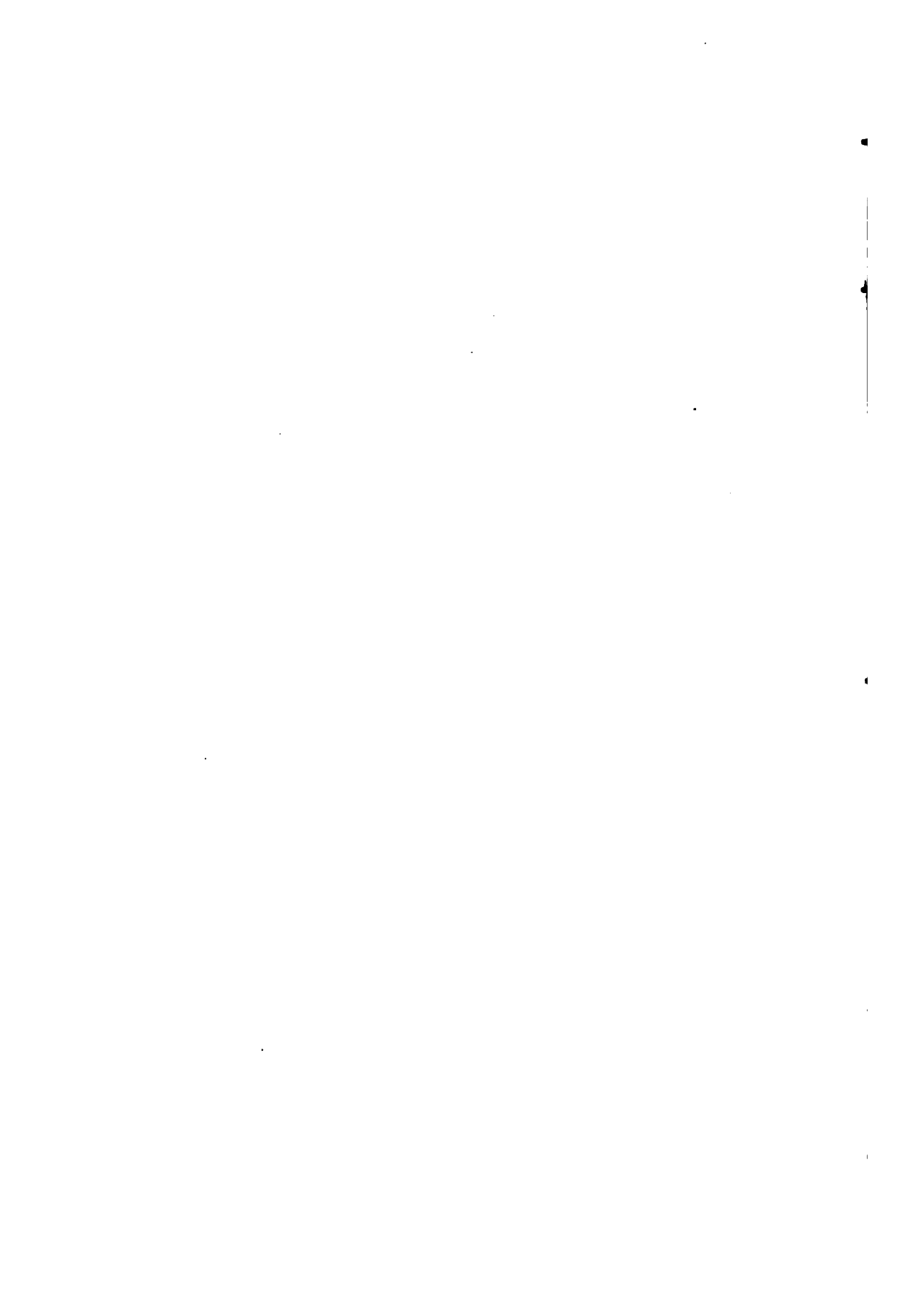
Again referring to Mr. Charles Booth's book, there you

may learn for yourself what is paid to men, women, and children for every kind of work; there you may learn the hours employed and all the conditions—sanitary, insanitary, dangerous, poisonous—of all the industries. It must be enough here to note that there are, as might be expected, great variations in the wages of the work-people. High skill, whatever may be the effect, in certain quarters, of sweating, still commands high wages; those trades which make the smallest demand for skill and training are, as might be expected, poorly paid. For instance, there is no work which calls for more skill than that of the electrical or mechanical engineer, or the engineer of steam or of gas. Therefore we observe without astonishment that such a man may receive £3 or £4 a week, while the wage of the ordinary craftsman ranges, according to the skill required, from 18s. to 35s. a week. In the work of women it is well to remember that the lower kinds of work are worth from 7s. to 12s. in ordinary seasons, and that there are some kinds of work in which a woman may make from 15s. to 25s. a week. In thinking of East London remember that the whole of the people (with certain exceptions) have to live on wages such as these, while the clerks, who belong to a higher social level and have higher standards of comfort, are not in reality much better off with their salaries ranging from £80 a year to £150.

It might be expected that in speaking of trade and industry we should also speak of the sweating, which is so largely carried on in this city of industry. There is, however, nothing on which so much half-informed invective has been written—and wasted—as on the subject of sweating. For my own part, I have nothing to say except what has been already said by Mr. Charles Booth, who has investigated the subject and for the first time has explained exactly what sweating means. The sweater is either the small master or the middleman; the employer practically resigns the responsibility of his workmen and makes a contract with a middleman, who



An East End Factory.



relieves him of trouble and makes his profit out of the workmen's pay. Or the employer finds a middleman who distributes the work and collects it, does part of it himself, and sweats others, being himself sweated. Or sometimes it is a "chamber master" who employs "greeners"—new hands—for long hours on wages which admit of bare subsistence—sweating, in fact, is the outcome in all its shapes of remorseless competition. Many experiments have been tried to conduct business on terms which will not allow the sweater's interference. These experiments have always ended in failure, often because the work-people themselves cannot believe in the success of any system except that with which they are familiar. Some twelve or fifteen years ago my friend Mrs. H—— started a workshop at St. George's-in-the-East on coöperative principles. She made shirts and other things of the kind. At first she seemed to be getting on very well; she employed about a dozen workwomen, including a forewoman in whom she placed implicit confidence. Her successful start, she said, was due entirely to the enthusiasm, the zeal, the devotion, of that forewoman. Then a dreadful blow fell, for the devoted forewoman deserted, taking with her the best of the workwomen, and started a sweating shop herself—in which, I dare say, she has done well. My friend got over the blow, and presently extended her work and enlarged her premises. The enlargement ruined her enterprise; she had to close. Her experience was to the effect that it is only by the sweated farthing that in these days of cut-throat competition shops which sell things made by hand or by the sewing-machine can pay their expenses, that the sweater is himself sweated, and that the workwoman, starving under the sweating system, mistrusts any other and is an element of danger in the very workroom which is founded for her emancipation.

She also discovered that the workgirl requires constant supervision and sharp—very sharp—admonition; she found

that the system of fines adopted by many workshops saves a great deal of trouble both in supervision and in admonition; that a gentle manner is too often taken for weakness and for ignorance. And she impressed upon me the really great truth that the working girl is never employed out of sentimental kindness, but as a machine, by the right and judicious use of which an employer may make a livelihood or even perhaps a competence. In other words, when we talk about miserable wages we must remember all the circumstances and all the conditions, and, she insisted, we must set aside mere sentiment as a useless, or even a mischievous, factor. For my own part, I do not altogether agree with my friend. I believe in the power and uses of sentiment. Let us by all means ascertain all the facts of the case, but let us continue our sentiment—our sympathy—with the victim of hard conditions and cruel competition.

A remarkable characteristic of East London is the way in which the industrial population is constantly recruited from the country. I shall speak of the aliens later on. I mean, in this place, the influx from the country districts and from small country towns of lads or young men and young women who are always pouring into East London, attracted by one knows not what reports of prosperity, of high wages, and greater comforts. If they only knew—most of them—what awaits them in the labyrinthine city!

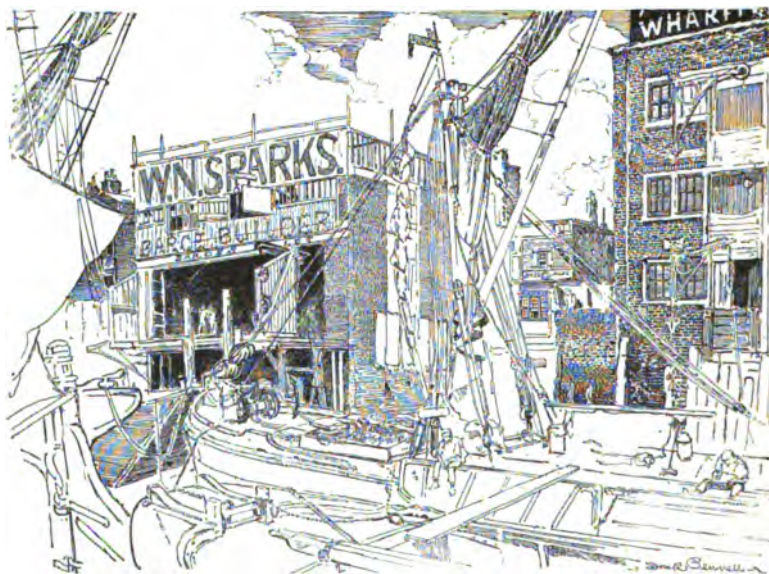
Long ago it was discovered that London devours her own children. This means that city families have a tendency to die out or to disappear. All the city families of importance—a very long list can be drawn up—of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the Bukerels, Basings, Orgars, Battes, Faringdons, Anquetils—have disappeared in the fifteenth. All the great names of the fifteenth—Whittington, Philpot, Chichele, and the rest—are gone in the sixteenth; all the great names of the sixteenth century have disappeared in the eighteenth, and we may ask in vain, "Where are those

families which were leaders of the City in the beginning of the nineteenth?"

The same thing seems true of the lower levels. I cannot here inquire into the reasons; the fact remains that London demands the continual influx of new blood, whether for the higher or the lower work. At the same time, there is also the continual efflux. I should like if it were possible, but it would entail an enormous amount of work and research, to ascertain how far the descendants of the old London families, the rich merchants of the last three or four hundred years, are still to be found among our county families. There are descendants of Henry Fitz Ailwyn, first mayor of London, and there are also descendants of the Thedmars, the Brembres, the Philpots, the Walworths. Are there descendants of the Boleyns and the Greshams? Are there descendants among the county families and the nobility of those city merchants who made their "plum" in the last century, and were so much despised by the fashion of the day? Further, I should like to ascertain, if possible, how far the old London families are represented by descendants in America. It would, again, be interesting to learn how many firms of merchants still remain of those which flourished in London a hundred years ago. And it would also be interesting if we could learn, in a long-settled parish of working folk, such as Bethnal Green or Spitalfields, how many names still survive of the families who were baptized, married, and buried at the parish church in the year 1800. The last would be an investigation of great and special interest, because no one, so far, has attempted to ascertain the changes which take place in the rank and file of a London parish, and because the people themselves keep no record of their origin, and the grandchildren, as a rule, neither ask nor seek to know where their grandfathers were born; they care nothing for the rock from which they were digged.

Again I venture to borrow two or three simple figures

from Mr. Booth. He tested a small colony called an "Irish" neighborhood; it consisted of 160 persons. I presume that he means 160 heads of families; of these 57 were Londoners by birth; out of London, but in the United Kingdom, 88 were born; the remaining 15 were foreigners by birth. And out of 693 applicants for relief to the Charity Organization



Barge-Builders.

Society in Mile End, Old Town, and St. George's-in-the-East, 486, or seventy per cent., were Londoners by birth; 207, or thirty per cent., were born out of London.

It may be added that if we take the whole of London it is roughly estimated that 630 in the thousand of the population are natives of London, that 307 come from other parts of England and Wales, that 13 are Scotch, 21 Irish, 8 colonists, and 21 of foreign birth. This estimate may have been slightly altered by the recent influx of Russian Jews,

but the difference made by a hundred thousand or so cannot be very great. The settlements of the alien, especially in East London, will be considered in another chapter. Meantime, to one who lives in the suburbs of London—to one who considers the men of light and leading in London: its artists, men of letters, architects, physicians, lawyers, surgeons, clergy, etc.—it seems at first sight as if no one was born in London. The City merchants, however, can, I believe, point to a majority of their leaders as natives of London. It would be easy to overstate the case in this respect.

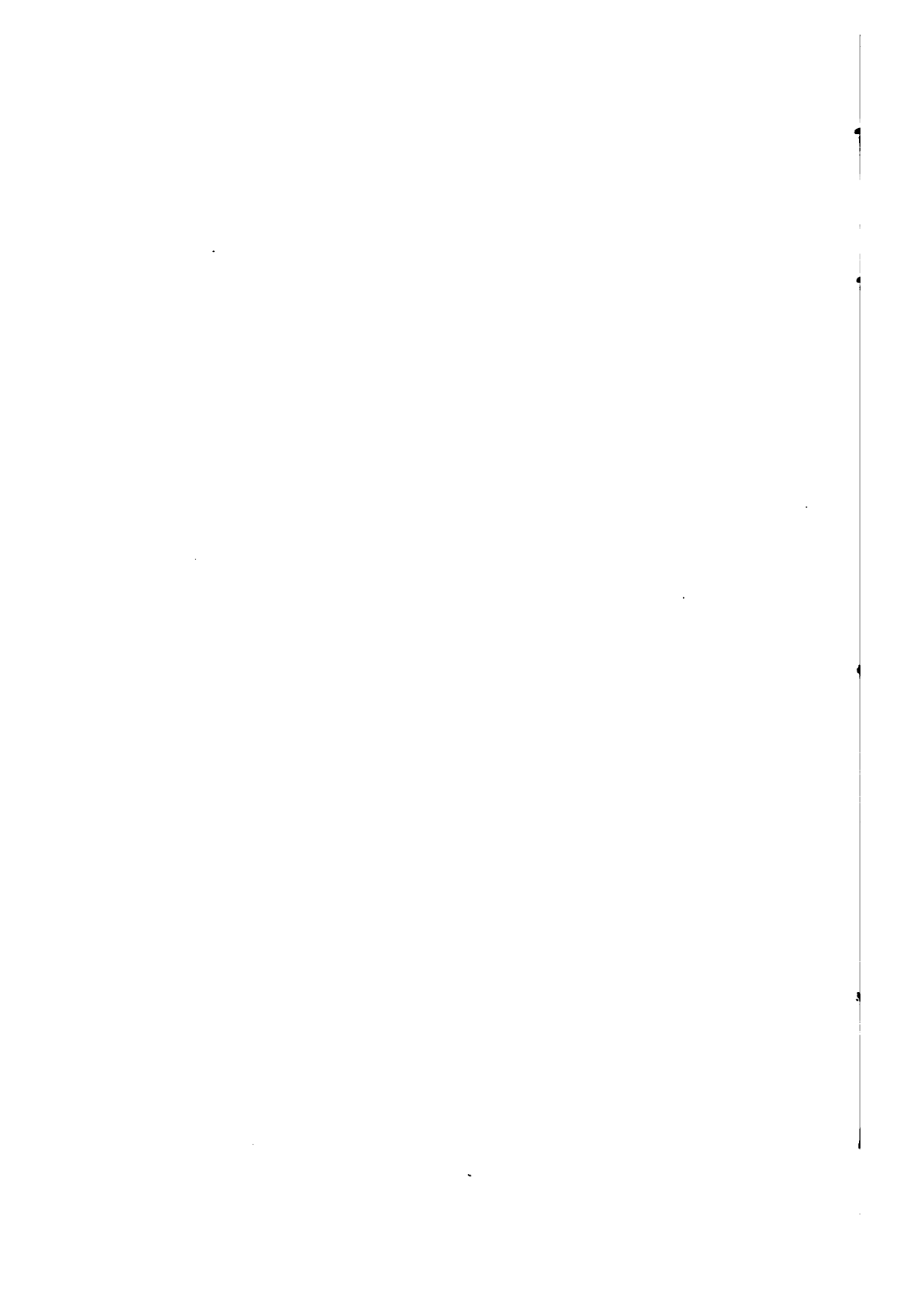
The statistics, so far as they can be arrived at, as to religion are startling. On October 24, 1886, a census was taken of church attendance. The results were as follows: Over an area including 909,000 souls there were 33,266 who attended the Church of England in the morning, and 37,410 who attended in the evening. This means 3.6 per cent. in the morning and 4.1 per cent. in the evening, so that out of every 100 persons 96 stayed away from church. Taking the nonconformist chapels, it was found that 3.7 per cent. attended some chapel, while 3.3 per cent. attended the mission halls in the evening. These mission halls, with their hearty services, the exhortations of the preacher, and the enthusiasm of the singing, are crowded. So that, taking all together, there were between seven and eight per cent. of the population who went to some religious service in the evening. This leaves about ninety-two per cent., men and women, boys and girls and infants, who did not attend any kind of worship. This does not indicate the hatred of religion which is found among Parisian workmen; it is simply indifference and not hostility, except in special cases and among certain cranks. And although he does not go to church the East Londoner is by no means loath to avail himself of everything that can be got out of the church; he will cheerfully attend at concerts and limelight shows; his wife will cheerfully get what she can at a rummage sale; and they will cheerfully send their

children to as many picnics in the country, feasts, and parties as may be provided for them by the clergy of the parish. But they will not go to church. To this rule there are certain exceptions, of which I shall perhaps speak in due time.

These few notes will not, I hope, be thought out of place in a volume whose object it is to present the reader with some kind of portraiture of the people of East London, the only study in that city which is curious and interesting. I want, once more, these facts to be borne in mind. It is a new city, consisting of many old hamlets whose fields and gardens have been built upon chiefly during this century. It is a city without a center, without a municipality, and without any civic or collective or local pride, patriotism, or enthusiasm. It is a city without art or literature, but filled with the appliances of science and with working-men, some of whom have acquired a very high degree of technical skill. It is a city where all alike, with no considerable exceptions, live on the weekly wage; it is a city of whose people a large percentage were born elsewhere; and it is a city which offers, I suppose, a greater variety and a larger number of crafts and trades than any other industrial center in the world—greater even than Paris, which is the home of so many industries. And it is not a city of slums, but of respectability. Slums there are; no one can deny them; there are also slums in South London much worse in character, and slums in West London, where the "Devil's Acre" occupies a proud preëminence in iniquity; but East London is emphatically not a city of slums.

III

THE POOL AND THE RIVERSIDE



III

THE POOL AND THE RIVERSIDE

EAST LONDON, then, is a collection of new towns crammed with people; it is also a collection of industries; it is a hive of quiet, patient, humble workers; all its people live by their own labor; moreover, it is a busy port with a population of sailors, and those who belong to sailors, and those who make their livelihood out of sailors, and such as go down to the sea in ships. Its riverside is cut up with docks; in and about among the houses and the streets around the docks rise forests of masts; there is no seaport in the country, not even Portsmouth, which is so charged and laden with the atmosphere of ocean and the suggestion of things far off as this port of London and its riverside. The port and the river were here long before East London was begun. The port, however, was formerly higher up, below London Bridge. It was one of London's sturdy mayors who bluntly reminded a king, when he threatened to take away the trade of London, that, at least, he would have to leave them the river. For, you see, while the river runs below London Bridge, it is not much harm that any king, even a mediæval monarch, can do to London trade.

And now come with me; let us walk quietly about this strange city which has so little to show except its people and their work.

We will begin with the riverside, the port and the Pool and the "hamlets" which lie beside the river.

There is one place in London where, at any time of day and all the year round, except in days of rain and snow, you may find a long line of people, men and women, boys and girls—people well dressed and people in rags, people who are halting here on their errands or their business, and people who have no work to do. They stand here side by side, leaning over the low wall, and they gaze earnestly and intently upon the river below. They do not converse with each other; there is no exchange of reflections; they stand in silence. The place is London Bridge; they lean against the wall and they look down upon the Pool—that is to say, upon the reach of the river that lies below London Bridge. I have never crossed the bridge without finding that long line of interested spectators. They are not in a hurry; they seem to have nothing to do but to look on; they are not, apparently, country visitors; they have the unmistakable stamp of London upon them, yet they never tire of the prospect before them; they tear themselves away unwillingly; they move on slowly; when one goes another takes his place. What are they thinking about? Why are they all silent? Why do they gaze so intently? What is it that attracts them? They do not look as if they were engaged in mentally restoring the vanished past; I doubt whether they know anything of any past. Perhaps their imagination is vaguely stimulated by the mere prospect of the full flood of river and by the sight of the ships. As they stand there in silence, their thoughts go forth; on wings invisible they are wafted beyond the river, beyond the ocean, to far-off lands and purple islands. At least I hope so; otherwise I do not understand why they stand there so long, and are so deeply wrapped in thought.

To those who are ignorant of the fact that London is one of the great ports of the world the sight of the Pool would not convey that knowledge. What do we see? Just below us on the left is a long, covered quay, with a crane upon



The Water-Gate of London : Tower Bridge Looking Toward St. Paul's.

it. Bales and casks are lying about. Two steamers are moored beside the quay; above them are arranged barges, three or four side by side and about a dozen in all; one is alongside the farther steamer, receiving some of her cargo; on the opposite shore there are other steamers, with a great many more barges, mostly empty; two or three tugs fight their way up against the tide; heavily laden barges with red sails, steered by long sweeps, drop down with the ebb; fishing smacks lie close inshore, convenient for Billingsgate market; there is a two-masted vessel, of the kind that used to be called a ketch, lying moored in midstream—what is she doing there?

The steamers are not the great liners; they are much smaller craft. They run between London and Hamburg, London and Antwerp, London and Dieppe. The ships which bring the treasures of the world to London port are all in the docks where they are out of sight; there is no evidence to this group of spectators from the bridge of their presence at all, or of the rich argosies they bear within them.

You should have seen this place a hundred years ago. Try to carry your imagination so far back. Before you lie the vessels in long lines moored side by side; they form regular streets, with broad waterways between; as each ship comes up-stream it is assigned its place. There are no docks; the ships receive or discharge their cargo by means of barges or lighters, of which there are thousands on the river; there are certain quays at which everything is landed, in the presence of custom-house officers, landing surveyors, and landing masters. All day long and all the year round, except on Sunday, the barges are going backward and forward, lying alongside, loading and unloading; all day long you will hear the never-ending shouting, ordering, quarrelling, of the bargees and the sailors; the Pool is as full of noise as it is full of movement. Every trade and every country are represented in the Pool; the rig, the lines, the masts of

every ship proclaim her nationality and the nature of her trade. There are the stately East and West Indiamen, the black collier, the brig and the brigantine and the schooner, the Dutch galliot, the three-masted Norwegian, the coaster, and the multitudinous smaller craft—the sailing barge, the oyster boat, the smack, the pinnace, the snow, the yacht, the lugger, the hog boat, the ketch, the hoy, the lighter, and the wherries, and always ships dropping down the river with the ebb, or making their slow way up the river with the flow.

Steam is a leveller by sea as well as on land; on the latter it has destroyed the picturesque stage-coach and the post-chaise and the Berlin and the family coach; by sea it banishes the old sailing craft of all kinds; one after the other they disappear; how many landsmen are there who at the present day know how to distinguish between brig and brigantine, between ketch and snow?

I said that there is no history to speak of in East London. The Pool and the port must be excepted; they are full of history, could we stop for some of it—the history of ship-building, the expansion of trade, the pirates of the German Ocean; when one begins to look back the things of the past arise in the mind one after the other and are acted again before one's eyes. For instance, you have seen the Pool in 1800. Look again in 1400. The Pool is again filled with ships, but they are of strange build and mysterious rig; they are short and broad and solidly built; they are not built for speed; they are high in the poop, low in the waist, and broad in the bow; they roll before the wind, with their single mast and single sail; they are coasters laden with provisions; they are heavily built craft from Bordeaux, deep down in the water with casks of wine; they are weather-beaten ships bringing turpentine, tallow, firs, skins, from the Baltic. And see, even while we look, there come sweeping up the river the long and stately Venetian galleys, rowed by

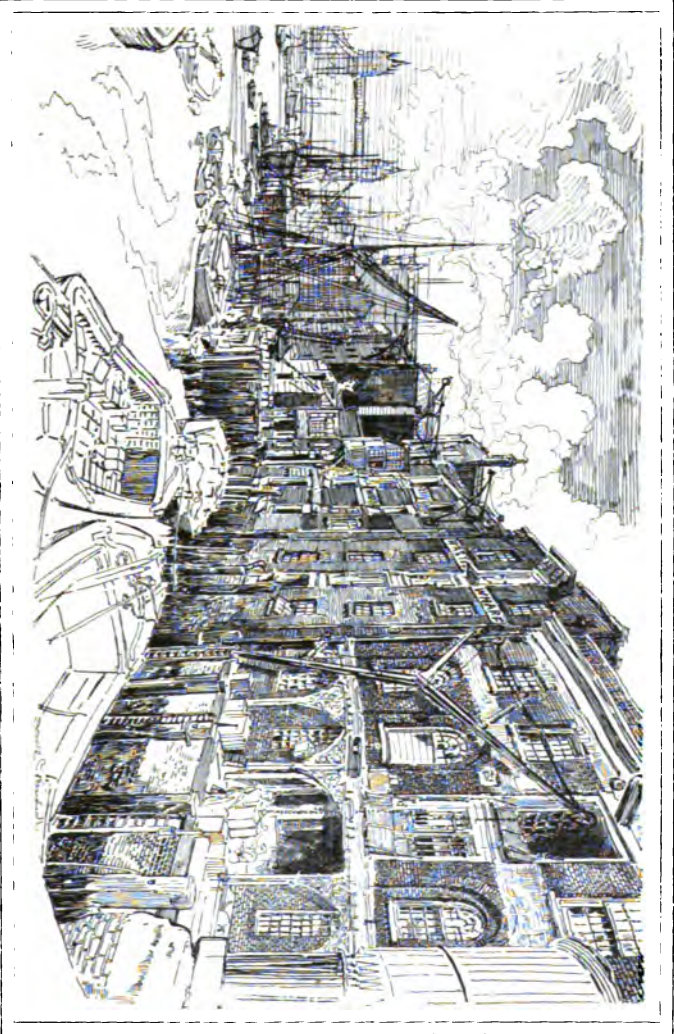
Turkish slaves, with gilded masts and painted bows. They come every year—a whole fleet of them; they put in first at Southampton; they go on to Antwerp; they cross the German Ocean again to London. Mark the pious custom of the time. It is not only the Venetian custom, but that of every country; when the ship has reached her moorings, when the anchor is dropped and the galley swings into place, the whole ship's company gather together before the mainmast—slaves and all—and so, bareheaded, sing the Kyrielle, the hymn of praise to the Virgin, who has brought them safe to port.

Of history, indeed, there is no end. Below us is the custom house. It has always stood near the same spot. We shall see Geoffrey Chaucer, if we are lucky, walking about engaged in the duty of his office. And here we may see, perhaps, Dick Whittington, the 'prentice lad newly arrived from the country; he looks wistfully at the ships; they represent the world that he must conquer—so much he understands already; they are to become, somehow, his own ships; they are to bring home his treasures—cloth of gold and of silver, velvet, silk, spices, perfumes, choice weapons, fragrant woods; they are to make him the richest merchant in all the City; they are to enable him to entertain in his own house the King and the Queen, and to tear up the King's bonds, amounting to a princely fortune. You may see, two hundred years later on, one Shakspeare loitering about the quays; he is a young fellow, with a rustic ruddiness of countenance, like David; he is quiet and walks about by himself; he looks on and listens, but says nothing. He learns everything, the talk of sailors, soldiers, working-men—all, and he forgets nothing. Later on, again, you may see Daniel Defoe, notebook in hand, questioning the sailors from every port, but especially from the plantations of Virginia. He, too, observes everything, notes everything, and reproduces everything. As to the Pool and the port and their history one

could go on forever. But the tale of London Town contains it all, and that must be told in another place.

Come back to the Pool of the eighteenth century, because it is there that we get the first glimpse of the people who lived by the shipping and the port. They were, first, the sailors themselves; next, the lightermen, stevedores, and porters; then the boat builders, barge builders, rope-makers, block-makers, ships' carpenters, mast- and yard-makers, shipwrights, keepers of taverns and ale-houses, dealers in ships' stores, and many others. Now, in the eighteenth century, the shipping of London port increased by leaps and bounds; in 1709 there were only five hundred and sixty ships belonging to this port; in 1740 the number was multiplied by three; this number does not include those ships which came from other British ports or from foreign ports. With this increase there was, naturally, a corresponding increase of the riverside population. Their homes were beyond and outside the jurisdiction of the City; they outgrew the inefficient county machinery for the enforcement of order and the prevention and punishment of crime. As years went on the riverside became more densely populated, and the people, left to themselves, grew year by year more lawless, more ignorant, more drunken, more savage; there never was a time, there was no other place, unless it might have been some short-lived pirate settlement on a West Indian islet, where there was so much savagery as on the riverside of London—those "hamlets" marked on my map—toward the close of the eighteenth century. When one thinks of it, when one realizes the real nature of the situation and its perils, one is amazed that we got through without a rising and a massacre.

The whole of the riverside population, including not only the bargemen and porters, but the people ashore, the dealers in drink, the shopkeepers, the dealers in marine stores, were joined and banded together in an organized system of plunder and robbery. They robbed the ships of their cargoes



The Bank of "The Pool." Looking Toward Tower Bridge.



as they unloaded them; they robbed them of their cargoes as they brought them in the barge from the wharf to the ship. They were all concerned in it—man, woman, and child; they all looked upon the shipping as a legitimate object of plunder; there was no longer any question of conscience; there was no conscience left at all; how could there be any conscience where there was no education, no religion, not even any superstition? Of course the greatest robbers were the lightermen themselves; but the boys were sent out in light boats which pulled under the stern of the vessels, out of sight, and received small parcels of value tossed to them from the men in the ships. These men wore leathern aprons which were contrived as water-tight bags, which they could fill with rum or brandy, and they had huge pockets concealed behind the aprons which they crammed with stuff. On shore every other house was a drinking-shop and a "fence" or receiving-shop; the evenings were spent in selling the day's robberies and drinking the proceeds. Silk, velvets, spices, rum, brandy, tobacco—everything that was brought from over the sea became the spoil of this vermin. They divided the work, they took different branches under different names, they shielded each other; if the custom-house people or the wharfingers tried to arrest one, he was protected by his companions. It was estimated in 1798 that goods to the value of £250,000 were stolen every year from the ships in the Pool by the men who worked at discharging cargo. The people grew no richer, because they sold their plunder for a song and drank up the money every day. But they had, at least, as much as they could drink.

Imagine, then, the consternation and disgust of this honest folk when they found that the ships were in future going to receive cargo and to discharge, not in the open river, but in dock, the new wet docks, capable of receiving all; that the only entrance and exit for the workmen was by a gate, at which stood half a dozen stalwart warders; that the good

old leathern apron was suspected and handled; that pockets were also regarded with suspicion and were searched; and that dockers who showed bulginess in any portion of their figures were ignominiously set aside and strictly examined. No more confidence between man and man; no more respect for the dignity of the working-man. The joy, the pride, the prizes of the profession, all went out as if at one stroke. I am sorry that we have no record of the popular feeling on the riverside when it became at last understood that there was no longer any hope, that honesty had actually become compulsory. What is the worth of virtue if it is no longer voluntary? For the first time these poor injured people felt the true curse of labor. Did they hold public meetings? Did they demonstrate? Did they make processions with flags and drums? Did they call upon their fellow-workmen to turn out in their millions and protest against enforced honesty? If they did, we hear nothing of it. The riverside was unfortunately considered at that time beneath the notice of the press. After a few unfortunates had been taken at the dock gates with their aprons full of rum up to the chin; after these captives had been hauled before the magistrate, tried at the Old Bailey, without the least sympathy for old established custom, and then imprisoned and flogged with the utmost barbarity, I think that a general depression of spirits, a hitherto unknown dejection, fell upon the quarter and remained, a cloud that nothing could dispel; that the traders all became bankrupt, and that the demand for drink went down until it really seemed as if from Wapping to Blackwall the riverside was becoming sober.

Billingsgate, the great fish-market, is down below us, just beyond the first wharves and the steamers. This is one of the old harbors of London; it was formerly square in shape, an artificial port simply and easily carved out of the Thames foreshore of mud and kept from falling in by timber piles driven in on three sides. It was very easy to construct such

a port in this soft foreshore; there were two others very much like this higher up the river. Of these one remains to this day, a square harbor just as it was made fifteen hundred—or was it two thousand?—years ago.

The first London Bridge, the Roman bridge built of wood, had its north end close beside this port of Billingsgate. My own theory—I will not stop to explain it, because you are



In the Docks.

not greatly interested, friendly reader, in Roman London—is that the square harbor was constructed with piles of timber on three sides and wooden quays on the piles, in order to provide a new port for Roman London when those higher up the river were rendered useless for sea-going craft by the building of the bridge. If you agree to accept this theory without question and pending the time when you may possibly take up the whole subject for yourself, you may stand with me at the head of the present stairs and see for yourself what it was like in Roman times, with half a dozen merchantmen lying moored to the wooden quays; upon them bales of wool, bun-

dles of skins, bars of iron, waiting to be taken on board; rolls of cloth and of silk imported, boxes containing weapons, casks of wine taken out of the ships and waiting to be carried up into the citadel; in one corner, huddled together, a little crowd of disconsolate women and children going off into slavery somewhere—the Roman Empire was a big place; beside them the men, their brothers and husbands, going off to show the Roman ladies the meaning of a battle, and to kill each other, with all the grim earnestness of reality, in a sham fight for the pleasure of these gentle creatures. One does not pity gladiators; to die fighting was the happiest lot; not one of them, I am sure, ever numbered his years and lamented that he was deprived of fifty, sixty, seventy, years of life and sunshine and feasting. Perhaps—in the other world, who knows?—in the world where live the ghosts whose breath is felt at night, whose forms are seen flitting about the woods, there might be—who knows?—more battle, more feasting, more love-making.

They have now filled up most of the old port of Billingsgate, and made a convenient quay in its place. They have also put up a new market in place of the old sheds. With these improvements it is said to be now the finest fish-market in the world. Without going round the whole world to prove the superiority of Billingsgate, one would submit that it is really a very fine market indeed. Formerly it was graced by the presence of the fishwomen—those ladies celebrated in verse and in prose, who contributed a new noun to the language. The word “Billingsgate” conveys the impression of ready speech and mother-wit, speech and wit unrestrained, of rolling torrent of invective, of a rare invention in abuse, and a give-and-take of charge and repartee as quick and as dexterous as the play of single stick between two masters of defense. The fishwomen of the market enjoyed the reputation of being more skilled in this language than any other class in London. The carmen, the brewers’ draymen, the watermen, the fellowship porters were all

skilled practitioners,—in fact, they all practised daily,—but none, it was acknowledged, in fullness and richness of detail, in decoration, in invention, could rise to the heights reached by the fishwomen of the market. They were as strong, also, physically, as men, even of their own class; they could wrestle and throw most men; if a visitor offended one of them she ducked him in the river; they all smoked pipes like men, and they drank rum and beer like men; they were a picturesque part of the market, presiding over their stalls. Alas! the market knows them no more. The fish-woman has been banished from the place; she lingers still in the dried-fish market opposite, but she is changed; she has lost her old superiority of language; she no longer drinks or smokes or exchanges repartee. She is sad and silent; we all have our little day; she has enjoyed her's, and it is all over and past.

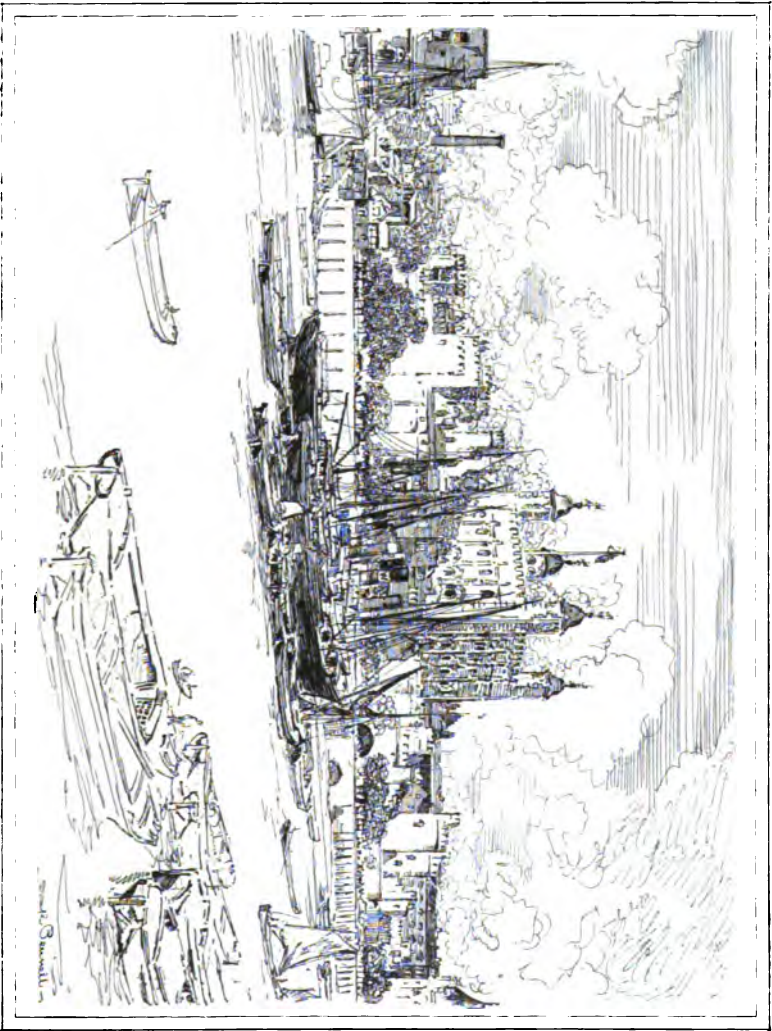
If you would see the market at its best you must visit it at five in the morning, when the day's work begins—the place is then already crowded; you will find bustle and noise enough over the sale of such an enormous mass of fish as will help you to understand something of hungry London. Hither come all the fishmongers to buy up their daily supplies. If you try to connect this vast mass of fish with the mouths for which it is destined you will feel the same kind of bewilderment that falls upon the brain when it tries to realize the meaning of millions.

Next to Billingsgate stands the custom house, with its noble terrace overlooking the river and its stately buildings. This is the fifth or sixth custom house; the first of which we have any record, that in which Chaucer was an officer, stood a little nearer the Tower. After keeping the King's accounts and receiving the King's customs all day, it was pleasant for him to sit in the chamber over the Gate of Ald, where he lived, and to meditate his verses, looking down upon the crowds below.

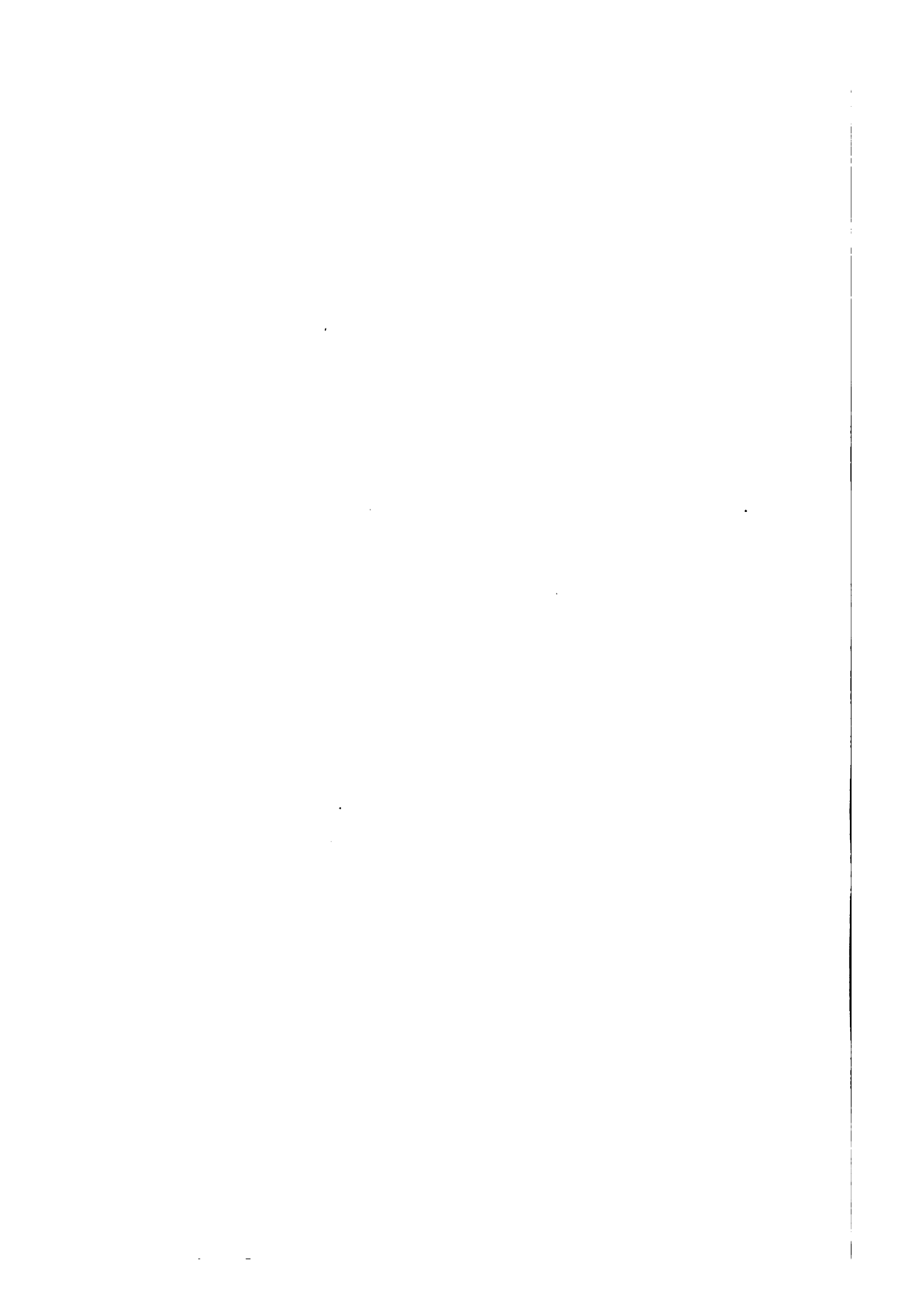
Next to the custom house you see the Tower and Tower

Hill. I once knew an American who told me that he had been in London three years and had never once gone to see even the outside of the Tower of London. There are, you see, two varieties of man—perhaps they are the principal divisions of the species. To the first belongs the man who understands and realizes that he is actually and veritably compounded of all the generations which have gone before. He is consciously the child of the ages. In his frame and figure he feels himself the descendant of the naked savage who killed his prey with a club torn from a tree; in his manners, customs, laws, institutions, and religion, he enjoys, consciously, the achievements of his ancestors; he never forgets the past from which he has sprung; he never tires of tracing the gradual changes which made the present possible; like the genealogist, he never tires of establishing a connection. I am myself one of this school. I do not know any of my ancestors by sight, nor do I know whether to look for them among the knights or among the men at arms, but I know that they were fighting at Agincourt and at Hastings, beside Henry and beside Harold. If I consider the man of old, the average man, I look in the glass. When I sit upon a jury I am reminded of that old form of trial in which a prisoner's neighbors became his compurgators and solemnly swore that a man with such an excellent character could not possibly have done such a thing. When I hear of a ward election I remember the Ward Mote of my ancestors. I think that I belong more to the past than to the present; I would not, if I could, escape from the past.

But, then, there is that other school, whose disciples care nothing about the past. They live in the present; they work for the present, regardless of either past or future; their faces are turned ever forward; they will not look back. They use the things of the past because they are ready to hand; they would improve them if they could; they would abolish them if they got in the way of advance. They are the practical



The Tower of London.



men, the administrators, the inventors, the engineers. For such men the laws of their country, their liberties, the civic peace and order which allow them to work undisturbed, all are ready made; they found them here—they do not ask how they came. If they come across any old thing and think that it is in their way, they sweep it off the earth without the least remorse; they love a new building, a new fashion, a new invention; they are the men who only see the Tower of London by accident as they go up and down the river, and they think what a noble site for warehouses is wasted by that great stone place. This is a very large school; it embraces more than the half of civilized humanity.

Let me speak in this place of the Tower to the former school—the lesser half.

Three hundred years ago Stow wrote of the Tower of London in these words: "Now to conclude in summary. The Tower is a citadel to defend or command the city, a royal palace for assemblies or treaties, a prison of state for the most dangerous offenders, the only place of coinage for all England, the armory for warlike provision, the treasury of the ornaments and jewels of the Crown, the general conserves of the most ancient records of the king's courts of justice at Westminster."

The history of the Tower would cover many sheets of long and gloomy pages. There is no sadder history anywhere. Fortunately, we need not tell it here. When you think of it, remember that it is still, as it always has been, a fortress; it has been in addition a palace, a court, a mint, a prison; but it has always been a fortress, and it is a fortress still; at night the gates are shut; no one after dark is admitted without the password; to the lord mayor alone, as a compliment and a voluntary act of friendliness on the part of the Crown, the password is intrusted day by day. The Tower was surrounded by a small tract of ground called the Tower Liberties. Formerly the City had no jurisdiction over this district. Even

now the boundaries of the Liberties are marked out again every three years by a procession including the mayor of the Tower, the chief officials, including the gaoler with his axe of office, and the school children carrying white wands. They march from post to post; at every place where the broad arrow marks the boundary the children beat it with their wands. In former times they caught the nearest bystander and beat him on the spot, in this way impressing upon his memory, in a way not likely to be forgotten, the boundaries of the Tower Liberties. In such fashion, "by reason of thwacks," was the barber in the "Shaving of Shagpat" made to remember the injunctions which led him to great honor. In every London parish to this day they "beat the bounds" once a year with such a procession. I know not if the custom is still preserved outside London. But I remember such a beating of the bounds, long years ago, beside Clapham Common, when the boys of the procession caught other boys, and, after bumping them against the post, slashed at them with their wands. We were the other boys, and there was a fight, which, while it lasted, was brisk and enjoyable.

There are two places belonging to the Tower which should be specially interesting to the visitor. These are the chapel, called "St. Peter ad Vincula," and the terrace along the river. The history, my American friend, which this chapel illustrates is your property and your inheritance, as much as our own. Your ancestors, as well as ours, looked on while the people buried in the chapel were done to death. Look at those letters "A. B." They mark the grave of the hapless Anne Boleyn, a martyr, perhaps: a child of her own bad age, perhaps—who knows? Beside her lies her sister in misfortune,—no martyr, if all is true, yet surely hapless,—Katherine Howard. Here lies the sweetest and tenderest of victims, Lady Jane Gray; you cannot read her last words without breaking down; you cannot think of her fate without tears. Here lies Sir Walter Raleigh—is there anywhere in America

a monument to the memory of this illustrious man? For the rest, come here and make your own catalogue; it will recall, as Macaulay wrote, "whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny, with the savage triumph of implacable enemies, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame."

The other place, the terrace along the river, is fit for the musing of a summer afternoon. In front you have life—the life of the day; behind you have life, but it is the life of the past. Nowhere in England can you find such a contrast. Sit down upon this terrace, among the old, useless cannon, among the children at play, and the contrast will presently seize you and hold you rapt and charmed.

It is also the best place for seeing the gray old fabric itself, with its ancient walls and towers of stone, its barbican, its ditch, its gates, its keep, and the modern additions in brick and wood that have grown up among the mediæval work—incongruities which still do not disfigure. On the east of the Tower a new road has been constructed as an approach to the Tower Bridge. From this road another and quite a new view can now be obtained of the Tower, which from this point reveals the number and the grouping of its buildings. I have not seen represented anywhere this new side of the Tower.

I have said nothing all this time of London's new gate. Yet you have been looking at it from London Bridge and from the terrace. It is the new Water Gate, the noblest and most stately gate possessed by any city: the gate called the Tower Bridge. It is, briefly, a bascule bridge—that is, a bridge which parts in the middle, each arm being lifted up to open the way, like many smaller bridges in Holland and elsewhere, for a ship to pass through. It was begun in 1884 and finished in 1894.

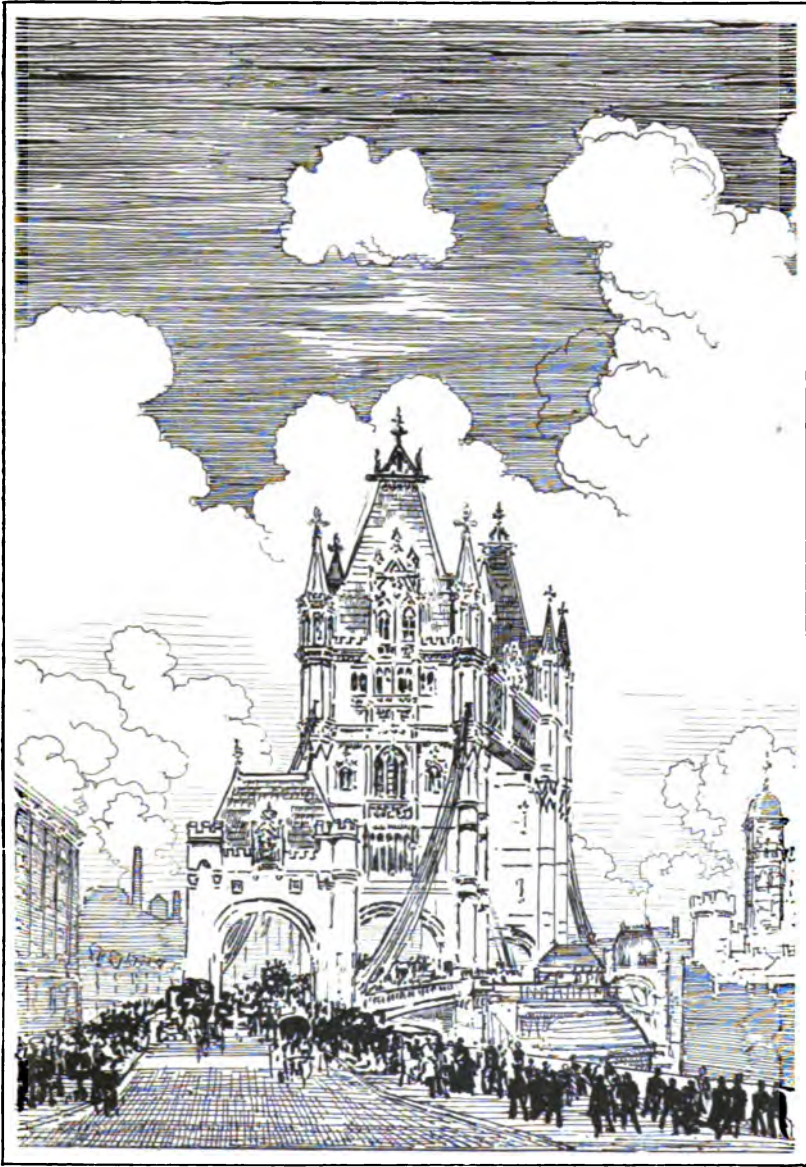
It consists of two lofty towers communicating with either shore by a suspension bridge. There is a permanent upper

bridge across the space between the towers, access being gained from the lower level by lifts. The lower bridge, on the level of the two suspension bridges, is the bascule, which is raised up by weights acting within the two towers, so as to leave the space clear.

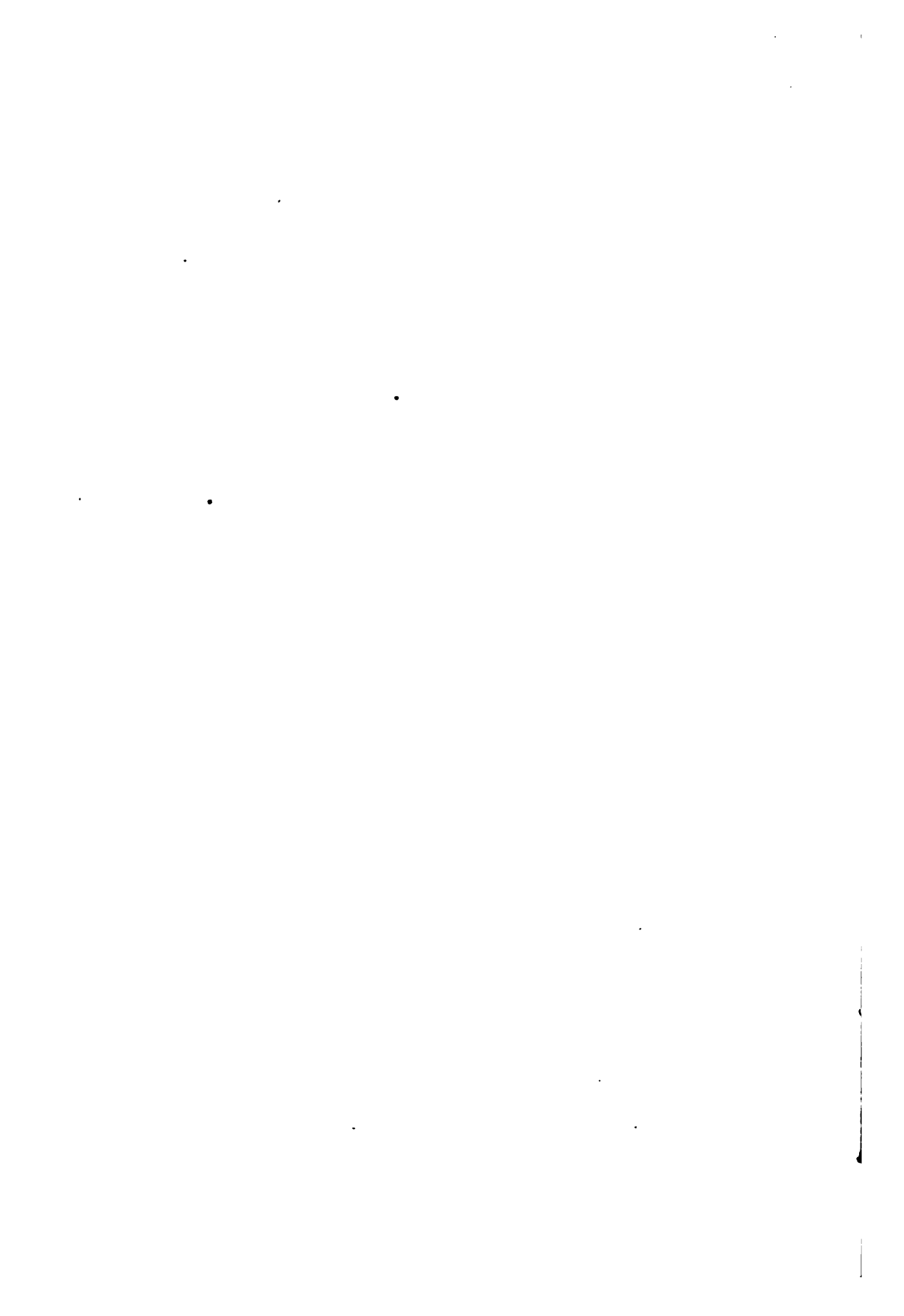
The width of the central span is 200 feet clear; the height of the permanent bridge is 140 feet above high-water mark, and the lower bridge is 29 feet when closed. The two great piers on which the towers are built are 185 feet long and 70 feet wide; the side spans are 270 feet in the clear.

The bascule may be described as a lever turning on a pivot; the shorter, and therefore the heavier, end is within the Tower. The weight at the end of the lever is a trifle, no more than 621 tons. That of the arm, which is 100 feet long, is 424 tons. If you make a little calculation you will find that the action of one side of the pivot very nearly balances that of the other, with a slight advantage given to the longer side. You are not perhaps interested in the construction of the bridge, but you must own that there is no more splendid gate to a port and a city to which thousands of ships resort than this noble structure. The bascule swings up about seventeen times a day, but the ships are more and more going into the docks below, so that the raising of the arms is becoming every day a rarer event. It is a pleasant sight to see the huge arms rising up as lightly as if they were two deal planks, which the great ship passes through; then the arms fall back gently and noiselessly, and the traffic goes on again, the whole interruption not lasting more than a few minutes—less time than a block in Cheapside or Broadway.

Beyond the Tower are the docks named after St. Katherine. They are so named to commemorate an ancient monument and a modern act of vandalism more disgraceful perhaps than any of those many acts by which things ancient and precious have been destroyed.



The Water-Gate of London: Tower Bridge from the East Side of the Tower.



On the site of those docks there stood for seven hundred years one of the most picturesque and venerable of City foundations. Here was the House called that of St. Katherine by the Tower. Its first foundress was Matilda, queen of Stephen. She created the place and endowed it, in the spirit of the time, in grief for the loss of two children who died and were buried in the Church of the Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate. Later on, Eleanor, Queen of Edward I, added certain manors to the little foundation, which had hitherto been but a cell to the Holy Trinity Priory. She appointed and endowed a master, three brethren, three sisters, the bedeswoman, and six poor clerks. Fifty years later, a third Queen, Philippa, wife of Edward III, increased the endowments. We should hardly expect this ancient foundation to survive to the present day, but it has done so. The house was spared at the Dissolution; it was considered peculiarly under the protection of the Queen consort, since three queens in succession had endowed it. Therefore, while all the other religious houses in the country were swept away this was spared; it received a Protestant form; it was called a college, a free chapel, a hospital for poor sisters. The warden, who received the greater part of the endowment, became a dignified person appointed by the Queen, the brethren and sisters remained, the bedeswoman remained, the endowment for the six poor clerks was given to make a school. The precinct became a Liberty, with its own officers, court, and prison; the buildings were retired and quiet, in appearance like a peaceful college at Cambridge; the warden's house was commodious; the cloisters were a place for calm and meditation; there was a most beautiful church filled with monuments; there was a lovely garden, and there was a peaceful churchyard. Outside, the precinct was anything but a place of peace or quiet. It was a tangle of narrow lanes and mean streets; it was inhabited by sailors and sailor folk. Among them were the descendants of those Frenchmen who had

fled across the Channel when Calais fell; one of the streets, called Hangman's Gains, commemorated the fact in its disguise, being originally the Street of Hammes and Guisnes, two places within the English pale round Calais.

This strange place, mediæval in its appearance and its customs, continued untouched until some eighty years ago. Then—it is too terrible to think of—they actually swept the whole place away; the venerable church was destroyed; the picturesque cloister, with the old houses of sisters and of brethren, the school, the ancient court house, the churchyard, the gardens, the streets and cottages of the precinct, were all destroyed, and in their place was constructed a dock. No dock was wanted; there was plenty of room elsewhere; it was a needless, wanton act of barbarity. They built a new church, a poor thing to look at, beside Regent's Park; they built six houses for the brethren and sisters, a large house for the warden; they founded a school, they called the new place St. Katherine's. But it is not St. Katherine's by the Tower, and East London has lost the one single foundation it possessed of antiquity; it has also lost the income, varying from £10,000 to £14,000 a year, which belonged to this, its only religious foundation.

In the modern chapel at Regent's Park you may see the old monuments, the carved tombs, the stalls, the pulpit, taken from the ancient church; it is the putting of old wine into new bottles. Whenever I stand within those walls there falls upon me the memory of the last service held in the old church, when, amid the tears and lamentations of the people who loved the venerable place, the last hymn was sung, the last prayer offered, before the place was taken down.

Outside the docks begins the place they call Wapping. It used to be Wapping in the Ouze, or Wapping on the Wall. I have spoken of the embankment on the marsh. All along the river, all round the low coast of Essex stands "The Wall," the earthwork by which the river is kept from over-

flowing these low grounds at high water. This wall, which was constantly getting broken down, and cost great sums of money to restore, was the cause of the first settlement of Wapping. It was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth that people were encouraged to settle here, in order that by building houses on and close to the wall this work would be strengthened and maintained.

Stow says that about the year 1560 there were no houses here at all, but that forty years later the place was occupied and thickly settled by "seafaring men and tradesmen dealing in commodities for the supply of shipping and shipmen." If this had been all, there would have been no harm done, but the place was outside the jurisdiction of the city, and grave complaints were made that in all such suburbs a large trade was carried on in the making and selling of counterfeit goods. The arm of the law was apparently unable to act with the same vigor outside the boundaries of the lord mayor's authority. Therefore the honest craftsman was encouraged by impunity to make counterfeit indigo, musk, saffron, cochineal, wax, nutmegs, steel and other things. "But," says Strype, "they were bunglers in their business." They took too many apprentices; they kept them for too short a time, and their wares were bad, even considered merely as counterfeits. The making of wooden nutmegs has been, it will be seen, unjustly attributed to New England; it was in vogue in East London so far back as the sixteenth century. The craftsmen of the City petitioned James I. on the subject; a royal commission was appointed who recommended that the City companies should receive an extension of their power and should have control of the various trades within a circle of five or six miles' radius. Nothing, however, seems to have come of the recommendation.

Before this petition, and even in the lifetime of Queen Elizabeth, there was alarm about the growth of the suburbs; it was argued that there were too many people already; they

were too crowded; there were not enough provisions for so many; if the plague came back there would be a terrible mortality, and so on. Therefore orders were issued that no new buildings should be erected within three miles of the City, and that not more than one family should live in one house. Nothing could be wiser than these ordinances. But nature is not always so wise as human legislators. It is therefore credible that children went on being born; that there continued to be marrying and giving in marriage; that the population went on increasing; and, since one cannot, even in order to obey a wise law, live in the open air, this beneficent law was set at defiance; new houses were built in all the suburbs, and if a family could not afford a house to itself it just did what it had always done—took part of a house. In the face of these difficulties East London began to create itself, and riverside London not only stretched out a long arm upon the river wall, but threw out lanes and streets to the north of the wall.

Not much of Wapping survives. The London docks cut out a huge cantle of the parish; the place has since been still further curtailed by the creation of a large recreation ground of the newest type. Some of the remaining streets retain in their name the memory of the gardens and fields of the early settlements; there is Wapping Wall, Green Bank, Rose Lane, Crabtree Lane, Old Gravel Lane, Hermitage Street, Love Lane,—no London suburb is complete without a Love Lane or a Lovers' Walk,—Cinnamon Street: does this name recall the time of the wooden nutmegs?

Let me, at this point, introduce you to Raine's Charity. Did you know that in our East London, as well as in the French village, we have our *Rosière*? The excellent Raine, who flourished during the last century, built and endowed a school for girls who were trained for domestic service; he also left money for giving, once a year, a purse containing a hundred golden sovereigns, upon her wedding day, to a girl coming from his own school who could show four years'



The Turn of the Tide on the Lower Thames.



domestic service with unblemished character. On the occasion when I assisted at this function there was observed—I do not think that the custom has since been abolished—a quaint little ceremony. The wedding was held in the church of St. George's-in-the-East. This church, a massive structure of stone, built a hundred and fifty years ago, stands a little off a certain famous street once called Ratcliffe Highway. They have changed its name, and shamed it into better ways. When the marriage was celebrated the church was crowded with all the girls, children, and women of the quarter. This spontaneous tribute to the domestic virtues, in a place of which so many cruel things have been alleged, caused a glow in the bosom of the stranger. Indeed, it was a curious spectacle, this intense interest in the reward of the Rosière. The women crowded the seats and filled the galleries; they thronged the great stone porch; they made a lane outside for the passage of the bridal party; they whispered eagerly, without the least sign of scoffing. When the bride, in her white dress, walked through them they gasped, they trembled, the tears came into their eyes. What did they mean—those tears?

After the service the clergyman, with the vestrymen, the bridal party, and the invited guests, marched in procession from the church through the broad churchyard at the back to the vestry hall. With the procession walked the church choir in their surplices. Arrived at the vestry hall, the choir sang an anthem composed in the last century especially for this occasion. The rector of St. George's then delivered a short oration, congratulating the bride and exhorting the bridegroom; he then placed in the hands of the bridegroom an old-fashioned, long silk purse containing fifty sovereigns at each end. This done, cake and wine were passed round, and we drank to the health of the bride and her bridegroom. The bride, I remember, was a blushing, rosy maiden of two and twenty or so; it was a great day for her,—the one

day of all her life,—but she carried herself with a becoming modesty; the bridegroom, a goodly youth, about the same age, was proposing, we understood, something creditable, something superior, in the profession of carter or carman. It is more than ten years ago. I hope that the gift of the incomparable Raine—the anthem said that he was incomparable—has brought good luck to this London Rosière and her bridegroom.

The church of St. George's-in-the-East stands, as I have said, beside the once infamous street called the Ratcliffe Highway. It was formerly the home of Mercantile Jack when his ship was paid off. Here, where every other house was a drinking den, where there was not the slightest attempt to preserve even a show of deference to respectability, Jack and his friends drank and sang and danced and fought. Portugal Jack and Italy Jack and Lascar Jack have always been very handy with their knives, while no one interfered, and the police could only walk about in little companies of three and four. Within these houses, these windows, these doors, their fronts stained and discolored like a drunkard's face, there lay men stark and dead after one of these affrays—the river would be their churchyard; there lay men sick unto death, with no one to look after them; and all the time, day and night, the noise of the revelry went on—for what matter a few more sick or dead? The fiddler kept it up, Jack footed it, one Jack after the other, heel and toe with folded arms, to the sailors' hornpipe; there were girls who could dance him down, there was delectable singing, and the individual thirst was like unto the thirst of Gargantua.

The street, I say, is changed; it has now assumed a countenance of respectability, though it has not yet arrived at the full rigors, so to speak, of virtue. Still the fiddle may be heard from the frequent public house; still Mercantile Jack keeps it up, heel and toe, while his money lasts; still there are harmonic evenings and festive days, but there are changes;

one may frequently, such is the degeneracy, walk down the street, now called St. George's, without seeing a single fight, without being hustled or assaulted, without coming across a man too drunk to lift himself from the kerb. It is a lively, cheerful street, with points which an artist might find picturesque; it is growing in respectability, but it is not yet by any means so clean as it might be, and there are fragrances and perfumes lingering about its open doors and courts which other parts of London will not admit within their boundaries.

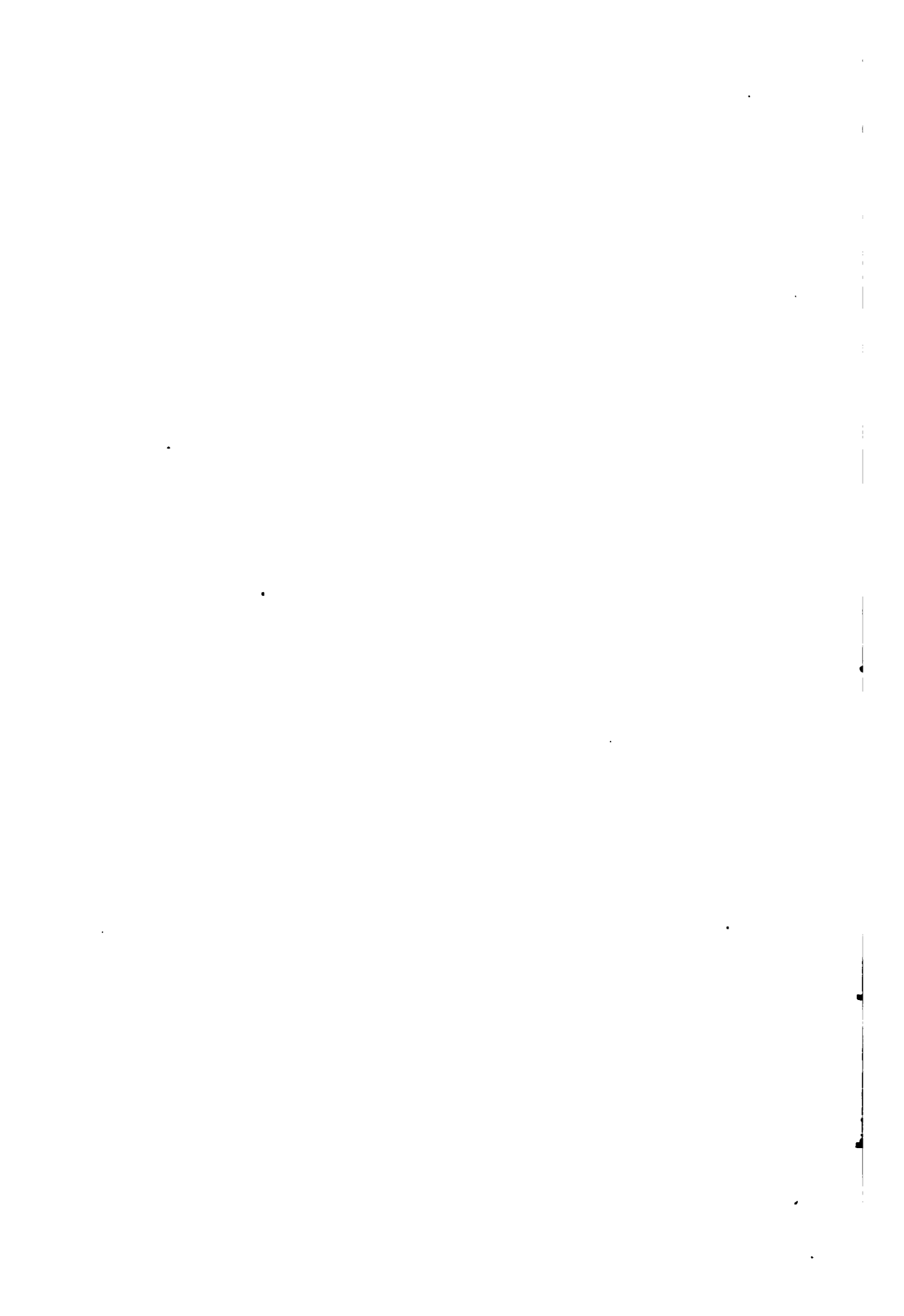
There are two squares lying north of this street; in one of them is the Swedish church, where, on a Sunday morning, you may see rows of light-haired, blue-eyed mariners listening to the sermon in their own tongue. In a corner, if you look about, you may come upon the quaintest little Jewish settlement you can possibly imagine; it is an almshouse, with a synagogue and all complete; if you are lucky you will find one of the old bedesmen to show you the place. St. George's Street, also, rejoices in a large public garden; no street ever wanted one so badly; it is made out of the great churchyard, where dead sailors and dead bargemen and dead roysterers lie by the hundred thousand. And one must never forget Jamrack's. This world-wide merchant imports wild beasts; in his place—call it not shop or warehouse—you will find pumas and wildcats of all kinds, jackals, foxes, wolves, and wolverines. It is a veritable Ark of Noah.

In the very heart of Wapping stands a group of early eighteenth century buildings, with which every right-minded visitor straightway falls in love; they consist of schools and a church; to these may be added the churchyard—I suppose we may say that a churchyard is built, when it is full of tombs. This sacred area is separated from the church by the road; it is surrounded by an iron railing, and within there is a little coppice of lilac, laburnum, and other shrubs and trees which have grown up between the tombs, so that in

the spring and summer the monuments become half-revealed and half-concealed; the sunshine, falling on them, quivering and shifting through the light leaves and blossoms, glorifies the memorials of these dead mariners. The schools are adorned with wooden effigies of boy and girl—stiff and formal in their ancient garb; the church is not without a quiet dignity of its own, such a dignity as I have observed in the simple meeting-house of an American town. In some unexplained manner it seems exactly the sort of church which should have been built for captains, mates, quartermasters, and bo's'uns of the mercantile marine in the days when captains wore full wigs and waistcoats down to their knees. The master boat-builder and master craftsman, in all the arts and mysteries pertaining to ships and boats, their provision and their gear, were also admitted within these holy walls. The church seems to have been built only for persons of authority; nothing under the rank of quartermaster would sit within these dignified walls. You can see the tombs of former congregations; they are solid piles of stone, signifying rank in the mercantile marine. The tombs are in the churchyard around the church, and in the churchyard on the other side of the road. As you look upon the old-fashioned church, this Georgian church, time runs back; the ancient days return: there stands in the pulpit the clergyman, in his full wig, reading his learned and doctrinal discourse in a full, rich monotone; below him sit the captains and the mates and the quartermasters, with them the master craftsman, all with wigs; the three-cornered hat is hanging on the door of the high pew; for better concentration of thought, the eyes of the honest gentlemen are closed. The ladies, however, sit upright, conscious of the Sunday best; besides, one might, in falling asleep, derange the nice balance of the "head." When the sermon is over they all walk home in neighborly conversation to the Sunday dinner and the after-dinner bottle of port. The tombs in the churchyard belong to the time when



Coming Up the Lower Thames with the Tide.



a part of Wapping was occupied by this better class, which has long since vanished, though one or two of the houses remain. Of the baser sort who crowded all the lanes I have spoken already. They did not go to church; always on Sunday the doors stood wide open to them if they would come in, but they did not accept the invitation; they stayed outside; the church received them three times—for the christening, for the wedding, for the burial; whatever their lives have been, the church receives all alike for the funeral service, and asks no questions. After this brief term of yielding to all temptations, after their sprightly course along the primrose path, they are promised, if in the coffin one can hear, a sure and certain hope.

Here are Wapping Old Stairs. Come with me through the narrow court and stand upon the stairs leading down to the river. They are now rickety old steps and deserted. Time was when the sailors landed here when they returned from a voyage; then their sweethearts ran down the steps to meet them.

“Your Polly has never been faithless, she swears,
Since last year we parted on Wapping Old Stairs.”

And here, when Polly had spent all his money for him, Jack hugged her to his manly bosom before going aboard again. Greeting and farewell took place in the presence of a theater full of spectators. They were the watermen who lay off the stairs by dozens waiting for a fare, at the time when the Thames was the main highway of the City. The stairs were noisy and full of life. Polly herself had plenty of repartee in reply to the gentle badinage of the young watermen; her Tom had rivals among them. When he came home the welcome began with a fight with one or other of these rivals. The stairs are silent now; a boat or two, mostly without any one in it, lies despondently alongside the stairs or in the mud at low tide.

Sometimes the boats pushed off with intent to fish; the river was full of fish, though there are now none left; there were all kinds of fish that swim, including salmon; the fishery of the Thames is responsible for more rules and ordinances than any other industry of London. The boatmen were learned in the times and seasons of the fish. For instance, they could tell by the look of the river when a shoal of roach was coming up stream; at such times they took up passengers who would go a-fishing, and landed them on the sterlings—the projecting piers of London Bridge—where they stood angling for the fish all day long with rod and line.

Next to the Wapping Old Stairs is Execution Dock. This was the place where sailors were hanged and all criminals sentenced for offenses committed on the water; they were hanged at low tide on the foreshore, and they were kept hanging until three high tides had flowed over their bodies—an example and an admonition to the sailors on board the passing ships. Among the many hangings at this doleful spot is remembered one which was more remarkable than the others. It was conducted with the usual formalities; the prisoner was conveyed to the spot in a cart beside his own coffin, while the ordinary sat beside him and exhorted him. He wore the customary white nightcap and carried a prayer-book in one hand, while a nosegay was stuck in his bosom; he preserved a stolid indifference to the exhortations; he did not change color when the cart arrived, but it was remembered afterward that he glanced round him quickly; they carried him to the fatal beam and they hanged him up. Now, if you come to think of it, as the spot had to be approached by a narrow lane and by a narrow flight of steps, while the gallows stood in the mud of the foreshore, the number of guards could not have been many. On this occasion, no sooner was the man turned off than a boat's company of sailors, armed with bludgeons, appeared most unexpectedly, rushed upon the constables, knocked down the

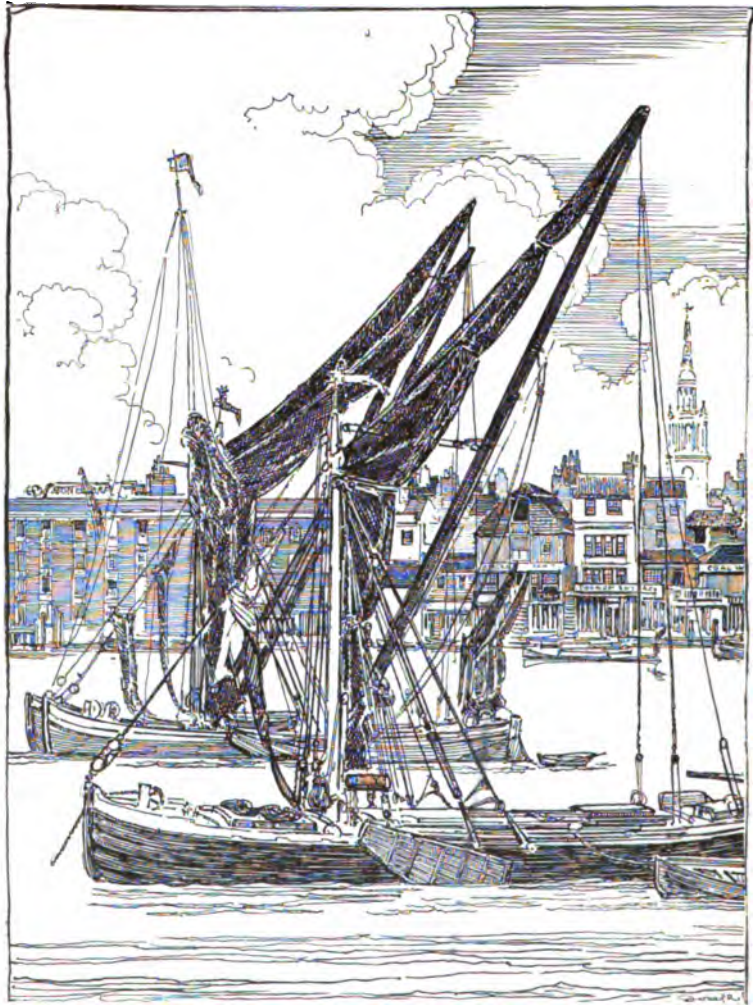
hangman, hustled the chaplain, overthrew the sheriff's officers, cut down the man, carried him off, threw him into a boat, and were away and in midstream, going down swiftly with the current before the officers understood what was going on.

When they picked themselves up they gazed stupidly at the gallows with the rope still dangling—where was the man? He was in the boat and it was already a good way down the river, and by that kind of accident which often happened at that time when the arrangements of the executive were upset, there was not a single wherry within sight or within hail.

Then the ordinary closed his book and pulled his cassock straight; the hangman sadly removed the rope, the constables looked after the vanishing boat, and there was nothing to be done but just to return home again. As for the man, that hanging was never completed and those rescuers were never discovered.

As an illustration of the solitude of this place, before its settlement under Queen Elizabeth, one observes that there was a field called Hangman's Acre, situated more than a quarter of a mile from the river, where in the year 1440 certain murderers and pirates were hanged in chains upon a gallows set on rising ground, so that they should be seen by the sailors in the ships going up and down the river. There was not therefore at that time a single house to obstruct this admonitory spectacle.

The "hamlet" of Shadwell is only a continuation of St. George's or Ratcliffe Highway; its churchyard is converted into a lovely garden, one of the many gardens which were once burial grounds; the people sit about in the shade or in the sun; along the south wall is a terrace commanding a cheerful view of the London docks, with their shipping. There is a fish-market here, the only public institution of Shadwell; there are old houses, which we may look at and



Off Shadwell.

perhaps represent, but there is little about its people that distinguishes them from the folk on either hand.

In the year 1671 the church was built; Shadwell was already a place with a large population, and the church was

built in order to minister to their spiritual wants. What could be better? But you shall learn from one example how the best intentions were frustrated and how the riverside folk were suffered to go from bad to worse, despite the creation of the parish and the erection of the church. The first rector was a nephew of that great divine and philosopher, Bishop Butler. He was so much delighted with the prospect of living and working among this rude and ignorant folk, he was so filled and penetrated with the spirit of humanity and the principles of his religion, that his first sermon was on the text, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" This good man, however, received permission from the bishop to live in Norfolk Street, Strand, about three miles from his church. And so, with a non-resident clergy, with no schools, with no restraints of example or precept, with little interference from the law, what wonder if the people reeled blindly down the slopes that lead to death and destruction?

The name of Ratcliffe or Redcliff marks a spot where the low cliff which formerly rose up from the marsh curved southward for a space and then receded. It is a "hamlet" which at first offers little to interest or to instruct. It consists of mean and dingy streets—there is not a single street which is not mean and dirty; none of the houses are old; none are picturesque in the least; they are rickety, dirty, shabby, without one redeeming feature; there is a church, but it is not stately like St. George's-in-the-East, nor venerable like that of Stepney; it is unlovely; there are "stairs" to the river and they are rickety; there are warehouses which contain nothing and are tumbling down; there are public houses which do not pretend to be bright and attractive—low-browed, dirty dens, which reek of bad beer and bad gin. Yet the place, when you linger in it and talk about it to the clergy and the ladies who work for it, is full of interest. For it is a quarter entirely occupied by the hand-to-mouth

laborer; the people live in tenements; it is thought luxury to have two rooms; there are eight thousand of them, three quarters being Irish; in the whole parish there is not a single person of what we call respectability, except two or three clergymen and half a dozen ladies; there are no good shops, there are no doctors or lawyers, there is not even a newsvender, for nobody in Ratcliffe reads a newspaper. But the place swarms with humanity; the children play by thousands in the gutters: and on the door-steps the wives and mothers sit all day long and in all weathers, carrying on a perpetual parliament of grievance. Here once—I know not when—stood Ratcliffe Cross, and the site of the cross—removed, I know not when—was one of the spots where, in 1837, Queen Victoria was proclaimed. Why the young Queen should have been proclaimed at Ratcliffe Cross I have never been able to discover. I have asked the question of many persons and many books, but I can find no answer. The oldest inhabitant knows nothing about it; none of the books can tell me if the accession of the Queen's predecessors was also proclaimed by ancient custom at Ratcliffe Cross. Unfortunately, it is now extremely difficult to find persons who remember the accession of the Queen, not to speak of that of William IV.

Ratcliffe has other historical memories. Here stood the hall of the Shipwrights' Company. This was a very ancient body; it existed as the Fraternity of St. Simon and St. Jude from time immemorial; the Shipwrights' Company formerly had docks and building yards on the south of the Thames; then they moved their hall to this place on the north bank, and seem to have given up their building yards.

Here was a school, founded and maintained by the Coopers' Company, where Lancelot Andrewes, the learned bishop, was educated.

There is another historical note concerning Ratcliffe. It belongs to the year 1553. It was in that year that Admiral



Joseph Sturvell 1899

Ratcliffe-Cross Stairs.



Sir Hugh Willoughby embarked on that voyage of discovery from which he was destined never to return. He was sent out on a roving commission to "discover regions, dominions, islands, and places unknown," and he began by an attempt to discover the northeast passage. Remember that geographers knew nothing in those days of the extent of Siberia. Willoughby had three ships; their tonnage was, respectively, 160 tons, 120, and 90. His crews consisted of 50, 35, and 27 men, respectively. With such tiny craft they put forth boldly to brave unknown Arctic seas. It was from Ratcliffe Stairs that Willoughby went on board on May 10, 1553. Half a mile down the river the flotilla passed Greenwich Palace, where the young King, Edward VI, was residing. It was within a few weeks of his death; consumption had laid him low. When the ships passed the palace they "dressed" with flags and streamers, they fired cannons of salute, they blew their trumpets. The young King was brought out to see them pass. It was his last appearance in public; on July 6th he was dead. As for Willoughby, he parted with one of his ships, and after being tossed about off the coast of Lapland he resolved to winter at the mouth of the river Argina. Here, in the following spring, he was found with his companions, all dead and frozen. A strange story of English enterprise to be connected with these forlorn and ramshackle stairs.

Here is another story about Ratcliffe. In a street by the river, beside the stairs, are two or three big ruinous warehouses, mostly deserted. One of these has a double front, the left side representing a private house, the right a warehouse. What was stored in the warehouse I know not; the whole riverside is lined with warehouses and stores. The place is now for a third time deserted, and stands with broken windows. It has been deserted, so far as the original purpose was concerned, for many years. Some thirty years ago a young medical man began to live.

and to practise in Ratcliffe. He became presently aware that the death-rate among the children was frightful. There was no hospital nearer than the London Hospital in the Whitechapel Road, and that was two miles away; there were no nurses to be obtained and there were no appliances; if a child was taken ill it had to lie in the one room occupied by the whole family, without ventilation, without proper food, without skilled care, without medicines. Therefore in most cases of illness the child died.

He found this rickety old warehouse empty; he thought that he would do what he could, being quite a poor man, to make a hospital for children. He did so; with his slender funds he got a few beds and quickly filled them. He was physician, surgeon, dispenser, druggist, everything; his wife was nurse and everything else. Together these two devoted people started their hospital. Well, it grew; it became known; money began to come in; other doctors and nurses were taken on; all the rooms, there were many, were filled; the children began to recover. Presently the house became so prosperous that it was resolved to build a separate Children's Hospital, which was done, and you may see it—a noble place. But for the founder this crown of his labors came too late. The work killed him before the new hospital was completed; one of the wards, the Heckford Ward, is named after the man who gave all his strength, all his mind, all his knowledge, all his thoughts; who gave his life and his death; who gave himself, wholly and ungrudgingly, to the children. His patients recovered, but their physician died. He gave his own life to stay the hand of death.

Then the house stood empty for a time; it was presently taken over by the vicar of the parish and made into a play-house for the little children in the winter after school hours, from four to seven; I have told you how the children swarm in the Ratcliffe streets. After seven the house was converted into a club for the rough riverside lads, where they

could box and play single stick and subdue the devil in them, and so presently could sit down and play games and listen to reading and keep out of mischief. But the house is condemned; it is really too ramshackle; it is empty again, and is now to be pulled down.

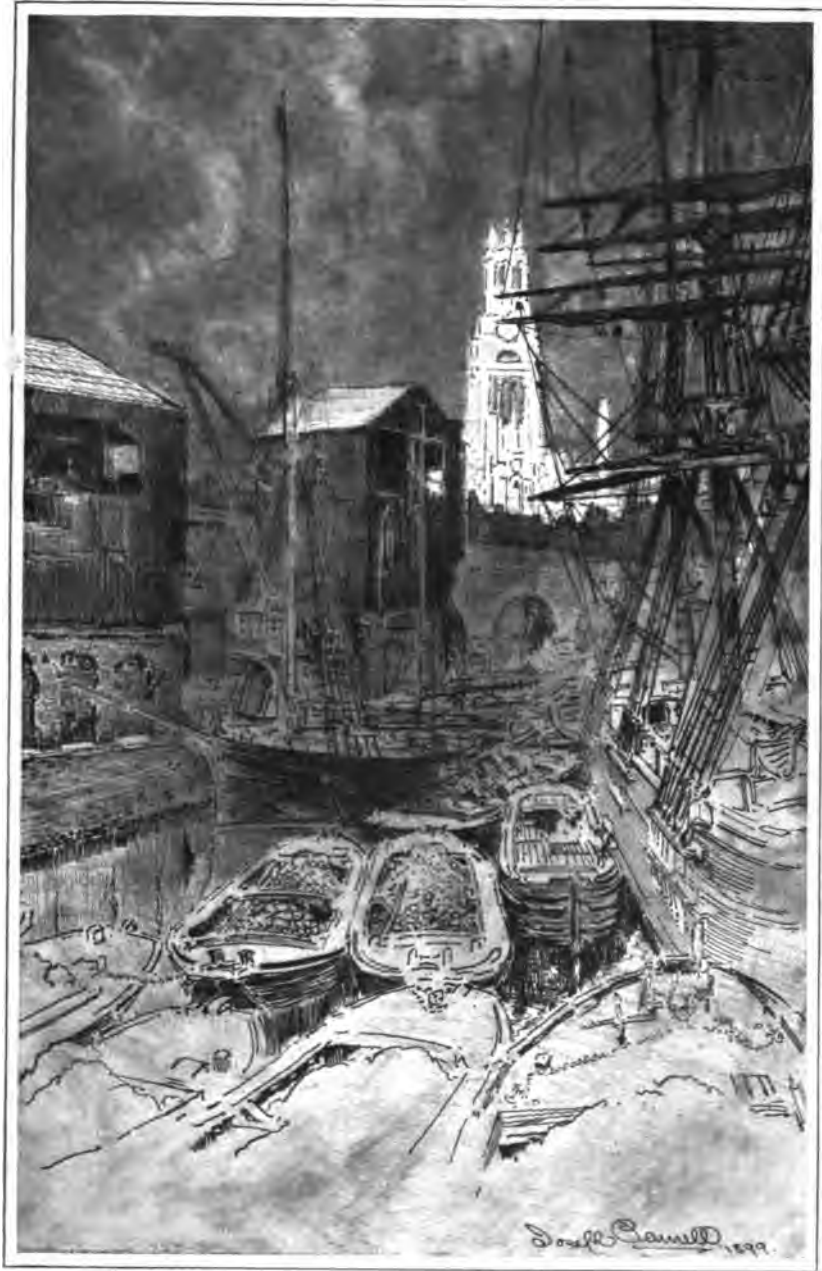
There is still another story whose scene is laid at Ratcliffe. There is a house beside the church which is now the vicarage. It is a square, solid house, built about the end of the seventeenth century. It is remarkable for a dining-room whose walls are painted with Italian landscapes. The story is that there lived here, early in the eighteenth century, a merchant who rode into London every day, leaving his only daughter behind. He desired to decorate his house with wall-paintings, and engaged a young Italian to stay in the house and to paint all day. Presently he made the not unusual discovery that the Italian and his daughter had fallen in love with each other. He knew what was due to his position as a City merchant, and did what was proper for the occasion—that is to say, he ordered the young man to get out of the house in half an hour. The artist obeyed, so far as to mount the stairs to his own room. Here, however, he stopped, and when the angry parent climbed the stairs after the expiration of the half hour to know why he was not gone, he found the young lover, dead, hanging to the canopy of the bed. His ghost was long believed to haunt the house, and was only finally laid, after troops of servants had fled shrieking, when the wife of the vicar sat up all night by herself in the haunted chamber, and testified that she had neither seen nor heard anything, and was quite willing to sleep in the room. That disgusted the ghost, who went away of his own accord. I wish I could show you one room in the house. It was the old powdering-room. When your wig had been properly curled and combed you threw a towel or dressing-gown over your shoulders and sat in this little room, with your back to the door. Now, the door had a sliding panel,

and the barber on the other side was provided with the instrument which blew the white powder through the panel upon the wig. The operation finished, you arose, slipped off the dressing-gown and descended to your coach with all the dignity of a gold-laced hat, a wig white as the driven snow, lace ruffles, a lace tie, and a black velvet coat—if you were a merchant—with gold buttons, and white silk stockings. A beautiful time it was for those who could afford the dignity and the splendor which made it beautiful. For those who could not— Humph! Not quite so beautiful a time.

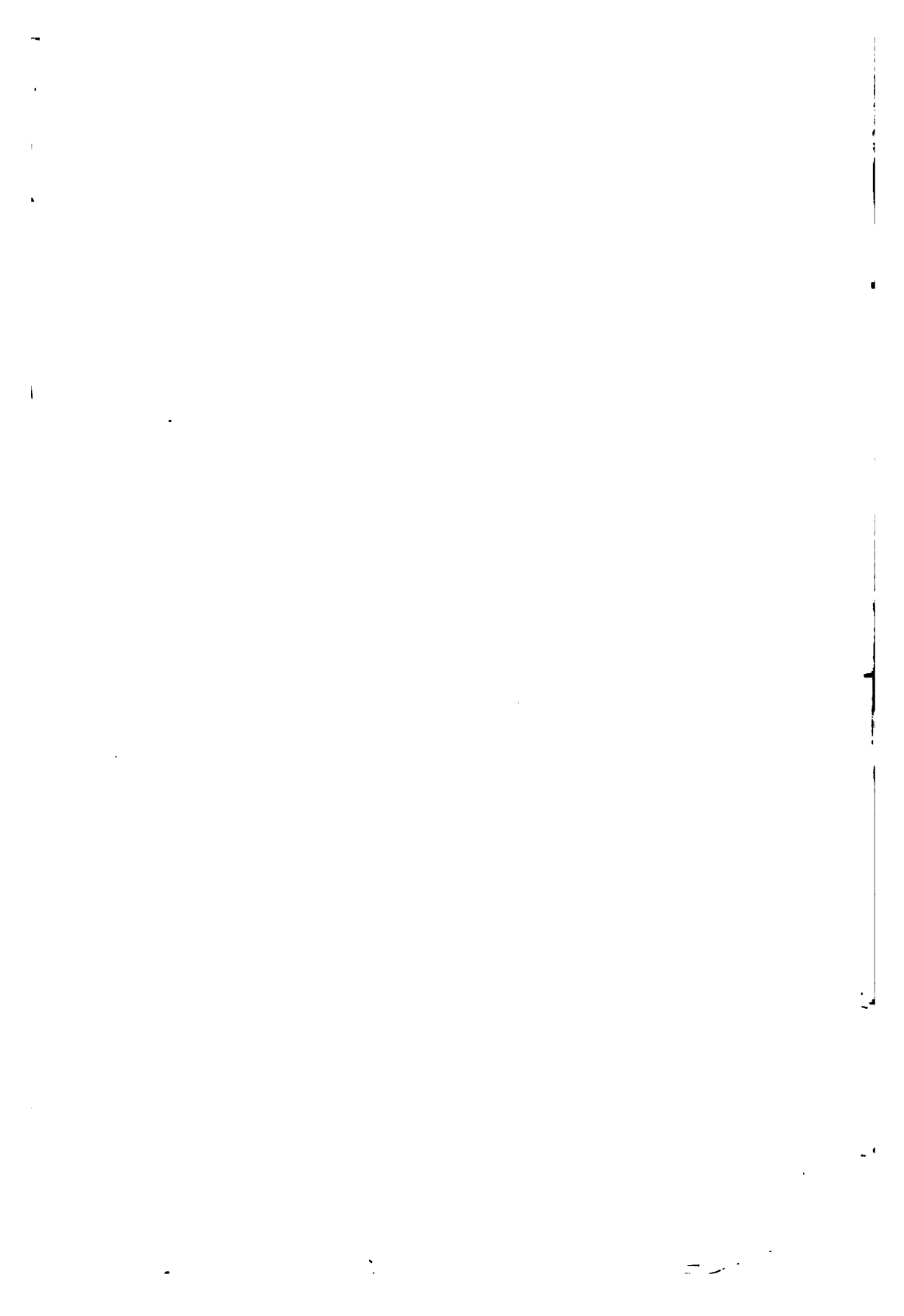
After Ratcliffe we pass into Limehouse. It was at Limehouse Hole that Rogue Riderhood lived.

The place is more marine than Wapping; the public houses have a look, an air, a something that suggests the sea; the shops are conducted for the wants of the merchantmen; the houses are old and picturesquely dirty; the streets are narrow; one may walk about these streets for a whole afternoon, and find something to observe in every one, either a shop full of queer things or a public house full of strange men, or a house that speaks of other days—of crimps, for instance, and of press gangs, and of encounters in the streets; there are ancient docks used for the repair of wooden sailing ships; there are places where they build barges; a little inland you may see the famous church of Limehouse, with its lofty steeple; it was only built in 1730. Before that time there was no church at Limehouse; since that time nobody has gone to church at Limehouse, speaking of the true natives, the riverside folk, not of those who dwell respectably in the West India Dock Road. It is, however, doubtless a great advantage and benefit to a sea-going population to have a churchyard to be buried in.

At Limehouse the river suddenly bends to the south, and then again to the north, making a loop within which lies a peninsula. This is a very curious place. It occupies an area of a mile and a half from north to south, and about



Limehouse Basin and Church.



a mile from east to west. The place was formerly a dead level, lower than the river at high tide, and therefore a broad tidal marsh; it was, in fact, part of the vast marsh of which I have already spoken, now reclaimed, lying along the north bank of the river. This marsh was dotted over with little eyots or islets, sometimes swept away by the tide, then forming again, composed of rushes, living and dead, the rank grasses of the marsh, and sticks and string and leaves carried among the reeds to form a convenient and secure place where the wild birds could make their nests. When the river wall was built the marsh became a broad field of rich pasture, in which sheep were believed to fatten better than in any other part of England. Until recently it had no inhabitants; probably the air at night was malarious, and the sheep wanted no one to look after them; the river wall was adorned with half a dozen windmills; dead men, hanging in chains, preached silent sermons by their dolorous example to the sailors of the passing craft; there was instituted at some time or other before the seventeenth century a ferry between its southern point and Greenwich, a road to meet the ferry running north through the island. Pepys crossed once by this ferry in order to attend a wedding. It was in the plague year, when one would have thought weddings were not common and wedding festivities dangerous things. But there was still marrying and giving in marriage. He was with Sir George and Lady Carteret; they got across from Deptford in a boat, but found that their coach, which ought to have met them, had not come over by ferry, the tide having fallen too low. "I being in my new colored silk suit and coat trimmed with gold buttons and gold broad-lace round my hands, very rich and fine, . . . so we were fain to stay there in the unlucky Isle of Dogs, in a chill place, the morning cool, the wind fresh, to our great discontent." Why does he call the Isle of Dogs unlucky?

In the middle of the island stood, all by itself, a little

chapel. Nothing is known about its origin. I am inclined to think that, like many other chapels built on this river wall, on town walls, and on bridges, it was intended to protect the wall by prayers and masses, sung or said "with intention." We have already found a hermitage by, or on, the wall at Wapping, another place of prayer for the maintenance of this important work.

Why this peninsula was called the Isle of Dogs no one knows. One learned antiquary says that the King kept his hounds there when he stayed at Greenwich Palace. Perhaps. But the antiquary produces no proof that the royal kennels were ever set up here, and the person who trusts a little to common sense asks why the King should have sent his hounds across a broad and rapid river by a dangerous ferry when he had the whole of Greenwich Park and Black Heath in which to build his kennels. "Drowned dogs," suggests another, but doubtfully. No. I have never heard of drowned dogs being washed ashore in any number, either here or elsewhere. Drowned dogs, it is certain, were never an appreciable factor in the flotsam and jetsam of the Thames. "Not the Isle of Dogs," says another, "but the Isle of Ducks. Ducks, you see, from the wild ducks which formerly—" No; when the wall was built, which was probably in the Roman time, the wild ducks vanished, and as no tradition of any kind can be traced among the Saxons concerning the Roman occupation they never heard of these ducks. For my own part, I have no suggestion to offer, except a vague suspicion that, as Pepys thought, there was a tradition of bad luck attaching in some form to the place, which was named accordingly. If a man on the downward path is said to be going to the dogs, a place considered as unlucky might very well have been called the Isle of Dogs. Now a level marsh without any inhabitants and adorned by gibbets and dangling dead bodies would certainly not be considered a lucky place. You must not expect anything in the place of the least

antiquity. Yet a walk round the Isle of Dogs is full of interest. To begin with, the streets are wide and clean; the houses are all small, built for working-men; there are no houses of the better sort at all; the children swarm, and are healthy, well fed, and rosy; the shops are chiefly those of



The Thames Side at Limehouse.

provisions and cheap clothing. All round the shore there runs an unbroken succession of factories. These factories support the thousands of working-men who form the population of the Isle of Dogs. All kinds of things are made, stored, received, and distributed in the factories of this industrial island; many of them are things which require to be carried on outside a crowded town, such as oil storage, oil, paint, color, and varnish, works; disinfectant fluid works, boiler-makers, lubricating-oil works; there are foundries of

brass and iron, lead-smelting works, copper-depositing works, antimony and gold-ore works. All kinds of things wanted for ships are made here—cisterns and tanks, casks, steering-gear, tarpaulin, wire rope, sails, oars, blocks, and masts; there are yards for building ships, barges, and boats.

Of public buildings there are few: two churches and one or two chapels. There are Board-schools and church schools; there are no places of amusement, but posters indicate that theaters and music-halls are within reach. On the south of the island the London County Council has erected a most lovely garden. It is four or five acres in extent; there are lawns, trees, and flower-beds; there is a stately terrace running along the river; there are seats dotted about, and on certain evenings in the summer a band plays. Above all, there is the view across the river. All day long that pageant, of which we have already spoken, goes up and down, never ending; the ships follow each other—great ships, small ships, splendid ships, mean ships; the noisy little tugs plow their way, pulling after them a long string of lighters heavily laden; the children, peeping through the iron railings, know all the ships, where they come from and to what "line" they belong. Beyond the river is Greenwich Hospital, once a splendid monument of the nation's gratitude to her old sailors, now a shameful monument of the nation's thanklessness. Would any other country so trample upon sentiment as to take away their hospital from the old sailors, to whom it belonged and to whom it had been given? The old pensioners are gone, and the people have lost the education in patriotism which the sight and discourse of these veterans once afforded them.

It is needless to say that there is not a single book-shop in the Isle of Dogs; we do not expect a book-shop anywhere in East London; there are also very few news-agents. I saw one, the whole of whose window was tastefully decorated with pictures from the "Illustrated Police Budget." These illustrations are blood-curdling: a lady bites another lady,

such is the extremity of her wrath; a burglar enters a bedroom at night; a man with a revolver shows what revenge and jealousy can dare and do, and so on. I am sure that the people read other things; the "Police Budget" is not their only paper, but I confess that this was the only evidence of their favorite reading which I was able to discover when I was last on the island. There are no slums, I believe, on the Isle of Dogs. I have never seen any Hooligans, Larrikins, or any of that tribe—perhaps because they were all engaged in work, the harder the better. You will not see any drunken men, as a rule, nor any beggars, nor any signs of misery. We may conclude that the Isle of Dogs contains an industrious and prosperous population; the air that they breathe, when the fresh breeze that comes up with the tide has dropped, is perhaps too heavily charged with the varied fragrance of the multitudinous works, with the noise of various industries: as for the hammering of hammers, the grinding and blowing and whirring of engines, to these one gets accustomed. It is a place where one might deliberately choose to be born, because, apart from the general well-being of the people and the healthfulness of the air, there is a spirit of enterprise imbibed by every boy who grows up in this admirable island. It is engendered by the universal presence of the sailor and the ship; wherever the sailor and the ship are found there springs up naturally in every child the spirit of adventure.

A large part of the island is occupied by docks—the West India docks, the Blackwall Basin, and the Millwall Dock. We need not enter into the statistics of the tonnage and the trade; it is sufficient to remember that the docks are always receiving ships, and that the sailors are always getting leave to go ashore, and that some of them have their wives and families living in the Isle of Dogs. That would be in itself sufficient to give this suburb a marine flavor; but think what it means for a boy to live in a

place where at every point his eyes rest upon a forest of masts, where he is always watching the great ships as they work out of dock or creep slowly in; think what it means when, in addition to living beside these great receiving docks, he can look through doors half open and see the old-fashioned repairing dock, with the wooden sailing ship shored up and the men working at her ribs, while her battered old figure-head and her bowsprit stick out over the wall of the dock and over the street itself. The Tritons and the Oceanides, the spirits of the rolling sea, open their arms with invitation to such a boy. "Come," they say, "thou too shalt be a sailor, it is thy happy fate; come with a joyful heart; we know the place, deep down among the tiny shells of ocean, where thou shalt lie, but not till after many years. Come. It is the sweetest life of any; there is no care or cark for money; there is no struggle on the waves for casual work and for bare food; no foul diseases lurk on the broad Atlantic; the wind of the sea is pure and healthy, the fo'c'sle is cheerful, and the wage is good." And so he goes, this favorite of fortune.

For some strange reason the gates of the docks are always bright and green in spring and summer with trees and Virginia creepers, which are planted at the entrance and grow over the lodge. Within, flower-beds are visible. Outside, the cottages for the dock people also have bright and pleasant little front gardens. To the forest of masts, to the bowsprit sticking out over the street, to the ships that are warped in and out the dock, add the pleasing touch of the trees and flowers and the creepers before we leave the Isle of Dogs—that "unlucky" isle, as Pepys called it.

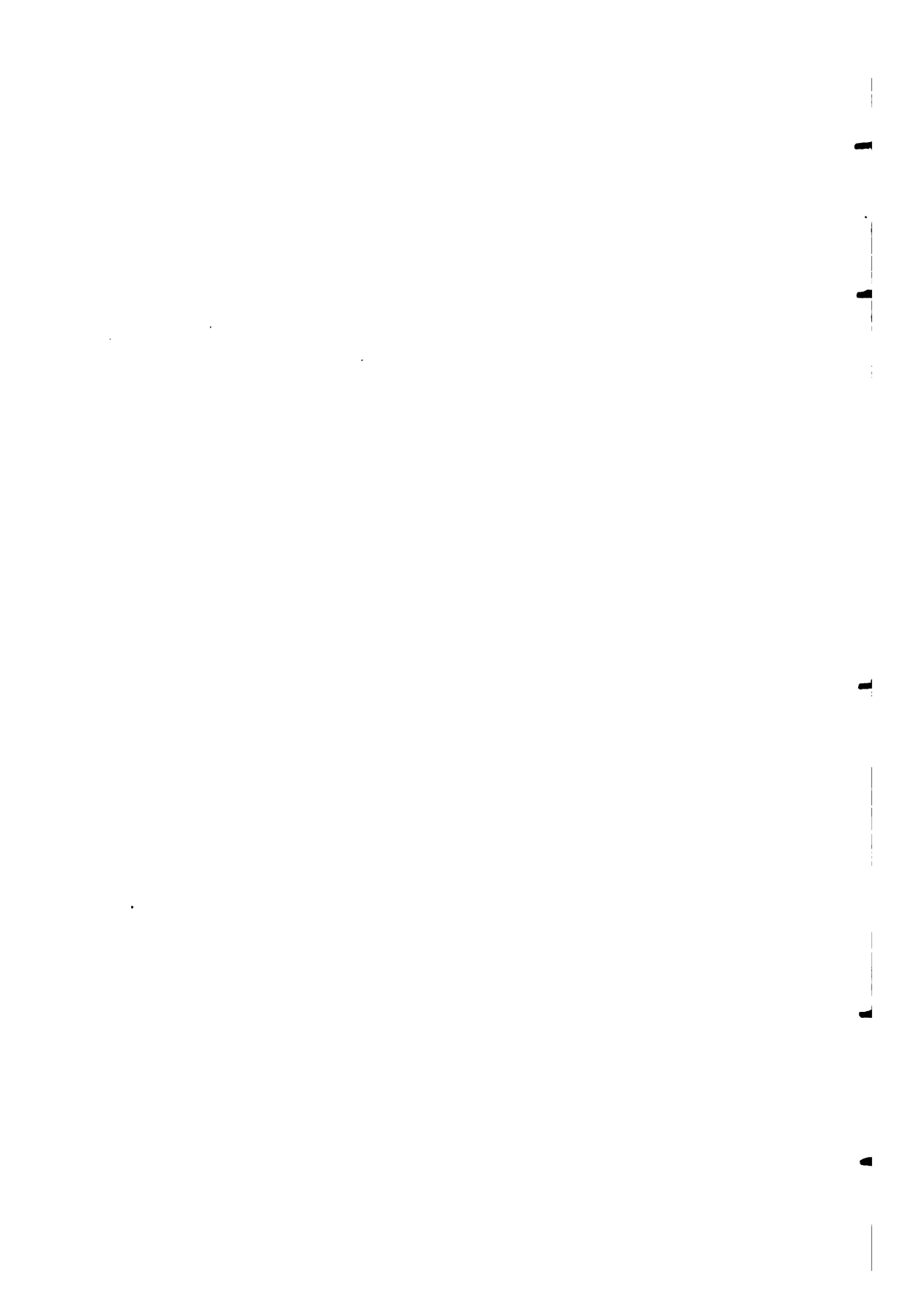
The last of the East London riverside hamlets is Blackwall. Where Blackwall begins no one knows. Poplar Station is in the middle of the place, included in the map within the letters which spell Blackwall. And where are the houses of Blackwall? It is covered entirely with docks. There are



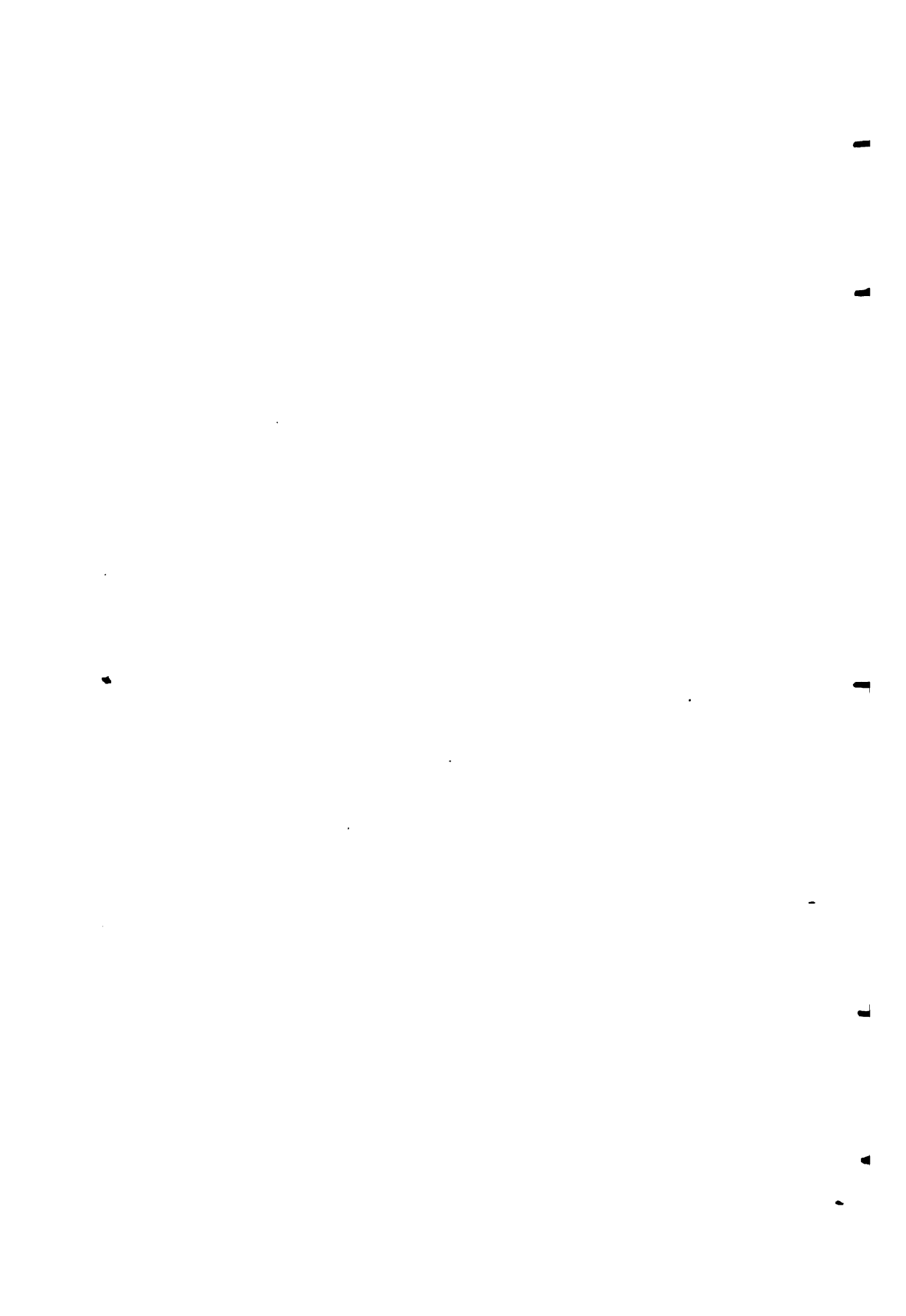
Greenwich Hospital.



the East India docks and the Poplar docks and the basin. There are also half a dozen of the little old repairing docks left, and there is a railway station with a terrace looking out upon the river; there is a street running east, and another running north. Both streets are stopped by Bow Creek; the aspect of both causes the visitor to glance nervously about him for a protecting policeman. And here, as regards the riverside, we may stop. Beyond Bow Creek we are outside the limits of London. There follow many more former hamlets—West Ham, East Ham, Canning Town, Silverton, and others—now towns. These places, for us, must remain names.



IV
THE WALL



IV

THE WALL

I DO not mean the old wall of London, that which was built by the Romans, was rebuilt by Alfred, was repaired and maintained at great cost until the sixteenth century, when it began to be neglected, as it was no longer of any use in the defense of the City. For two hundred years more the gates still stood, but the wall was pulled down and built upon, no one interfering. That wall is gone, save for fragments here and there. I speak of another wall, and one of even greater importance.

No one knows when this other wall was first built. It was so early that all record of its building has been lost. It is the wall by which the low-lying marshes of the Thames, once overflowed by every high tide, were protected from the river and converted into pastures and meadow-land and plow-land. It is the wall which runs all along the north bank of the river and is carried round the marshy Essex shores and round those Essex islands which were once broad expanses of mud at low tide, and at high tide shallow and useless stretches of water. It protects also the south bank wherever the marsh prevails. It has been a work of the highest importance, to London first, and to the country next. It has converted a vast malarious belt of land into a fertile country, and it has made East London possible, because a great part of East London is built upon the reclaimed marsh, now drained and dry. In order to understand what the wall

means, what it is, what it has done, and what it is doing, we must get beyond the houses and consider it as it runs along the riverside, with fields on the left hand and the flowing water many feet higher than the fields on the right.

In order to get at the wall, then, we must take the train to Barking, about eight miles from London Bridge. This ancient village, once the seat of a rich nunnery, some remains of which you may still see there, is on the little river Roding; we walk down its banks to its confluence with the Thames. There, after suffering a while from the fumes of certain chemical works, we find ourselves on the wall, with no houses before us; we leave the works behind us, and we step out upon the most curious walk that one may find within the four seas that encompass our island.

No one ever walks upon this wall; once beyond the chemical works we are in the most lonely spot in the whole of England; no one is curious about it; no one seems to know that this remarkable construction, extending for about a hundred and fifty miles, even exists; you will see no one in the meadows that lie protected by the wall; you may walk mile after mile along it in a solitude most strange and most mysterious. Even the steamer which works her noisy way up the broad river, even the barge with its brown sail, crawling slowly up the stream with the flowing tide, does not destroy the sense of silence or that of solitude. We seem not to hear the screw of the steamer or even the scream of the siren; overhead the lark sings; there are no other birds visible about the treeless fields; the tinkle of a sheep-bell reminds one of Dartmoor and its silent hillsides.

Presently there falls upon the pilgrim a strange feeling of mystery. The wall belongs to all the centuries which have known London; it is a part of the dead past; it speaks to him of things that have been; it reminds him of the Vikings and the Danes when they came sweeping up the river in their long, light ships, the shields hanging outside,

the fair-haired, blue-eyed fighting men thirsting for the joy of battle; they are on their way to besiege London; they will pull down part of the bridge, but they will not take the City. The fresh breeze that follows with the flood reminds him of the pageant and procession, the splendid pageant, the never-ending procession, of the trade which is the strength and the pride and the wealth of London, which has been passing before this wall for all these centuries, and always, as it passes now, unseen and unregarded, because no one ever stands upon the wall to see it.

A strange, ghostly place. If one were to tell of a murder, this would be a fitting place for the crime. Perhaps, however, it might be difficult to persuade his victim to accompany him. The murderer would choose the time between the passing of two ships; no one could possibly see him; he would conduct his victim along the wall, conversing pleasantly, till the favorable moment arrived. The deed accomplished, he would leave the wall and strike across the fields till he found a path leading to the haunts of man. Any secret or forbidden thing might be conveniently transacted on the wall; it would be a perfectly safe place for the conjuration of conspirators and the concoction of their plans, or it would be a place to hide a stolen treasure, or a place where a hunted man could find refuge.

Let us stand still for a moment and look around. The wall is about fifteen feet high; at the base it is perhaps thirty feet wide; the sides slope toward the path on the top, which is about seven feet across; the outside is faced with stone; the inside is turfed. Looking south the river runs at our feet, the broad and noble river which carries to the port of London treasures from the uttermost ends of the earth and sends out other treasures in exchange. There are many rivers in the world which are longer and broader,—for instance, the Danube and the Rhine, even the Orinoco and the Amazon,—but if we consider the country through which the

river flows, the wealth which it creates, the wealth which it distributes, the long history of the Thames, then, surely, it is the greatest of all rivers. As we stand over it we mark how its waters are stirred into little waves by the fresh breeze which never fails with the flood of the tide; how the sun lights up the current rolling upward in full stream, so that we think of strong manhood resolved and purposed; it is not for nothing that the tide rolls up the stream. Then we mark the ships that pass, ships of all kinds, great and small; the ships and the barges, the fishing smacks and the coasters, some that sail and some that steam; the heavy timber ship from the Baltic, the Newcastle collier, the huge liner; they pass in succession along the broad highway, one after the other. This splendid pageant of London trade is daily offered for the admiration of those upon the wall. But it is a procession with no spectators; day after day it passes unregarded, for no one walks upon the wall. And if a stray traveler stands to look on, the pageant presently becomes a thing of the imagination, a dream, an effect of animated photographs.

On the land side lie the fields which have been rescued from this tidal flow; they are obviously below the level of the river; one understands, looking across them, how the river ran of old over these flats, making vast lagoons at high tide. It is useful to see the fact recorded in a book or on a map; but here one sees that it really must have been so. Gradually, as one passes along the wall and looks landward, the history of the reclamation of the marsh unfolds itself; we see in places, here and there, low mounds, which are lines of former embankments; these are not all parallel with the river; they are thrust forward, protected by banks at the side, small pieces rescued by some dead and gone farmer, who was rewarded by having as his own, with no rent to pay, the land he had snatched from the tide. Perhaps it was long before rent was thought of; perhaps it was easier to build the bank and to take a slip of the foreshore and the

marsh, with its black and fertile soil, than it was to cut down the trees in the forest and to clear the land; perhaps these embankments were constructed by the lake dwellers, who made their round huts upon piles driven into the mud, and after many thousands of years made the discovery that it was better to be dry than wet, and better to have no marsh fevers to face than to grow inured to them.

When was this wall built? How long has it been standing? Is it the first original wall? Have there been rebuildings? Learned antiquaries have proved that long before the advent of the Romans the south of Britain was occupied by people who had learned such civilization as Gauls had to teach them. This was no small advance, as you would acknowledge if you looked into the subject; they knew many arts; they already had many wants; they had arrived at a certain standard of comfort; they carried on an extensive trade.

How long ago? It is quite impossible to answer that question. But there are other facts ascertained. Let us sum them up in order.

1. South Britain, at least, and probably the Midland as well, had the same religion, the same arts, the same customs, the same forms of society, as Gaul.

2. There was an extensive trade between Britain and Gaul—of what antiquity no one knows.

3. When we first hear of London it was a place of resort for many foreign merchants.

4. Tessellated pavements of Roman date have been found in Southwark at a level lower than that of the river.

5. Tacitus made Galgacus, the British leader, indignant because the Britons were compelled by the Romans to expend their strength and labor on fencing off woods and marshes.

6. Roman buildings are found behind the wall in Essex. To this point I will return immediately.

7. No settlement or building or cultivation whatever was

possible beside the river anywhere near London until the wall had been built.

8. Are we to believe that a city possessing a large trade, attracting many foreign merchants, would have continued to stand in the midst of a vast malarious swamp?

9. Indications have been found of an older wall, consisting of trunks of trees laid beside each other, the interstices crammed with small branches. Such a rude wall might be effective in keeping back the great body of water.

10. In order to arrive at the civilization represented by a large foreign trade and a trading city there must have been many years of communication and intercourse. In fact, I see no reason why London should not have existed as a trading-place for centuries after Thorney was practically deserted, having ferries instead of a bridge, and centuries before the coming of the Romans.

These considerations show the conclusion to which I have arrived. For centuries there had been a constant intercourse between the Gauls and the southern Britons; trading centers had been established, notably in Thorney Island, at Southampton, at Lymne, which was afterward an important Roman station, and at Dover. When the ships began to sail up the Thames the superior position of London was discovered, and that port quickly took over the greater part of the trade by the Thorney route. When London grew, it became important to reclaim the malarious marsh and the wasted miles of mud. Some kind of embankment, perhaps that old kind with trunks of trees, was constructed. At first they put up the wall on the opposite side, which the Saxons afterward called the South Work (Southwark), meaning the river wall and not a wall of fortification; then they pushed out branches on the north side and they carried the wall gradually, not all at once, but taking years, even centuries, over the work, down the Thames, along the Essex shores and round the mud islands, but the last not till modern times.

At the end of the Essex wall there is an instructive place at which to consider its probable date.

It is a very lovely and deserted place, about a mile and a half from a picturesque little village, five or six miles from a railway station, called Bradwell—I suppose the meaning of the name is the broad wall. When the visitor reaches the seashore he finds the wall running along, a fine and massive earthwork; but behind the wall, and evidently built after the wall, there are the earthworks of a Roman fortress; you can still trace the ramparts after all these years though the interior is now plowed up; this was one of the forts by means of which the count of the Saxon shore (*Comes littoris Saxonici*) kept the country safe from the pirates, always on the watch for the chance of a descent; his ships patrolled the narrow seas, but always, up the creeks and rivers, all the way from Ostend to Norway, lay the pirate,—Saxon, Dane, Viking,—watching, waiting, ready to cross over if those police ships relaxed their watchfulness, ready to harry and to murder. You may stand on the wall, where the Roman sentinel kept watch; you may strain your eyes for a sight of the pirate fleet, fifty ships strong and every ship stout, clinker built, sixty feet long and carrying a hundred men. As soon as the Romans took their ships away they did come, and they came to stay, and as soon as the Saxons forgot their old science of navigation the Danes came, and after the Danes, or with them, the men of Norway. Long after this Roman fortress had been deserted and forgotten, so that to the people it was nothing more than a collection of mounds round which clung some vague tradition of terror, a person, whose very name is now unknown, built here a chapel dedicated to St. Peter; the chapel, still called St. Peter's on the Wall, is now a barn. Ruined chapel, ruined fortress, both stand beside the wall, which still fulfils its purpose and keeps out the waters from the lowlands within.

Why do I mention this chapel? What has it to do with

East London? Well, consider two or three facts in connection with this chapel. If you walk along the wall you presently come to a little village church; it is called the Church of West Thurrock; the church, like that old chapel of St. Peter, stands beside, or on, the wall; it is a venerable church; it has its venerable churchyard; it is filled with the graves of rustics brought here to lie in peace for a thousand years and more. And there is no village, or hamlet, or farm, or anything within sight. It was built beside the wall. Again, they built two churches at least, beside, or on, the wall of London City, not to speak of the churches built at five gates of the City; they built a hermitage beside the wall at Wapping; another by the city wall at Aldgate; on London Bridge they built a chapel; on the wall in Essex, as we have seen, they built a chapel. I see in all these churches and chapels built beside, or on, a wall, so many chapels erected for prayers for the preservation of the wall; at West Thurrock the people of the farmhouses made the chapel their parish church, and so it has continued to the present day. But it was originally a chapel on the wall, intended to consecrate and protect the wall. Perhaps there are others along the wall, but I do not know of any.

I have said that it is possible that the wall stands upon the site of earlier attempts to rescue the land and to keep out the water. For instance, when the excavations were made for the foundation of the new London Bridge, three separate sets of piles for rescuing more and more of the foreshore were laid bare, and lower down the river, as I have said, the workmen found, in repairing the wall, a very curious arrangement of trunks of trees laid one upon the other, with branches and brushwood between, evidently part of a wooden work meant for a dam or tidal wall.

The maintenance of the wall has always been a costly business; the tides find out the weak places, and bore into them and behind them like a gimlet that grows every day

larger and longer and more powerful. For instance, there was a flourishing monastery near the junction of the Lea with the Thames; it was called the House of Stratford Langthorne. One morning the brethren woke to find that the river wall had given way and that their pastures and meadows, their cornlands and their gardens were all three feet deep in water. They had to get away as fast as they could and to remain in a much smaller and more uncomfortable cell, on higher ground, until the wall could be patched up again. In the fifteenth century the pious ladies of Barking Nunnery made a similar discovery; their portion of the river wall had broken down. They had no funds for its repair. Then King Richard, the third of that name, came to their assistance. This pious monarch had got through with most of his enemies and nearly all his relations, and was just then going off to settle matters with his cousin, Henry the Welshman, when this misfortune to the Barking nuns happened.

Fifty years later the Plumstead marshes were "drowned" by the breaking of the wall. In 1690 the Grays Marsh, lower down the river, was overflowed by the same accident; in 1707 the wall gave way at a place called Dagenham; it took nearly twenty years to repair the wall, which was carried away time after time; the receding tide carried out into the bed of the river so much earth that a bank was formed in mid-channel, and it seemed as if the river would be choked. At last, however, it was found possible to construct a wall which would stand the highest tide. If we walk along this part of the wall we observe a large black pool of water; this was left behind when the wall shut out the river; the lake still remains and is full of fish, and on Sundays it is surrounded by anglers, who stand all day long intent upon expectations which are seldom rewarded. Out of this lake and its fishing originated the ministerial white-bait dinner. It began when the occupant of a house beside this lake invited William Pitt to dine with him in order to taste the eels of

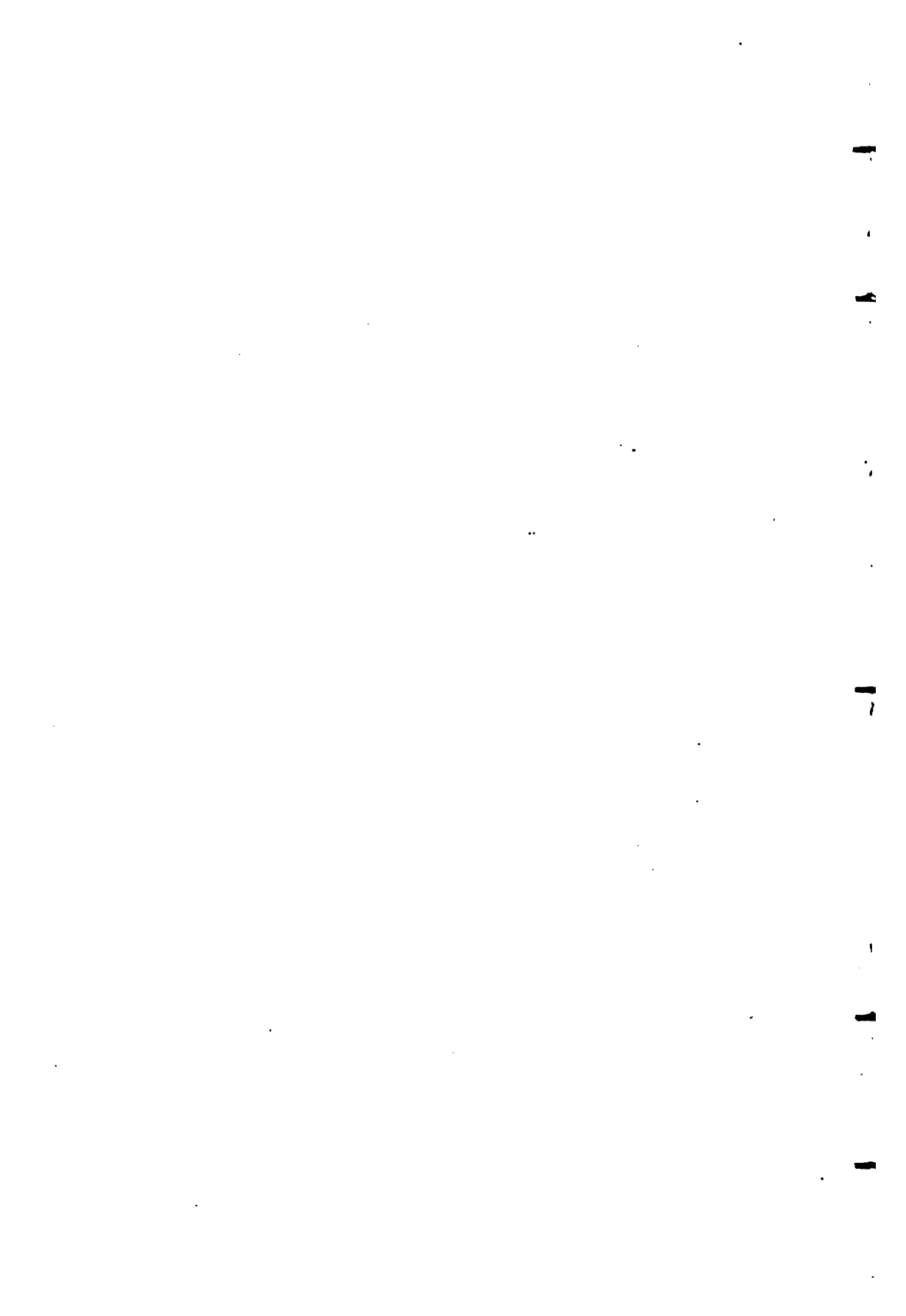
the pond and the white-bait of the river. Pitt brought other members of the Cabinet, the dinner became a yearly institution, the place was presently transferred from Dagenham to Greenwich, and the ministerial white-bait dinner was held every year, in June or July, until ten or twelve years ago, when the pleasant institution was stopped.

To return to the date of the wall. We have seen that nobody knows when it was put up, that it must have been there in some form or other for a very long time. It is tolerably certain that the wall was either built by the Romans or that it existed before their time. My own belief is, as I have stated, that it was put up here and there as occasion or necessity served, that some of the land was rescued strip by strip, each time by a new wall advanced before the others. Embankments, mounds, and traces of a more ancient wall can be observed, as I have said, at many points; it is worthy of note that in the county of Lincoln, where there is also the necessity of a sea-wall, there are two, one standing at a distance of half a mile in advance of the other. And I think that this process of rescuing the land has gone on at intervals to the present day. Even now there are broad stretches of mud along the Essex shore which might be reclaimed; at the present moment there are projects afloat for reclaiming the whole of the Wash, but the conditions of agriculture in England are no longer such as to encourage any attempts to add more acres to estates which at present seem unable to pay either landlord or farmer.

I have said enough, however, to show that this earthwork, so much neglected and so little known, is really a most important structure; that it has made East London possible, and London itself healthy, while it has converted miles and miles of barren swamp into smiling meadows and fertile farms.

V

THE FACTORY GIRL



V

THE FACTORY GIRL

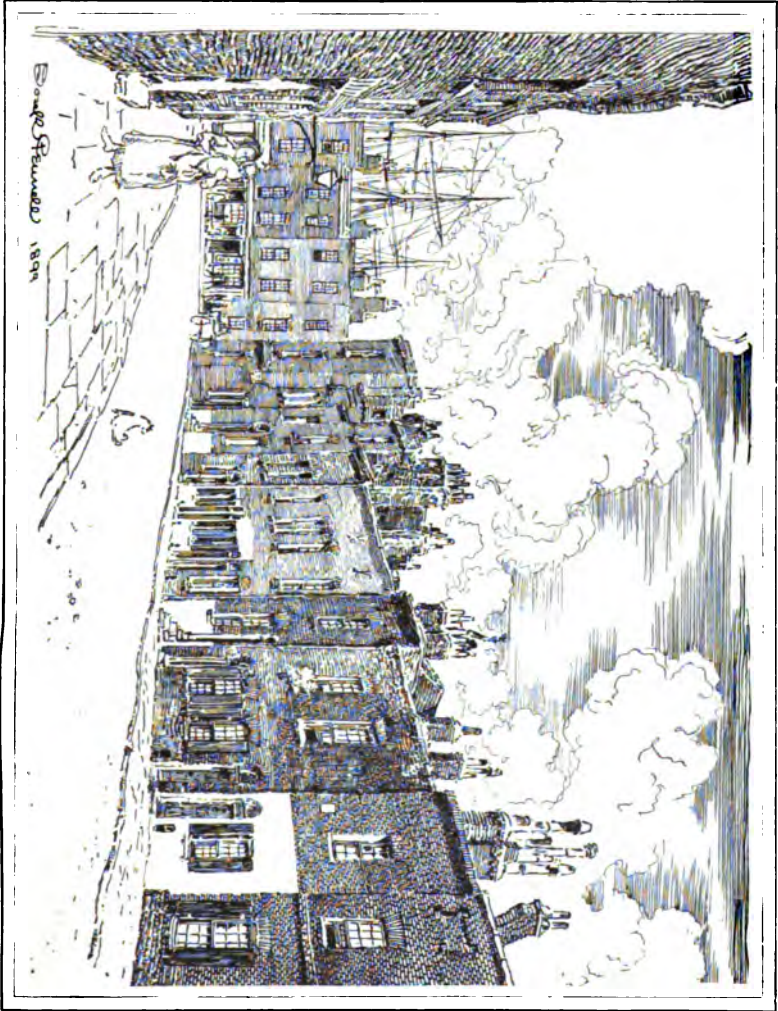
EAST LONDON—one cannot repeat it too often—is a city of working bees. As we linger and loiter among the streets multitudinous, we hear, as from a hive, the low, contented murmur of continuous and patient work. There are two millions of working-people in this city. The children work at school; the girls and boys, and the men and women, work in factory, in shop, and at home, in dock and in wharf and in warehouse; all day long and all the year round, these millions work. They are clerks, accountants, managers, foremen, engineers, stokers, porters, stevedores, dockers, smiths, craftsmen of all kinds. They are girls who make things, girls who sew things, girls who sell things. There are among them many poor, driven, sweated creatures, and the sweaters themselves are poor, driven, sweated creatures, for sweating once begun is handed on from one to the other as carefully and as religiously as any holy lamp of learning. They work from early morning till welcome evening. The music of this murmur, rightly understood, is like the soft and distant singing of a hymn of praise. For the curse of labor has been misunderstood; without work man would be even as the beasts of the field. It is the necessity of work that makes him human; of necessity he devises and discovers and invents, because he would die if he did not work; and because he has to subdue the animal within him. The animal is solitary; the man must be gregarious. He must

make a friend of his brother, he must obey the stronger, he must make laws, he must fight with nature, and compel her to give up her secrets. It is only by means of work that man can rise; it is his ladder; in the sweat of his face he eats his bread—yea, the bread of life. It is not with any pity that we should listen to this murmur. It should be with pure contentment and gratitude, for the murmur, though it speaks partly of the whirr of ten thousand wheels and partly of those who stand and serve those wheels, speaks also of this blessed quality of work, that it enables men to use the body for the sake of the soul. Man must work.

Imagine, if you can, what would follow if you held up your hand and said: "Listen, all. There will be no more work. You may stop the engines, or they may run down of their own accord. You may take off your aprons and wash your hands. You may all sit down for the rest of your lives. Your food will be waiting for you when you want it. Eat, drink, and be happy if you can." If they can! But can they, with nothing to do—no work to do, only, like the sheep in the field, to browse, or, like the wolves of the forest, to rend and tear and slay?

If you can use your eyes as well as your ears, look about you. It is really like looking at a hive of bees, is it not? There are thousands of them, and they are all alike; they are all doing the same thing; they are all living the same lives; they wake and work and rest and sleep, and so life passes by. If you look more closely you will observe differences. No two human creatures, to begin with, are alike in face. More closely still, and you will discover that in the greatest crowd, where the people are, like sheep in a fold, huddled together, every one is as much for himself—there is as much individuality here—as in the places where every one stands by himself and has room to move in and a choice to make.

Let us take a single creature out of these millions. Perhaps if we learn how one lives, how one regards the world,



Wade Street, Limchouse.

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we may understand, in some degree, this agitated, confused, restless, incoherent, inarticulate mass.

I introduce you to a baby. Her name is Liz. She has as yet but a few days of life behind her. She is hardly conscious of hunger, cold, or uneasiness, or any of the things with which life first makes its beginning apparent to the half-awakened brain. She opens eyes that understand nothing—neither form, nor distance, nor color, nor any differences; she sees men, like trees, walking. When she is hungry she wails; when she is not hungry she sleeps. We will leave the child with her mother, and we will stand aside and watch while the springs and summers pass, and while she grows from an infant to a child, a girl, a woman.

The room where the baby lies is a first-floor front, in a house of four rooms and a ruinous garret, belonging to a street which is occupied, like all the streets in this quarter, wholly by the people of the lower working-class. This is London Street, Ratcliffe. It is a real street, with a real name, and it is in a way typical of East London of the lower kind. The aristocracy of labor, the foremen and engineers of shipyards and works, live about Stepney Church, half a mile to the north. Their streets are well kept, their doorsteps are white, their windows are clean, there are things displayed in the front windows of their houses. Here you will see a big Bible, here a rosewood desk, here a vase full of artificial flowers, here a bird-cage with foreign birds,—Avvadavats, Bengalees, love-birds, or a canary,—here a glass case containing coral or "Venus's fingers" from the Philippines, here something from India carved in fragrant wood, here a piece of brasswork from Benares. There is always something to show the position and superiority of the tenant. It is the distinctive mark of the lower grades of labor that they have none of these ornaments. Indeed, if by any chance such possessions fell in their way they would next week be in the custody of the pawnbroker; they would "go in."

We are, then, in a first-floor front. Look out of the window upon the street below : meanwhile the baby grows. The street contains forty houses. Each house has four rooms, two or three have six ; most of the people have two rooms. There are, therefore, roughly speaking, about one hundred families residing in this street. The door-steps, the pavement, and the roadway are swarming with children ; the street is their only playground. Here the little girl of six bears about in her arms, staggering under the weight, but a careful nurse, her little sister, aged twelve months ; here the children take their breakfast and their dinner ; here they run and play in summer and in winter. It seems to be never too hot or too cold for them. They are ragged, they are bareheaded, they are barefooted and barelegged, their toys are bits of wood and bones and oyster-shells, transformed by the imagination of childhood into heaven knows what of things precious and splendid. Of what they have not they know nothing ; but, then, they mind nothing, therefore pity would be thrown away upon them. It is the only world they know ; they are happy in their ignorance ; they are feeling the first joy of life. By their ruddy faces and sturdy limbs you can see that the air they breathe is wholesome, and that they have enough to eat.

The room is furnished sufficiently, according to the standards of the family. There is a table, with two chairs ; there is a chest of drawers with large glass handles. On this chest stands a structure of artificial flowers under a glass shade. This is the sacred symbol of respectability. It is for the tenement what the Bible or the coral in the window is for the house. So long as we have our glass shade with its flowers we are in steady work, and beyond the reach of want. On each side of the glass shade are arranged the cups and saucers, plates and drinking-glasses, belonging to the family. There are also exhibited with pride all the bottles of medicine recently taken by the various members.

It is a strange pride, but one has observed it among people of a more exalted station. There are also set out with the bottles certain heart-shaped velvet pincushions, made by the sailors, and considered as decorations of the highest æsthetic value. The chest of drawers is used for the clothes of the family—the slender supplement of what is on the family back. It is also the storehouse for everything that belongs to the daily life. There is a cupboard beside the chimney, with two shelves. Any food that may be left over, and the small supplies of tea and sugar, are placed on the upper shelf, coals on the lower. On the table stands, always ready, a teapot, and beside it a half-cut loaf and a plate with margarine, the substitute for butter. Margarine is not an unwholesome compound. It is perhaps better than bad butter; it is made of beef fat, clarified and colored to resemble butter. I am told that other people eat it in comfortable assurance that it is butter.

When the child grows old enough to observe things she will remark, from time to time, the absence of the chest of drawers. At other times she will discover that the drawers are empty. These vacuities she will presently connect with times of tightness. When money is scarce and work is not to be got things “go in” of their own accord; the pawnbroker receives them.

She will learn more than this; she will learn the great virtue of the poor, the virtue that redeems so many bad habits—generosity. For the chest of drawers and the best clothes are more often “in” to oblige a neighbor in difficulties than to relieve their own embarrassments. The people of Ratcliffe are all neighbors and all friends; to be sure, they are frequently enemies, otherwise life would be monotonous. Always some one is in trouble, always some of the children are hungry, always there is rent to pay, always there is some one out of work. Liz will learn that if one can help, one must. She will learn this law without any formula

or written code, not out of books, not in church, not in school; she will learn it from the daily life around her. Generosity will become part of her very nature.

You will perceive, however, that this child is not born of the very poor; her parents are not in destitution; her father is, in fact, a docker, and, being a big, burly fellow, born and brought up in the country, he gets tolerably regular employment and very fair wages. If he would spend less than the third or the half of his wages in drink his wife might have a four-roomed cottage. But we must take him as he is. His children suffer no serious privation. They are clothed and fed; they have the chance of living respectably, and with such decencies as belong to their ideals and their standards. In a word, Liz will be quite a commonplace, average girl of the lower working-class.

The first duty of a mother is to "harden" the baby. With this view, Liz was fed, while still a tiny infant, on rusks soaked in warm water, and when she was a year old her mother began to give her scraps of beefsteak, slightly fried, to suck; she also administered fish fried in oil—the incense and fragrance of this delicacy fills the whole neighborhood, and hangs about the streets day and night like a cloud. For drink she gave the baby the water in which whiting had been boiled; this is considered a sovereign specific for building up a child's constitution. Sometimes, it is true, the treatment leads to unforeseen results. Another child, for instance, about the same age as Liz, and belonging to the same street, was fed by its mother on red herring, and, oddly enough, refused to get any nourishment out of that delightful form of food. They carried it to the Children's Hospital, where the doctor said it was being starved to death, and made the most unkind remarks about the mother—most unjust as well, for the poor woman had no other thought or intention than to "harden the inside" of her child, and all the friends and neighbors were called in to prove that plenty of herring had been administered.

As soon as Liz was three years of age she had the same food as her parents and elder sisters. You shall dine with the family presently. For breakfast and tea and supper, and for any occasional "bever" or snack, she had a slice of bread and margarine, which she cut for herself when, like Mrs. Gamp, so disposed. It was indeed terrifying to see the small child wielding a bread-knife nearly as big as herself. She got plenty of pennies when work was regular; nobody is so generous with his pennies as the man who needs them most. She spent these casual windfalls in sweets and apples, passing the latter round among her friends for friendly bites, and dividing the former in equal portions. This cheap confectionery for the children of the kerb and the door-step supplies the place of sweet puddings, for the mystery of the pudding is unfortunately little known or understood by the mothers of Ratcliffe.

In the matter of beer, Liz became very early in life acquainted with its taste. There is a kind of cheap porter, sold at three farthings a pint, considered grateful and comforting by the feminine mind of Ratcliffe. What more natural than that the child should be invited to finish what her mother has left of the pint? It would not be much. What more motherly, when one is taking a little refreshment in a public house, than to give a taste to the children playing on the pavement outside? And what more natural than for the children to look for these windfalls, and to gather round the public house expectant? It seems rough on the little ones to begin so early; it is contrary to modern use and custom, but we need not suppose that much harm is done to a child by giving it beer occasionally. Formerly all children had beer for breakfast, beer for dinner, and beer for supper. In Belgium very little children have their bock for dinner. The mischief in the case of our Liz and her friends was that she got into the habit of looking for drink more stimulating than tea, and that the habit remained with her and grew with her.

At three years of age Liz passed, so to speak, out of the nursery, which was the door-step and the kerb, into the school-room. She was sent to the nearest Board-school, where she remained under instruction for eleven long years. She began by learning certain highly important lessons; first, that she had to obey; next, that she had to be quiet; and, thirdly, that she had to be clean. As regards the first and second, obedience and order were not enforced in the nursery of London Street. They were, it is true, sometimes enjoined with accompaniment of a cuff and a slap, not unkindly meant, in the home. As for cleanliness, one wash a week, namely, on Sunday morning, had hitherto been considered sufficient. It was, however, a thorough wash. The unkempt locks, brown with the dust and grime of a week's street play, came out of the tub a lovely mass of light-brown, silky curls; the child's fair skin emerged from its coating of mud; her rosy cheeks showed their natural color; her round, white arms fairly shone and glowed in the sunshine. On Sunday morning Liz presented the appearance of a very pretty child, clean and fair and winsome. As soon as she went to school, however, she had to undergo the same process every morning except Saturday. If she appeared in school unwashed she had to go home again; not only that, but there was often unpleasantness in the matter of pinafore. Saturday is a school holiday, therefore no one washes on Saturday, and face and hands and pinafore may all go grimy together.

Liz remained at school from three to fourteen years of age. What she learned I do not exactly know. Some years ago I looked through some "readers" for Board-schools, and came to the conclusion that nothing at all could be learned from them, counting scraps as worth nothing. But I hear that they have altered their "readers." Still, if you remember that no one has any books at all in London Street, that even a halfpenny paper is not often seen there, that no talk goes on which can instruct a child in anything, you will



Pink May
/ 29

In an East-End Gin-Shop.

own that a child may be at school even for eleven years and yet learn very little. And since she found no means of carrying on her education after she left school, no free libraries, no encouragement from her companions, you will not be surprised to hear that all she had learned from books presently dropped from her like a cloak or wrapper for which she had no further use. Let us be reasonable. The Board-school taught her, besides a certain small amount of temporary and short-lived book-lore, some kind of elementary manners—a respect, at least, for manners; the knowledge of what manners may mean. The clergy and the machinery of the parish cannot teach these things. It can be done only at the Board-school. It is the school, and not the church, which softens manners and banishes some of the old brutality, because, you see, they do not go to church, and they must go to school. How rough, how rude, the average girl of Ratcliffe was before the Board-schools were opened, Liz herself neither knows nor comprehends. These schools have caused the disappearance of old characteristics once thought to be ingrained habits. Their civilizing influence during the last thirty years has been enormous. They have not only added millions to the numbers of those who read a great deal and perhaps—but this is doubtful—think a little, but they have abolished much of the old savagery. I declare that the life of this street as it was thirty or forty years ago simply could not be written down with any approach to truth in these pages.

Let me only quote the words of Professor Huxley, who began life by practising as a medical man in this quarter. "I have seen the Polynesian savage," I once heard him say in a speech, "in his primitive condition, before the missionary or the blackbirder or the beach-comber got at him. With all his savagery, he was not half so savage, so unclean, so irreclaimable, as the tenant of a tenement in an East London slum." These words open the door to unbounded

flights of imagination. Leave that vanished world, leave the savage slum of Huxley's early manhood, to the region of poetry and fancy, to the unwritten, to the suggested, to the half-whispered. It exists no longer; it has been improved.

Liz passed through school, then, from one standard to the next. We have seen that she learned manners, order, obedience, and the duty of cleanly clothes and cleanly language. She learned also to love teacher and school. Teacher came to see her when she was ill, and brought her nice things. Teacher kissed her. There were others, however, who took a mean advantage of her affectionate nature, and used it as a means of keeping her out of mischief—ladies who went in and out of the streets and houses, not afraid of anything; who gathered the children together on Sundays, and sang with them and talked to them, and gave them oranges. These ladies knew all the children. When they walked down the streets the very little ones ran after them, clinging to their skirts, catching at their hands, in the hope of a word and a kiss. Liz, among the rest, was easily softened by kindness. She had two schools,—that provided by the country and that provided by these ladies, who taught her more than books can teach,—and both schools, if you please, were provided for nothing. Whatever may happen to Liz in after life, her respect for manners and for the life of order will remain. And sometimes, when things look very black and there is real cause for sadness and repentance, this respect may be the poor girl's most valuable asset.

At the age of fourteen, when she had to leave school, she was a sturdy, well-built girl, square-shouldered, rather short, but of a better frame than most of her companions, because her father was country-born; her features were sharp, her face was plain, but not unpleasing; her gray eyes were quick and restless, her lips were mobile; her cheek was somewhat pale, but not worn and sunken. She looked abounding in life and health; she was full of fun, and quick

to laugh on the smallest provocation; she was ready-witted and prompt with repartee and retort; she danced as she went along the street, because she could not walk sedately; if a barrel-organ came that way she danced in the road, knowing half a dozen really pretty steps and figures. She had something in her quick movements, in the restlessness of her eyes, in the half-suspicious turn of the head, of the street sparrow, the only bird which she knew. If you grow up among street sparrows there is every reason for the adoption of some of their manners; the same resemblance to the sparrow, which is an impudent, saucy bird, always hungry, always on the lookout for something more, may be observed in other street children. She was affectionate with her companions, but always watchful for her own chance.

In her views of the conduct of life she was no strict moralist. She was ready to condone some things which more rigid maidens condemn. She would not, for instance, bear malice because her brother, for one of the smaller crimes, such as gambling on the pavement, got into trouble; nor would she judge him harshly if he was found in the possession of things "picked up"—unconsidered trifles; nor would she resent being knocked down by her brother when in drink. She had too often seen her mother cuffed by her father when he came home drunk to feel any resentment about such a trifle. In sober moments her brother did not use his fist upon her, nor did her father, except under the provocation of drink, drive the whole family flying into the street by "taking the strap" to everybody.

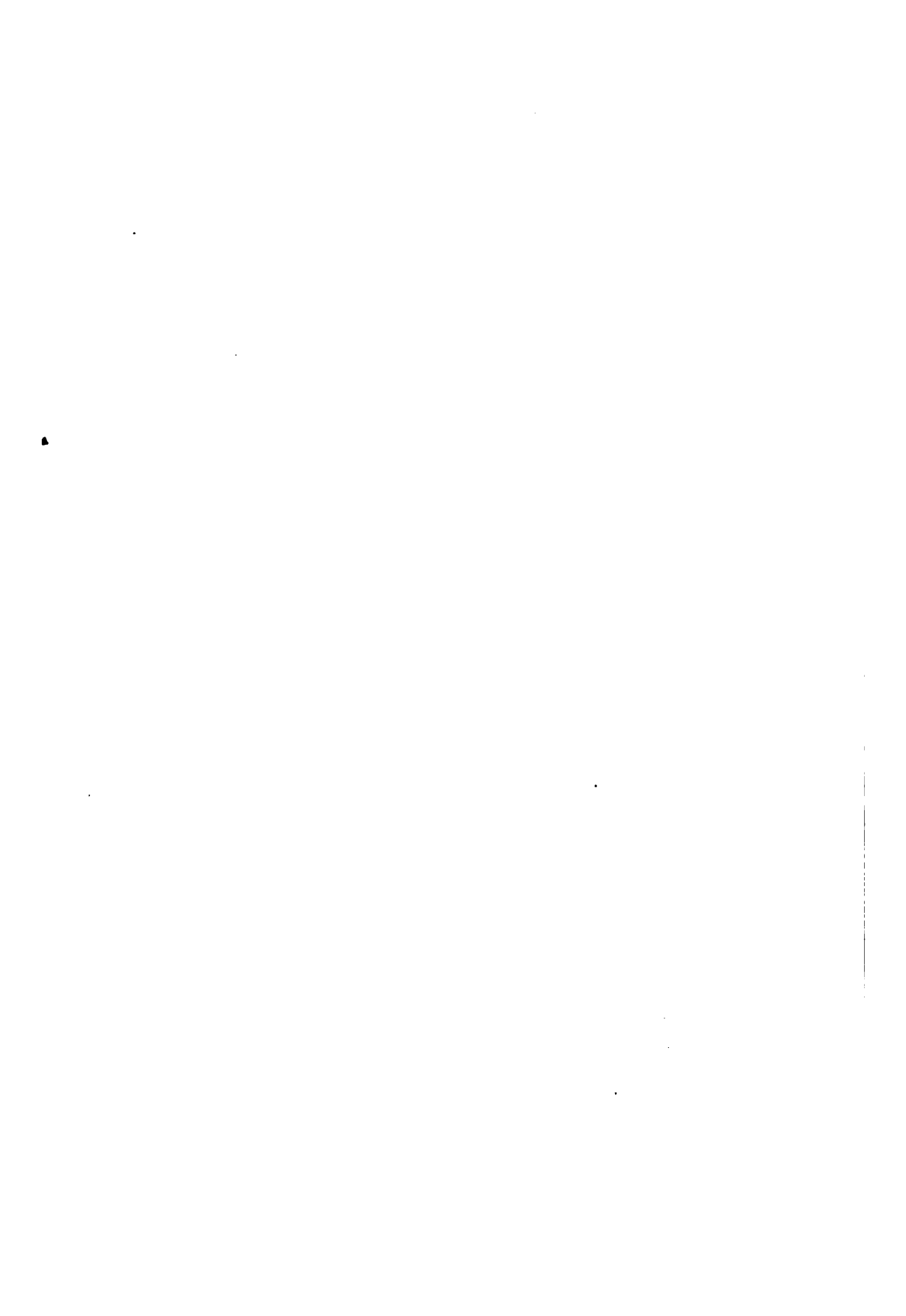
What did she know about the outer world? From her books and her school little enough. Her own country, like every other country, was to her a geographical expression. Even of London she knew nothing, though from the river stairs and foreshore she could see a good deal of it. Once a year, however, she had been taken for a day in the country, either by train to the nearest seaside place, or by brakes

and wagonettes to Epping Forest. She was therefore by no means ignorant of green fields. Why, there was the "Island Garden," in the Isle of Dogs, close at hand. But of trees and flowers and birds individually she knew nothing, and she never would know anything. A bird was a bird, a tree was a tree to her. On the whole of nature her mind was a blank. About her own country, its history, its position, its achievements, she had learned something, but it was rapidly becoming a vague and dim memory; of literature she knew nothing. She had learned a little singing, and had an ear for melody. She never read either newspapers or books, not even penny story-books, therefore she added nothing to her scanty knowledge.

What did she think about and what did she talk about? When one lives in a crowded street, where every family lives in one room, or in two at the most, there is an unending, perennial stream of interest in the fortune and the conduct, the good luck and the bad luck, of the neighbors. Liz and her companions did exactly what other people do in country towns much duller than London Street—they talked about one another and the people about them. They talked also of the time when they, like their elder sisters, would go about as they pleased: to the Queen's Music-hall and to the Pavilion Theatre; when they could enjoy the delights of walking up and down their favorite boulevard—it is called Brook Street—all the long winter evening, each with her young man. The young girls always talk about the life before them. They know perfectly what it is going to be; they see it all round them. Who are they that they should expect anything but the common round, the common lot? They also, like their elder sisters, talk of dress. Already they plan and contrive for some extra bit of finery. Let us not believe that Liz was ever troubled with vacuity of mind or with lack of interest in her thoughts and conversation. There is in London Street even too much incident. Where there are



The British Workman in Epping Forest.



always in the street men out of work, families whose "sticks" are all "in," children who are kept alive by the generosity of other people, only not quite so poor as themselves; where there is always sickness, always violence, always drunkenness, always lads taken away by the man in blue, and always the joy of youth and the animation of children and young girls—why, Piccadilly is a waste by comparison, and Berkeley Square is like unto Tadmor in the desert.

In the case of Liz and her friends there was an additional interest in the river and the craft of all kinds. The children would stand on Ratcliffe Cross Stairs and gaze out upon the rushing tide and upon the ships that passed up and down. At low tide they ran out upon the mud, with bare feet, and picked up apronfuls of coal to carry home. Needs must that a child who lives within sight of ships should imagine strange things and get a sense of distance and of mystery. And sometimes a sailor would find his way to London Street—a sailor full of stories of strange lands across the seas, such as would make even the dullest of Ratcliffe girls launch out in imagination beyond the dim and dusty street.

Once, for instance, a cousin came. It was at Christmas. Never was such a Christmas. He was a sailor. He came from the West India docks—or was it from Limehouse Basin? It was the only time; he never came again. But could any one privileged to be present ever forget the celebration of that home-coming? He had money in his pocket—lots of money. He threw it all upon the table—nine pounds in gold, Liz remembered, and a heap of silver and copper. On Christmas eve the feast began. Relations and far-off cousins were found and invited. The family had two rooms. The company, with the guests, numbered twenty-one. A barrel of beer and any quantity of whisky and gin were laid in for the occasion. No more joyful family reunion was ever known. Outside, there were the usual Christmas rejoic-

ings. In the street the drunken men reeled about; there was an occasional fight; the houses were all lighted up, but nowhere was a nobler spread or a longer feast or a more joyous Christmas known than in those two rooms. It took three days and three nights. From Friday, which was Christmas eve, till Monday, which was Boxing-day, this feast continued. During all this time not one among them, man, woman, or child, undressed or went to bed. The children fell asleep, with flushed faces and heavy heads, in corners, on the landing, anywhere; the others feasted and drank, danced and sang, for three days and three nights. Now and then one would drop out and fall prone upon the floor; the others went on regardless. Presently the sleeper awoke, sat up, recovered his wandering wits, and joined the revelers again.

For plenty and profusion it was like unto the wedding-feast of Camacho. There were roast geese and roast ducks, roast turkey and roast beef, roast pork and sausages and ham, and everything else that the shops at this festive season could supply.

On the third day, toward three in the afternoon of Monday, lo, a miracle! For the money was all gone, and the barrel of beer was empty, and the bottles were empty, and the bones of the geese and the turkeys were all that was left of the feast. The company broke up, the cousin departed, the family threw themselves upon the beds and slept the clock twice round. Who could forget this noble Christmas? Who could forget a feast that lasted for three whole days and three long nights?

Liz had got through her school-time; she must go to work.

Of course, she knew all along what awaited her. She must do as the others did, she must enter a factory. She contemplated the necessity without any misgiving. Why should she not go into a factory? It was all in the natural order of things, like getting hungry or waking up in the

morning. Every girl had to be cuffed, every girl had to get out of the way when her father was drunk, every girl had to go to work as soon as she left school.

There is apparently a choice of work. There are many industries which employ girls. There is the match-making, there is the bottle-washing, there is the box-making, there is the paper-sorting, there is the jam-making, the fancy confectionery, the cracker industry, the making of ornaments for wedding-cakes, stockings for Christmas, and many others. There are many kinds of sewing. Virtually, however, this child had no choice; her sisters were in the jam factory, her mother had been in the jam factory, she too went to the jam factory.

There are many branches of work more disagreeable than the jam factory. Liz found herself at half-past seven in the morning in a huge building, where she was one among a thousand working women and girls, men and boys, but chiefly girls. The place was heavily laden with an overpowering fragrance of fruit and sugar. In some rooms the fruit was boiling in great copper pots; in some girls were stirring the fruit, after it had been boiled, to get the steam out of it; in some machinery crushed and ground the sugar till it became as fine as flour. The place was like a mill. The flour of sugar hung about the room in a cloud of dust; it lay in such dust on the tables and the casks; it got into the girls' hair, so that they were fain to tie up their heads with white caps; it covered their clothes, and made them sticky; it made tables, benches, floor, all alike sticky. There were other developments of sugar; sometimes it lay on tables in huge, flat cakes of soft gray stuff like gelatine; they turned this mass, by their craft and subtlety, into innumerable threads of fine white silk; they drew it through machines, and brought it out in all the shapes that children love. Then there were rooms full of cocoanut. They treated casks full of dessicated cocoanut till that also became like flour. There

were other rooms full of almonds, which they stripped and bleached and converted also into fine flour; or they turned boxes of gelatine into Turkish delight and jujubes. All day long and all the year round they made crackers; they made ornaments for wedding-cakes; they made favors; they made caramels; they made acidulated drops; they made things unnamed except by children. In all these rooms girls worked by hundreds, some sitting at long tables, some boiling the sugar, filling the pots with jam, stirring the boiling fruit, feeding machinery, filling molds; all were as busy as bees and as mute as mice. Some of them wore white caps to cover their hair, some wore white aprons, some wore coarse sacking tied all round for a skirt to keep off stickiness. All day long the machinery whirred and pulsed an accompaniment to the activity and industry of the place.

"I like the smell," said Liz. First impressions are the best; she continued to like the smell and the factory and the work.

She was stouter and stronger than most girls. They gave her a skirt of sacking, and put her where her strength would be of use. She liked the movement, she liked the exercise of her strong arms, and she liked the noise of the place; she liked the dinner-hour, with its talking and laughing; she liked the factory better than the school; she liked the pay-day, and the money which she kept for herself.

I say that she liked the work and the sense of society and animation. About a year afterward, however, a strange and distressing restlessness seized her. Whether she was attracted by the talk of the other girls, or whether it was an instinctive yearning for change and fresh air, I know not. The thing was infectious. Many other girls compared their symptoms, and found them the same. Finally, the restlessness proving altogether too much for the children, they took hands, thirty of them, and one Saturday afternoon, without bag or baggage, they ran away.

They ran through Wapping and along Thames Street, which is empty on Saturday afternoon; they ran across London Bridge, they poured into London Bridge Station. One of the girls knew the name of the station they wanted; it was in Kent. They took tickets, and they went off.

They had gone hopping.

Thousands of Londoners in the season go hopping. I wish I could dwell upon the delights of the work. Unfortunately, like the summer, it is too soon over. While it lasts the hoppers sleep in barns, they work in the open, they breathe fresh air, they get good pay, they enjoy every evening a singsong and a free-and-easy. The beer flows like a rivulet; everybody is thirsty, everybody is cheerful, everybody is friendly.

When it was over Liz returned, browned and refreshed and strengthened, but fearful of the consequences, because she had deserted her work. But she was fortunate. They took her back into the factory, and so she went on as before.

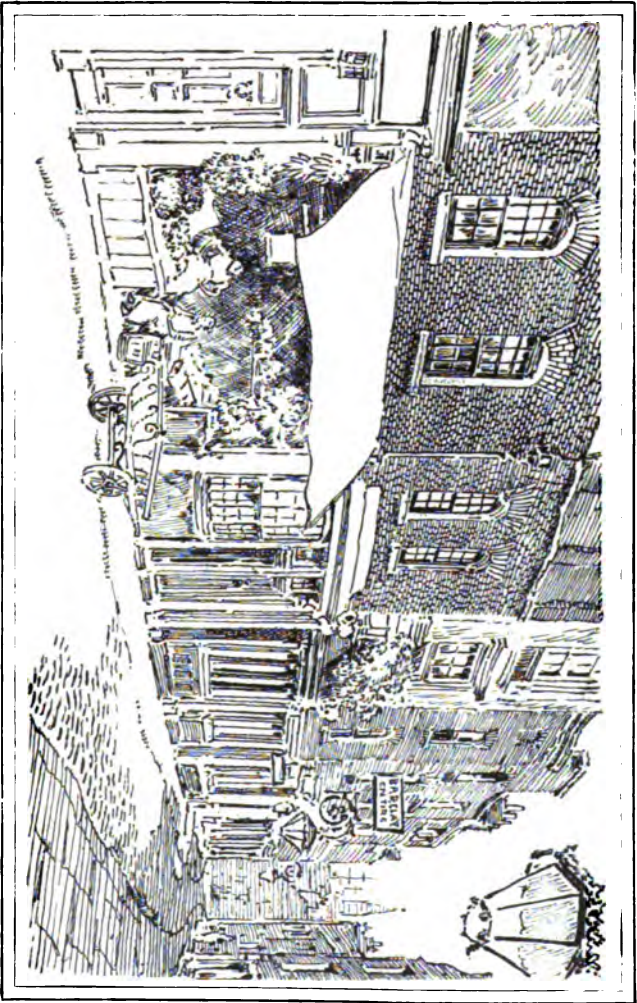
Let us follow her through a single day. She had to be at the factory at half-past seven in the morning, and, with an hour off for dinner, to work till six. She made her breakfast on tea, bread and margarine, and a "relish." The relish included many possibilities. It depended mainly on the day of the week. It is obvious that what one can afford on a Monday is unattainable on a Friday. On Monday it might be a herring or a haddock, an egg or a rasher of bacon. On Friday and Saturday it would be a sprig of water-cress or a pickle.

With all factory girls dinner is a continual source of anxiety and disappointment, for the ambitions of youth are lofty, and the yearnings of youth are strong, and the resources of youth are scanty. Within the factory there were, for those who chose to use them, frying-pans and a gas-stove. The girls might cook their food for themselves. There was also hot water for making tea; but the factory girl detests

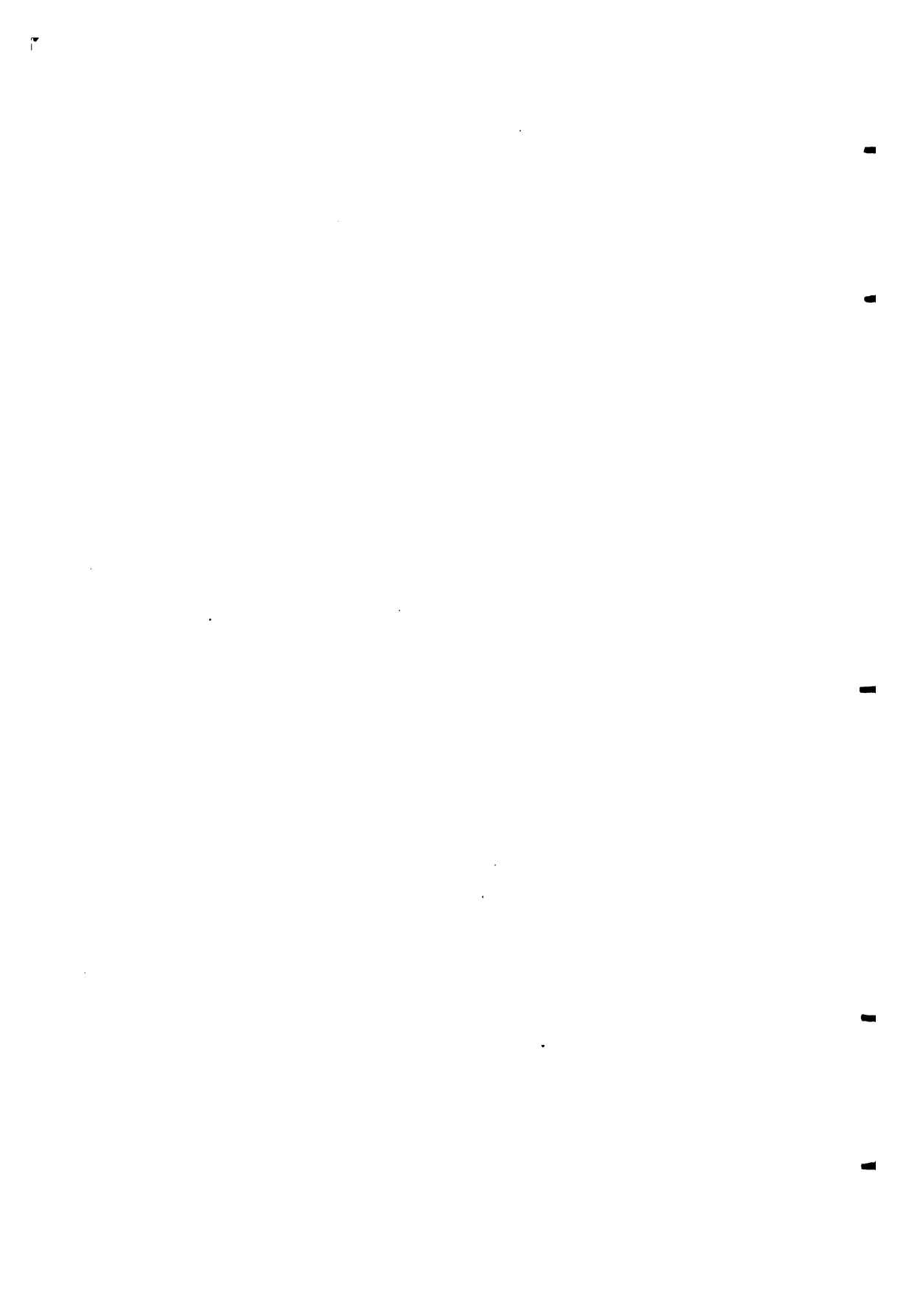
cooking, and may be trusted to spoil and make unfit for human food whatever cooking is intrusted to her. Besides, there were the eating-houses. Here, if you please, were offered to the longing eyes of Liz, always hungry at half-past twelve, daily temptations to extravagance. Just think what the bill of fare every day offered to a girl of discernment in the matter of dinner.

Saveloy and Pease Pudding
 German Sausages and Black Pudding
 Fried Fish and Pickles
 Meat-pie
 Pie-crust and Potatoes
 Fagots and Mustard Pickle
 Beans, Potatoes, Greens, Currant Pudding
 Jam Pudding

The mere choice between these delicacies was bewildering, and, alas! on many days only the cheapest were attainable. Every day Liz pondered over the list and calculated the price. The meat-pie at twopence—glorious! But could she afford twopence? The jam pudding at one halfpenny! It seems cheap, and a good lump too, with a thick slab of red jam—plum jam—laid all over the top. But yet, even a halfpenny is sometimes dear. You see that dinner is wanted on seven days in the week. It was impossible to afford jam pudding every day. Fagots, again. They are only a penny hot, and three farthings cold. A fagot is a really toothsome preparation. In appearance it is a square cake. In composition it contains the remnants and odd bits of a butcher's shop—beef, veal, mutton, lamb, with fat and gristle contributed by all the animals concerned. The whole is minced or triturated. It is treated with spices and shreds of onion, and is then turned out in shapes and baked. No one in the position of our Liz can withstand the temptation of a fagot. The rich people who keep the shops, she believes, live ex-



Brook Street, Limehouse.



clusively on fagots. Wealth cannot purchase anything better than a fagot.

To begin with, she had only five shillings a week. When we consider the Sunday dinner, her clothes and her boots, her share of the rent, her breakfast, her amusements, her clubs, of which we shall speak immediately, I do not think that she was justified in laying out more than twopence, or at the most twopence halfpenny, on her daily dinner. A meat-pie with potatoes, a fagot with mustard pickles and greens, and a jam pudding would absorb the whole of her daily allowance. It left this growing girl hungry after eating all of it.

Meantime, the factory people are as careful about their girls as can be expected. They insist on their making a respectable appearance and wearing a hat. In many other ways they look after them. There is a good deal of paternal kindness in the London employer, especially when he is in a large way.

The factory girls of East London have shown a remarkable power of looking after themselves. Once or twice they have even had a strike. On one occasion they made a demonstration which made the government give in. It is old history now. Once there was a certain statesman named Lowe—Bob Lowe, he was irreverently called. He made a considerable stir in his day, which was about five-and-twenty years ago. He was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. To-day I doubt if there are many young people in England under five-and-twenty who could pass an examination in the political career of Bob Lowe. He was a very fine scholar. He had been a fellow and lecturer of his college at Oxford; he had been a barrister practising in Australia, and he was believed to hold in contempt our colonial empire, and to hunger after the time when Great Britain would become a second Holland. Once he conceived the idea of a tax on matches. His scholarship supplied him with a punning motto, "Ex luce

lucellum" ("from light a little profit"). The match-makers rebelled. They marched down to Westminster in their thousands. They demonstrated: they stated their grievance. Bob Lowe quailed, and the government withdrew the bill.

Our young friend Liz had nothing to do with this prenatal business, which, had it happened in her own time, she would have greatly enjoyed. Where she showed her native ability was in the establishment of clubs. They were practical clubs; they were organized upon an entirely new and original method. I can best explain it by giving an illustration. Thus, there is the one-pound club. Twenty girls agree to get up a one-pound club. For twenty weeks they have to subscribe each a shilling. To determine the order of taking the money they draw numbered tickets. The girl who draws No. 1 receives twenty shillings in a lump the first week; the girl who draws No. 2 takes the second week's money, and so on. It is obvious that this method can be applied to anything, provided the girls who draw the earlier numbers play fair. It seems that they generally do. Should they shirk their duty, there are "ructions." The girl Liz could not, at first, aspire to the one-pound club. But there were humbler clubs—sixpenny, even penny, clubs. Thus, there were boot clubs, calico clubs, petticoat clubs, tea-fight clubs, jewelry clubs, and, but secretly and among the older girls who had sweethearts to consider and to please, there were spirit clubs, for gin and whisky, not for supernatural manifestations. A girl cannot belong to all these clubs at once, but the convenience of belonging to two or three at a time is very great. It enables a provident girl to keep her wardrobe in order by small weekly savings which are not much felt. In the matter of boots, now; if one draws No. 1 there is a new pair at once; suppose the pair lasts for three months, after six weeks another boot club might give the same girl the last number instead of the first, and so on.

Her days were not spent wholly in the factory. At seven

in the winter and at six in the summer she was free; she had also her Saturday afternoons and her Sundays. In other words, she had a fair five hours of freedom every day, ten hours of freedom on Saturdays, and the whole of Sunday. Now, five hours a day of continuous freedom from work is as much as in any working community can be expected. It is a third of the waking day. How did Liz get through that time?

She very soon got beyond her mother's control. It is not, indeed, the custom with many mothers to exercise authority over a girl at work. Liz did what other girls did. She therefore spent most of her evenings in the boulevard of her quarter, a place called Brook Street. Here she walked about, or ran about, or danced arm in arm with other girls, chaffing the lads, whom she treated, if she had the money, to a drink. She went sometimes to a music-hall, where some of the factory girls "did a turn" or danced in the ballet. She wore no hat or bonnet in the street, and she retained the apron which is the badge of her class. She looked on with interest when there was a fight. She listened with a critical mind when there was an exchange of reproaches between two women.

Then a girls' club got hold of her and persuaded her to come in. The club was run by some of those ladies of whom I have spoken, the same who trade on the affection of the children for their own purposes, which may be described as a mean and underhand attempt to make the little ones learn to prefer good to evil. At this club there was singing every night, there was dancing with one another, there was reading, there was talking; everybody behaved nicely, and for two or three hours it was a restful time, even though young girls do not feel the need of rest or understand its use.

When the club closed, the girls went away. If it was a fine night and not too cold they went back for a while to Brook Street, where there was neither rest nor quiet nor godly talk.

Besides her evenings, the girl had the four bank-holidays, and the holidays of Christmas and Easter. Nobody in London does any work between Thursday in Passion Week and Easter Tuesday, nor does any one work much between Christmas eve, when that falls on Thursday or Friday, and the following Tuesday.

These days and seasons are not only holidays, they are days reserved for weddings and christenings. It is necessary, of course, that a girl who respects herself should make a creditable appearance at such a time. She must therefore save, and save with zeal. Saving up for bank-holiday becomes a passion. Dinner is reduced to the lowest possible dimensions, even to a halfpenny lump of currant pudding, which is as heavy as lead and the most satisfying thing for the money that can be procured.

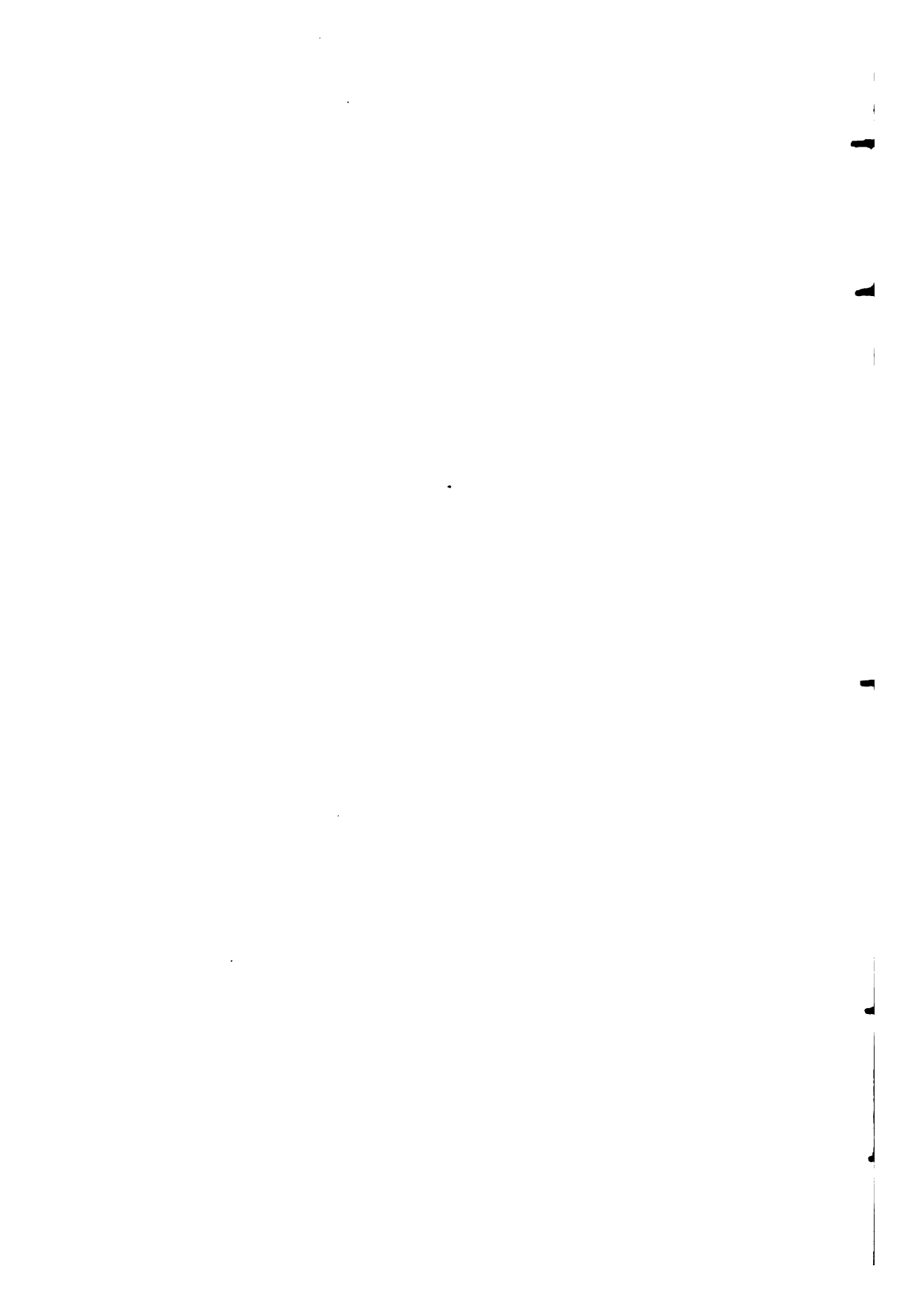
Bank-holiday demands a complete change of clothes, from the hat to the boots. Everything must be new. There must not be an old frock with a new hat, nor an old pair of boots with a new frock. This means a great deal of saving. It must also be accompanied by a general cleaning up of the windows, the door-steps, the stairs, the rooms. All over London Street before bank-holiday there is unusual movement. Chairs are brought out, and girls stand upon them to clean the ground-floor windows.

I have already spoken of the change that has come over this quarter. Formerly a holiday was celebrated after the manner of the ancient Danes, by long and barbaric drinking bouts. Early in the morning girls would be seen lying helpless on the pavement. Lads ran about carrying bottles of gin, which they offered to every one. These are customs of the past, though complete soberness is not yet quite achieved.

Still, however, the Ratcliffe girl likes to keep her bank-holiday at home among her own people, in her beloved Brook Street. She cheerfully saves up all she can, so that there may be a good sum for bank-holiday, enough for new clothes



An August Bank-Holiday in the East End.



and something over, something to treat her friends with. And when the day is over she must go back to her work with an empty purse. Well for her if it is not also with an aching head.

When Liz was approaching the age of seventeen she had learned, from every point of view, all that she would ever learn; she had risen as high as she could rise in the factory; she made as good wages as she would ever make; she lived at home, sharing a room with two sisters; she paid her mother sixpence a week for bed and lodging; her character was formed; her acquaintance with good and evil was deep, wide, and intimate; she was steady, as girls of her class go, thanks to those ladies; if she ever drank too much she was ashamed of herself, and as yet she had no sweetheart. She was affectionate and responded to kindness, but she was self-willed, and would bear no thwarting. She was deficient on the side of imagination. She could not enter into the thoughts or the position of any one except herself; that was the natural result of her narrow, groove-like life. She had rules of conduct and of behavior; of religion she had little, if any, discoverable. She never went to church or chapel. She was fond of every kind of excitement, yet the emotional side of religion touched her not. The Irish girls, of whom there are many at Ratcliffe, were Catholics, and sometimes went to church. Once Liz went there, too, and seemed to like the music and the lights, but she did not repeat her visit.

This was her life all through the week. On Sunday, however, she made a difference.

On that morning she lay in bed till ten or eleven. She spent the time before dinner over her wardrobe; at one o'clock she sat down with the family to the most important ceremony of the week, the Sunday dinner. To other people besides the working-folk of Ratcliffe the Sunday dinner is an institution. Pope's retired citizen, on Sundays, had, we

know, two puddings to smoke upon the board. To all people of the middle class the Sunday dinner is the occasion for a little indulgence, for a glass of wine after dinner. To the resident in Ratcliffe it means a big feed, as much as a man can eat, and that of a popular and favorite dish. There are many dishes dear to the heart of the working-man. He loves everything that is confectioned with, or accompanied by, things of strong taste. If he knew of the delicacy called lobscouse he would have it nearly every Sunday; if he knew of that other delicacy called potato-pot he would order it frequently. As it is, he relies for the most part upon some portion of pig—that creature of “fine miscellaneous feeding.” He loves roast pork, boiled pork, fried pork, baked pork, but especially he loves pig’s head. His wife buys this portion of the animal, stuffs the ears and eyes thereof with sage and onions,—a great deal of sage and much onion,—and sends it to the bakehouse. Pig’s head thus treated and done to a turn is said to have no fellow. It is accompanied by beer, and beer in plenty. The family sit down to this meal when it is brought in from the baker, and continue eating until they can eat no longer. So, in Arabian deserts, if you would win the hearts of the Bedouin you give them a sheep, and they will eat until they can eat no longer. It is part of the Sunday dinner that there is to be no hint or suspicion of any limit, except that imposed by nature. They eat till they can eat no more.

When she was seventeen Liz found a sweetheart.

He was a young fellow of twenty or thereabouts. He had come out of his native village, some place in the quiet country, a dull place, to enjoy the life of London. He was a highly skilled agricultural laborer; there was nothing on the farm that he could not do. He knew the fields and the woods, the wild creatures and the birds; he knew how to plow and to reap; he could keep an allotment full of vegetables all the year round; he understood a stable and a dairy,

a paddock and sheepfold. Yet with all this knowledge he came to London, where it was of no earthly use to him. He threw over the best work that a country lad can have, and he became nothing but a pair of hands like this girl's father. He was a pair of hands; he was a strong back; his sturdy legs were fit to do the commonest, the heaviest, the most weary work in the world. One evening Liz was standing alone on the pavement, looking at something or other—a barrel-organ, a cheap Jack, one of the common sights and sounds—when this young fellow passed along, walking heavily, as one who has walked chiefly over plowed fields. He looked at her. Something in her face,—it was an honest face,—something in her attitude of alertness and the sharp look of her eye struck his imagination. He hitched closer. In Brook Street it is permissible, it is laudable, to introduce yourself. He said huskily: "I've seen you here before. What's your name? Mine is George."

That was the beginning of it. Presently the other girls met Liz walking proudly along Brook Street with a big, well-set-up young fellow. They moved out of her way. Liz had got a chap. When would their turn come?

Next night they met again. On Sunday she walked with him along the Mile End Road without her apron and in her best hat. It was a parade and proclamation of an engagement. She told her mother, who was glad. "A man," she said, "is a better friend than a woman. He sticks." Liz did not tell the ladies of the club, but the other girls did, and the ladies looked grave and spoke seriously to her about responsibilities.

George did stick to her. He was an honest lad; he had chosen his sweetheart, and he stuck to her. When he had money he gave her treats. He took her by train to Epping Forest, to North Woolwich Gardens, to the theater, to the music-hall. In his way he loved the girl. She would not leave the club, but she gave him part of every evening. He

talked to her about the country life he had left behind him. He told her the stories about poachers which belong to every village ale-house. It pleased him to recall the past he had thrown away. All day long he carried heavy bales and boxes and burdens backward and forward. It was monotonous



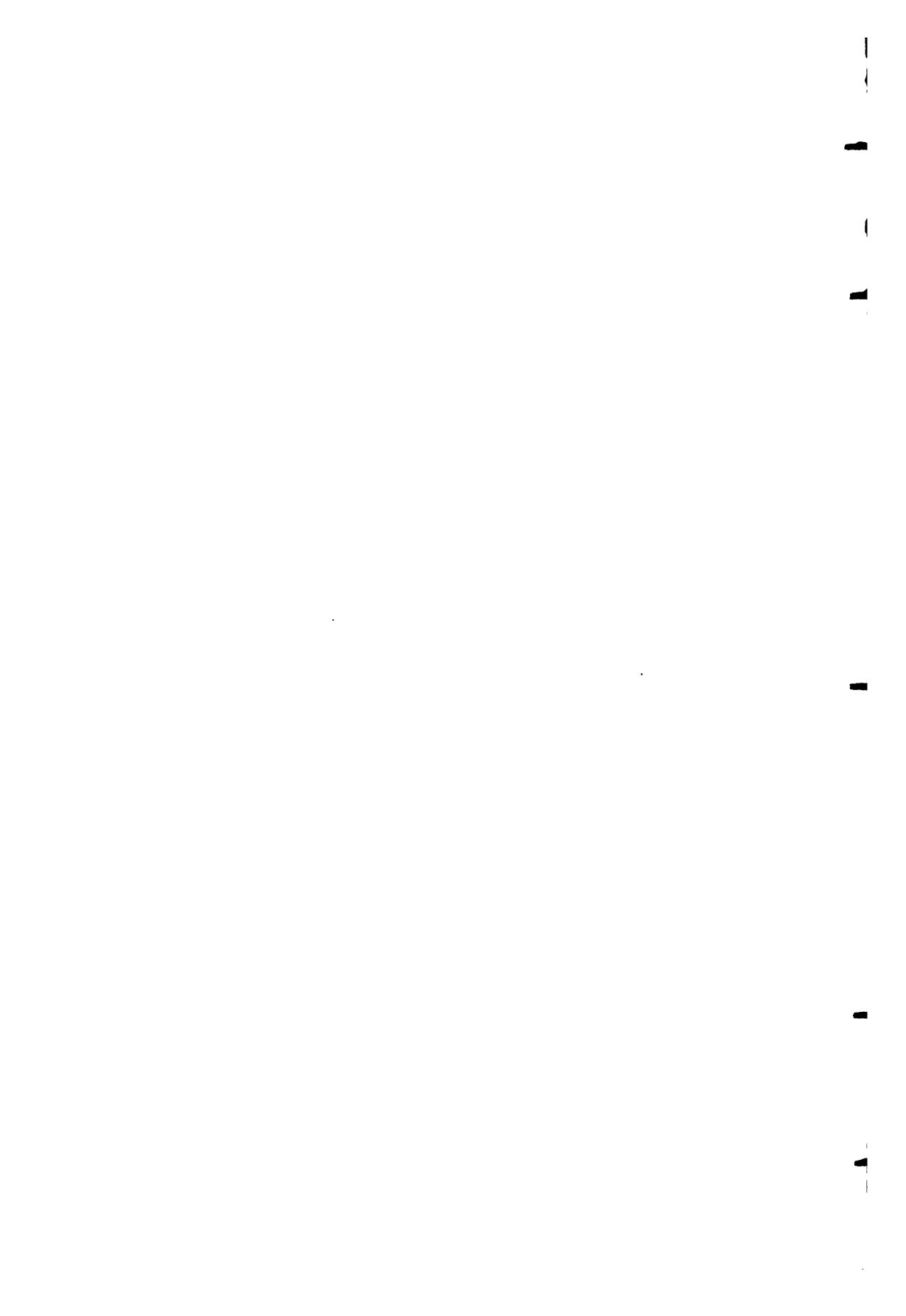
A Music-Hall.

work, cheered only by the striking of the hours and the thought of the coming evening. The poor lad's day was hallowed by his evening walk.

Six months later Liz was married. It was on the August bank-holiday. The wedding took place at St. James's Church, Ratcliffe. It was celebrated in a style which did honor to the quarter. The bride was dressed in heliotrope satin. She wore a large hat of purple plush. The bridesmaids were brilliantly attired in frocks of velveteen, green and crimson and blue. They too wore hats of plush. After

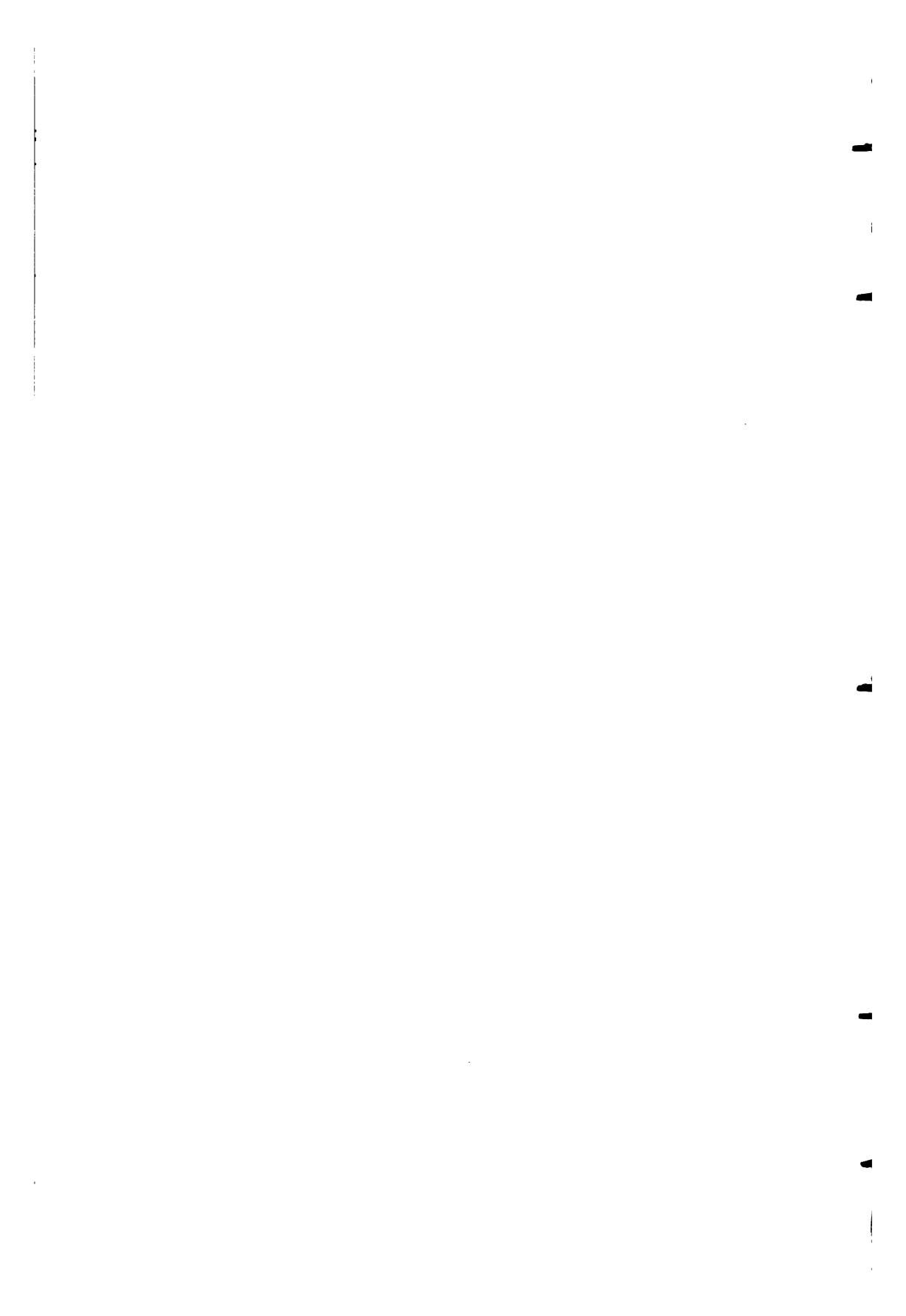
the ceremony they adjourned to the residence of the bride, where a great feast was spread. The rejoicing lasted all day and all night. When the young couple began their wedded life it was with an empty purse and a week of borrowed food. I hope that George will not get drunk, will not knock his wife down, and will not take the strap to her. If he does, we must comfort ourselves with the thought that to Liz it will be no new thing, hitherto unknown in the land, not an unnatural thing when the drink is in a man, and, unless repeated in soberness, a trifle to be endured and forgotten and forgiven, even seventy times seven.

Here we must leave our girl. She is now a wife. For a little while she will go on at the factory; then she will stay at home. London Street will be enriched by half a dozen children all her own. Like their mother, these children will play in the dust and the mud; like her, they will go to school and be happy; like her, they will go to work in the factory. Liz will be repeated in her children. As long as she lives she will know and enjoy the same life, with the same pleasures, the same anxieties, the same luck. She will "do" for her girls when they grow up. Now and then she will be taken on as a casual at the old factory. London Street will always be her whole world; she will have no interests outside, and when she dies it will be only the vanishing of one out of the multitudes which seem, as I said at the beginning, to be all alike, all living the same life, all enduring, hoping, loving, suffering, sinning, giving, helping, condoling, mourning, in the same kindly, cruel, beneficent, merciless, contradictory, womanly fashion that makes up the life of London Street.



VI

THE KEY OF THE STREET



VI

THE KEY OF THE STREET

DURING our walk along the riverside we passed here and there small groups of men, either two and three together or in companies of ten or a dozen. They were "hanging around," hands in pockets, an empty pipe between their lips, with a slouching, apathetic air; in every case a public house was within very easy reach; in most cases the public house afforded them door-posts and walls against which to lean. They were observed in large numbers around the dock-gates and in long lines leaning against the dock-walls. There was no alertness or activity in the look or the carriage of any of these men; on the other hand, there was no dejection or unhappiness. Had we stopped to ask any of them what they were doing they would have assumed for the moment an imitation of readiness indicated by a slight stiffening of the knee-joints, the withdrawal of the hands from the pocket, and the attitude of attention by which they gave the inquirer to understand that they were waiting for a job.

This is their trade—waiting for a job; it appears to be a trade which takes the spirit out of a man, which makes him limp, which makes him unwilling to undertake that job when it arrives, which tempts him to look for any other way of getting food than the execution of that job, which narrows his views of life so that the haven where he would be is nothing but the bar of the public house, and the only joy he

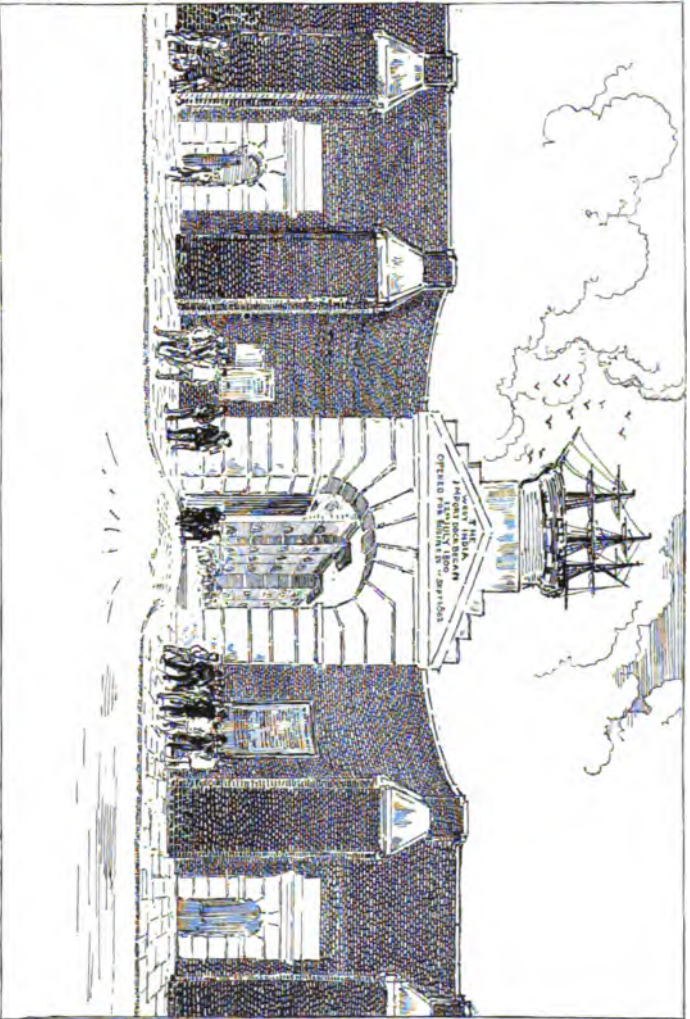
desires is the joy of endeavoring to alleviate a thirst that nothing can assuage.

This manner of life can hardly be reckoned among the more noble. It demands no skill and no training. What they mean by a job is the fetching or carrying something, either in the way of transferring cargo from ship to quay or carrying something from one house to another. If it is the former, if one of these fellows gets taken on at the docks, he enters with a sigh; his work is not worth a fourth part of that done by one of the regular staff, and as soon as he has earned enough for the day's wants he retires, he goes back to his street corner and his public house, he once more seizes on the momentary rapture of a drink, and he rejoins his limp companions.

I have considered the daily life of the factory girl. Let me now consider that of the casual hand, almost as important an element on the riverside as the girl.

In most cases he is a native of the place; he was born on the riverside; he has been brought up on the riverside; he was born and brought up conveniently near the public house, beside which he wastes the leaden hours of his dreary life. A country lad cannot easily become a creature so weak and limp; the father of the casual hand was himself in the same profession, his mother was a factory girl like her of whom we have been speaking.

This man—he never seems to be more than five-and-thirty, or less than thirty—is one of the very few survivors of a numerous family; the riverside families are very large if you count the graves, for the mortality of the young fills the graveyards very rapidly; most of this man's brothers and sisters are dead—one can hardly, looking at the man himself and his surroundings, say that they are "gone before"; it is best to say only that they are gone, we know not whither. He himself has been so unfortunate, if we may put the case plainly, as to escape the many perils of infancy



The West India Dock Gates.



and childhood. He has not been "overlaid" as a baby, nor run over as a child, nor carried off with diphtheria, scarlatina, croup, or any other of the disorders which continually hover about these streets, nor has he been the victim of bad nourishment and food which was unsuited to him. He has become immune against contagion and infection; wet feet and cold and exposure have been unable to kill him; the close and fetid air of the one-family living room has carried off his brothers and sisters, but has not been able to strike him down; he is like a soldier who has come unscathed through a dozen battles and a malarious campaign. Surely, therefore, this man ought to be a splendid specimen of humanity, strong and upright. The contrary is the case, however. You observe that he is by no means the kind of Briton we should like to exhibit; he hath a sallow complexion, his shoulders are sloping and narrow, his chest is hollow, his walk is shambling, he has no spring in his feet, his hands betray by their clumsiness his ignorance of any craft, he is flat-footed, his eye lacks intelligence, he is low-browed, the intellectual side of him has not been cultivated or even touched; if you talked with him you would find that he has few ideas, that his command of language is imperfect, and that he is practically inarticulate. The best thing that could happen to such a man would be compulsory farm work, but no farmer would have him on any terms, and he himself would refuse such work; he means to go on as he always goes on, to wait outside the public house for the casual job.

As a child and as a boy he was made to attend school—indeed, he liked nothing better than the hours of school. His mother, who found that in order to send the children off clean and tidy to school she had herself to get up early, and, besides, had to assume for herself some outward appearance of cleanliness, threw every possible obstacle in the way of school attendance. But she was firmly overruled by the school-board visitor and by the magistrate. Therefore

she abandoned opposition and acquiesced, though with sadness too deep for words, in the inevitable.

The boy remained at school until his fourteenth year, when he was allowed to leave, on passing the fourth standard. If you ask what he had learned one might refer you to any of the "readers" used in London Board-schools, but probably these interesting and valuable works are not within easy reach. It must suffice, therefore, to explain, as in the case of Liz, that the elementary school readers, as a rule, contain selections, snippets, and scraps of knowledge, and that if a boy who passed the fourth standard remembered them all, from the first to the fourth inclusive, they would carry him a very little way indeed toward the right understanding of the round world and all that is therein.

Now comes the question, What good will the boy's education be to him in the life that lies before him? Truly, in the case of the casual hand, little or none. For, you see, although, apart from the encyclopedic snippets and the scraps, the boy has learned to read and to write, he never needs the latter accomplishment at all, and, as regards the former, he has no books; his father had no books, his friends have no books. But all the world read newspapers. Not all the world; there is a considerable section, including the casual hand and certain others whom we shall meet immediately, who never read the papers. This boy is not going to read the papers; his father never did, his friends never do, he will not. Why should he? The papers contain nothing that is of the least importance to him; they are apparently in a conspiracy to make it impossible for such as himself to drink unless they work. He speedily forgets his scraps of information, and he gets no more from the usual sources.

You must not, however, imagine that he never learns anything. It is impossible for any boy to grow up in a crowded street in complete ignorance. Something he must learn; some views of life he must be forced to frame, though un-

consciously. He will grow up in ignorance of the things which form actual life in other circles, but it is with a riverside lad as with a village lad. The latter, brought up in the country, acquires insensibly a vast mass of information and knowledge about the things of the country—the fields, the hedges, the woods, the birds, the creatures—without book, without school, without master; so the riverside lad, by running about on the Stairs and the foreshore, acquires a vast mass of information about the port and the river and the ships and the ways of those who go down to the deep. He knows the tides, he knows the jetsam and the flotsam of the tides, he trudges and wades in the mud of the foreshore to pick up what the tide leaves for him; he knows all the ships, where they come from, whither they are bound, the great liner which puts in at the West India docks, the packet boats, the coasters, the colliers, the Norwegian timber ships, he knows them all; he knows their rig, he knows their names and when to expect them—the river and all that floats upon it are known to him as a book is known to the student. Were it not for the work, the physical activity, the discipline, the obedience, expected of the man before the mast, he would be a sailor. Concerning the imports and the exports of London he knows more than any official of the Board of Trade—that is to say, figures concern him not, but he knows the bales and the casks and the crates and the boxes: are not his friends engaged every day in discharging cargo and taking it in? All this, you will acknowledge, means a good, solid lump of knowledge which may occupy his brain and give him materials for thought and conversation—if he ever did think, which is doubtful, and if he could converse, which is not at all doubtful.

There is another kind of knowledge which the riverside lad picks up. It is the knowledge of the various ways, means, tricks, craft, and cunning by which many of his friends and contemporaries get through life without doing

any work. It is with him as with men in other lines; he knows how things are done, but he cannot do them himself; he lacks courage, he lacks the necessary manner, he lacks the necessary quickness; he would be a rogue if he could; he admires successful roguery, but he is unable to imitate or to copy or to practise roguery. Not everyone can defy the law even for a brief spell between the weary periods of "stretch."

From picking up trifles unguarded and unwatched on the shore to doing the same thing in the streets is but a step. There are plenty of these lads who learn quite early to prey upon the petty trader. I have been told by one of his victims how to watch for and to observe the youthful prowler. You place yourself in one of the busy streets lined with shops in some position, perhaps at a shop-door, where you may observe without being suspected; it is like Jefferies' rule for observing the wild creatures; assume an attitude of immobility; the people pass up and down, all occupied with their own affairs, unobservant; presently comes along a boy, long-armed, long-legged; his step is silent and slouching, his eyes beneath the peak of his cap glance furtively round; the stall is unprotected; the goods exposed for sale are only guarded by a child, who is looking the other way; then, in a moment, the hand darts out, snatches something, and the lad with the long and slouching step goes on without the least change in his manner, unsuspected. He is ready to pick up anything—a loaf from the baker, an apple from the coster's cart, an onion from the green-grocer; nothing comes amiss. And he does it for the honor and the glory of it and the joy in the danger. He is not going to become an habitual criminal, not at all; that career requires serious work; he is going to become a casual hand, and he will remember pleasantly in his manhood the cunning and the sleight-of-hand with which as a boy he knew how to lift things from shop and stall and barrow.



The Barges that Lie Down the Thames.

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I have spoken of the unguarded things upon the foreshore at low tide. There are still lingering by the riverside survivals of the good old days when the whole people lived in luxury on the robberies they committed from the ships loading and unloading in the river. There are barges which go up and down with the tide. At ebb tide they lie in the mud; the men in charge go ashore to drink; the boys then climb on board in search of what they can get. If the barge is laden with sugar they cut holes in the bags and fill their pockets, their hats, their boots, their handkerchiefs with the stuff, which they carry ashore and sell. They get a halfpenny a pound for their plunder. If the barge is laden with coals they carry off all that their clothes will hold; one goes before to warn the rest of danger; plenty of houses on the way are open to them; it is a comparatively safe and certainly a pleasant way of earning a penny or two. It is also a way which brings with it its own punishment. For the great and ever present temptation with the riverside lad is to shirk work; a physical shrinking from hard work is his inheritance; every way by which he can be relieved from work strengthens this physical shrinking; not at one step, not suddenly, does a young man find work impossible for him; the casual hand grows slowly more casual; the waiter on fortune's jobs grows steadily more inclined to wait; he finds himself tied to the lamp-post opposite the public house; chains bind him to the doors; within is his shrine, his temple, his praying place, his idol; he keeps his hands in his pockets while he keeps his eyes on the swinging door and suffers his mind to dwell all day long on the fragrance of the beery bar.

Every year there are thousands of boys who leave the London Board-schools, their "education" completed, with no chance of an apprenticeship to any trade, their hands absolutely untrained, just a hanging pair of hands, prehensile, like the monkey's tail. It is indeed lucky that they are prehensile, otherwise what would be the lot of their owners?

They leave school; they have to face the necessity of making a livelihood for themselves, of earning their daily bread, perhaps for sixty long years to come, without knowing any single one of the many arts and crafts by which men live and provide for their families and themselves. At the outset it appears to be a hopeless task. Of course, it is the greatest possible misfortune for a lad to learn no trade. If we consider the waste of intellectual power alone, where there is no training to skilled labor, it must be acknowledged to be the greatest misfortune that can befall a boy at the outset. Still, all is not lost. For a steady lad, willing to work, this misfortune may be partly overcome. There are many openings for such a boy. Let us consider, for instance, what lines of work he may attempt, keeping only to those which require no previous training and no skill.

He hears of these openings from other boys; he has heard of such openings all his life. For instance, he would very much like to enter the service of the City of London, as one of the boys whose business it is to keep the streets clean. You may see these boys, in a red uniform, running about among the horses and omnibuses in Cheapside; they are always under the horses' feet, but they never get run over; they are active and smart lads; they seem to take a pride in doing their humble work rapidly and thoroughly. They receive very good pay, which helps to keep up their spirits—6s. 6d. a week, rising to 9s. or 10s. Even better than this is the railway service, where a smart lad may very soon get 9s. a week. He may then rise to the position of a railway porter. Now, at the great London stations, in which the trains are coming in and going out all day long, and every passenger with luggage is good for a tip of threepence or sixpence, no one knows what the weekly earnings of a railway porter may be. Things are whispered; nothing is known for certain; the position, however, is recognized as one of the prizes in the profession of the unskilled hand.

Then there are the factories—matches, jam, all kinds of factories—into which, if a boy is fortunate enough to be taken, he may make at the outset 5s. or 6s. a week. It is, however, generally felt that there is a lack of interest about factory work. A much more enviable occupation is that of a van boy, whose very simple duty is to sit behind among the boxes and parcels, in order to take care that none of them are stolen and that none drop off into the street. One is expected to assist in loading and unloading, which means somewhat heavy work, but the greater part of the day is spent in being pleasantly carried up and down the streets of London and enjoying a moving panorama of the town in all its quarters. There are great possibilities for the van boy; if he is ambitious he may hope to become, in course of time, even driver of the van, a post of real distinction and responsibility, with “good money,” although the hours may be long.

Some boys, without taking thought for the future, jump at the post of beer boy to a barge. It is attractive, it is light work, it is well paid, but it leads to nothing. One would not recommend any young friend to accept this post. Generally a barge is loaded and unloaded by one or two gangs of men, seven in a gang. Each of these men pays the beer boy twopence a day, so that if there are two gangs to the barge he will make 2s. 4d. a day, or 14s. a week, his simple duty being to carry beer to the men at work from the nearest public house. The work seems easy, but it requires activity; the gangs are thirsty, tempers are quick, and cuffs are frequent.

This kind of errand situation is very easy to get; in every trade an errand boy is wanted. I am surprised that no one has magnified the post and preached upon the necessity, for the conduct of the internal trade of the country, of the errand boy. As yet he has not found his prophet. Thus a greengrocer is lost without his errand boys; a suburban greengrocer in a flourishing way of business will have twenty boys

in his employ; every small draper, every shopkeeper, in fact, small or great, must have his errand boy—but this is a post reserved for older lads. Some one must carry round the things; it is the boy who has learned no trade; the carriage of the basket is the first use to which he puts his unskilled hands. I believe that five shillings a week is the recognized pay for the situation. In one way or another, however, the boy finds some kind of place and begins to earn a living.

As a rule, these boys live well. For breakfast they have bread and butter and tea, with a "relish," such as an egg or a piece of bacon; at twelve they take their dinner at one of the humbler coffee-houses which abound in the streets of East London; it consists of more bread and butter and tea, with half a steak and potatoes. For tea they go to another coffee-house; they can get two thick slices of bread for a halfpenny each; butter or jam costs another halfpenny; a cup of coffee costs a halfpenny, or a whole pint may be had for a penny. In the evening their favorite supper is the dish familiarly known as "ha'porth and ha'porth"—that is, fish and potatoes at a halfpenny each. So far their life is healthy, with plenty of work and plenty of food, and, in most cases, strong drink is neither desired nor taken. The craving for drink comes later. The dangerous time of life is the age when the boy passes into manhood. Then the simple meals at the coffee-house no longer suffice. Then it becomes necessary to have beer, and beer in ever-increasing quantities. Then the boy grows out of his work; he becomes too big to carry beer for the bargees or to go round with the newspapers, or to sit at the back of the van, or to carry about cabbages in a basket.

What is he to do next?

There are, even for a grown man, many situations which demand no training and no apprenticeship. In all the warehouses, in the great shops, in offices of every kind, there are wanted men to fetch and carry, to load and unload, to pack



East London Loafers.



and unpack. In the docks there are wanted troops of men to load and to unload. In the markets and on the railways there are wanted men to carry and to set out the goods. In every kind of business servants must be had to do that part of the work which requires no skill. Unfortunately the supply is greater than the demand. There are many lads who get into the service of companies, railways, or factories, and remain in steady work all their working lives in the same employment. There are, on the other hand, a great number who have to hang about on the outskirts of regular work, who are taken on in times of pressure and find it difficult to get work when times are slack; these are the men who become the casual hands; these are the men who hang about the dock-gates and loaf round street corners.

The process of degeneration by which the promising lad sinks into the casual hand is easy to follow.

The work, whatever it may be, is finished at half-past six or seven. The lads have, therefore, like the factory girl already considered, four or five solid hours every evening to get through. The other day I was looking through some statistics of work in the eighteenth century. It then began at six, sometimes at half-past five; it left off at eight in the evening, with the exception of those trades which could not be carried on by the light of tallow candles. The people went to bed before ten. The time for supper, rest, and recreation was therefore reduced to two hours. There was no Saturday afternoon holiday. All through the pre-Reformation time there had been a Saturday half-holiday, because Saturday was reckoned as the eve of a saint's day, and every eve of an important saint's day was a half-holiday. The Reformation swept away this grateful respite from work. Therefore, except for Sunday, the craftsman's working-day was practically the whole day long.

We have changed these long for shorter hours; the people

have now a long evening to themselves and the Saturday half-holiday, as well as Sunday.

Consider what this means to a lad of sixteen, one of the riverside lads. He has, we have seen, no books and no desire for reading; a free library offers no attractions to him; he has no study or pursuit of any kind; he does not wish to learn anything; and he has four hours, perhaps five, to get through every evening, except Saturday, when he has nine hours, and Sunday, when he has the whole day—say sixteen hours. In every week he has actually forty-five long hours in which to amuse himself as best he can. What is that boy to do? He must do something which brings with it excitement and activity; his blood is restless; he knows not what he wants; it is an age which has its ideals, and his are of the heroic kind, but too often of a perverted heroism.

A few of them, but in proportion very few indeed, belong to the boys' clubs which are scattered about East London. They are the fortunate boys; they contract friendships with the young men—gentlemen always—who run the club; they can learn all kinds of things if they like; they work off their restlessness and get rid of the devil in the gymnasium with the boxing-gloves and with the single stick; they contract habits of order and discipline; they become infected with some of the upper-class ideals, especially as regards honor and honesty, purity and temperance; the fruits of the time spent in the club are seen in their after life; these are the lads who lead the steady lives and become the supporters of order and authority. A few again, but very few, get the chance of polytechnic classes and continuation schools, but these things are mostly above the riverside folk. Here and there a class is formed and taught by ladies in one or other of the minor arts, such as wood-carving, in which the lads quickly take great delight.

Setting aside these, what becomes of all the rest?

They have the music-hall; there are half a dozen music-

halls in which the gallery is cheap; they go to one of these places two or three times a week in winter; they have the public house, but these lads are not, as a rule, slaves to drink so early in life; their own lodgings are not inviting either for comfort or for rest or for society. They have, however, the street.

It is the street which provides the casual hand; it is also the street which produces the drunkard, the loafer, the man who cannot work, the man who will not work, the street rough, the street sneak, and the street thief. The long evening spent in the street nourishes and encourages these and such as these of both sexes.

It is of course the old story—the abuse of liberty. We shorten the hours of work, and we offer nothing in the place of work, except the street; we leave the lads, whom we thought to benefit, to their own devices, and to discover, if they can, the way to turn the hours thus rescued from drudgery into a means of climbing to a higher life. We leave them, even, in complete ignorance as to any higher life at all. Their own idea of employing their idle time is to do nothing, to amuse themselves, and, as the street is the only place where they can find amusement for nothing, they go into the street.

They begin by walking about in little companies of two and three; by way of asserting their early manhood the boys smoke cheap cigarettes, called, I believe, “fags”; also, by way of asserting their own importance—no one knows the conceit and vanity of lads of fifteen and sixteen, the age between the boy and the man—they occupy a great deal of the pavement, they hustle each other, regardless of other people; they get up impromptu fights and sham fights; they wrestle; they make rushes among the crowd; they push about the girls of their own age, who are by no means backward in appreciating and returning these delicate attentions; they whistle and sing, and practise the calls of the day and the locality. A

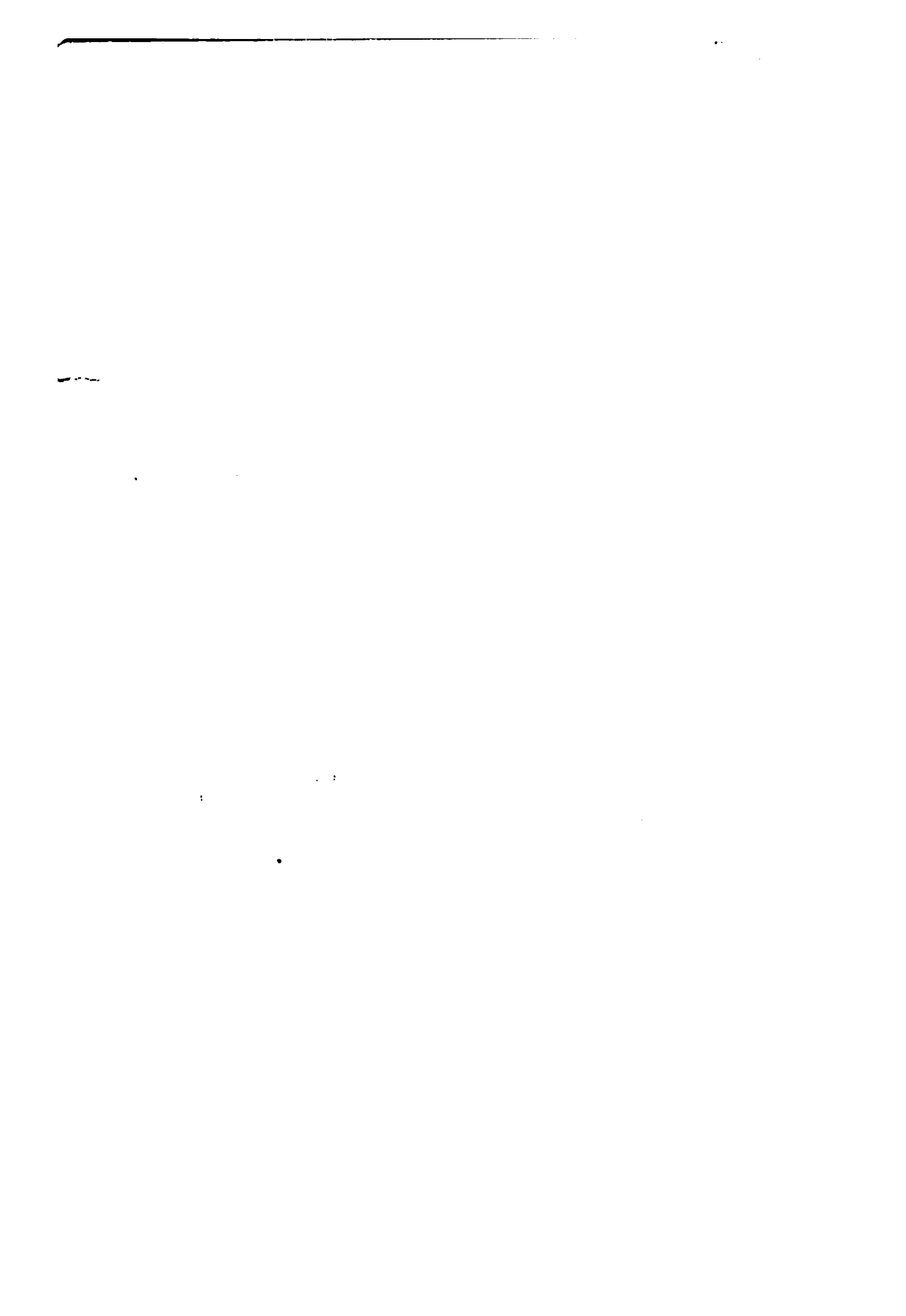
very favorite amusement, in which they are joined and assisted by the girls, is to get up a little acting in dumb show; some of them are excellent mimics. I have, for instance, read more than once in the columns of temperance organs or the letters of philanthropists, tearful or indignant, most melancholy accounts of precocious drunkenness among the boys and girls of East London—that poor East London! “I have seen,” writes the visitor to Ratcliffe and Shadwell, “with my own eyes, boys and girls, quite young boys and girls, reeling about drunk,—actually drunk, hopelessly drunk,—the girls, poor creatures, worse than the boys. I spoke to one. She was no more than thirteen or so—a pretty child, but helplessly intoxicated. When I spoke to her she tried to reply, but became inarticulate; she gasped, she laughed—the awful laugh of a drunkard! She made a gesture of helplessness, she fell sideways on the pavement, and would not rise. Her companions, as far gone as herself, only laughed. A sad sight, truly, in a civilized country!”

A very sad sight, indeed! This observer, however, did not understand that the personation of drunken people is one of the favorite amusements of the boys and girls in the evening streets. They have every day opportunities of studying their subject. A life school exists in every street, and is thrown open every night, and the fidelity with which every stage of drunkenness is represented by these young actors would be remarkable even on the boards of Drury Lane. Had the indignant writer of that letter known so simple a fact his pity and his wrath would have been reserved for a more worthy object.

Acting and running and shouting are amusing as far as they go, but they are not enough. The blood is very restless at seventeen; it wants exercise in reality. This restlessness is the cause of the certain street companies of which the London papers have recently spoken with indignation. They are organized originally for local fights. The boys



The "Hooligans."



of Cable Street constitute themselves, without asking the permission of the War Office, into a small regiment; they arm themselves with clubs, with iron bars, with leather belts to which buckles belong, with knotted handkerchiefs containing stones—a lethal weapon—with sling and stones, with knives even, with revolvers of the “toy” kind, and they go forth to fight the lads of Brook Street. It is a real fight; the field is presently strewn with the wounded; the police have trouble in putting a stop to the combat; with broken heads, black eyes, and bandaged arms, the leaders appear next day before the magistrate.

The local regiment cannot always be meeting its army on the field of glory; the next step, therefore, to hustling the people in the street is natural. The boys gather together and hold the street; if any one ventures to pass through it they rush upon him, knock him down, and kick him savagely about the head; they rob him as well. In the autumn of last year (1899) an inoffensive elderly gentleman was knocked down by such a gang, robbed, kicked about the head, and taken up insensible; he was carried home, and died the next day. These gangs are the modern Mohocks; South London is more frequently favored with their achievements than the quarter with which we are here concerned; they are difficult to deal with because they meet, fight, and disperse with such rapidity that it is next to impossible to get hold of them. It is an ugly feature of the time; it is mainly due to the causes I have pointed out, and it will probably disappear before long. Meantime, the boys regard the holding of the street with pride; their captain is a hero, as much as the captain of the Eleven at a public school.

Sometimes they devise other modes of achieving greatness. A year or two ago half a dozen of them thought that it would be a good thing if they were to attend Epsom races on the Derby Day, the great race of the year. One can go to Epsom by road or rail; the latter is the cheaper and the

easier way, but the more glorious way is to go by road, as the swells go. They hire a carriage and pair, and get a luncheon hamper from Fortnum and Mason's, and pay for a stand on the hill—the thing can be done for about £25. These boys thought to emulate the swells; they would drive to Epsom. They therefore helped themselves to a baker's horse and light cart, and, all in the gray of the morning, drove the whole way in the greatest glory to the race-course. Arrived there they sold the horse and cart to a Gipsy for three pounds, and spent the day in watching the races, in betting on the events, and in feasting. When the glorious day was over and their money all gone they found an out-house near the common, and there lay down to sleep, intending to walk home in the morning. Now, the baker, on discovering his loss, had gone to the police, and the police, remembering the day and suspecting the truth, for the lads' thirst for sport was well known, telegraphed to Epsom; the horse and cart were recovered, and in the middle of the night the boys themselves were found. They did return to town in the morning, but not as they left. It was in the roomy vehicle commonly called "Black Maria" that they were taken to the police court, and from the court to the Reformatory, where they still languish.

The boys are great gamblers. As gambling and betting are strictly forbidden in the streets, they have to find places where they can play undisturbed. Sunday is the day devoted to gambling. The boys get on board a barge, where they sit in the hold and play cards—locally called "darbs"—all day long; sometimes they find an empty house, sometimes a room in a condemned row of crazy tenements. The favorite game, the name of which I do not know, is one in which the dealer holds the bank; he deals a card to every player and one to himself. Each player covers his card with a stake, generally a penny; the cards are turned up; the players pay the dealer for cards below, and are paid for cards above



Sunday Gambling.

the dealer's card. It is quite a simple game, and one in which a boy may lose his Saturday wages in a very short time. They also play "heads and tails," and they are said to bet freely among each other.

At this period of their career some of them begin to read a good deal. Not the newspapers, not any books; their reading is confined to the penny novelette; for them Jack Harkaway performs incredible feats of valor; it is not for them that the maiden of low degree is wedded by the belted earl—that is for the girls; for these lads, to whom a fight is the finest thing in the world, the renowned Jack Harkaway knocks down the wicked captain on the quarter-deck, rescues a whole ship's company from pirates, performs prodigies at Omdurman. His feats are described in the amazing sheets which he calls "ha'penny bloods" or "penny dreadfuls." If the boys buy a paper it is one of like mind, such as are written and printed especially and exclusively for him.

They go often, I have said, to the music-hall; there are three or four in their own quarter—the Paragon, Mile End Road; the Foresters, Cambridge Road; and the Queen's, Poplar. But they go farther afield, and may be found in the galleries of even West-End music-halls to see a popular "turn." As for concerts and lectures and entertainments given at the Town Hall or other places, they will not go to them. There is too much "class."

At this time, namely, at sixteen or seventeen, the boys commonly take a sweet heart; they "keep company" with a girl; night after night they walk the streets together; what they talk about no one knows, what vows of constancy they exchange no man hath ever heard or can divine; they take each other, the boy paying when he can, to the music-hall or to the theater; they stand drinks—it is at this period that the fatal yearning for drink begins to fasten itself upon the lad. The "keeping company" is perhaps a worse evil than the growing thirst for drink; it ends, invariably, in the early

marriage, which is one of the most deplorable features in the lower life; the young girl of sixteen or seventeen, ignorant of everything, enters upon the married life, and for the rest of her days endures all the wretchedness of grinding poverty, children half-nourished and in rags, a drunken husband and a drunken self. The boys' clubs, the girls' clubs, the settlements, of which I shall speak again presently, do all in their power to occupy the young people's minds with other things; but the club closes at ten, and the street remains open all night.

None of these street boys and girls—or very few, as I have said already—are country-born; the country lads come up to London Town, to the city paved with gold, in thousands, but they are older than these children of the street; they have not learned the fascination which the street exercises upon those who have always lived in it and always played in it.

Their martial tastes should make them enlist, but the discipline forbids enlistment. Many of them, however, belong to the Tower Hamlets Militia, a regiment called out for drill for six weeks every year. They enjoy sporting the uniform; they like marching; they like the band and the mess in barracks, but they cannot endure the discipline for more than six weeks, even in return for the grandeur and the glory of the thing.

What, then, is the connection between the casual hand and the lads of the street? This: the life of the street is an ordeal through which these lads must pass, since we give them no other choice; some of them emerge without harm; for them the craving for drink has not become a demoniac possession; they have never been haled before the police court; they know not the interior of prison or reformatory; they have not married at seventeen; these are the young fellows who get, and keep, permanent places with "good money," they are hewers of wood and drawers of

water like the children of Gideon, yet they live not in the slums; their homes are in the Monotonies; theirs is a four- or six-roomed house, one of a row, one of a street, a flat in a barrack; their houses and dwelling-places stand side by side miles around. But the life that is led in these streets is not monotonous, because every man has his own life and his own experience, his birth and childhood, his manhood and his age, and these can never be monotonous.

There remain, alas! those with whom we began, the company of two or three who hang around the corner outside the public house or lean against the walls of the docks. They are the men whom the ordeal of the street, more than any other cause, has broken down. They have emerged from that ordeal with a confirmed habit of taking the Easy Way, that of no self-restraint, that which temptation indicates with beckoning finger and false smiles; at nineteen they have lost any possible joy of work, pride in work, desire for work—they know not any work which can afford the workman joy or pride; to them the necessity for work is an ever-present curse which corrupts and poisons life. Were it not for this cruel necessity they might pass through the allotted span with no more effort and no more ambition than the common slug of the hedge.

Alas! work must be done if they would drink; they do not mind being badly fed; it is wonderful to think of the small amount of solid food they get, but they must drink. In their single room they have wife and children, but they must drink; they hang about waiting for work, in the hope that no work may come, yet that food will appear; they have neither honesty, nor self-respect, nor any sense of duty or responsibility at all. But they must drink.

What to do for, or with, these unfortunates is the most difficult and the most pressing question of the slums. The only hope seems to be to get hold of the boys and girls and to spare them, if possible, the cruel ordeal of the street.

And meantime, while we look and while we talk, lo! the company has melted away; the cold wind and the rain have fallen upon them; drink has robbed them of their immunity; the infirmary ward holds them to-day; to-morrow the pauper's funeral will wind up the sum and story of their sordid days.

VII
THE ALIEN



VII

THE ALIEN

LONDON has always held out hands of toleration, if not of welcome, to the alien. He has come to London from every part of Great Britain and Ireland, and from every country of Europe. Under the Plantagenets the country lad was as much an alien or a foreigner as the Hollander or the German. To country lads and the continental alike London was the city paved with gold. First came Saxon, Jute, and Angle; then came Dane; then Norman; after these came Fleming, French, German. The German, indeed, laid hands on our foreign trade and kept it for six hundred years; whenever one of our kings married a foreign princess the Queen's countrymen flocked over in swarms, to pick up what they could. William the Conqueror's consort brought over the weavers from her own country; when Eleanor of Provence married Henry III her people came with her, especially the ecclesiastics, seizing on dignities and benefices from the Archbishopric of Canterbury downward; when Queen Mary married Philip of Spain the streets of London were filled with Spaniards; when Charles I married Henrietta of France French priests, for the first time since the Reformation, paraded the streets by scores, offending the Protestant conscience. Italy and the South of France sent usurers with the pope's license to prey upon the land.

London was a city of refuge as well as a city where gold

was to be picked up in the streets. Many exiles have sought and found protection within its walls.

The most important of these arrivals was that of the French Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. An immense number came over; in one year 15,500 were relieved by the collection of a fund amounting to £63,713. A large colony of 13,500 of them settled in London, most of them in Spitalfields, at that time still a place of fields. Here they introduced the industry of silk-weaving, very much to the profit of the country and city of their adoption.

The next invasion of aliens was that of the unfortunate Palatines, in the year 1709. The Palatinate had been devastated by the French; it was a vast battle-field plundered during every incursion of the enemy; in despair, the people abandoned their country; they flocked over to England in companies and troops; the immigration continued for three years, during which time thirteen thousand thrust themselves upon the mercy of the City. A collection was made for them amounting to £22,038. These people, who seem to have been agricultural rather than industrial, contributed little to the population of London; three thousand of them were sent to Ireland; to each of the provinces of North and South Carolina six hundred were sent; to New York nearly four thousand, but seventeen hundred died on the voyage, no doubt enfeebled by their sufferings and privations before embarking; they seem not to have met with favor in New York; many of them emigrated to Pennsylvania, where, it is said, their descendants still preserve the memory of their origin. Those who settled in London got their names Anglicized, so that they were entirely absorbed and lost in the general population.

At the beginning of the French Revolution, when the madness of the revolutionaries fell upon the priests and nobles, there was an immense flight of the persecuted classes into

England. They did not however, as a rule, come to settle; as soon as circumstances permitted they returned to France; some, however, remained; it is not uncommon to find families descended from the *émigrés* of 1792-93 who preserve the memory of their former nobility, though they have long since abandoned all intention of claiming a title which carries with it neither privilege nor property nor honor.

The *émigrés* formed during their stay small colonies in and about London. One of them was at St. Pancras, in whose churchyard many of them are buried; another was a little further out, five or six miles out of the City, at Hampstead—the Roman Catholic chapel built for them still remains; there were other small settlements, and many of them remained in Westminster and in Soho. The hospitality offered them, the pity shown to them, the maintenance granted to them by our government, the cordial friendship extended to them by our people, were worthy of all praise. Yet it was remarked, with some bitterness, that when these refugees were enabled to return to their own country they ignored every obligation of gratitude, or even courtesy, and actually refused to admit their old friends of the English gentry to their salons in Paris. Partly, I believe, this apparent ingratitude was due to their poverty, of which they were ashamed.

Another political invasion of refugees was that of the Poles after their abortive rising in the thirties; they, too, were received by our government with a generosity unparalleled. There were many thousands of them. They were granted barracks to live in and a small pension to live upon; both were continued as long as they lived; they must now all be dead; some of them no doubt married here, and their children must now be part of the general population. A few of the most foolhardy ventured back again, to lead one more forlorn hope in another mad attempt at rebellion, and to die unprofitable patriots by the Russian bayonet.

In our own time there has been—it is still going on—a considerable influx of Russian Polish and German Jews flying from the Judenhetze of the continent. I will speak of them immediately.

Every year there is an immigration as from a barren and an unfertile soil to a land of promise. The immense strides made by industrial Germany during the last few



Whitechapel Shops.

years will probably check this immigration. Hamburg, Berlin, not to speak of Antwerp and Rotterdam, also rapidly growing centers of trade, will attract some of those who have been accustomed to look toward London as the land of promise. At present there appear to be about ten thousand new immigrants every year, without counting those who purpose going on to America. They consist of Russians, Poles, Germans, Dutch, Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Belgians, French, Austrians, Hungarians, Italians, Swiss—but we have gone through the whole of Europe. I find no mention of Spain or Portugal or Turkey; nor are there, so far as I have heard,

any aliens hailing from the smaller peoples—the Croats, Celts, Servians, or Bulgarians. What becomes of this array? What has become of the hundred thousand who have come over during the last ten years? Go up and down the streets of East London—over the shop-fronts you will see everywhere German and Jewish names, which seem to answer this question in part. Walk along the Whitechapel Road on a Sunday morning; there you will see most of the hundred thousand, there you will see the peaceful invaders who have occupied a large part of East London and have achieved for themselves, by dint of unconquerable patience and untiring work, a far better livelihood, with a far higher level of comfort, than could have been possible for them in their native lands. As for their children, you may look for them in the Board-schools; they have become English—both boys and girls: except for their names, they are English through and through; they accept our institutions, laws, and customs; they rejoice with our successes, they grieve with our misfortunes; never yet has it been known that the second generation of the alien has failed to become English through and through. I believe that our power of absorbing alien immigrants is even greater than that of the United States.

The foreign element, with the exception of the Polish Jews, and that only for mutual help and at the outset, does not seek to separate itself and to create its own quarter. In the West End, it is true, there are streets principally inhabited by Italians, French, and Swiss; that is because the people are employed in the restaurants as waiters and cooks, in the laundries, in the *charcuteries* and provision shops, which exist for the use of the foreigner. But their children will become English; you may see them playing on the asphalted pavements outside the schools; you fail to perceive any difference between the children of the German waiter and those of the English working-man. There are thousands of German clerks in London; they come over, some to stay, some

to learn the conduct and the extent of English trade and to take back with them information about markets and prices and profits, which may be useful to their friends of Hamburg and Altona. In either case they learn English as quickly as they can, and live in the English fashion. Where, again, is the French colony? There are thousands of French people in London, but there is no French colony. There is a society of Huguenot families, there is a French hospital, there are two or three French Protestant churches, but there is no part of East London, or of any other quarter of London, where we may find French the prevailing speech. There are, again, a good many Dutch. Where are they? Some of them have a kind of colony in Spitalfields, where they make cigars; as for the rest, they are scattered. One may see some of them any Sunday morning in their church, all that is left of the great church of the Augustine Friars; in that old place a scanty congregation meets for service in the Dutch language and after the Dutch use. It is pleasant to sit among them and to look around upon the serious faces of the Hollanders, our former rivals, and to make believe to listen to the sermon, which sounds so much like English until you try to make out what it means. The feet of these honest burghers rest upon the dust of many great princes and lords and noble dames buried in the church of the Augustines, because it was so holy a place that sepulture here was a certain passport through purgatorial fires, without a stay in purgatory, to the gates of heaven. Hither, on the day after the battle of Barnet, which practically ended the Wars of the Roses, they brought, in the long, grunting country wagons, the bodies of the lords and knights who fell upon the field, and buried them within this church. That of Warwick the king-maker lay here, the face uncovered, for some days, so that the people might be assured of his death. But I doubt whether the Hollander cares much about the bones of ancient nobles. There are also Swedes in East London, but the

only place where I have met them is in their church near St. George's-in-the-East, where you may see them any Sunday at the Swedish service. They are a pleasant-looking race, with brown hair and blue eyes; they appear to be largely composed of seafaring folk; one would like to be able to converse with them. However, they have no quarter of their own.

Of course, the most important foreign element in East London is that of the newly arrived Jewish immigrants. They are the poorest of the very poor; when they come over they have nothing. They are received by the Jewish Board of Guardians, which is, I believe, a model of a well-managed board; work is speedily found for them; their own people take them on at the lowest wage at which life can be sustained until they learn enough to move on and get higher pay. Their ranks are always recruited by new arrivals; there is talk of their taking work away from English workmen. Yet there seem to be no signs, as on the continent, of a *Judenhetze*, or any such wide-spread, unreasoning hatred of the Jew as we lately saw in France, and such as we have seen in Russia and in Germany.

The newly arrived Jews have their own colony. It has much increased of late years. They now occupy, almost to the exclusion of others, a triangular area of East London—without a map it is not easy to make the limits understood—lying north of the Whitechapel Road immediately without the city limits: it has a base of nearly half a mile and an altitude of three fourths of a mile. Here, for the time, the poorer Jews are all crowded together. It is alleged that they have ingenious ways of sweating each other; as soon as the Polish Jew has got his head a little above water he begins to exploit his countrymen; he acquires the miserable tenements of the quarter and raises the rent and demands a large sum for the “key”—that is to say, the fine on going in.

These Jews all succeed, unless they are kept down by their

favorite vice of gambling. It is perhaps as well for their own peace that for the first few years of their residence in London they should live in their own quarter, among their own people. For the transformation of the poor, starving immigrant, willing to do anything at any wage, to the prosperous master workman is unlovely. He succeeds partly because he is extremely industrious, patient, orderly, and law-abiding. But there are other reasons. It is sometimes pretended that the Jew is endowed naturally with greater intellectual power than is granted to men of other nationality. This I do not believe. The truth seems to be that advanced by Mr. Charles Booth, I think for the first time. "The poorest Jew," he says, "has inherited through the medium of his religion a trained intellect." This fact, if you consider it, seems quite sufficient, taken with those other gifts of industry and obedience to order and law, to explain the Jew's success among the poorer classes through which he works his way upward.

He is a person of trained intellect. What does this mean? Poor and miserable as he stands before you, penniless, ragged, half-starved, cringing, this man has been educated in the history of his own people, in the most ancient literature of the world, in a body of law which exercises all the ingenuity and casuistry of his teachers to harmonize with existing conditions. It is like putting into the works of an engineer, among the general hands, one who has been trained in applied mathematics. Into any kind of work which means competition, the Jew brings the trained intellect and the power of reasoning due to his religious training; he brings also the habit of looking about for chances and looking ahead for possibilities which long generations of self-defense have made hereditary. These faculties he brings into the market; with them he contends against the dull mind, untrained and simple, of the English craftsman. What wonder if he succeeds? Nothing but brute violence, which he will not meet with here, can keep him down.

This I believe to be the great secret of the Jew's success. It is his intellectual superiority over working-men of his own class. Observe, however, that we do not find him conspicuously successful when he has to measure his intellectual strength against the better class. In law, for instance, he has produced one or two great lawyers, but not more than his share; in mathematics and science, one or two great names, but not more than his share. I am inclined to think that in every branch of intellectual endeavor the Jew holds his own. But I doubt if it can be proved that he does more. So long as we can hold our own in the higher fields there will be no Judenhetze in this country. I am informed, however, that the leaders of the people in London are persistent in their exhortations to the new-comers to make themselves English—to make themselves English as fast as possible; to send their children to the Board-schools; and to make them English. It is the wisest advice. There should be no feeling as of necessary separation between Jew and Christian. We ought to live in amity beside each other, if not with each other; we should no more ask if a man is a Jew than we ask if a man who has just joined our club is a Roman Catholic or a Unitarian.

Yet, even in this country, it cannot be said that the Jew is popular; there are prejudices against him which are no longer those concerning his religion. Here, again, I turn to the authority who has made so profound a study of the question; the importance of the question is my excuse. This is how Mr. Charles Booth explains the dislike and suspicion with which the Jews are still regarded by many: "No one will deny that the children of Israel are the most law-abiding inhabitants of East London. . . . The Jew is quick to perceive that law and order, and the sanctity of contract, are the *sine qua non* of a full and free competition in the open market. And it is by competition, and by competition alone, that the Jew seeks success. But in the case of the foreign Jews it is a competition unrestricted by the personal dignity

of a definite standard of life and unchecked by the social feelings of class loyalty and trade integrity. The small manufacturer injures the trade through which he rises to the rank of a capitalist by bad and dishonest production. The petty dealer suits his wares and his terms to the weakness, the ignorance, and the vice of his customers; the mechanic, indifferent to the interests of the class to which he belongs, and intent only on becoming a small master, acknowledges no limit to the process of underbidding fellow-workers except the exhaustion of his own strength. In short, the foreign Jew totally ignores all social obligations other than keeping the law of the land, the maintenance of his own family, and the charitable relief of coreligionists."

The place and time in which to see the poorer Jews of London collected together is on Sunday morning in Wentworth Street and Middlesex Street, Aldgate—the old Petticoat Lane. These streets and those to right and left are inhabited entirely by Jews; Sunday is their market-day; all the shops are open; the streets are occupied by a triple line of stalls, on which are exposed for sale all kinds of things, but chiefly garments—coats and trousers. There is a mighty hubbub of those who chaffer and those who offer and those who endeavor to attract attention. You will see a young fellow mounted on a pair of wooden steps, brandishing something to wear; with eloquence convincing, with gesture and with action, he declares and repeats and assures the people of the stoutness of the material and the excellence of the work. The crowd moves slowly along, it listens critically; this kind of thing may become monotonous; the oratory of the salesman, in order to be effective, continually requires new adjectives, new metaphors, new comparisons; among the crowd are other professors of the salesman's rhetoric. They know the tricks, they have learned the art. One wonders how many such fervid speeches this young man has to make before he effects a single sale. We need not pity



A Corner in Petticoat Lane.

him, although at the close of the market his voice is hoarse with bawling and the results are meager; he enjoys the thing; it is his one day of glory, and he has admirers; he knows that among the audience there are many who envy his powers and would fain take his place and deceive the people.

Not all the holders of stalls are so eloquent. Here, before a miserable tray resting on crazy trestles, stand a ragged old couple. They look very, very poor; they cast wistful eyes upon the heedless crowd; their wares are nothing but common slippers of bright red and blue cloth. Will you buy a pair because the makers are so old and so poor? Alas! they cannot understand your offer; their only language is Yiddish, that remarkable composite tongue which in one place is a mixture of Russian and Hebrew, in another of German and Hebrew, in another of Lettish and Hebrew. They stare, they eagerly offer their wares; a kindly compatriot from the crowd interprets. There is a little bargaining, and the slippers are in your pocket. Very well. It is a piece of good luck for the old pair; like unto him who had the splendid shilling "fate cannot harm them; they will dine to-day." True to their national instincts, which are Oriental, they have made you pay three times as much for the slippers as they would charge one of their own people. Going on slowly with the crowd one admires the variety of the wares laid out on trestles. Who wants these rusty iron things—keys, locks, broken tools, things unintelligible? Somebody, for there is noisy chaffering.

You observe that the newly arrived Polish Jew is for the most part a man of poor physique; he is a small, narrow-chested, pasty-faced person. "Is this," you ask, "a descendant of Joshua's valiant captains? Is this the race which followed Judas Maccabæus? Is this the race which defied the legions of Titus?" "My friend," replies a kindly scholar, one of their own people, "these are the children of the Ghetto. For two thousand years they have lived in the worst parts

of a crowded city; they have been denied work, except of the lowest; they have endured every kind of scorn and contumely. Come again in ten years' time. In the free air of

Anglo-Saxon rule they will grow; you will not know them again."

It is among these new-comers that one recognizes the Oriental note; there is among the women a love of bright colors; among the men, even with the poorest, a certain desire for display; an assertion of grandeur. Look at this little shop of one window on the ground floor. It is crowded with girls. Outside the proprietor stands. He is not tall, but he swells with pride; a large cigar is between his lips; it is a sign and a symbol. His poorer countrymen look with envy upon that very large cigar.



A "Schnorrer" (Beggar) of the Ghetto.

He condescends to talk because he is so proud that he must display the cause of his glory. "All the week," he says, "I study what to give them on Sunday. To-day it's bonnets. Last Sunday it was fichus. Next Sunday? That is my secret. My wife serves the shop. I furnish the contents. All the week my son Jacob keeps it, but there is no trade except on Sunday."

In a second-hand furniture shop, to which we have been directed, the proprietor sits among his tables and chairs. He also has a large cigar for the better display of his grandeur. He is conscious of the envy with which the man who has a shop is regarded by a man who must work with his own hands. This man has more—he has a father. You called on purpose to see that father. You would like to see him? You are invited to step up-stairs. There, in a high-backed chair, with pillows on either side, sits a little shriveled-up creature. His eyes are bright, for he has just awakened from the sleep which fills up most of the day and all the night. Beside him is the Book of the Law in Hebrew. Upon the open book there rests his pipe. Two girls, his great grandchildren, sit with him and watch him. For the old man is a hundred and three years of age. Yet he can still read his Hebrew Bible, and he can still take his pipe of tobacco.

“Last night,” said one of the girls, “we carried him down-stairs into the shop, and the people crowded round to see him. He drank a whole glass of beer—in their sight.”

The patriarch nods and laughs, proud of the feat. He then talks about himself. He was born in the Ghetto of Venice—you can see the place to this day. His father came to London when he was a child. His occupation, he tells us, was formerly that of cook. He was employed as cook for the great banquets of the City companies; in that capacity he used to drink as much wine as he wished to have, and in those days he wished for a great deal. His lengthened years, therefore, are not due to abstinence from strong drink. He was also a follower of the Ring, and was constantly engaged as second or bottle-holder in the prize-fights so common in the first sixty years of the century. He remembers what was once considered a great political event, the committal of Sir Francis Burdett to the Tower of London in 1808. Sir Francis was at the time a leading Radical. He

was afterward the father of Angela, Lady Burdett-Coutts, a leader in the noble army of philanthropists.

We are not allowed to talk too long to this ancient and venerable survival. After a quarter of an hour or so his watchful nurses dismiss us, and he promises to see us again—"if I live," he adds, with a sigh. "If I live." It is his constant refrain. He has outlived all his friends, all his companions, all his enemies, all his contemporaries. There is no pleasure left to him save that of being admired on account of extreme old age. It is enough. It binds him to life; he would not wish to die so long as that is left. "If I live," he says.

For my own part, I like sometimes to sit in the synagogue on the Sabbath and listen to the service, which I do not understand. For it seems to explain the people—their intense pride, their tenacity, their separation from the rest of the world. Their service—I may be mistaken; I have no Hebrew—strikes upon my ears as one long, grand hymn of praise and gladness. The hymns they sing, the weird, strange melodies of the hymns, are those, they allege, which were sung when Israel went out of Egypt; they are those which were sung when in the Red Sea the waters stood up like a wall on either side to let them through; they are those which were sung when Pharaoh's hosts lay drowning and the walls of water closed together. The service, the reading, the hymns, the responses—they are all an assertion that the choice of the Lord hath fallen upon this people; the Lord their God hath chosen them. Let no one speak of Jews until he has listened to their service. By their worship the mind of a people may be discerned.

I have already mentioned the settlement of the Huguenot silk-weavers at Spitalfields—the fields behind the old hospital and monastery called St. Mary's. There they have remained. Until quite recently, they carried on from father to son the trade of silk-weaving; there are silk-weavers in

Spitalfields and Bethnal Green. An attempt has been made to revive the trade; meantime many of the old houses remain with their wide windows on the first floor, and over the shops one may still see the French names, or these names rudely Anglicized. But the French settlement no longer exists; the French language has been forgotten, and the Huguenots are completely absorbed. They are now like all the rest of us, a mongrel blend of Celt, Saxon, Dane, Norman, Fleming, and everything else. It is the Anglo-Saxon blend, or, as we ought rather to call it, the Anglo-Celtic blend.

A small colony of Italians has settled in another part of London—not in East London. You would know the colony, which does not belong to these pages, if you were to stumble upon it accidentally, by the barrel-organs in the courts, by the barrows on which the Italian costers carry round their penny ices, by the bright-colored handkerchiefs and the black hair of the women, and by the cheap Italian restaurants, where the colonists can rejoice in Italian cookery and Italian wine.

In the West India Dock Road, before you reach the docks, there is a building on the north side which contains a colony always changing. It is the home of the Indian and Malay sailors—the Lascars and the Arabs. I remember spending a morning there with one who was afterward murdered by Cairene ruffians in the desert of Sinai. This man loved the place because he loved the Oriental folk who lodged there, and because he not only talked their languages, but knew their manners and customs, and would sit with them after their manner, talk with them on their own subjects, and become one of themselves. On this occasion he met a certain poor Persian scholar down on his luck. He was a man of great dignity and presence, insomuch that one realized the truth that in the East clothes do not make the man. He was in rags, but he had lost nothing of his dignity. It was

pleasant to see them sitting down together on the floor, side by side, discussing and quoting Persian poetry, and still more pleasant to see the Persian quickly yielding to the charm of a common love of literature and treating the infidel as a friend and a brother. It is a strange place and full of strange people; no one can understand how strange it is, how great is the gulf between the Oriental and the Occidental, unless he can talk with them and learn how they think and how they regard us. My friend interpreted for me, afterward, something of what the Persian scholar had said. Colossal is the pride of the Oriental; inconceivable the contempt with which he regards the restless West.

“ Here as I sit by the Jumna bank,
 Watching the flow of the sacred stream,
 Pass me the legions, rank on rank,
 And the cannon roar and the bayonets gleam.”

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“ When shall these phantoms wither away,
 Like the smoke of the guns on the wind-swept hill,
 Like the sounds and colors of yesterday;
 And the soul have rest and the air be still ? ”

Nearly opposite this house is a small street which contains the Chinese colony. Compared with the Chinese colony of New York, part of which I once visited, one sweltering night in July, that of London is a small thing and of no importance. Yet it is curious. There are not, I believe, more than a hundred Chinese, or thereabouts, in all; they occupy a few houses in this street; there are one or two small shops kept by Chinamen; it is considered quite safe to visit the place, at all events in the daytime; I was myself taken there by one who was personally known to the shopkeepers. There was not much that was attractive or interesting offered for sale, except Chinese playing-cards, which are curious; conversation in Pidgin-English is difficult at first, but one

quickly acquires enough of the *patois*. There is a boarding-house for Chinese in the street; the ground floor we found furnished with a tiny joss-house, in one corner, and a large table which occupied nearly the whole of the room; the table was covered with Chinamen sitting and sprawling; they were wholly absorbed in a little gamble with dominoes and small Chinese coins; their absorption in the chances of the game was complete. One of them, the banker, manipulated the dominoes; nobody spoke; every time that a domino was turned there was the exchange of coins in silence. The eager, intent faces were terrifying; one recognized the passion which sees nothing, hears nothing, cares for nothing, feels nothing, but the fierce eagerness of play. We looked on for five minutes. No one spoke, no one breathed. Then I became aware that in a room, a cupboard at the back, there was a fire, with a great black pot hanging over it and a man with a spoon taking off the cover and stirring the contents and inspecting the progress of the stew. Presently he came out, ladle in hand, and bawled aloud, but in Chinese. I took his bawling for an announcement of dinner. But none of the players heard; the banker turned up another domino; there was another exchange of coins; no one heeded the call.

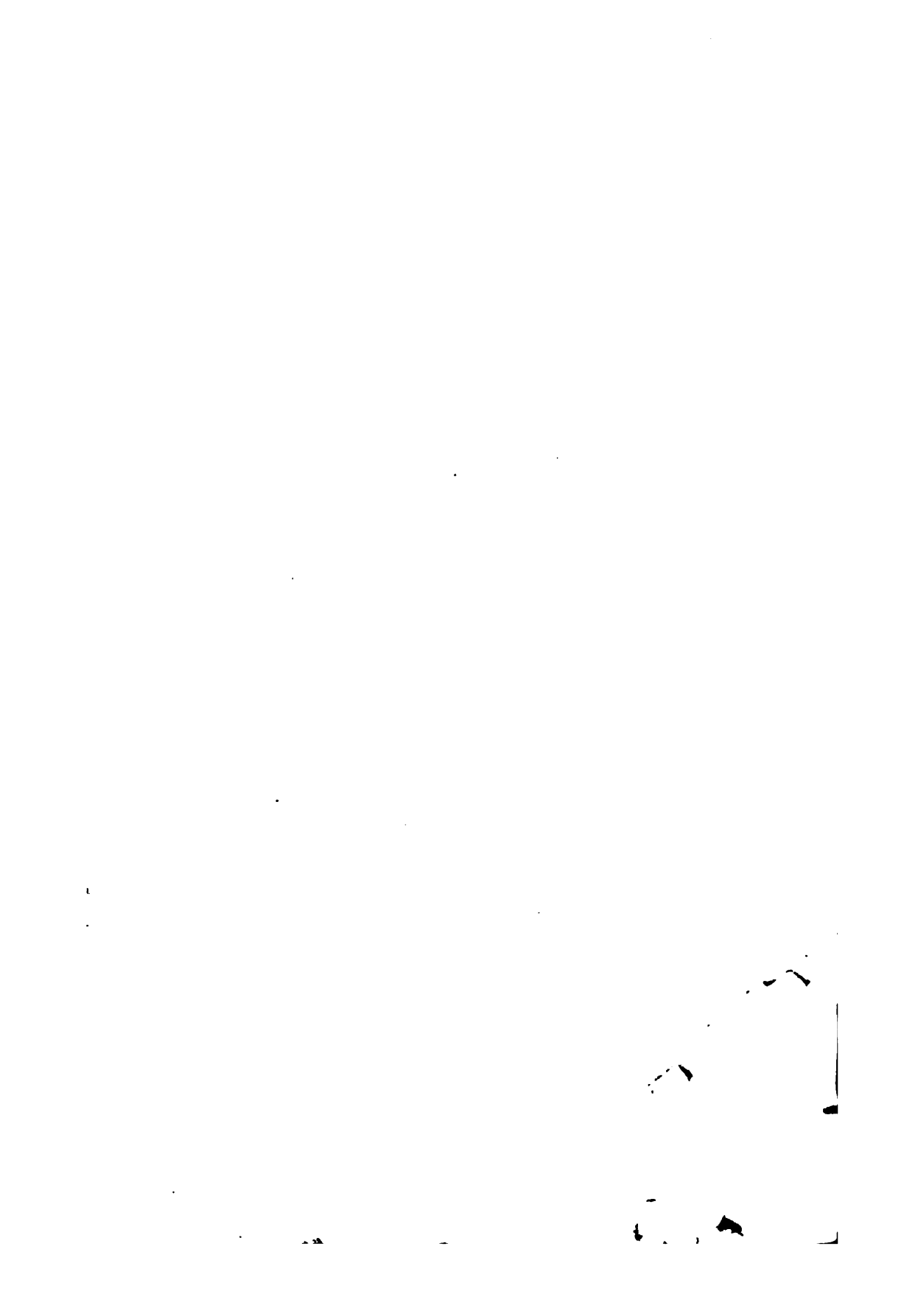
Yet it was the dinner-bell; down-stairs came chattering, laughing, and joking, half a dozen of the boarders, each with a basin in his hand. The cook filled every man's basin, and they went up-stairs again, and none of the players marked them or heeded them, or turned his head, and none of the boarders took the slightest notice of the players. Nobody meanwhile paid the least attention to the joss-house, where burned the candle which is said to be the Chinaman's sole act of worship. And nobody took the least notice of the stranger who stood at the door and looked on.

Across the road, in another house, was an opium den. We have read accounts of the dreadful place, have we not?

Greatly to my disappointment, because when one goes to an opium den for the first time one expects a creeping of the flesh at least, the place was neither dreadful nor horrible. The room was of fair size, on the first floor; it was furnished with a great bed, covered with a mattress; there was a bench against the wall, and there were half a dozen common cane chairs. Two men were lying on the bed enjoying the opium sleep, perhaps with the dreams that De Quincey has described—but one cannot, even the thought reader cannot, read another man's dreams. A third man was taking his opium by means of a long pipe. Half a dozen men were waiting their turn. One of them had a musical instrument. Except for the smell of the place, which was overwhelming, the musical instrument was the only horror of the opium den. When I think of it I seem to remember a thousand fingernails scratching the window, or ten thousand slate-pencils scratching a schoolboy's slate. It is one of those memories which sink into the brain and never leave a man. Nor can I understand why, under the weird and wonderful torture of the intolerable music of that instrument, even the sleepers themselves did not awake, their dreams dissipated, their opium, so to speak, wasted and rendered of none account, and fly, shrieking, forswearing forever opium and the Chinese quarter.

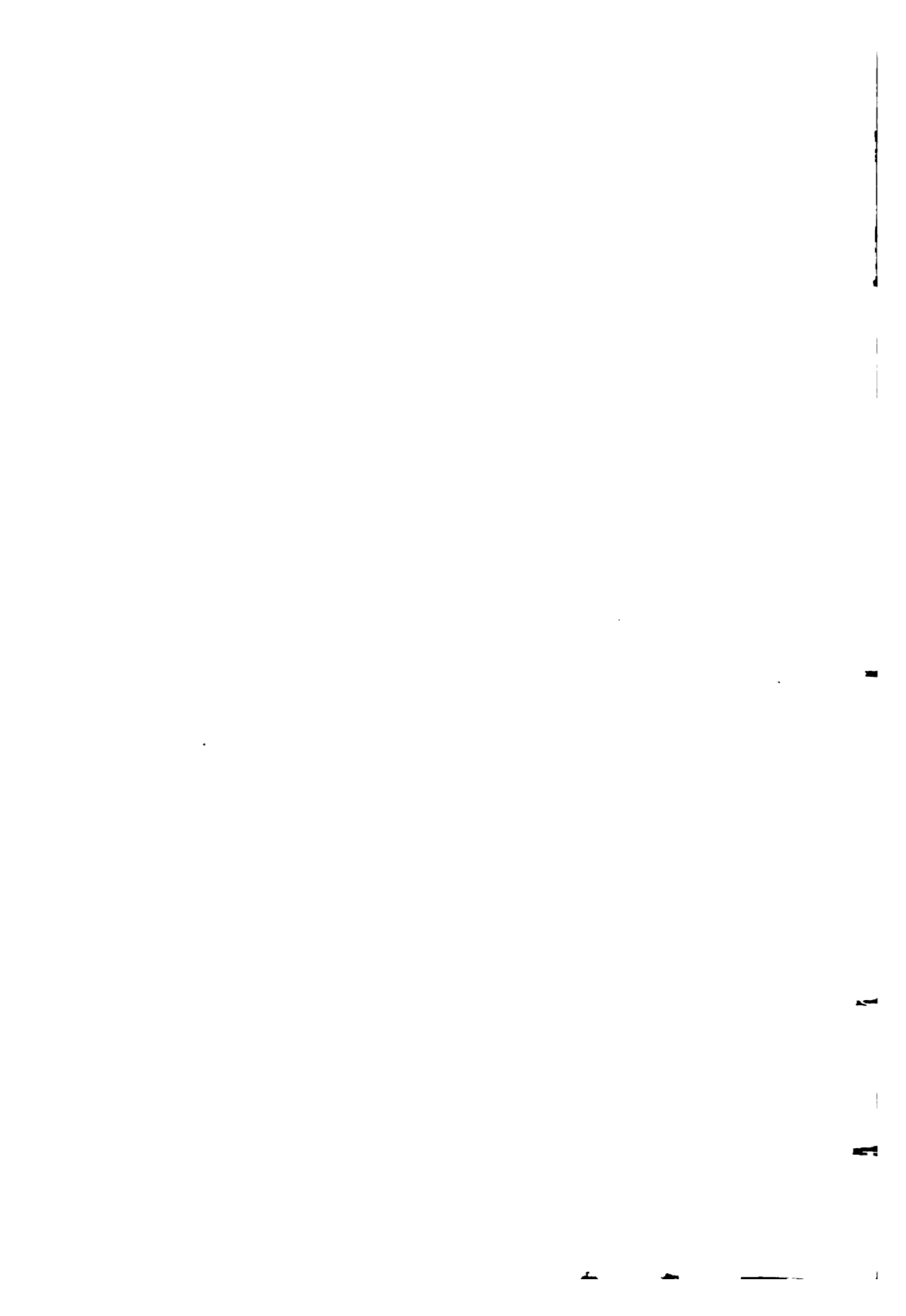
There are small colonies and settlements of other foreigners. Anarchists make little clubs where murders are hatched, especially murders of foreign sovereigns; they think to overthrow a settled government by the assassination of a king; they succeed only in adding one more to the anxieties and the dangers that accompany a crown. There are Orleanists, Bonapartists, Carlists, and I know not what, who carry on their little intrigues and their correspondence with partizans in France and Spain and elsewhere, with a great show of zeal and much promise of results—the day after tomorrow. But with these we have nothing to do. It is

enough for us to note the continual immigration into London of aliens who become in a few years English in manners, and in the next generation are English in speech and in thought, in will, as in manners. As it was in the days of Edward I, when the men of Rouen, the men of Caen, the men of the Empire, the Venetian, the Genoese, the Fleming, the Gascon, the Spaniard, the Hamburger, from every part of western Europe came as merchants to trade, and remained to settle. So it is in the days of Victoria. They come to the banks of the Thames by thousands every year, and they come to stay, and they are content to be absorbed.



VIII

THE HOUSELESS



VIII

THE HOUSELESS

AT the present moment nearly all those parts of East London which are inhabited by working-men of all kinds, from the foreman and the engineer and the respectable craftsman in steady employ at good wages down to the casual and the dock-hand and the children of the street, are suffering from a dearth of houses. In this vast labyrinthine maze of streets—all houses—there are not enough houses. The people are willing to incur discomfort; a respectable household, accustomed to the decencies of life and the wholesome separation of their children from themselves and from each other, will consent to pack them all into one room, or into a workman's flat of two rooms in a "model" barrack; they are ready to offer double the former rent, with a tremendous premium on the "key," but still there are no houses and no lodgings to be had even on those terms. The rents of the lowest tenements are mounting daily; there seems to be no limit in the upward tendency; the landlord is no longer doubtful as to the increased rent he can demand; the rise is automatic, it goes on without any stimulus or grinding on his part. A single room, in some quarters, is the very best that can be hoped for; the rent of that room, which was formerly from three to four shillings, is now six or more, while the charge for the "key,"—*i. e.*, the fine on taking the room,—which was formerly a few shillings, is now a pound or even more.

Meantime, although they are willing to pay the high rents,

people are everywhere found wandering in search of lodgings. A workman who has found employment must be within easy reach of his work; if he cannot find lodgings, what is he to do? The workhouse authorities have in some cases risen to the occasion. They agree to take in a man's wife and family and to keep them at a fixed charge until the breadwinner finds a lodging. He himself seeks a fourpenny bed at a "doss" house—*i. e.*, a common lodging-house.

In some parts it is reported that the overcrowding has actually led to the letting, not of rooms, but of beds; the children are put to sleep under the bed; men on night duty hire the bed for the day; nay, it is even said that beds are divided among three tenants, or sets of tenants. Of these one will occupy it from ten in the evening till six in the morning, another from six in the morning till two in the afternoon, and a third from two until ten. This Box and Cox arrangement would present difficulties with the children.

The situation, which has been growing worse for a long time, has now reached that acute stage in a social problem when it can no longer be neglected by statesmen or by philanthropists. Attention, at least, has been called to the evil—papers are read, articles are written, speeches are made; so far we have got little farther than an understanding of the difficulties which are such as to seem fatal to any proposed remedy that has been yet advanced. For my own part, I have no views except a conviction that something must be done, and that without delay, and that the best that can be done will only be the least dangerous of many proposed experiments.

The subject may appear technical and dry, but it is impossible to speak of work-a-day London without touching on the difficulty of housing the people. A speaker at a recent meeting took exception to the phrase "housing of the people." He said, which is quite true, that the people are not cattle. We are not, yet we must be housed whether we are rich or poor, or only middling. I am, myself, housed in-

different well, but I feel no comparison with an ox or a cow when I am told so.

The facts of the case were first ascertained by a commissioner for the "Daily News," and published in that paper early in 1899. The work was carried out by Mr. George Haw, a resident in one of the new settlements. The reader who wishes to consider the subject from every point of view is referred to the volume in which Mr. Haw has reprinted his valuable papers.

It is not probable that the difficulties which any one populous city has to encounter have no lesson to convey to other cities, though the circumstances in each case must vary with the conditions of site, access, and many other considerations. Overcrowding in New York or in Boston would certainly present many features differing widely from those in London. Moreover, the remedy or the alleviations which would serve in one case might be impossible in another.

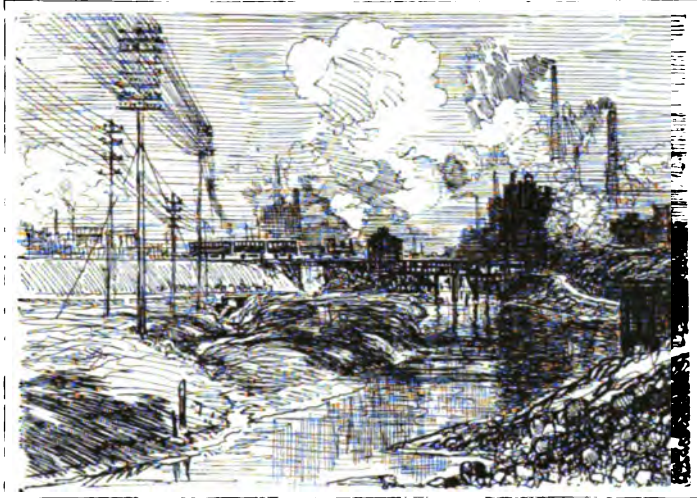
The principal causes operating to produce this overcrowding are three—the vast and rapid increase of population, the extraordinary development of new industries in East London, with a consequent demand for more labor, and the flocking of country lads into the town.

For instance, there are two places, both lying outside the limits of the London County Council, which twenty or thirty years ago were mere villages or rural hamlets, the churches standing among market gardens and fields, having still their great houses and gardens, the residence of City merchants who drove in their own carriages to and from their offices. One of them, called East Ham, I remember, a quarter of a century ago, as a village spread about on a large area, as if land had no value. It was a flat expanse, fertile, and lying close to the Thames marshes. The map of that time shows farms and farmhouses, almshouses, and a few cottages. This place has now a population of ninety thousand, increasing every day, and consisting entirely of the working-class.

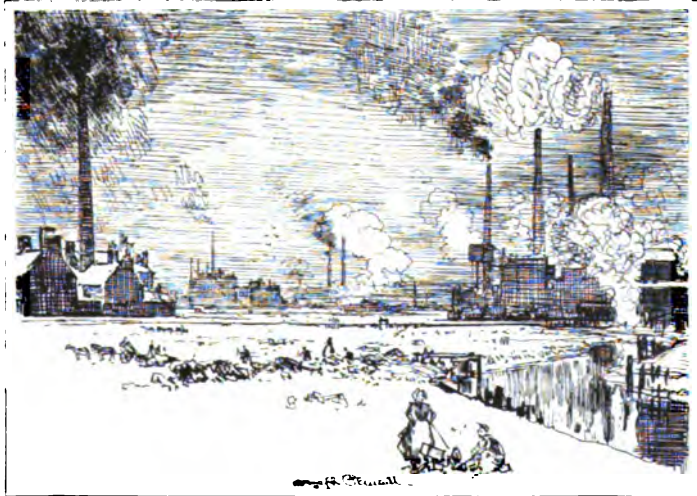
Its neighbor, formerly also a village a little nearer Lon-

don and called West Ham, presents on the map of 1891 the aspect, familiar to the growing suburban town, of a small central area covered with streets, and with new streets running out north, south, east, and west. It is quite obvious from the map that West Ham was destined to be rapidly built over. It is now a huge town of two hundred and seventy thousand people, also, like East Ham, entirely consisting of working-people. It was at one time a place much loved by Quakers; evidence of their occupation still remains in certain stately old houses, now let out in lodgings; their gardens are built over; the character of the place is changed; the streets are crowded with people; trains and omnibuses run about all day; one of the Quaker's gardens still survives; it belonged to a member of the Gurney family; the house has been pulled down, but the lordly garden is kept up and the grounds around it have become the park for the West Ham folk. The quickened demand for lodgings has caused the whole of this town to be overrun with streets of small workmen's houses, containing four or six rooms each, most of which are let to families by two rooms or by single rooms. But the demand still continues; by-streets are run across, narrow lanes usurp the small backyard or little slip of garden; when the whole available space is built over, what will happen next? The crazy condition of these jerry-built houses, after a few years, opens up another and a different set of questions. The case of West Ham represents only on a more rapid scale what has been going on for many years over the whole of industrial London. And now we seem at last to have arrived at an end to the accommodation possible on the old method of small houses and narrow streets.

The results of the overcrowding are, as might be expected, deplorable in the extreme. Among other evils, it kills the infants; it dwarfs those who grow up among its evil influences; it poisons the air; it deprives the house of comfort, of cleanliness, of decency; it drives the man to drink; and it



East and West Ham.



East and West Ham, from the Marshes.

makes the life of their unhappy wives one long-continued misery of hopeless battle with dirt and disease. The late Sir Benjamin Richardson would allow, in his "City of Health," no more than twenty-five persons to an acre; in some of the outlying suburbs of London there are no more; in others there are, or have been, actually as many as 3000 people crowded together over a single acre of ground. Put them up all together in a solid square; each person will take 2 feet by $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet—that is, three square feet. The whole company of 3000 will stand on 9000 square feet, or 1000 square yards. This is about a fifth of an acre, so that if we spread them out to cover the whole of the acre each person will have no more than a square yard and a half in which to stand, to sleep, and to breathe.

Of course, the first effect of the overcrowding is the vitiation of the air. The extent of this vitiation has been ascertained by chemical analysis. But, indeed, the senses of sight and smell do not require the aid of chemical analysis in order to prove that the air is corrupt and unwholesome. It is poisoned by the breathing of so many; by the refuse that will always be found lying about where a multitude of people are massed together; by all the contributions of all the unwashed. Sometimes the kindly rains descend and wash the pavements and the roads; sometimes the fresh breeze quickens and drives out the malodorous air from the narrow streets, but wind and rain cannot enter into rooms where the occupants jealously keep the windows closed, and fear cold more than they fear the fetid breath of diphtheria and fever; the wind drops; the warm sun comes out; then from the ground under and between the stones, from the saturated road, from the brick walls, from the open doors, the foul air steals back into the street and hangs over the houses invisible, yet almost as pestilential as the white mist of the morning that floats above the tropical marsh.

The magnitude of the evil may be estimated by the fact

that nearly a million people have to live in London under these conditions. A whole million of people are condemned to this misery and to the moral and physical sufferings entailed—the degradation of decent women, the death of children who might have grown up honest and respectable men and women! A whole million! We cannot think in millions; the magnitude of the number conveys no impression as to the magnitude of the evil. We can only realize it by taking a single case. Let us take the case of A. B. and his family. He was by trade a mechanical engineer; perhaps they called him a fitter, but it matters nothing; he was a decent and a sober man; he had a wife and five children, the eldest of whom was twelve and as “likely” a girl as one would see anywhere—but they were all likely children, clean and well kept and well fed and well mannered, the pride of their mother. The man had employment offered him in some works. It was absolutely necessary for him to live near his work. He broke up, therefore, his “little home”—they all delight in making a “little home”—and brought his children to live in the overcrowded quarter near his work. After a great deal of difficulty he secured one room. It was no more than ten feet square; in that room he had to pack all his children and his wife and all his effects. There was simply no room for the latter; he therefore pawned them; it would be only for a time, a few days, a week or two, and they would find a house, or at least better lodgings. Imagine, if you can, the change. This unfortunate family came from a decent flat of three rooms, in which the two boys slept in the living-room, the three girls in one bedroom and the parents in the other. They had on the staircase access to a common laundry; the roof was the place for drying the clothes; it was also a place where on a summer evening they could breathe fresh air. In place of this flat they had to accommodate themselves in a single small room. This had to contain all their furniture; to be at once the common bed-

room, living-room, kitchen, wash-house, drying-room, dressing-room—think of it! There was, however, no choice. They pawned most of their “sticks”; they brought in nothing but absolute necessaries; they had a large bed, a table, a cupboard, two or three chairs, some kitchen things, and a washtub—little else. And so, uncomplaining, they settled down. It would only be for a week or two. Meantime, the rent of this den was 6s. 6d. a week, and a pound for the “key.”

Outside, the pressure grew worse; the more the factories flourished, the more hands were wanted; new houses were run up with all the speed and all the scamping of work that a jerry-builder could provide, but still the pressure grew. For the man his home brought no comfort; he was not a drinking man, but he began to sit in the public house and to spend his evenings talking; his children could not sit at home; they ran about the streets; the eldest girl, who was so pretty and had been so sweet, began to assume the loud talk and rowdy habits of the girls around her; on the unfortunate woman lay the chief burden of all. She toiled all day long to keep things sweet and clean; alas! what can be done when seven people have to sleep in a room with little more than a thousand cubic feet of air between them all? She saw her husband driven away to the public house, she saw her children losing their bright looks and their rosy cheeks: what could she do? Many of the women around her, giving up the struggle, went in and out of the public house all day. This woman did not. But she was no longer the neat, clean housewife amid her clean surroundings. The stamp of deterioration was upon her and upon the others.

Then the summer came, with a week of hot weather to begin with, and the foundation of the house asserted itself; the house, you see, was built upon the rubbish of the dust-cart. You do not believe it possible? I can show you whole streets in the suburbs which I have myself seen

built upon the rubbish of the dust-heap. It contains, among other things useful and beneficial to the occupants, quantities of cabbage stumps and other bits of vegetable matter. So when the hot weather came the cabbage stumps behaved accordingly; the foul air from the foundations crept through the floors and crawled up the stairs and poured under the doors.

First it was sore throat, then it was something else, and from house to house it was spread, and the doctor came and went, and in the broad bed of the little room lay four children sick at once; their soft, white skins were hard and dry and red; their brains wandered; the mother, with haggard face, bent over them.

It is all over now; three of the children lie in the new cemetery; the man has got a house at last; he will not get back his children, nor will the two who are left to him ever be again what they once were. This is one story out of the thousands which may be told of the people who live in the crowded quarters.

Another cause of overcrowding springs from the bad building of the workmen's houses. It is not only the foundation that is rotten: the house itself is built of bad brick laid in single courses, the woodwork is unseasoned and shrinks, zinc is used instead of lead, the stairs are of matchboard—only the cheapest and worst materials are used. There are laws, there always have been laws, against bad building; there are inspectors, yet the bad building continues. A man who had been an apprentice in the building trade told me how this surprising result of our laws and our inspectors used to be possible twenty-five years ago. "It is this way," he said; "I was a boy when these houses were built. For a house like this it was £15 to the inspector; for one of the smaller houses it was £10." We must not believe it possible for such a thing to happen now; one's faith in human nature would suffer too severe a blow, but when one looks around

in certain quarters that little transaction between the honest builder and the faithful inspector recurs to my unwilling memory.

In course of time authority interposes. The houses are condemned. Out go the people, with their sticks, into the street; the houses are boarded up, the boys throw stones at the windows; the place is deserted. But where are the people to go?

There is a riverside parish entirely inhabited by the lowest kind of working-people, chiefly dock laborers and casuals and factory girls. There are literally no inhabitants of a higher class, except the clergy and a few ladies who live and work among the people. There was until recently a population of eight thousand in this parish. But street after street has been condemned; the houses, boarded up, their windows broken by the boys, stand miserably waiting to be pulled down; the parish has lost three thousand of its population. Where have they gone? Nobody knows; but they must go somewhere, and they have certainly gone where the rents are higher and the crowding worse.

Or the London County Council, becoming aware of the insanitary condition of a whole area, condemns it all, *en bloc*, takes it over, pulls down the miserable tenements and erects new buildings in their place. Nothing could be better; everybody applauds this vigorous action. Yet what happens? I will show you from a single example.

There is an area of fifteen acres in Bethnal Green, one of the worst and most overcrowded parts of London. It contains twenty streets, all small; there were 730 houses, and there were 5719 people. About a third of this army lived in tenements of one room each; nearly a half lived in tenements of two rooms. This area has been entirely cleared away; the London County Council turned out the people, and built upon the site a small town whose streets are fifty feet wide, whose houses are five stories high; water and gas

are laid on, workshops are provided, there are only thirty one-room tenements, there are only five hundred of two rooms, and so on; the rent of the two-room tenements is six shillings a week; the center of the area is occupied by a circular terraced garden. Nothing could be better. Moreover, to crown all, the cost of the whole will be repaid to the ratepayers by means of a sinking fund spread over sixty years.

BUT—what became of the five thousand while these fine palaces were being built? Did their condition improve? Or did it become worse during the period of construction? They were turned out; they had to go somewhere; they imposed themselves upon districts already overcrowded, their habits most certainly grew more careless and more dragged, their condition most certainly grew worse. How many of the five thousand will come back to the old quarters and enter upon the civilized life offered to them? I know not; but the experience is that the former occupants do not return.

London in all directions is now thickly planted with the huge, ugly erections called model lodging-houses, workmen's residences, and barracks. South London, across the river, is especially rich in these erections. Drury Lane, the historic Drury Lane, once the home of Nell Gwynne, the site of the National Theatre, accommodates a vast number of people in its barracks; it is favored also with two playgrounds for the children; both are disused burial grounds—one of them is the burial ground in "Bleak House."

Opinions vary as to the success of these buildings. Their advantages at first sight appear overwhelming. Step out of a Drury Lane block into one of the courts beside it and a dozen advantages will immediately be perceived by all your senses at once. It is a great thing to be clean if you like cleanliness; to have a sanitary house if you like fresh air; to have conveniences for washing if, unlike Dr. Johnson, you prefer your linen to be clean. But there are certain losses

about the block building. I do not say that they are greater than the gains. It has always been the instinctive desire of the Englishman to have his own home, to himself, separate. It is a survival of the early Anglo-Saxon custom when each family formed a settlement to itself. The workingman would like to have his cottage and his bit of garden, and to enjoy his own individuality apart from the rest of the world. In the block he loses this distinction; his family is one of fifty, of a hundred; his children are part of a flock, there is no more distinction among them than in a flock of sheep. There are great dangers attending the loss of the individual; it tends to destroy ambition, to weaken the power of free thought, to injure the responsibility of self-government. This loss is a very great danger among a people whose whole history illustrates the value of a sturdy assertion of self, of personal independence, of responsibility, and of a continual readiness to revolt against any encroachments of authority. For these reasons many regard the barrack or block system with suspicion and dislike.

Other reasons there are which make these flats unpopular, even though they continue to be in great request. They are defects which might be managed by the exercise of a little organization. But it has not yet occurred to the managing bodies of these barracks that the tenants who are intrusted with the votes for the government of the country might also very well be intrusted with the government of their own dwellings. Thus it is complained that a whole staircase is sometimes terrorized by two or three roughs, that there are quarrels and drunken brawls on the stairs at night, that there are continual disputes concerning the day for using the laundry, that the stairs are not kept clean, that the children see and hear and learn things which they should not—but then the children of the streets learn things which they should not; I fear we cannot keep the children from the tree of knowledge. The presence of drunken rowdies, the objection of

many to take their share in cleaning the stairs, and other scandals of the kind ought all to be remedied or, at least, attacked by the formation of committees of order composed of the tenants themselves. I have long been of opinion that the real remedy of most of the abuses of our streets and slums would be the organization of the respectable inhabitants into committees of order and the banishment of the police. Such committees in our barrack dwellings should have power of ejection against evil-doers; they should be their own police.

It is characteristic of the Salvation Army that they sometimes attack a rowdy staircase in their own way by sending two girl lieutenants to take a flat and live there, setting an example of cleanly and orderly life, and bringing round the women to a better mind. I have heard that their success in this work has been marked, and I am prepared to believe it. At the same time, the committee would be a permanent police, while the appearance of the girls can only be occasional and only temporary.

Another result of the barrack life—one which the working-man himself does not perceive—is that the children grow up slow of sight, not short-sighted, but slow of sight. They have nothing to exercise their eyes upon; in the country there are a thousand things; children are always looking about them for the birds, the creatures, the flowers, the berries; in the barracks their playground is an asphalted pavement, with the high houses for boundary walls; there is nothing to look at. When they are taken out for a day in the country, once or twice a year, they see in a bank of flowers only a breadth of color, such as a house-painter might spread; it takes time for them to discern the flowers and the grasses which produce the pleasing effect; one bird is to them the same as another; they are not quick enough to catch the rapid flight of the swallow. One tree is the same as another; they do not discern differences of shape or color in

the leaf or in the bough. A few summer days in the country cannot give to that child the training of sight which the country-bred child receives every time it goes out into the open.

Here, then, are the facts of the case: overcrowding, with results most dangerous to the community, and the principal causes—increase of population, rapid development of industries, the necessity of being near the work, the condemnation of insanitary streets and areas. There remain the remedies proposed. We have seen that the erection of blocks, while it provides decent accommodation for a vast number of working-men, turns out a large number into the streets to find what accommodation they can. Obviously, therefore, the further extension of this method would result in far worse overcrowding. The housing in big barracks has also, it has been seen, its own dangers.

We come, next, to the proposal which seems to meet with the greatest amount of favor. It is the creation and erection of industrial villages within easy reach of town—say not more than twelve miles out. The railways would have to sell cheap workmen's tickets; the villages should consist of three- or four-roomed cottages, each with a scullery and a garden. There should be a common garden as well; there should be no sale of drink in any of the villages; there should be in each a coöperative store; the rent of a cottage ought not to exceed three shillings a week.

This is the proposal advanced by General Booth of the Salvation Army ("Darkest England," p. 210).

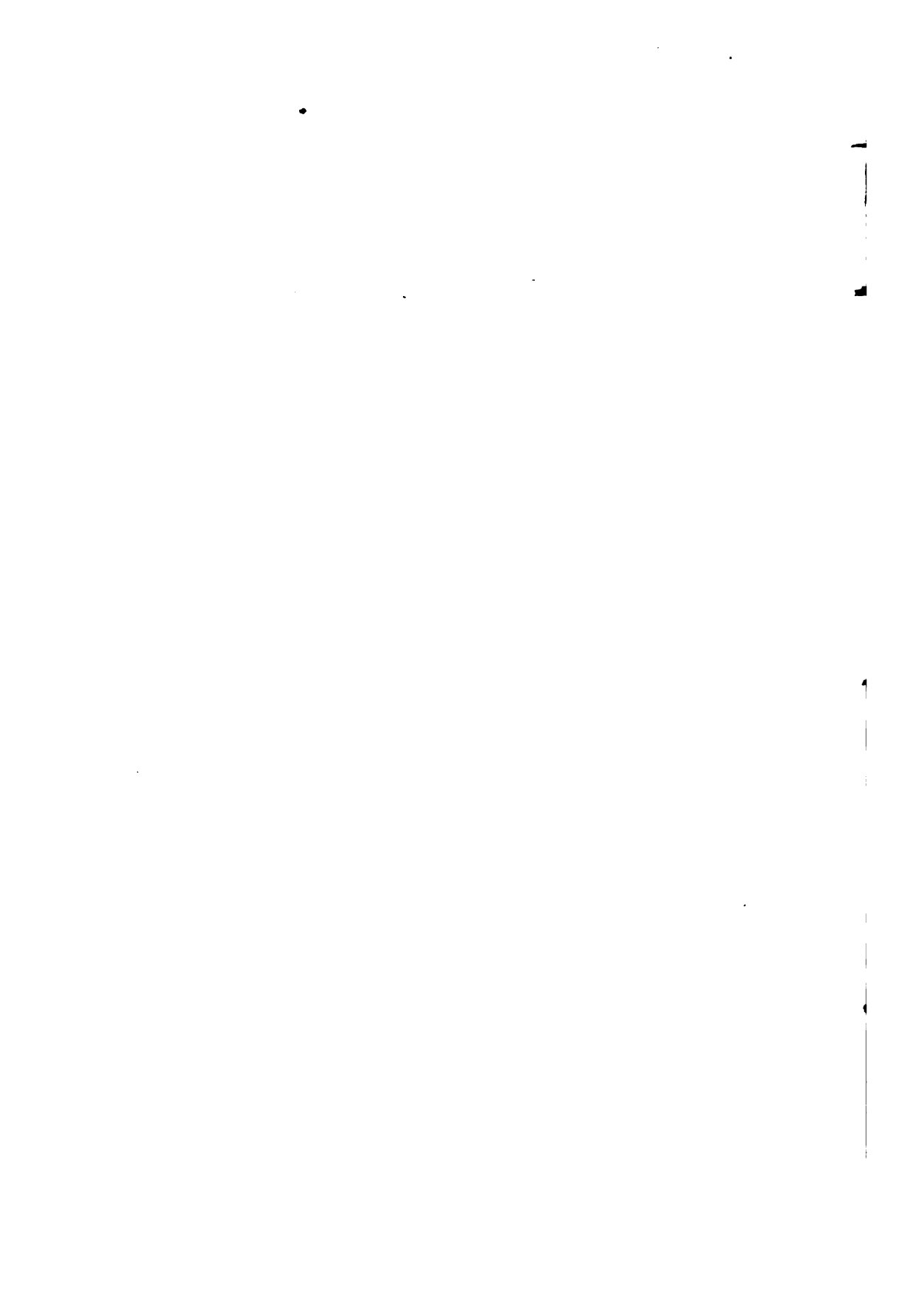
It is announced ("Times," February 20, 1900) that the London County Council is about to ask of Parliament an increase of its powers, so that it may buy up land beyond its own limits, with a view of erecting some such industrial villages. We must therefore wait to see the result of this new experiment. We may be quite certain that it will prove to bring with it dangers and evils at present unsuspected,

but I think that the gains will be greater than the losses. The country village will be as much better than the barrack as the barrack is better than the narrow and stinking court.

It is hoped that when the advantages of living in the country are understood the men will not mind living at a distance from their work. At the same time, the experiment must be on a very large scale, and if it fails will prove very costly. Objections are taken to the municipality acting as builder and landlord; it is urged that private companies might take up the question; but the experiment made by a private company, if it fails, costs the whole capital advanced by private persons, whereas if the experiment of the County Council fails it will be only the loss of the ratepayers' money. Whatever is done must be done quickly; mischiefs incalculable are inflicted upon the children by the present overcrowding. To neglect it is to make the evils far worse. The remedy requires a great mind and a clear vision and unlimited powers. As yet little practical attention has been paid to the cry of the houseless and the rack-rented, and to the sobs of the children poisoned physically by the air, corrupt and vitiated, which they have to breathe; poisoned morally by evil companionship, starved and cabined mentally for want of light and air and sunshine, for want of the breeze among the trees and the grass of the meadows and the flowers of the field and the creatures of the air and of the hedge.

IX

THE SUBMERGED



IX

THE SUBMERGED

THE word "submerged" likes me not. I have endeavored to find or to invent another and a better word. So far without success. The word must define the class. It is the unhappy company of those who have fallen in the world. There are many levels from which one may fall; perhaps there are many depths into which one may fall; certainly I have never heard of any depth beyond which there was not another lower and deeper still. The submerged person, therefore, may have been a gentleman and a scholar, an officer, a prodigal; or he may have been a tradesman, or a working-man, or anything you please; the one essential is that he must have stepped out of his own class and fallen down below. He is a shipwrecked mariner on the voyage of life, he is a pilgrim who has wandered into the dark and malarious valleys beside the way. We have read in the annals of luckless voyages how those who escaped with their lives wandered along the seashore, living by the shell-fish they could pick up, moving on when there were no more mussels, huddled together at night in the shelter of a rock for warmth. We know and are familiar with their tales of misery. As these shipwrecked mariners on the cold and inhospitable coast, so are the unfortunates whom we call submerged; in a like misery of cold and starvation do they drag on a wretched existence.

They have no quarter or district of their own; we come

upon them everywhere. In the wealthy quarters there are courts and alleys, lanes and covered ways, where they find shelter at night; they slouch along aimlessly, with vacant faces, in the most fashionable streets; they stand gazing with eyes which have no longer any interest or expression upon a shop-window whose contents would provide a dozen of them with a handsome income for life; in the warm summer evenings you may see them taking up their quarters for the night on the seats outside St. James's Park; if you walk along the Thames embankment you will see them sitting and lying in corners sheltered from the wind; they seek out the dry arches if they can find any, happy in the chance of finding them; they sit on door-steps and sleep there until the policeman moves them on; wherever a night watchman, placed on guard over an open excavation, hangs up his red lamp and lights his fire in the workman's grate you will find one or two of the submerged crouching beside the red coals; the watchmen willingly allow them their share of warmth and light. If you are walking in the streets late at night you will presently pass one of them creeping along looking about for a crust or a lump of bread. Outside the Board-schools, especially, these windfalls are to be found, thrown away by the children; it is a sign that food is cheap and work is abundant when one sees lumps of bread thrown into the gutter. These are the gifts of fortune to the submerged; the day has brought no jobs and no pence, not even the penny for a bare shelter with the Salvation Army; fate, relentless, has refused to hands willing to work—perhaps unwilling, for the submerged are sometimes incapable of work; like their betters, they have nerves. But in the night under the gas-lamps there are the gifts of the great goddess, Luck—the children's lumps of bread lying white in the lamplight on kerb or door-step.

Or, again, if you are in the streets early in the morning, at the hour when the cheap restaurants set out upon the

pavement their zinc boxes full of the refuse and unspeakable stuff of yesterday, you will find the person submerged busy among this terrible heap; he finds lumps of food, broken crusts, bones not stripped clean; he turns over the contents with eager hands; he carries off, at last, sufficient for a substantial meal.

One would hardly expect to find history occupying herself with a class so little worthy of her dignity. Yet have I found some account of the submerged in the eighteenth century. They did not prowl about the streets at night nor did they search the dust-box in the morning, because there were no crusts of costly wheaten bread thrown away, and there were no dust-boxes. But they had their customs. And the following seems to have been the chief resource of the class.

There were no police walking about the streets day and night; there were night watchmen, who went home about five in the morning; then for an hour, before the workmen turned out on their way to the shops, the streets were quite deserted and quiet. At that hour the submerged had their chance; they were the early vultures that hovered over the City before the dawn; they went out on the prowl, carrying lanterns in the winter; they searched the streets; where the market carts had passed there were droppings of vegetables and fruit, there were bones thrown out into the streets, there were things dropped; drunken men were lying on door-steps, stretched out on the pavement between the posts, or propped up against the walls; the night watchmen paid no attention to these common objects of the night, the helplessly drunk; they cleared out their pockets of money no doubt, otherwise they left them. But the prowlers, after another investigation of the pockets, carried off everything portable—hat, wig, necktie, ruffles, boots, coat, everything. The cold air quickened the recovery of the patient; when he came to his senses and sat up he was ready to repent, not in sackcloth, but in shirt-

sleeves. Later on in the day the prowlers inveigled children into back courts, stripped them of their fine frocks, cut off their long curls, and so let them go. Or they lay in wait for a drunken man and led him carefully to some quiet and secluded spot, where he could be stripped of all. But



Salvation Army Shelter.

the submerged of George III were a ruder and a rougher folk than those of Queen Victoria.

The submerged do not, as a rule, give trouble to the police, nor are they a terror to the householder; they do not rob, they do not brawl, they do not get up riots, they do not "demonstrate," they endure in quiet. Their misery might make them dangerous if they were to unite; but they

cannot unite, they have no leader, they have no prophet; they want nothing except food and warmth, they accuse nobody, they are not revolutionaries; they are quite aware—those of them who have any power of thought left—that no change in the social order could possibly benefit them. They live simply, each man clothed with his own misery as with a gaberdine. And they know perfectly well that their present wretchedness is due to themselves and their own follies and their own vices. They have lost whatever spirit of enterprise they may once have possessed; in many cases long habits of drink have destroyed their power of will and energy.

Many causes have made them what they are. As many men, so many causes. They cannot be reduced to a class; they come from every social station—many of them are highly educated men, born of gentle-folk, some of county families, some of the professional classes. Their tale of woe, if you ask it, is always the lamentation of the luckless; it should be the lamentation of a sinner. Incompetence, especially that kind of incompetence which belongs to an indolent habit of mind and body; the loss of one situation after another, the throwing away of one chance after the other, the shrinking from work either bodily or mental, which grows upon a man until for very nervousness he is unable to do any work; the worn-out patience of friends and relations, drink—always drink; dismissal which involves the loss of character, the habit begun in boyhood of choosing always the easier way; sickness, which too commonly drives a man out of work and sends him on to the streets in search of casual jobs; crime and the gaol—all these causes work in the same direction; they reduce the unfortunate victim to the condition of hopelessness and helplessness which is the note of the submerged.

I think that where the case is one in which the former social standing was good the most common cause is loss of character. This does not mean, necessarily, the taint of dis-

honesty. It means, in many cases, simply incompetence. How shall a clerk, a shop assistant, find another place when he can only give reference to a former employer who can say nothing in his praise? He goes down, he takes a worse place with lower pay, he continues in his incompetence, he is again dismissed. He falls lower still. In any country it is a terrible thing for a young man to lose his character; it is fatal in a country where laborers of his kind, at the only work he can do, are redundant; while men with good character can be obtained, who will employ a man without a character? For such a man it would seem as if a new country—a new name—were the only chance left for him. He tries the new country. Alas! Incompetence is no more wanted there than at home. If, as sometimes happens, such an one yields to the temptation that is always before the penniless and falls into crime, it is no longer a descent along the familiar easy slope; it is a headlong plunge which the unfortunate man makes, once for all, into the Male-bolge of the submerged.

I was once in a London police court looking on at the day's cases which were brought up one after the other before the magistrate. The drunk and disorderly came first; these were soon dismissed; indeed, there is a terrible monotony about them; the reporters do not take the trouble even to listen or to make a note of them unless the prisoner is a man of some note. Then followed the case of a young man, apparently four- or five-and-twenty years of age. He was described as a clerk; he was dressed in the uniform of his craft, with a black coat and a tall hat; it was the cold, early spring, and he had no overcoat or wrapper or collar or neckerchief of any kind, and he was barefooted. The sight of him filled one with a kind of terror. Now, the face of that poor wretch told its own story; it was a handsome face, with regular features, light hair, and blue eyes. As a boy he must have been singularly attractive; as a child, lovely.

But now the face was stamped and branded with the mark of one who has always followed the Easy Way; his weak mouth, his shifting eyes, the degradation of what had once promised to be a face of such nobility and beauty, proclaimed aloud his history. I could see the boy at school who would do no more work than he was obliged to do; the young clerk at five shillings a week, who would do no more than he was bidden, and that without intelligence or zeal; the lad rising, as even the junior clerk rises, by seniority; the billiard-room, the public house, the wasted evenings, the betting, the evil companions, the inevitable dismissal for incompetence, the difficulty of finding another place, the influence of friends not too influential, the second dismissal, the tramp up thousands of stairs in search of a vacant desk where character was not required, borrowing of small sums, with faithful promises of repayment, the consequent loss of friends, the alienation even of brothers, the inevitable destitution, the pawning of all but the barest necessities of clothes, even at last parting with his boots—all this was revealed by the mere aspect of the man. He was charged with stealing a pair of boots to replace those which he had pawned. There was no shame in his face; the thing had come at last which he had felt coming so long. It was not shame, it was a look of resigned hopelessness; he was become the foot-ball of fate, he was henceforth to be kicked about here and there as fate in her gamesome moods might choose. Practically there was no defense; he had nothing to say; he only shook his head; the magistrate was lenient because it was a first offense. Leniency in such a case is only apparent, though the magistrate means well, for a fortnight in prison is as ruinous for the rest of a man's life as a twelvemonth. So he stepped out of the dock, and presently the wheels of Black Maria—sometimes called the Queen's omnibus—rolled out into the street with the day's freight of woe and retribution.

I met this poor creature afterward; I came upon him car-

rying a pair of boards; I stumbled over him as he sat in the sun in St. James's Park, monumental in shabbiness; I met him once or twice shambling about the Embankment, which was his favorite boulevard—a place where no work can be picked up, and for that reason, I suppose, dear to him. London is a very big city, but such men as this have their haunts; they are too weak of will to wander far from the way of habit; it requires an effort, a moment of energetic decision, to change his daily walk from the Embankment to the Strand. I never saw him, except on that one occasion when he was a sandwich man, doing any kind of work; I never saw him begging; I never saw him in a shelter at night; I know not how he lived or how, if ever, he procured a renewal of his rags when they fell off him. Presently it occurred to me that I had not seen him lately. I looked about for him. By this time I took an interest in the case; had he asked me for money I should have given him some, I dare say. Why not? The indiscriminate giving of alms is, one knows and has been taught for years, a most mischievous thing; but in this case money will not lift a man out of the slough, nor will it plunge him deeper; give him money and he will devour it; refuse him money and he will go on just in the same way. But I have never seen him since, and I am sure that in some workhouse infirmary he lay lingering awhile with pneumonia, which carries off most of the half-fed and the ill-clad, and that he died without murmuring against his fate, resigned and hopeless. I dare say that those who composed his limbs in death admired the singular beauty of the face. For lo! a marvel—when the debased soul, which has also debased the face, goes out of the body, the face resumes the delicacy and the nobility for which it was originally intended.

Another case of a submerged. I knew something of the man, not the man himself. He began very well; he was clever in some things; he could play more than one instru-

ment, he was a companionable person; he got into the civil service by open competition very creditably; for some ten or twelve years he lived blamelessly. It was known by his friends that he was always thirsty; he would drink large quantities of tea for breakfast; he drank pints of cold water with his pipe. Presently his friends began to whisper—things. Then openly there were said—things. Then I was told that A. A. had been turned out of his place, and that meant a good many—things. For certain reasons I was interested in the man. One evening in July I strolled in St. James's Park after dinner; the air was balmy; the benches of the park were nearly full. I found a vacant seat and sat down. Beside me was a youngish man; by the light of the gas-lamp I observed that the brim of his hat was broken, and that in other respects rags were his portion. He entered into conversation by a question as to some race-horse, to which I pleaded ignorance. He then began to talk about himself. It was, as I have said above, the lamentation of the luckless. "One man," he said, "may steal a pig, another may not look over the garden-wall. I, sir, am what I am; in rags, as you see; penniless, or I should not be here; tormented by thirst, and no means of procuring a drink. I, sir, am the man who looked over the garden-wall." He went on; suddenly the story became familiar to me; he was the man of whose decline and fall I had heard so much.

He had not abandoned his grand air, for which he was always distinguished. I offered him a cigar. He examined it critically. "A brand of this kind," he said, "I keep in tea for three years." He lit it. "A gentleman," he reminded me, "is not lowered by bad luck, nor is he disgraced by having to do work belonging to the service—the menial service. The other day I was a sandwich man—in Bond Street. I met my brother face to face. I have a brother—" the poor man is a member of the Travelers and a few other clubs of that kind. "He will do nothing for me. At sight

of me he winced; he changed color. Do you think I flinched? Not so, sir. The disgrace was his; he felt it." And so on; he was instructive. I believe his friends shipped him off somewhere.

Some of the submerged contrive to make their own livelihood; they are even able, as a rule, to take a bed at the Sixpenny Hotel. One of these institutions has, indeed, the credit of being the chosen haunt of the brokendown gentlemen. Here they are all broken down together; to meet here, to cook their own suppers, to rail at fortune like kings deposed is an agreeable diversion. At least they talk with each other in the language to which they are accustomed. And there is always something about the manner of the brokendown "swell" which distinguishes him from those of lower beginnings. There is something of the old galantry left; he does not sit down and hang a head and moan like the poor bankrupt small trader; so long as the sixpence is forthcoming he is not unhappy.

It is a strange company; they were once soldiers, sportsmen, billiard players, betting men, scholars, journalists, poets, novelists, travelers, physicians, actors. One of the submerged of whom I heard had been a reader of some learned language at one of our universities; another was a clergyman—not, if the story about him was true, quite admirable professionally; both these gentlemen, however, found it best, after a time, to exchange the Sixpenny Hotel for the workhouse, where they are at least free from the anxiety about the sixpence.

One more illustration of the submerged who has been a gentleman. I met him once, only once. It was in Oxford Street; he was standing before the window of a very artistic and attractive shop—a china and glass shop. The window was most æsthetically "dressed"; it contained, besides Venetian glass and other glass of wondrous cunning and beauty, a small dinner-table set out with flowers, glass, silver plate,

costly china of new design, some white napery, and those pretty little lights—called fairy lights—which were a few years ago fashionable.

The man was unmistakably a gentleman; his dress betrayed his extreme poverty; his boots showed a solution of continuity between the upper leather and the sole; his closely buttoned coat was frayed, his round hat was broken, apparently he had no shirt; he certainly had no collar; his red cotton handkerchief was tied round his neck; the morning was cold and raw, a morning in November. Evidently, a gentleman. The poor wretch was looking at the dinner-table; it reminded him of mess nights, of dinner parties, of clubs, of evenings abroad and at home, before he fell; of what else did that dinner-table remind him—of what light laughter and music of women's voices, while as yet he was worthy to sit among them? One knows not. He was absorbed in the contemplation of the table; as he gazed his face changed strangely; it went back, I know not how many years; it became the face of a hawk, the face of a man keen and masterful. How did he fall? How came the look of mastery and command to go out of his face?

I spoke to the man. I touched him on the arm; he started; I pointed to the fairy lights; "Do you remember," I asked him, "when those things came in?" "It was about ten years ago," he said, without hesitation. Then the present moment reasserted itself. He became again one of the submerged. "Lend me half a crown," he said. "On Monday morning I will meet you here, and I'll return it." On the following Monday morning I repaired to the china and glass shop. My friend, however, had forgotten his appointment. Faith in my own expectations would have been shaken had he kept it. I have only to add that he took the half crown as one gentleman accepts, say, a cigar, from another. "Thanks, thanks," he said, airily, and he moved away with the bearing of one who is on his way to his club. It was pleasant to observe the

momentary return to the old manner, though the contrast between the rags and the manner presented an incongruity that could not pass unobserved, and I regret to this day that I did not invite him to a chop-house and to a statement from his own point of view as to the turning of fortune's wheel.

I have said that the submerged do not, as a rule, give much trouble to the police. They may have had their lapses from virtue, their indiscretions, but they are not habitual criminals. The way of the latter, so long as he keeps out of prison, is much more comfortable; for transgressors the prison in which they pass most of their time is hard, but the intervals of freedom are often times of plenty and revelry. The submerged have no such intervals. The common rogue is generally a brazen braggart, while the submerged is timid and ashamed. Of course, too, it is by no means a common thing that he has been a gentleman; in East London there are over ten thousand of the homeless and the wanderers, loafers, and the casuals, with some criminals. I have before me twelve cases investigated by an officer of the Salvation Army. The men belonged to the following trades: confectioner, feather-bed dresser, tailor, riverside laborer, sawyer, distiller, accountant in a bank, builder's laborer, plumber's laborer, carman, match-seller, slater. Out of the twelve, one, you see, had been a gentleman. The cause of destitution was variously stated: age—it is very difficult in some trades to resist the pressure of the young; cataract in one eye; inability to find work, though young and strong; cut out by machinery; last place lost, by his own fault—an admission reluctantly made and not explained; arm withered; brought up to no trade, and so on.

As for their attempts to get work, the odd job appears to be the most common, if the most hopeless. It will be seen from the cases given above that the men can no longer get work at their own trades; now, they know no other; what, then, are they to try? One cannot expect much resource

in an elderly man who has been making confectionery all his life, when he has lost his place and his work; nor in a feather-bed dresser, when feather-beds are no longer made. The former can do nothing in the world except make sugar plums according to certain rules of the mystery; the latter can do nothing but "dress" feather-beds. The ignorance and helplessness of our craftsmen outside their own branch of work are astonishing. So that the run after the odd job is explained. There is nothing else for them to try. A great many working hands are dock laborers, and fight every day for the chance of being taken on; but a man advanced in years, with the sight of one eye gone or with a withered arm—what chance has he of getting employment?

Sometimes they try to sell things—boot-laces and useful odds and ends. But capital is wanted, a few shillings that can be locked up, and the returns are deplorable. Sometimes they try matches; the man with the "box o' lights" is busy on Sundays and holidays outside the railway station or at the stopping places of omnibus or tram; I believe that threepence or so represents the average daily profit to be made in this branch of commerce. A few try to sell newspapers, but they are cut out by the boys who run and bawl and force their "specials" on the public. Newspaper selling in the streets is only good when one has a popular "pitch." For instance, at Piccadilly Circus, where the stream of life runs full and strong, a news-vender must do very well, but such "pitches" are rare. Sometimes they offer the latest novelty out for one penny. The trade in "novelties" depends on the attractiveness of the wares; they must be really novel to catch the eye, and they must seem desirable. The principal markets for the penny novelties are the kerb of Broad Street and that on the north side of Cheapside. There is generally a new "novelty" every week, and the ingenuity, the resource, the invention of the unknown genius who provides it are beyond all praise. When he hits the popular

taste you may see the dealers selling their pennyworths as fast as they can lay them out on their trays. Sometimes there is a "frost"; the novelty does not "catch on." Then the poor dealer loses his little capital, and what happens to the inventor no one knows.

It is recorded of a certain collector, who spent his whole life in making a collection of the penny novelties, that at his death his museum, his life's work, was sold for the enormous sum of £12. I suppose he might have found comfort in the reflection that there are a great many men whose whole life's work would not fetch as many pence. But his soul must have felt a certain amount of dejection after so busy a pursuit—and one covering so many years—to find it valued at no more than £12. How many poets, novelists, preachers, journalists, could get as much as £12 for their contributions to literature? After all, he was above the average, this collector.

One would think that journalism would offer chances to the submerged. Here, at least, is a door always wide open. I know of one case in which a man just let out of prison met with a singular piece of good luck; he was a man whose character was hopelessly gone, and could never be retrieved, who had committed frauds and cheats innumerable upon all his old companions, whose friends had long since plainly told him that nothing, nothing more would be done for him, and that no mercy would be shown him in case of further frauds. The day came when he was released from prison; he stood outside and looked up and down and across the road; he saw a stony-hearted world; amid this multitude of people there was not one single person to whom he could turn for help; it was a cold, gray morning; he had concocted several little schemes of villainy in his cell; now, in the open air, he realized that they were hopeless; prison had somewhat reduced his strength of mind; he felt that just then he could not sit down and work out any one of his schemes; he saw no pros-

pect before him but that of a casual loafer in the streets, submerged for life.

He turned to the east; he wandered away, he knew not where; he had a small sum of money in his pocket, enough for a short time. After that, the slouch along the streets.

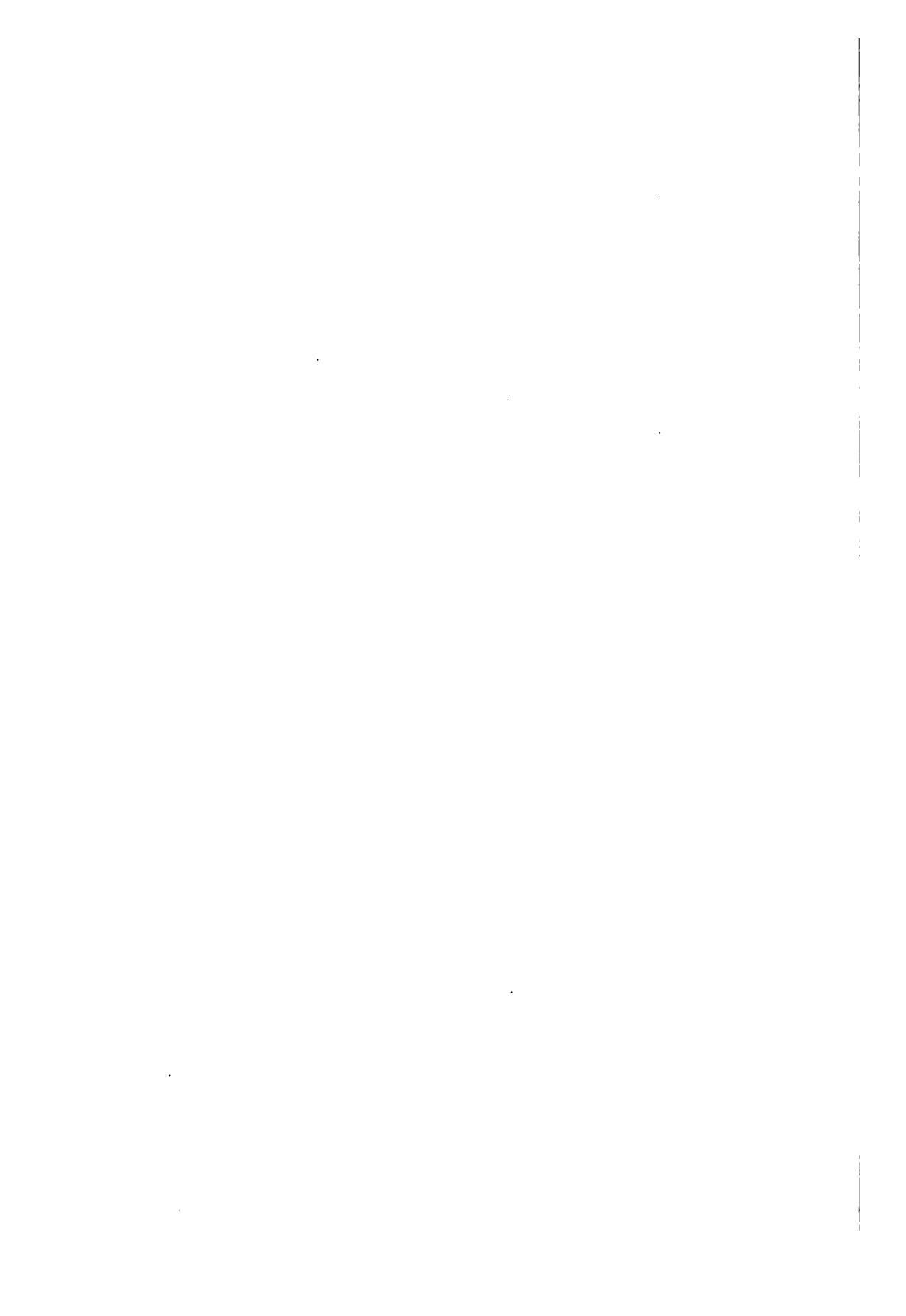
Suddenly he came upon a street scene, a short, quick, dramatic scene enacted in a few minutes. It fired his imagination; he saw a chance; he bought paper and pen at a stationer's shop; he went into a coffee-house, called for a cup of coffee and the ink, and wrote a descriptive paper on that scene; when it was done he took it to the office of a great daily paper, and asked to see one of the subeditors. His paper was read and accepted; he was told that he might bring more; he did bring more; he became one of the staff; he was presently sent abroad on the business of that paper. I do not know whether he thought fit to tell the editor anything about his own record. Well, the man ought to have become one of the submerged; but, you see, he was a scholar and a man of imagination; he had been engaged, it is true, in frauds, and was morally hopeless and corrupt through and through, but he had not lost his power of will; he had had no experience of the disappointments and the step-by-step descent which rob the submerged of his energy and his resource. The example only proves that journalism opens its doors in vain for the ordinary submerged who has lost his grasp of realities.

For those who are strong enough to walk about the streets at an even pace for a great many hours a day the sandwich offers a tolerably safe means of living. Remember, however, that your truly submerged very often, by reason of age and infirmities,—some physical weakness generally appears after a time to aggravate the misery,—cannot undergo the fatigue of carrying the boards all day. If, however, the strength is there the work can generally be found at a shilling or one shilling and twopence a day. It is work which entirely suits any man who has left off trying. At the same

time, it is a help to the young man who for the moment may be down on his luck. For the former it means simply the fatigue of walking about for so many hours on end. It is interesting to walk slowly along the pavement while the single file of sandwich men pass along, one after the other. They never talk, there is no exchange of jokes, they never chaff the workmen or the girls or the lads or the drivers who threaten to run over them; on the other hand, no one chaffs them; they are by common consent held sacred, as men in the world but not of the world. Some of them carry a pipe between their lips, but merely as a habit; it is an empty pipe; there is no speculation in their faces; they manifest no interest in anything; there may be a police row and a fight, there may be a horse down, the sandwich man pays no attention; he looks neither to the right nor to the left; the show that he advertises is not for himself; the wares exposed in the shop-windows are not for him to buy; the moving panorama, the procession of active and eager life along which he marches is nothing to him; he takes no longer any interest in anything; he is like the hermit, the anchorite, the recluse—he is dead to the world; he is without friends, without money, without work, without hope; his mind has nothing to occupy it; he thinks of vacant space; he walks in his sleep; he is comatose; if he lifts his eyes and looks upon the world it must be in wonder that his own figure is not in its proper place, its old place—it ought to be there. Why is it not? How did he get into the gutter, one of a line in single file, with a board in front of him and a board behind him? Newsboys shout their latest; the shops light up till every street is a fairyland of brightness; the carriages go up and down. To all the sights around him, to the meaning of the show and to the dance of life, which is so often the dance of death, the sandwich man remains indifferent. He has nothing left of all the joys and toys and dreams and vanities of the world; the past is a blurred memory on which he will



Sandwich-men.



not dwell if he can help it; there is no future for him, only the day's tramp, the shilling at the end of it; fivepence will give him warmth, light, a bed, and a modicum of food; eightpence, or, if he is lucky, tenpence, must find him food, drink, and tobacco for the following day, with some means of keeping the mud and water out of his boots.

A small contingent of the submerged is formed by the men who, not being habitual and hardened criminals, have been in prison and have not only found employment difficult and even impossible in consequence of a misfortune which many worse than themselves escape, but have returned to the world broken down by the terrible discipline of an English prison. The prison receives a man; it turns out a machine, an obedient machine, as obedient as the dog which follows at heel: it obeys cowering; the machine has no self-respect left, and no power of initiative; the prison bird can only henceforth live in a cage where he is not called upon to earn his livelihood or to carry on a trade. I know little about prisons in other countries, but I doubt whether any system has ever been invented more effective in destroying the manhood of the poor wretches who are subjected to its laws than the prison system of Great Britain. There is no sadder sight imaginable than the reception of a released prisoner by the Salvation Army Refuge for these unfortunate men. Every day their officer attends at the prison doors at the hour of discharge, and invites the men, as they come out, to the refuge. They come in dazed and pale; the light, the air, the freedom, the absence of the man of authority with the keys—all together make them giddy; they are received with a welcome and a handshake which make them suspicious; they are invited to sit down and take food; they obey with a shrinking readiness which brings a flush of shame to the spectator's face. See; after a little they push the plate away; it is solid food—they cannot take it; they have been so long accustomed to gruel that a plate of meat is too much for

them; they can neither eat nor talk; they cannot respond even to kindness; they cannot understand it; the man—the lost manhood—has to be built up again. The Salvation Army's Helping Hand rescues some; it fails with some; even where it fails, some good effect must be left in their minds by the show of friendliness and kindness.

The best place to find the submerged is at one of the shelters of the Salvation Army. Here they give for fourpence a large pot of coffee, tea, or cocoa, with a hunch of bread; it is probably the best meal that the men have had that day; the fourpence also entitles them to a warm and well-lighted room with benches and tables, the means of getting a good wash and a bed. For a smaller sum the accommodation is not so good. Every evening the shelters are quite full; every evening there is held that kind of service, with addresses, prayers, and the singing of hymns, which is called a Salvation Meeting. Well, the men feel, at last, that they are with friends; the lasses with the banjos and the tambourines, the men in the jerseys who speak to them—these are not making any money out of them, they are working for them, they are taking an immense amount of pains entirely on their behalf; I cannot but believe—indeed, I know—that among this poor wreckage of society their efforts meet with the kind of response that is most desired.

Or, if you can get so far out, there is Medland Hall by the riverside at Ratcliffe. It was formerly a Dissenting chapel; it is now a free lodging-house. No one pays anything; there are bunks ranged in lines over the floor—they are rather like coffins, it is true; these bunks are provided with mattresses, and for sheet and blanket with American cloth, which can be easily kept clean. I believe that bread is also provided. An effort is made to find out a way of helping the men to work; the likely young fellows are sent to the recruiting sergeants; some connection has been formed with the railway companies for men young and strong.

The casual ward is a place to which no one will go if he

can possibly avoid it. This refuge will only receive the actual destitute, those who have no money at all; their rations of food are light, to say the least. The allowance for young and old, strong and weak, is the same—for breakfast, half a pound of gruel and eight ounces of bread; the same for supper; for dinner, eight ounces of bread and an ounce and a half of cheese; for drink, cold water. The casual is put into a cell by himself and there locked up; in the morning, when he ought to be out and looking for work, he is detained to do stone-breaking or oakum-picking—half a ton of stone-breaking or four pounds of oakum, a task so heavy that it takes him the best part of the day, and he is lucky if he is not detained as a punishment for another night and day, with a corresponding increase in the task imposed upon him.

One would like to take some of the permanent officials of the Local Government Board and set them to the same work *on the same food*. What is the man's crime? Poverty. There may be other crimes which have reduced him to this condition of destitution, but no questions are asked. It is poverty, poverty, nothing but poverty, for which this treatment is the punishment. I once visited a casual ward; it was, I believe, Saturday afternoon. I was shown one cell occupied by a woe-begone young country lad; he was sitting alone; I think he had done his task; he was to be a prisoner till Monday morning—such was the infamy of his poverty. Lucky for him if he was not kept over Monday, to pick more oakum and to reduce his strength and impair his constitution by more starvation on gruel and bread weighed out by ounces. With refuges for the destitute where they are starved and made to work hard on insufficient food, with prisons for the criminal where manhood is crushed and strength is destroyed by feeding men on gruel, we support bravely the character of a country obedient to the laws of God and marching in the footsteps of Christ.

Such are the submerged—an army of brokendown gen-

tlemen, ruined professional men, penniless clerks, bankrupt traders, working-men who are out of work through age or infirmity, victims of drink, ex-prisoners and convicts, but not habitual criminals. It is a helpless and a hopeless army; I have said already that this is the note of the submerged. We shall see presently what is done for this great body of misery. One thing must be remembered. There are lower levels than those reached by this army; physicians, clergymen, missionaries, journalists, whisper things far worse than can be alleged against the submerged. And we have not included among them the tramp, that class whose blood is charged with restlessness hereditary, who cannot remain long in any place, who cannot enter upon steady work, who are driven by their restlessness, as by a whip of scorpions, along the roads. Not the tramp, nor the sturdy rogue, nor the professional criminal, nor the vile wretches who live by the vilest trades, may be numbered among the submerged. They fall noiselessly from their place of honor, they live noiselessly in their place of dishonor; they might perhaps be brought back to work, but the cases of recovery must be very few in proportion, because the causes which dragged them down are those which prevent them from being dragged up. If any physician can give back to the submerged patience, resolution, will, courage, hope, he may reclaim them. If that cannot be done they must remain as they are.

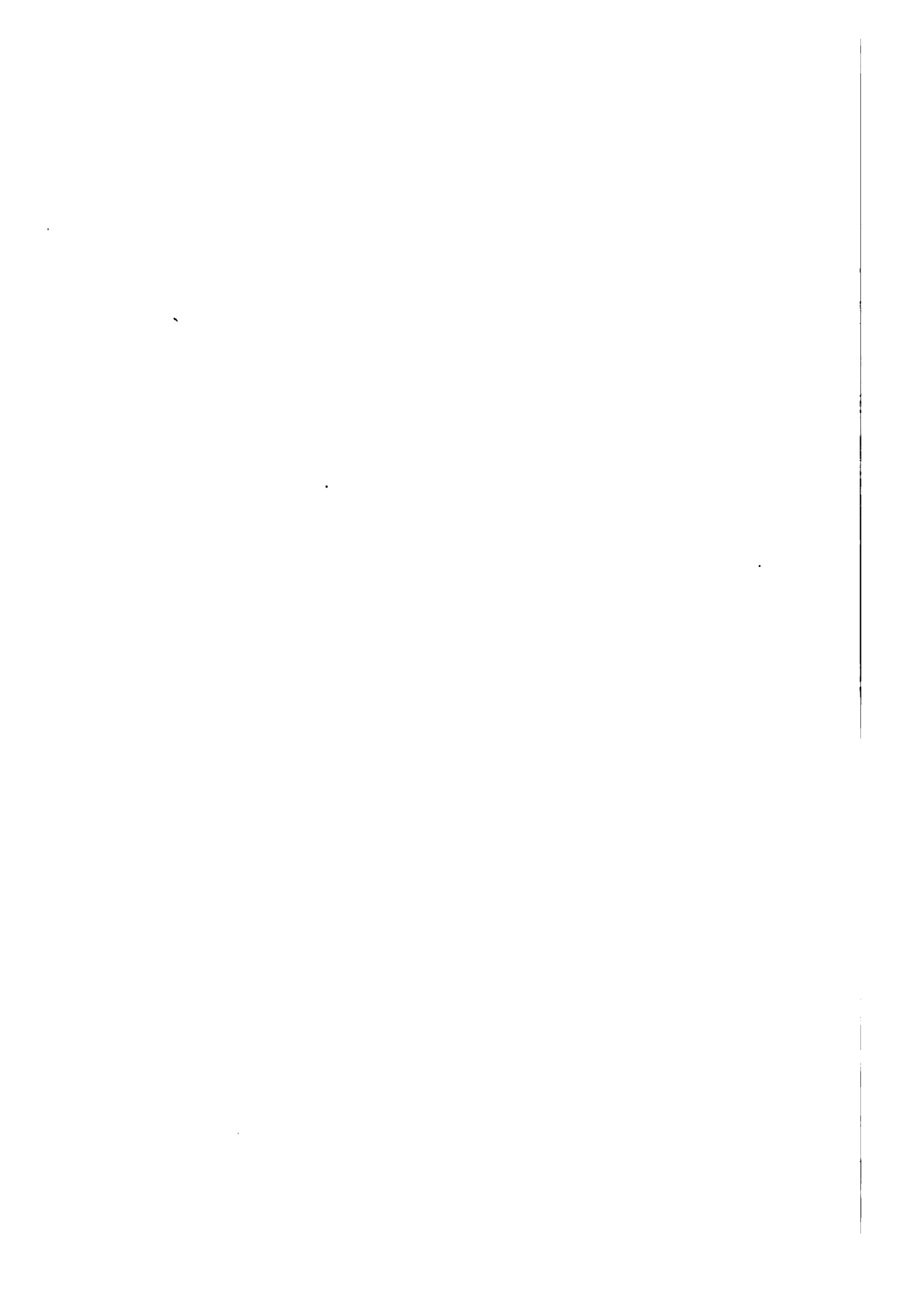
My illustration of the submerged seems to have little to do with East London. As a fact, there is no respect paid to places. When a man has belonged to the West End his wandering feet, over which, as over his other actions, the patient has no control, carry him about the scenes of his former prosperity without his taking any steps to prevent it. Old acquaintances recognize him, and pass him by with a cold eye which denies the recognition and conceals the pity. He himself sees nobody and remembers nobody. In the same way a man who belongs by birth and habits to

East London will remain there after he has come to grief. Or, if the former gentleman, for some reason, gets into East London and finds out its ways, with the cheap lodgings, the shelters, the "ha'penny" cups of cocoa, and the many helping hands from which he may get some kind of relief he will stay in East London. We need not hesitate about awarding the palm of nourishing or starving more or fewer of the submerged to East or West London. It is enough to know that they exist in both quarters, and that, according to statistics, there are over ten thousand of them in East London alone. If any help can be found for this mass of wreckage let us find that help and give it with full hands and in measure overflowing, for indeed of all those who are poor and distressed and unhappy the company of the submerged are the most wretched. Even if, as is almost always the case, they have brought their punishment upon themselves by the folly of the prodigal, the weakness of those who take the Easy Way, and the wickedness of those who indulge the natural inclination to vice, let us not inquire too closely into the record; let us still stretch out our hand of help; if we can restore some of them—even a few, even one here and there—to the life of honesty among folk of good repute, we must still leave them the shameful memory of the past. That punishment we cannot avert; we cannot remove it from them. The world will forgive them, but how shall we find that Lethe whose waters will enable them to forgive themselves? "Arise"—it is easy for the world to say—"thy sins shall no longer be imputed to thee for a reproach and a hissing." Alas! When the better self returns, how shall that poor wretch cease to reproach himself?



X

THE MEMORIES OF THE PAST



X

THE MEMORIES OF THE PAST

I HAVE so often insisted that East London must be regarded as a city of many crafts—the working-man's city—that it may seem contradictory to call attention to another aspect. That part of East London with which we have been most concerned is the densely populated part lying north of the river and including all that part west of the river Lea as far north as Dalston, Clapton, and Hackney, and east of that river, including Bow, Stratford, Walthamstow, Wanstead, Forest Gate, Bromley West, and East Ham and Barking. It includes, in a word, very nearly all the ancient villages and hamlets whose names may be found upon the map. But there is a fringe, and there are extensions. When one emerges at last from streets which seem to have no end, when the nightmare of a world which is all streets, with never a field or an orchard or a hillside left, begins to break, when it is cleared away, as an ugly dream by the daylight, by the reappearance of trees and large gardens and wide roads, then we discover the fringe. Part of Stoke Newington, part of Stamford Hill, a small part of Tottenham, part of Snaresbrook, belong to the fringe. Here we get roads lined with trees, villas with trees in front gardens, modern churches built all after the same half-dozen patterns, in true proportions, correct and without inspiration; here we get windows filled with flowers, and here presently we get houses well apart and a wealth of creepers and of flowering shrubs;

which means that the breath of the crowded City is left behind.

But there are further extensions; the suburbs of East London are not confined within the limits of the map of London; they stretch out far afield, they include Chigwell and Chingford and Theydon Bois, and all the villages round Epping Forest. Dotted about everywhere in this extension are stately houses with large gardens and grounds, the residences of the manufacturers and the employers, not those of the small trades of East London, where the master is often but one degree better off than the employee, but those of the factories and the works; theirs is the capital invested; theirs is the enterprise; theirs the wit and courage which have made them succeed; theirs is the wealth. This extension is a delightful place in early summer; it is full of trees; there are old churches, and there is "the" forest—the people of East London always speak of "the" forest, for to them there is no other. It is, also, a part of London very little visited; it is, to begin with, somewhat inaccessible; one who would visit it from the West End has to get first into the City. In the next chapter we will discourse on what may be seen by the curious who would explore the forest and its surroundings. Let us return to my group of villages.

To the American, and to most of my own people, the names of Stoke Newington, Hackney, Stepney, Mile End, and the rest are names and nothing else; they awaken no more memories than a list of Australian or American townships. Let me try to endow these names with associations; I would make them, if possible, venerable by means of their association with those who have gone before. The suburban life of London belongs essentially to the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. In the former only the wealthy had their country, as well as their town, houses; in the latter there have been no town houses left in the City at all, and the whole of the people who every day carry on their business in the City have now their suburban residences.

The introduction and the development of the suburban life effected a revolution in the City. It destroyed the social side of the City by the simple process of driving out all the people. When the citizens lived over their offices and their shops they belonged to a highly sociable and gregarious City, its society having no kind of connection with the aristocratic side of the west, and its gregarious nature preserving due respect and distinction to City rank and position. Every man had his weekly club and his nightly tavern. Here, with his friends of the same street or the same ward, he discussed the affairs of the day. He was a politician of advanced and well-defined views; he confirmed, by many a commonplace uttered with solemnity, his own and his friends' prejudices; the use of conversation, when men read nothing more than was provided by an elementary press, was mainly the development and the maintenance of healthy prejudice. This was all the amusement that the good man desired—how great was the interval between two of John Gilpin's pleasure jaunts? "Twice ten tedious years!" Wonderful! To be sure, he had his City company, and its dinners were events to be remembered. The City madams had their card-parties; for the *élite* there was the City Assembly. For those who wanted pleasure there were the gardens—Vauxhall, Ranelagh, Marylebone, Bagnigge Wells, any number of gardens.

The daily work, the business done on 'change, the counting-house, the shop, all this formed part and parcel of the family life; it was not cut off and separated as at present; from his counting-house the merchant went to his "parlor"—it was under the same roof—when dinner was called. And all the year round he slept under the same roof over his place of business.

A hundred and fifty years ago the people began to leave the City; the wealthiest merchants went first; then the less wealthy; finally the shopkeepers and the clerks; the private houses were converted into offices and warehouses and cham-

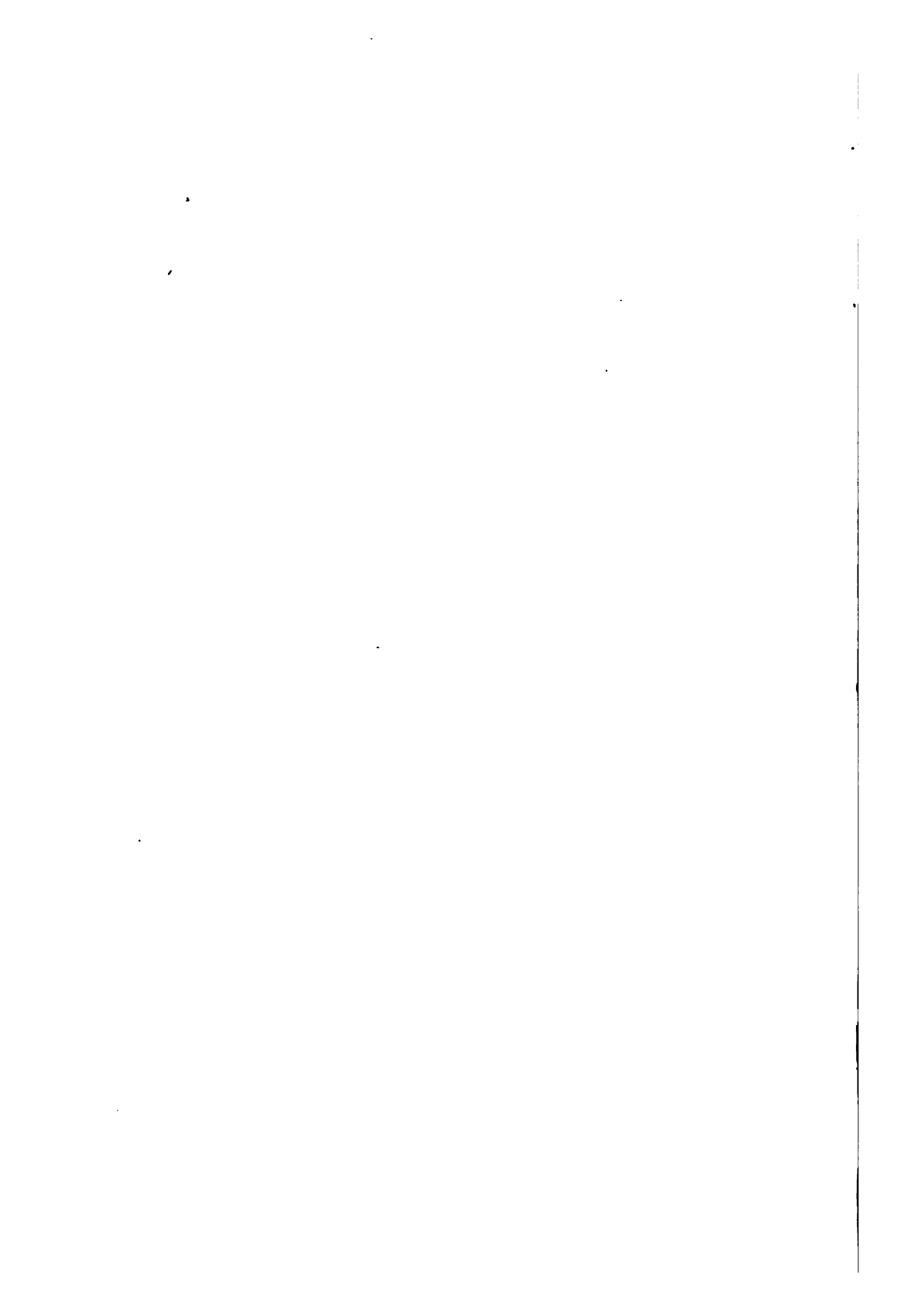
bers; the old City life absolutely vanished. Everything disappeared; the club, the tavern, the card-parties, the assembly, the evenings at Vauxhall—all were swept away. The life of the City man was cut in two, one half belonging to his office in the City, the other to his suburban villa, with the night and three or four of the waking hours. He took breakfast at eight; he went off after breakfast, catching an early omnibus; he returned at six or seven; he dined; he sat for an hour or two; he went to bed. No life could be duller; of social intercourse the suburban resident had little or none; visiting was limited; at rare intervals there were evenings with a "little music"; dances were few and far between; the old circles were broken up and no new ones formed; the occupation and social position of neighbors were not known to each other. For amusements the girls had their slender stock of accomplishments; the sons, whenever they could, ran up to town and got into mischief; and the *père de famille*, not knowing or suspecting the narrowness and the dullness of his life, solemnly sat after dinner with a book in his hand or took a hand at cribbage, and went to bed at ten. There were no theaters, no evening entertainments, no lectures even, no concerts, no talk of amusements. As the evangelical narrowness was widely spread over all the London suburbs, if a young man spoke of amusements he was asked if he could reconcile amusement with the working out of his own salvation. The church, or the chapel, was in itself the principal recreation of the ladies. They found in religious emotions the excitement and the interest which their narrow round of life failed to supply.

As for the theater, it was natural that, with such views as to amusement, it should be regarded with a shuddering horror. No young woman who respected herself would be seen at a theater. However, it was quite out of the question, simply because the theater was inaccessible.

Such has been the suburban life of London for a hundred



"A Quiet Dullness."



years, so dull, so monotonous, so destitute of amusement. So lived the residents of Hackney, Clapton, and Stoke Newington before their quiet dullness was invaded by the overflowing wave—irresistible, overwhelming—of the working swarms.

This side of London life deserves to be studied more attentively; it accounts for a great many recent events and for some of the governing ideas of Londoners. This, however, is not the place; let it suffice to pay it the tribute of recognition.

It is now fast passing away. New forces are at work; the old suburban life is changing; the rural suburb has become a large town, with its central boulevards, shops, and places of resort; there are theaters springing up in all the suburbs; there are concerts of good music; there are art schools; there are halls and public dances; there are late trains connecting the suburb with the West End and its amusements; there are volunteer corps, bicycle clubs, golf clubs, tennis clubs, croquet clubs, amateur dramatic clubs; above all, there is the new education for the new woman; whatever else she may do or dare, one thing she will no longer do: she will no longer endure to be shut up all day in a suburb left to the women and children, and every evening, as well as all day, to be kept in the house, with no gaiety, no interests, no pursuits, and no companions. In all these ways the dull suburban life has been swept away, and a new social life, not in the least like that of a hundred years ago, is being established and developed.

Let us pass on to the memories and associations of these hamlets. They are of two kinds—those which appeal to all who belong to this country by descent and inherit our literature and call our great men theirs as well, and those which appeal to ourselves more than they can be expected to do on the other side of the Atlantic. I propose to speak more especially of the former class. It will be seen that the memo-

ries of the past belong peculiarly to the history of Nonconformity, but I shall be able to connect East London with many persons distinguished in literature, art, science, and



The Street and Old Church Tower, Hackney.

politics. East London has also its eccentrics. And it has its villains.

Let us, however, consider one or two of these places separately, and note certain things worth visiting in those streets where no traveler's foot ever falls.

Hackney, to begin with, is a very ancient place; the manor belonged to the Knights Templars for about two hundred years; a house, now taken down, used to be shown as the Templars' Palace. It was an ancient house, but not of the

thirteenth century : it probably belonged to the reign of Henry VIII. On the suppression of the Templars the manor was given to the Hospitallers, whose traditional house was also shown till about sixty years ago, when it was destroyed. This house was also the traditional residence of Jane Shore, one of those women who, like Agnes Sorel and Nell Gwynne strike the imagination of the people and win their affections. Even the grave and serious Sir Thomas More is carried away by the beauty and the charm of Jane Shore, while the memory of so much beauty and so many misfortunes demands a tear from good old Stow. The name of a street—Palace Road—preserves the memory of the house.

Standing alone in its vast churchyard crammed with monuments, mostly illegible, of dead citizens all forgotten long ago, stands a monument for which we ought to be deeply thankful. They pulled down the old church, but they preserved the tower. It is a tower of singular beauty, the one ancient thing that is left in Hackney. Beneath the feet of the visitor on the east side lie the bones of the buried Templars, proud knights and magnificent once, beyond the power of the bishop, rich and luxurious; with them the dust of their successors, the Knights Hospitallers, and now all forgotten together. In another part of the churchyard they erected a singularly ugly new church—a capacious barn. Outside the churchyard the tower looks down upon a crowded and busy thoroughfare, the full stream of life of this now great town of Hackney. Omnibuses and tram-cars run up and down the street all day long; there is an open market all the year round, with stalls and wheelbarrows ranged along the pavement; a railway arch spans the street, the frequent train thunders as it passes the Templars' tower; the people throng the place from six in the morning till midnight. In many towns I have watched this stream of life flowing beside the gray survivals of the past; nobody heeds the ancient gate, the tower, the crumbling wall; nobody knows what

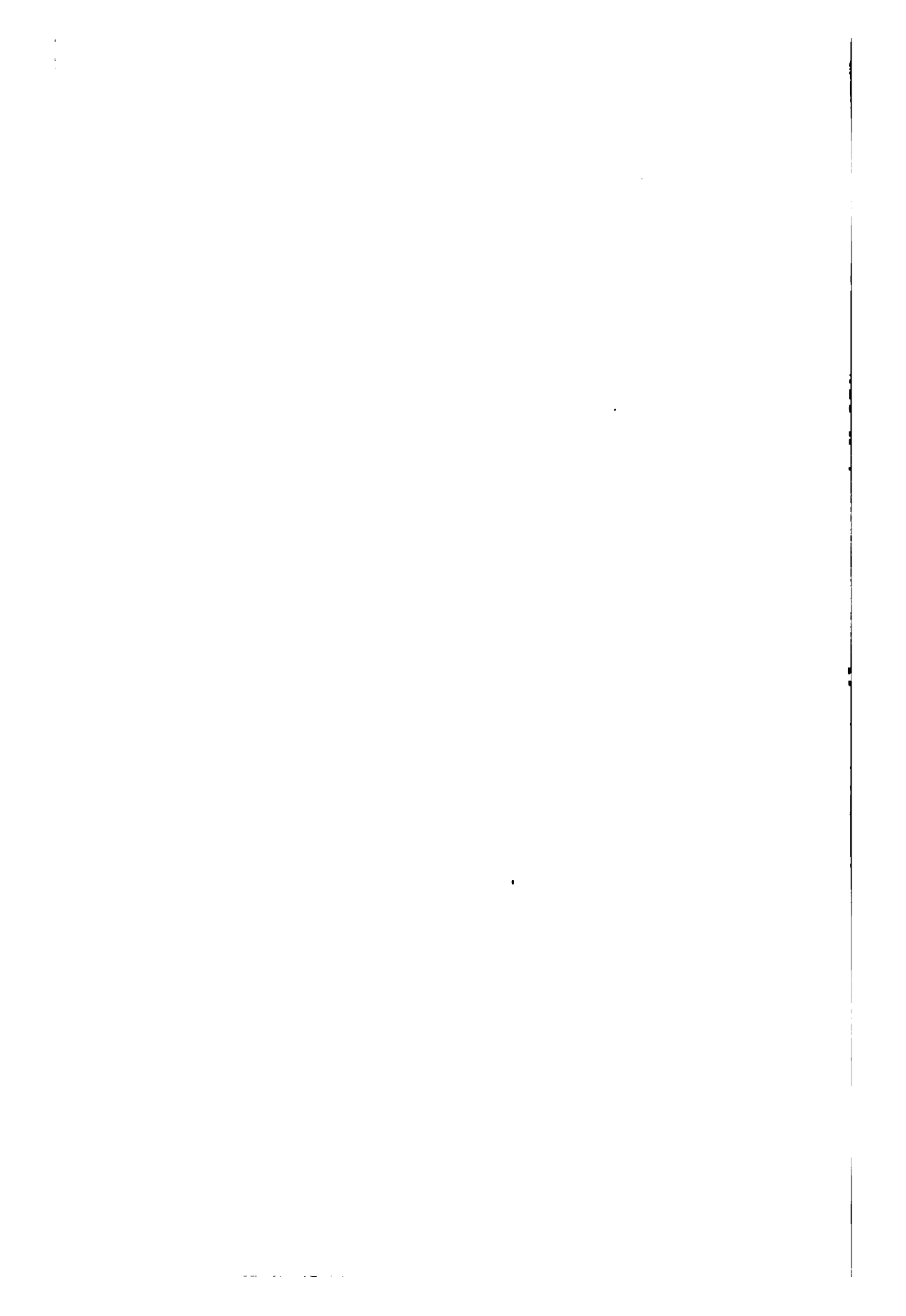
they mean; the historical associations enter not at all into the mind of the average man; even amid the ruins of Babylon the Great his thoughts would be wholly with the present; he has no knowledge or understanding of the past; his own life is all in all to him; being the heir of all the ages, he takes his inheritance without even knowing what it means, as if it grew spontaneously, as if his security of life, his power of working undisturbed, the peace of the City, his freedom of speech and thought and action were given to mankind like the sunshine to warm him and the rain to refresh him. Yet the presence of this venerable tower should have some influence upon him, if only to remind him that there has been a past.

One who walks about an English town of any antiquity—most of them are of very considerable antiquity—can hardly fail of coming from time to time upon a street, a place, a square, a court, which takes him back two hundred years at least, or even more, to the time of the first George, or even to that of Charles II. Sometimes it is a single house; sometimes it is a whole street. In this respect, one or two of the East London suburbs are richer than those of the west or the south because they are older. Hackney and Stoke Newington, Stepney and Tottenham, were villages inhabited by wealthy people or noble people when the suburbs of the south were mere rural villages, with farms and meadows among their hanging woods.

There are two such places which I have found in Hackney. The first is a wide and open place, not a thoroughfare for vehicles; it may be approached by a foot-path through Hackney churchyard. It consists of a row of early eighteenth century houses on the south side, and another row of houses, probably of late eighteenth century, on the north. There is nothing remarkable about the place except its peacefulness and its suggestion of authority and dignity. You may frequently find such places adjoining old churches. It is as if the calm of the church and the tranquillity of the church-



An East London Suburb, Overlooking Hackney Marshes.



yard overflowed into one at least of the streets beside it. The clergy who used to live in this claustral repose have left this memory of their residence; in such a place we look up and down expecting to see a portly divine in black silk cassock, full silk gown, white Geneva bands, and wig theological, step out into the street and magisterially bend his steps toward the church where he will catechize the children.

The second place is also on the east of Hackney church; it is a long and narrow winding street, called magnificently the High Street, Homerton. It contains three great houses and many small ones, mostly old; in spite of its name, which conveys the suggestion of a town, it is a secluded street, remote from the ways of man; it might be a street of some decayed old town, such as King's Lynn or Sandwich; there are no children playing in the road or on the door-steps. Half way down the street stands a church, the aspect of which proclaims it frankly and openly as belonging to the reign of the great George, first of the name. It was a place of worship simply, without special dedication or presentation to any religious body; it has been sometimes a chapel of ease to the parish church; sometimes it has been an independent chapel, having a service of its own. There it has stood since the year 1723, testifying to possibilities in the way of ugliness which would seem like some dream of architecture, fantastic and visionary, impossible of achievement. Yet it somehow fits in with the rest of the street; the ugliness of the chapel is not out of harmony with the street, for the early eighteenth century claims the houses as well as the church. All should be preserved together among the national monuments as a historical survival. This, it should be said, was how they built in the twenties of the eighteenth century.

If we leave Hackney and walk north we find ourselves in the village of Clapton, more suburban than Hackney, but not yet rural. Clapton lies along the western valley of the

river Lea, which here winds its way at the bottom of a broad, shallow depression. There is one spot—before the place was built over there were many spots—where one may stand and, in the summer, when the sunshine lights up the stream, gaze upon the green meadows, the mills, the rustic bridges, the high causeways over the marshes, and the low Essex hills beyond. The Essex hills are always far away; there is always one before the traveler; if he stands on an eminence he sees them, like gentle waves of the heaving ocean, across other valleys, and I would not affirm that this is more lovely than any other; indeed, one knows many valleys which are deeper and more picturesque, planted with nobler woods, shadowed by loftier hills. Yet look again. You remember the lines—

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green :
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

Mark how exactly the view fits the lines, and how the lines fit the view. This is as it should be, for good old Isaac Watts stood often here and gazed upon that scene; the swelling flood was the winding river Lea; the sweet fields lay before him in living green. That is why I have brought you to this place. Dr. Watts might have stood here at another season, when a low, white mist hung over the sweet fields and obscured the swelling flood, and when the Christian knew not what lay between him and the everlasting hills beyond, where he fain would be at rest.

He lived not at Clapton, but at Stoke Newington, on the west of Clapton. If we could have seen this suburb seventy years ago! But the place is overgrown and overcrowded; workmen's houses cover its gardens like a tangle of ugly weeds. Still there is one place left which it will please you to visit; on the map of 1830 it is the only street in the vil-

lage. It is called Church Street; you enter it from the high road running north; it promises at the outset to be common, mean, and without dignity or character. Patience! we pass through the mean part and we emerge upon a Street Beautiful. It consists of houses built of that warm red brick which,



Clapton.

as Ruskin has pointed out, grows richer in color with age; they are houses of the early eighteenth century with porches and covered with a wealth of creepers; the street has associations of which I will speak presently. Meantime, it is delight enough merely to stand and look upon it. The street ends with two churches. Happier than Hackney, Stoke Newington has been able to build a new church, and has not been obliged to pull down the old one. You see the new church; it is in the favorite style of our time, perhaps as favorable a specimen as can be found; in a word, a large, handsome, well-proportioned church. It was good that such a church should be built, if only to show that when Stoke Newington

passed from a small rural village to a great town it did not outgrow its attachment to the Anglican faith. The old church could no longer accommodate the people; a new one therefore was built, a church urban, belonging to a great population beside the other. The old church is not dwarfed by the new; happily, the broad road lies between; it is a charming and delightful village church, standing among the trees and monuments of its churchyard. It has been patched, repaired, enlarged; it is, I dare say, a thing of patchwork—an incongruous church; yet one would not part with a single patch or the very least of its incongruities. There is Perpendicular work in it, and Decorated work; there is also nondescript work. They did well to keep it standing; it is a venerable monument; its spire is much humbler than that of its splendid successor, still it points to heaven; it has what the other will never have, the bones of the villagers for two thousand years; and still, to admonish the men of to-day as of yesterday and the day before, over the porch hangs the dial, with the motto, "Ab Alto"—"From on High," that is, "cometh Safety, cometh Wisdom, cometh Hope" in the language of the ancient piety.

I have spoken of the intimate connection of these villages with Nonconformity. The Nonconformist cause was very strong among the better class of London merchants during the hundred and fifty years from 1650 to 1800. Hackney and other places in this part of the London suburbs are occupied to a large extent by their country houses. When the Act of Uniformity was passed and the Nonconforming ministers were ejected, many of them were received by the merchants of London in their country houses, and when the Conventicle Act of 1663 forbade the Nonconformists to frequent any place of worship other than the parish church, it was in their private houses at Hackney and other suburbs that the merchants were able, unmolested, to worship after their own consciences.

Before this, however, there had been Puritan leaders in the place. Two of them were regicides. On the east of the tower in Hackney churchyard stood until recently a chapel or mortuary chamber built by one of the Rowe family and called the Rowe Chapel. There was a Sir Thomas Rowe (or Roe), who was Lord Mayor of London in 1568; he married the sister of Sir Thomas Gresham, who founded the Royal Exchange; his son was also lord mayor in his time; his grandson, Sir Henry Rowe, built this chapel. Among the descendants was one Owen Rowe, citizen and haberdasher, a fierce partizan—in those days every one was a partizan and every one was fierce. He was colonel of the Green Regiment for the Parliament, so that he could fight as well as argue. Owen Rowe, unfortunately for himself, was one of those who took a leading part in the trial and execution of the King, being a signatory to the warrant for that execution. After the Restoration he surrendered, and by an act of clemency, of which Charles was sometimes capable, he was not executed, but sentenced to imprisonment in the Tower of London for the rest of his days. He died in the December following, and was buried in this chapel.

The other regicide of Hackney was John Okey, one of the Root and Branch men. He was a very turbulent Parliamentarian; he was of humble origin, beginning, it is said, as a drayman; he had no education, but he developed military genius of a kind and became a colonel of cavalry under Cromwell. After the Restoration he fled to Germany, where he might have continued in security to the end of his days, but being tempted to venture into Holland was there arrested by the English minister, Sir George Downing, and brought over to England with two other regicides, Miles Corbet and John Barkstead. Pepys records the event. It is astonishing that Sir George Downing should have done this, since he owed everything he had in the world to the favor of Cromwell. However, it was done, and on March 16, 1662,

Pepys says that the pink *Blackmore* landed the three prisoners at the Tower. He adds that the Dutch were a long while before they consented to let them go, and that "all the world takes notice of Sir George Downing as a most ungrateful villain for his pains." A month later, on April 19th,



The Old Church, Stoke Newington.

Pepys goes to Aldgate and stands "at the corner shop, the draper's," to see the three drawn on their way to execution at Tyburn. "They all looked very cheerful and all died defending what they did to the King to be just." While at Hackney, Okey lived in a house called Barber's Barn, formerly the residence of Lady Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, and mother of Lord Darnley, husband of Mary Queen of Scots, a curious little fact which connects Hackney with Queen Victoria, Darnley's descendant. The regicide's estate was confiscated, but his widow got permission to retain Barber's Barn, where she lived till her death. Okey himself was buried somewhere in Hackney churchyard.

Let us turn to more pleasing associations. In the village

of Hackney during the Commonwealth there lived a certain Captain Woodcock. Among his friends was the Protector's Latin secretary, John Milton, a person of very great consideration. John Milton in 1656 was a widower, but he was not a man who could live without the society of a wife. Captain Woodcock's daughter, Catharine, pleased the Latin secretary; they were married on November 12, 1656, and she died on October 17th in the following year.

But there are other Cromwellian associations with Hackney and Stoke Newington. The American visitor to London would do well to give a day to a quiet ramble in this quarter, once so sturdy in its Puritanism and independence.

Leading out of Church Street, Stoke Newington, there is a place called Fleetwood Street. This street covers the site of an Elizabethan house which was once the residence of Colonel Fleetwood, Cromwell's son-in-law. His second wife, Bridget Cromwell, however, did not live in this house, because Fleetwood got it, after her death, with his third wife, Lady Hartopp. He was left unmolested by the government at the Restoration, and died in this house in 1692. He lies buried in the Nonconformist cemetery of Bunhill Fields.

Another member of the Cromwell family, Major Cromwell, was a resident of this quarter. He was the son of Henry, and the grandson of the Protector. He married, in 1686, Hannah, eldest daughter of Benjamin Hewling, whose sons suffered for joining Monmouth. One of her children, at least, was born at Hackney. This was Richard, who became an attorney and solicitor in chancery. It is pleasant to record that when this Richard married the wedding was solemnized in the chapel of Whitehall, in memory of his great grandfather's occupation of the palace.

I have already mentioned Isaac Watts as a resident in this part of London. He was born at Southampton in 1674. At the age of sixteen he was placed under the care of the Rev. Thomas Rowe of London, and chose the calling of a

Nonconformist minister. For five years he was tutor in the family of Sir John Hartopp, Colonel Fleetwood's stepson, at Stoke Newington; he there became acquainted with Sir Thomas Abney, whilom Lord Mayor of London. He preached for ten years in London, under the Rev. Dr. Chauncey. Then an attack of fever prostrated him, and he was obliged to give up preaching altogether for the rest of his



A Street in Stoke Newington.

life. He was invited by Sir Thomas Abney to his house at Theobald's, where he stayed till Sir Thomas's death. He then removed with Lady Abney to her house at Stoke Newington, where he remained an honored guest, or rather one of the family, until his death in 1748. He was a painter as well as a poet, and until the house was pulled down certain paintings on the walls were shown as his.

A more sturdy and combative Nonconformist was Daniel Defoe, also a resident of Stoke Newington. The site of his house survives in a small street named after him. He was born at Cripplegate, just outside the walls of London. He

was sent to school at Newington Green, so that he was more or less connected with this quarter all his life. The school was kept by one Murton, and among his school-fellows was Samuel Wesley, father of John and Charles. Defoe came to live in Stoke Newington early in the eighteenth century. It was here that he wrote "Robinson Crusoe" and his novels. His house has long been pulled down, but a large part of his garden-wall still stands.

Matthew Henry, the commentator, lived at Hackney for some time. Among Nonconformists we must not forget Mrs. Barbauld. Her husband, Rougemont Barbauld, of French descent, was Unitarian minister at Newington Green. Unfortunately, his mental powers declined, and in a fit of insanity he threw himself, or fell, into the New River. Mrs. Barbauld's brother, Dr. Aikin, lived also at this time at Stoke Newington. Mrs. Barbauld removed to his house and died there. She is buried in the churchyard of the old church. There are many better poets than Mrs. Barbauld, but her memory should survive for one little scrap in which for once she is inspired, and speaks, as a poet should, out of the fullness of heart common to all humanity.

" Life! we have been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'T is hard to part when friends are dear,—
Perhaps 't will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not ' Good night,' but in some brighter clime
Bid me ' Good morning.'"

Also in Church Street, Stoke Newington, lived Isaac Disraeli, author of the "Curiosities of Literature" and the "Quarrels and Calamities of Authors." This estimable and amiable writer died in 1848. His son, Lord Beaconsfield, born here in 1805, was educated in a private school in the

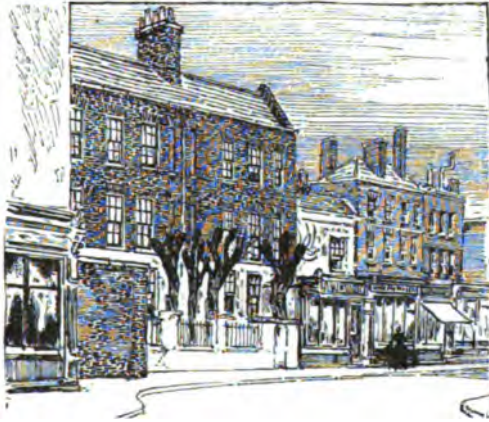
neighborhood until he was articled to a lawyer. He belonged, therefore, essentially to a middle-class family; he was not wealthy by birth, but he was not poor; he had the advantage, or the reverse, of being a Jew by descent and a Christian by conviction. To the former fact he owed much of his intellectual powers, to the latter the possibility of rising to the highest distinction and responsibility that the state has to offer, because at the outset of his career even the beginning would have been impossible to one of the ancient Hebrew faith.

The philanthropist John Howard was also a native of Hackney. He belonged, like so many others of the place, to the Nonconformists. His father was an upholsterer in the City, and he himself was at first made apprentice to a wholesale grocer. He was, however, unfitted for that kind of work, and as soon as he could he bought himself out. This is not the place to enlarge upon the work accomplished by this extraordinary man. After being a prisoner of war in France he became wholly possessed with one resolution—to reform the management of prisons. How he traveled through Great Britain first and the continent afterward, how he published reports which revealed the plague spots called prisons all over Europe, is matter of common fame and history.

I think that my claim for these suburbs, that they were a stronghold of Nonconformity, has been proved by these associations. There are, however, more. Everybody has read "Sandford and Merton," both that of Mr. Thomas Day and the other, equally instructive, of Mr. Burnand. Thomas Day belonged by residence to Stoke Newington. His house is still pointed out. In Clapton, on the other side of the high road, lived and died an amiable and accomplished novelist, Grace Aguilar. Here was born a philanthropist, also among the Nonconformist ranks, the late Samuel Morley. Here was born another Nonconformist, the late Sir William Smith,

editor of so many classical and antiquarian dictionaries and other aids to learning.

Enough of Nonconformists. Let us turn to other associations. Stoke Newington is connected with the name of Edgar Allan Poe. It was here that he was at school, where he was brought over by the Allans as a child. The house still stands; it is at the corner of Edward's Lane, which runs



House in Stoke Newington in which Edgar Allan Poe Lived.

out of Church Street. Let us hope that the eccentricities of this wayward poet were not due to the influences of Nonconformist Newington.

In the churchyard of Hackney may be seen the tombs and monuments of certain members of the André family. The unfortunate Major André was born at Hackney. His history is well known; our American visitors have been taught to think that Washington's act, severe indeed, was just and warranted by the facts of the case. That will not stifle the regret that a soldier of so much promise should have met with such a death. The time has gone by, or should have

gone by, when the name of André called forth bitterness and recrimination.

One more note to connect suburban East London with America. In the year 1709 a great number of refugees—Palatines, Swabians, and others—came over to England, being driven out of their own country by the desolation of war. There were between six and seven thousand of them, all, or nearly all, being quite destitute. The Queen ordered a daily allowance of food to be bestowed upon these unfortunates, and tents were put up for them in various parts round London. The parish of Stoke Newington possessed at that time a small piece of ground, which was lying unoccupied. The parishioners undertook to build four houses on this field, and to receive twenty persons from the refugees. Other parishes offered to do the same. Finally, however, the government disposed of them. The Roman Catholics were sent back to their own country; the Protestants were settled, some in Ireland and the rest in the American colonies. A few went to Carolina; the rest, twenty-seven hundred in number, were shipped to New York, where they arrived in June, 1710. They were allotted ten acres of land to each family. Most of them, however, for reasons of some dissatisfaction, removed to Pennsylvania, where they settled, and where their descendants, it is said, still preserve the history of their misfortunes and their emigration.

The history of these suburbs is unlike that of any other part of London. From the middle of the seventeenth century until far in the nineteenth they were rural retreats; a few houses were clustered about a church; a meeting-house stood here and there; upon the whole place, on the faces of the residents, was the stamp of grave and serious religious thought and conviction; grave and serious Nonconformist divines or grave and serious merchants of the City professing Nonconformity walked about its lanes and among its gardens. As recently as the thirties they retained this char-

acter. The map of 1834 shows fields and pasture and garden where there is now a waste of brick and mortar; the little stream known as Hackney Brook meandered pleasantly through these fields; Stoke Newington, though it could boast so many distinguished natives and residents, consisted of one long street, mostly with houses on one side only, and a church. The place is now entirely built upon; a few of the old houses remain, but not many, and the old atmosphere only survives in places which I have indicated, such as Sutton Place, High Street, Homerton, and Church Street, Stoke Newington. And I fear that to the visitor, to whom these associations are not familiar, there is no dignity about these streets other than is conferred by the few surviving mansions.

We have seen that the suburb of Hackney is connected with Queen Victoria by the early residence there of Darnley, husband of Mary Queen of Scots. There is, strangely, another house connecting this suburb with the Queen by another ancestress. Darnley was the father of James I; the Princess Elizabeth, known afterward as the Queen of Bohemia, was the daughter of James. Elizabeth had twelve children; the youngest, Sophia, was the mother of George I. Elizabeth lived for a time at Hackney, in a house called the Black and White House near the church—it is now destroyed; the house had formerly been the residence of Sir Thomas Vyner, Lord Mayor of London.

There are still more associations. Hackney is, in fact, richer in memories of this kind than any other suburb of London. Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Thomas More belong to American as well as English history, both of them because they precede the colonial time and the former because he foresaw the boundless possibilities of America and attempted to found a colony there. Tradition—a vague tradition only—assigns to Sir Walter a residence in Hackney. History points with certainty to Sir Thomas More's connection with the

place. His daughter Cecilia married one George Heron, son of Mr. Thomas Heron, Master of the jewel house to Henry VIII. The family house was a mansion, long since pulled down, on Shacklewell Green, and hither Sir Thomas must have come to visit his daughter.

All Americans who visit London go to see the Charter House. It is one of the really ancient and beautiful things still left standing. One can make out the disposition of the buildings, the cloisters, refectory, chapel, and cells of the Carthusian monks. One can also study the more recent buildings which converted the monastery into an almshouse and a school. The transformation was effected by Thomas Sutton.

This excellent person, the son of a country gentleman, filled many offices during a long life of over eighty years. He was Master of the Ordnance to Queen Elizabeth; he became, at the advanced age of fifty, a citizen of London, joining the Girdlers' Company, and married the widow of one John Dudley, lord of the manor of Stoke Newington. On her death he removed to Hackney, living in a great house which you may still see standing at the present day, one of the very few old houses remaining. It is a house with a center and two wings; formerly there was a large garden behind it. Sutton died in 1614, only a few weeks after signing deeds by which he endowed the Charter House with his estates for the maintenance of eighty almsmen and a school of boys. The foundation still exists; they have foolishly removed the school; the almsmen remain, though reduced in numbers. Colonel Newcome, as of course you remember, became one of them.

Enough of great men. Let us speak of smaller folk who have distinguished themselves each in his own way.

It is given to few to achieve distinction by ways petty and mean and miserable, or bold and villainous. These suburbs can point to one or two such examples, adduced here on ac-

count of their rarity. Perhaps the most illustrious of the former was a certain hermit. His name was Lucas; he belonged to a West Indian family; he became a man of Hackney only when he was buried in the churchyard. His house was about thirty miles north of London; on the death of his mother he became suddenly morose; he shut himself up alone in the house; he refused all society; he barricaded his room with timber and lived by himself in the kitchen, where he kept a fire burning night and day, wrapped himself in a blanket, slept upon a bed of cinders, and neither washed nor cut his hair nor shaved, but remained in this neglected condition, which he seems to have enjoyed greatly, after the manner of hermits, for twenty-five years, when he died. He lived on bread, milk, and eggs, which were brought to him fresh every day. He was an object of great curiosity; people came from all parts to gaze upon the hermit; he was very proud of a notoriety which he would probably have failed to acquire by any legitimate efforts; and he conversed courteously with everyone. He was found in a fit one morning, after this long seclusion, and was removed to a farmhouse, where he died the next day.

We may revive the memory of John Ward, formerly of Hackney, as a specimen of the villainous resident.

His career was chequered with coloring of dark, very dark, and black shade. He began life in some small manufactory; he wriggled up, and became a member of Parliament; he was prosecuted for forgery, he was pilloried, he was imprisoned, and he was expelled the House of Commons. He was also prosecuted by the South Sea Company for feloniously concealing the sum of £50,000. He suffered imprisonment for this crime. He is held up to execration by Pope:

“there was no grace of Heaven
Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil;
To Ward, to Waters, Charters and the Devil.”

He added to his villainies a kind of pinchbeck piety, that perverted piety which manifests itself in beseeching the Lord to be on his side in his money-getting. The following is, I imagine, almost unique as a prayer.

“O Lord, thou knowest that I have nine estates in the City of London and likewise that I have lately purchased an estate in fee simple in the county of Essex: I beseech thee to preserve the two counties of Middlesex and Essex from fire and earthquakes: and as I have a mortgage in Hertfordshire, I beg of Thee likewise to have an eye of compassion on that county and for the rest of the counties Thou mayest deal with them as Thou art pleased. O Lord, enable the bank to answer all their bills, and make all my debtors good men.

“Give prosperous voyage to the *Mermaid* sloop, because I have insured it: and as Thou hast said that the days of the wicked are but short, I trust in Thee that Thou wilt not forget Thy promise, as I have purchased an estate in reversion, which will be mine on the death of that profligate young man Sir J. L.”

Such a prayer would seem to argue some mental twist; but strange are the vagaries of the pinchbeck pious.

Two more villains, and we make an end. The first of them was the bold Dick Turpin. Have the achievements of Dick Turpin crossed the ocean? Surely they have, if only in the pages of the “Pickwick Papers,” where Sam Weller sings part of a song written in praise of the highwayman. The verses are generally believed to be by Charles Dickens himself, but that is not so. They are by James or Horace Smith, or both, the authors of the “Rejected Addresses,” and are the two opening stanzas of a long poem. Dick Turpin lived for a time at a house in Hackney Marsh, near a tavern and a cock-pit, and passed for a sporting gentleman free with his money. Few highwaymen were so successful as the gallant rider of Black Bess, and very, very few arrived, as he did, at the age of thirty-four before undertaking that drive to Tyburn Tree, which was the concluding act in his profession. Indeed, the

grand climacteric for a highwayman seems to have been twenty-four.

The other villain for whom Hackney blushes was a native of Homerton. This was none other than the famous "Jack the Painter," who formed the bold design of setting fire to all the dockyards in the country. The story of his attempt in Portsmouth Dockyard, and of his failure and trial, forms one of the most singular chapters in the criminal history of the last century. He was executed in 1776, and his body hung in chains on the shore near Portsmouth for a great many years. I have myself conversed with persons who could remember the gibbet of Jack the Painter, and his blackened, tarred remains dangling in chains. But they were old men, and they were seafaring men. And when the mariner grows old his memory lengthens and strengthens and spreads.



XI

ON SPORTS AND PASTIMES



XI

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WE have dwelt so long on the melancholy pictures of the houseless and the starving that there is danger of falling hastily into the conclusion that East London is the favorite residence of Poverty, Misery, and Necessity—those Furies three. We must not think this. East London is, as I have said before, above all things the city of the working-man—the greatest city of the respectable working-man in the whole world. Fortunately he is, for the most part, in good and steady work. Those are not his daughters who march arm in arm down Brook Street, lifting the hymn, which has no words, of irrepressible youth; nor are those his sons who hang about the corners of the streets near the public house; nor has he any connection with the shuffling, ragged outcasts whom we call the submerged.

The great mass of the population consists of the steady craftsmen, with the foremen, and the managers of departments, and the clerks employed in the factories and the works. I am about to point out some of the ways in which these people brighten and enliven their days.

A certain joyousness has always been the keynote of London life. A volume might be written on the cheerfulness of London; it is not gaiety—Paris or Vienna is a city of gaiety; it is a more valuable possession; the citizen of London is not light-hearted; he is always, in fact, possessed with a wholesome sense of individual responsibility; but he is cheerful,

and he loves those amusements which belong to the cheerful temperament. It must also be acknowledged that he loves sport, and everything connected with sport. Now this cheerfulness of London a hundred years ago seemed well-nigh destroyed. The old social life of the City was broken up by the abandonment of the City; the suburban life, without centers of attraction, such as the little City parish, or the ward, or the City company was wont to offer, was dull and monotonous; the working-men, long left to themselves without schools, or leaders, or masters, or discipline of any kind, were sunk deep in a drunken slough, and the industrial side of London had hardly yet sprung into existence. In another place I have considered the suburban life; here let me speak only of the people who make up the crowds of East London. Without apparent centers round which they could group themselves, the people, by instinct, when they found themselves thus massed together, revived the old cheerfulness of their ancestors. East London, for its sports and pastimes, when we look into them, reminds us of London of the twelfth century as described by Fitzstephen—a city always in good spirits, joyous, and given to every kind of sport. Not quite in the same way; the houses are no longer decked with flowers—it would be too ridiculous to decorate a street leading out of the Commercial Road with flowers; nor do we see any longer the old procession where the minstrels went before,—if it was only the tabor and the pipe,—while the lads and lasses followed after. Yet in its own way this new city is full of cheerfulness; it contains so many Hooligans and casuals and outcasts that it ought to go about with a face of dismal lines; but there were outcasts and casuals even in the twelfth century; quite another note will be struck by one who investigates; there is no city more cheerful and more addicted to enjoyment than East London.

Like all industrial cities—you may note the fact especially in Brussels—the young seem out of all proportion to the old;

this is of course partly because the young people come out more; they crowd the leading streets and the boulevards; they seem to have nothing to do, and to want nothing but to amuse themselves every evening.

I have already twice called attention to the very remarkable change that has gradually transformed the life of the modern craftsman. We have given him his evenings—all his evenings; we have postponed his going to work by an hour at least, and in many cases by two hours; this means a corresponding extension of the evening, because when a man had to present himself at the workshop at 5:30 or 6 A. M. he had to get up an hour before that time, therefore he had to be in bed by an early hour in the evening. This point is of vital importance; it is affecting the national character for good or evil; it is full of possibilities and it is full of dangers.

Our young people, who are those most to be considered, for obvious reasons, are now in possession of the whole evening. From seven o'clock till bedtime, which may be eleven or twelve, they are free to do what they please; the paternal authority is no longer exercised; they are, in every sense, their own masters. In addition, we give them the Saturday afternoon and the whole of Sunday free from the former obligations of church. We also give them the bank-holidays, with Christmas Day and Good Friday. In other words, we give them, if you will take the trouble to calculate, more than a quarter of the solid year, reckoned by days of twenty-four hours. If we reckon by days of sixteen hours we give them more than one third of the whole year, and we say to them, "Go; do what you please with one third of your lives." This is a very serious gift; it should be accompanied by admonition as to responsibilities and possibilities. Anything may be done for good or for ill, with a whole third part of the working year to work at it. The gift, so far, and with certain exceptions, as of the ambitious lad who means to rise,

and will rise, though it means hours of labor when others are at play, has been, so far, generally interpreted to mean, "Go and do nothing, except look for present enjoyment."

The winter, by universal consent, comes to an end on Easter Sunday, which may fall as early as the fourth week in March or as late as the fourth week in April. The breath of the English spring is chill, but the snow and the cold rains and the fogs have gone; if the east wind is keen it dries the roads; the bicycles can come out; there is not yet much promise of leaf and flower, but the catkins hang upon the trees and the hedges are turning green, and the days are long and the evenings are light. I think that Easter Monday is the greatest holiday of the year to East London.

It has replaced the old May-day. Formerly, when by the old style May-day fell on what is now the 14th, it came very happily at the real commencement of the English spring. We are liable to east winds and to cold and frost till about the middle of May, after which it is seldom that the east wind returns. On that day the whole City turned out to welcome summer. Think what they had gone through; the streets unpaved, mere morasses of mud and melting snow; the houses with their unglazed windows boarded up with shutters; the long evenings spent crouching round the fire or in bed; no fresh meat, no vegetables, only salted meat and birds, and, to finish with, the forty days of fasting on dried fish, mostly so stale that it would not now be allowed to be offered for sale. And here was summer coming again! Out of the City gates poured the young men and the maidens to gather the branches and blossoms of the white-thorn, to come back laden with the greenery and to dance and sing around the May-pole.

May-day has long ceased to be a popular festival. The Puritans killed it. Yet there still linger some of the old signs of rejoicing. To this day the carmen deck their horses with ribbons and artificial flowers on May-day. Until quite recently there were one or two May-day processions still to be

seen in the streets. The chimney-sweeps kept up the custom longest. They came out in force, dressed up with fantastic hats and colored ribbons. In the midst was a moving arbor of green branches and flowers, called Jack in the Green. Beside him ran and danced a girl in gay colors, who was Maid Marian. Before him went a fife and drum or a fiddler, and they stopped at certain points to dance round Jack in the Green. Another procession, discontinued before that of the chimney-sweeps, was that of the milkmaids. The dairy women, dressed in bright colors and having flowers in their hair or in their hats, led along a milch cow covered with garlands. After the cow came a man inside a frame which bore a kind of trophy consisting of silver dishes and silver goblets, lent for the occasion and set in flowers. Of course they had a fiddler, always represented in the pictures as one-legged, but perhaps the absence of a leg was not an essential.

May-day is gone. Its place is taken, and more than taken, by Easter Monday. It is the fourth and last day of the longest holiday in the whole year. From Good Friday to Monday, both inclusive, no work is done, no workshops are opened. The first day, the Day of Tenebræ, the day of fasting and humiliation, is observed by East London as a day of great joy; it is a day on which the men seek their amusements without the women; on this day there are sports, with wrestling and boxing, with foot-ball and athletics; the women, I think, mostly stay at home. On the Saturday little is done but to rest, yet there are railway excursions; many places of amusement, such as the Crystal Palace and the Aquarium (they offer a long round of shows lasting all through the day), are open. Easter Sunday is exactly like any other Sunday. But Monday—Monday is the holiday for all alike, men, women, and children. Poor and miserable must that man be who cannot find something for Easter Monday.

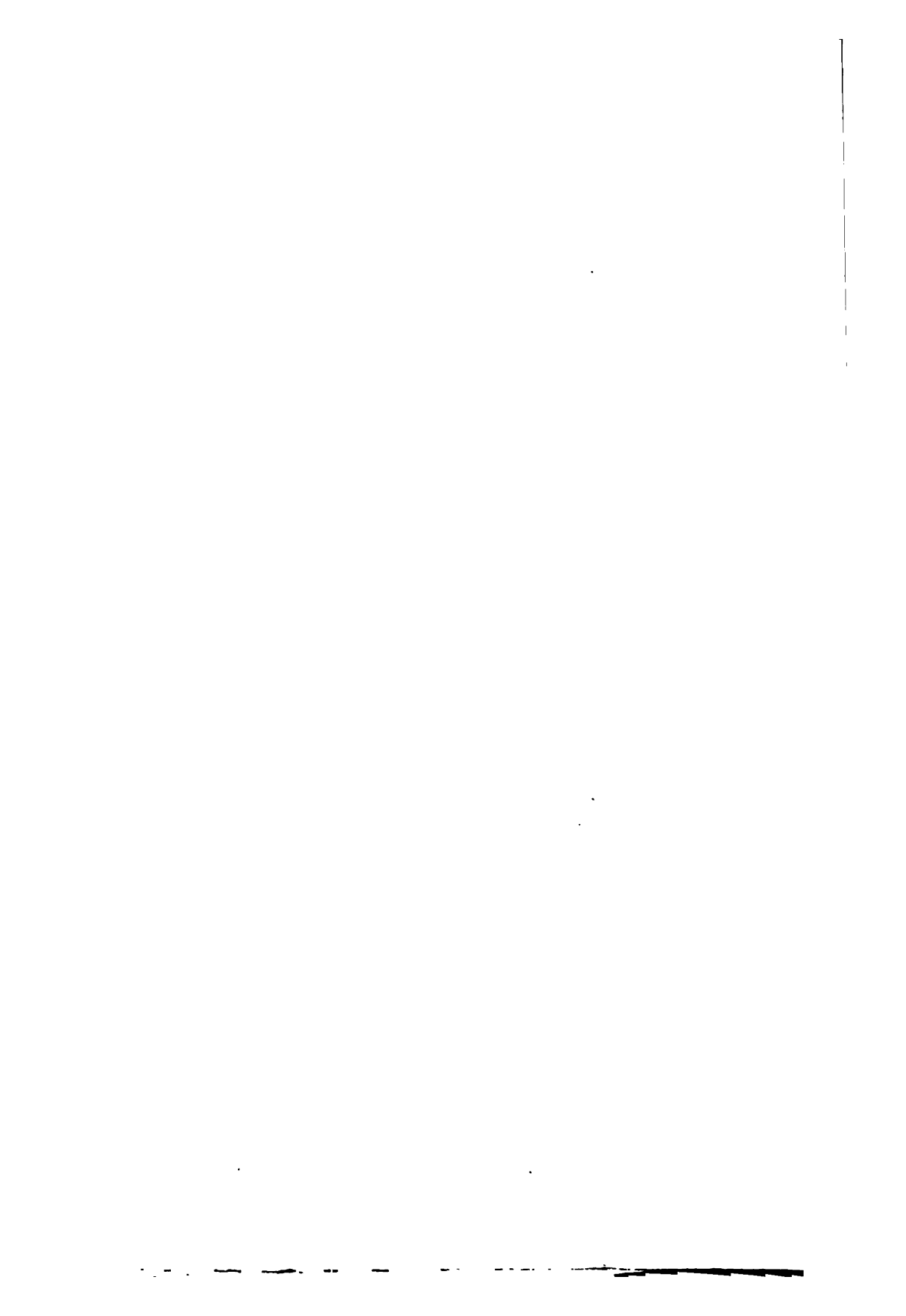
There used to be the Epping Hunt. This absurd bur-

lesque of a hunt was the last survival of the right claimed by the citizens of London to hunt in the forests of Middlesex. On Easter Monday the "hunt" assembled; it consisted of many hundreds of gallant huntsmen mounted on animals of every description, including the common donkey; there were also hundreds of vehicles of every kind bringing people out to see the hunting of the stag. It was a real stag and a real hunt. That is to say, the stag was brought in a cart and turned out, the horsemen forming an avenue for him to run, while the hounds waited for him. There was a plunge, a shout; the stag broke through the horsemen and ran off into the cover of the forest, followed by the whole mob at full gallop; the hounds seem to have been for the most part behind the horses, which was certainly safer for them. The stag was not killed, but was captured and taken away in the cart that brought him. The Epping Hunt is no longer celebrated, nor is Epping Forest any longer one of the haunts of Easter Monday.

Five miles from St. Paul's cathedral lies a broad heath on the plateau of a hill. This is Hampstead Heath. Two hundred years ago, on the edge of the heath was a Spa, with a fashionable assembly-room and a tavern. The Spa decayed, and the place became the residence of a few wealthy merchants, each with his stately garden. Some of these houses and these gardens survive to this day; most of them are built over, and Hampstead is now a suburb of eighty thousand people, standing on the slope and top of a long hill rising to the height of nearly five hundred feet. The heath, however, has never been built upon. It is a strangely beautiful place; not a park, not a garden, not anything artificial, simply a wild heath covered with old and twisted gorse bushes, with fern and bramble, and in spring lovely with the white-thorn and the blackthorn and the blossoms of the wild crab-apple, Britain's only native fruit. The heath is cut up into miniature slopes and tiny valleys; a



Hampstead Heath, Looking "Hendon Way."



high causeway runs right across it; the place is so high that there is a noble view of the country beyond, while at rare intervals, when the air is clear, the whole valley of the Thames lies at the spectator's feet, and London, with her thousand spires and towers is clearly visible, with St. Paul's towering over the whole.

The heath is the favorite resort of the holiday makers of Easter Monday; a kind of fair is permitted on one side, with booths and the customary bawling. There are never any shows on Hampstead Heath—I know not why. The booths are for rifle galleries, for tea and coffee and ices, for cakes and ginger-beer, for crafty varieties in the game of dropping rings or pretty trifles for bowls and skittles, and for “shying” sticks at cocoanuts. No stalls are allowed for the sale of strong drink. Here the people assemble in the morning, beginning about ten, and continue to arrive all day long, dispersing only when the sun goes down and the evening becomes too cold for strolling about. They may be numbered by the hundred thousand. Here are the factory girls, going about in little companies, adorned with crimson and blue feathers; they run about laughing and shrieking in the simple joy of life and the exhilarating presence of the crowd; they do not associate with the lads, who dress up their hats with paper ribbon and hurl jokes, lacking in originality as in delicacy, at the girls as they run past. There are a great many children; the policemen in the evening bring the lost ones, disconsolate, to the station. Some of them have come with their parents; some of them, provided with a penny each, have come alone; it is wonderful to see what little mites run about the heath, hand in hand, without any parents or guardians. There are young married couples carrying the baby. All the people alike crowd into the booths and take their chance at what is going on; they “shy” at the cocoanuts as if it were a new game invented for that day, they dance in the grass to the inspiring strains of a concertina, they swing uproariously

in the high wooden carriages, they are whirled breathlessly round and round on the steam-conducted wooden cavalry, and all the time with shouting and with laughing incessant. For, you see, the supreme joy, the true foundation of all this happiness, is the fact that they are all out again in the open, that the winter is over and gone, and that they can once more come out all together, as they love, in a vast multitude. To be out in the open, whether on the seashore or on Hampstead Heath, in a great crowd, is itself happiness enough. There is more than the joy of being in a crowd; there is also the joy of being once more on the green turf. Deep down, again, in the hearts of these townbred cockneys there lies, ineradicable, the love of the green fields and the country air. So some of them leave the crowd and wander on the less frequented part of the heath. They look for flowers, and pick what they can find; the season is not generally so far advanced as to tempt them with branches of hawthorn, nor are the fields yet covered with buttercups; the buds are swelling, the grass puts on a brighter green, but the spring as yet is all in promise. There are other country places of resort, but Hampstead is the favorite.

For those who do not go out of London on Easter Monday there are more quiet recreations. On that day Canon Barnett opens his annual exhibition of loan pictures at his schools beside his church at Whitechapel; to the people of his quarter he offers every year an exhibition of pictures which is really one of the best of the yearly shows, though the West End knows nothing about it, and there is no private view attended by the fashionable folk, who go to see each other. There is a catalogue; it is designed as a guide and an aid to the reader; it is therefore descriptive; in the evening ladies go round with small parties and give little talks upon the pictures, explaining what the artist meant and how his design has been carried out. Such a party I once watched before Burne-Jones's picture of "The Briar Rose." The people

gazed; they saw the brilliant coloring, the briar-rose everywhere, the sleeping knights, the courtyard—all. Then the guide began, and their faces lit up with pleasure and understanding, and all went home that evening richer for the contemplation and the comprehension of one great work of art.

At the People's Palace there are concerts morning and evening; perhaps also there is some exhibition or attraction of another kind; there are other loan exhibitions possible besides those of art.

Some of the people, but not many, go off westward and wander about the halls of the British Museum. I do not know why they go there, because ancient Egypt is to them no more than modern Mexico, and the Etruscan vases are no more interesting than the "Souvenir of Margate," which costs a penny. But they do go; they roam from room to room with listless indifference, seeing nothing. In the same spirit of curiosity, baffled yet satisfied, they go to the South Kensington Museum and gaze upon its treasures of art; or they go to the National Portrait Gallery, finding in Queen Anne Boleyn a striking likeness to their own Maria, but otherwise not profiting in any discoverable manner by the contents of the gallery. And some of them go to the National Gallery, where there are pictures which tell stories. Or some get as far as Kew Gardens, tempted by the reputation of the houses which provide tea and shrimps and water-cresses outside the gardens, as much as by the Palm House and the Orchid Houses within.

The streets on Easter Monday present a curious Sunday-like appearance, with shops shut and no vehicles except the omnibus, but in the evening the theater and the music-hall are open, and they are crammed with people.

Therefore, though Easter Monday is the greatest of the people's holidays, it is so chiefly because it is the first, and because, like the May-day of old, it stands for the end of the long, dark winter and the first promise of the spring.

Even in the streets, the streets of dreary monotony, the East Londoners feel their blood stir and their pulses quicken when the April day draws out and once more there comes an evening light enough and long enough to take them out by tram beyond the bricks.

The holiday of early summer is Whit-Monday, which is also a movable feast, and falls seven weeks after Easter, so that it is due on some day between May 12th and June 12th. I have already observed that the cold east wind, which retards our spring, generally ceases before the middle of May, though in our climate nothing is certain—not even hot weather in July and August. When it falls reasonably late, say in the first week of June, there is some probability that the day will be warm, even though there may be showers; that the woods will be resonant with warblers, the fields golden with buttercups, the hedges bright with spring flowers, the bushes white and pink with May blossom, and the orchards glorious with the pink of the apple and the creamy white of the cherry and the pear. On this day the East Londoner goes farther afield; he is not content with Hampstead Heath, and he will not remain under cover at the Crystal Palace. Trains convey him out of London. He goes down to Southend, at the mouth of the Thames; there, at low tide, he can gaze upon a vast expanse of mud or he can walk down a pier a mile and a half long, or, if it is high tide, he may delight in the dancing waters with innumerable boats and yachts. Above all, at Southend he will find all the delights that endear the seaside to him; there is the tea with shrimps—countless shrimps, quarts and gallons of shrimps; he is among his own kind; there is no one to scoff when, to the music of the concertina, he takes out his companion to dance in the road; he sings his music-hall ditties unchecked; he bawls the cry of the day, and it is counted unto him for infinite humor. Southend on Whit-Monday is a place for the comic man and the comic artist; it is also the place for the humorist.



The Shooting-Gallery.

One must not be hard upon the Whit-Monday holiday-maker. He is at least good-humored; there is less drunkenness than one would expect; there is very little fighting, but there is noise—yes, there is a good deal of noise. These children of nature, if they feel happy, instinctively laugh and shout to proclaim their happiness. They would like the bystanders to share it with them; they cannot understand the calm, cold and unsympathetic faces which gaze upon them as they go bawling on their way. They would like a friendly chorus, a fraternal hand upon the shoulder, an invitation to a drink. Let us put ourselves in their place and have patience with them.

I have already mentioned Epping Forest in connection with the cockney hunt of Easter Monday. But to be seen in the true splendor of its beauty Epping Forest must be visited in early June. It is the East Londoner's forest; fifty years ago he had two; on the east of Epping Forest lay another and a larger, called Hainault Forest. It was disforested and cleared and laid out in farms in the year 1850. Epping, however, remains. It is about sixteen miles north of the river; encroachments have eaten into its borders, and almost into its very heart. For a long time no one paid any attention. Suddenly, however, it was discovered that the forest, which had once covered twelve thousand acres, now covered only three thousand. Three fourths had been simply stolen. Then the City of London woke up, appointed a verderer and rangers, drew a map of what was left, and sternly forbade any more encroachments. What is left is a very beautiful wild forest; deer roam about its glades; for the greater part of the year it is quite a lonely place, only receiving visitors on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. It is a narrow, cigar-shaped wood about a mile broad and eight miles long. There are outlying bits on the north and on the south. The ancient continuity of the forest is gone, but there are tangles of real wood and coppice here and there;

the central point of the forest, that which attracts most people, is a small bit of wild wood lying on a hill. Here the ground is rough and broken; everywhere are oaks, elms, beeches, and hornbeams, with a veritable jungle of wild roses, sloes, thorns, and brambles. The woods are filled with singing birds; the ground is covered with wild flowers. Imagine the joy of the East Londoner on Whit-Monday when he plunges up to his knees in the buttercups, the wild anemones, and the flowering grasses, while the lark sings overhead, and thrush and blackbird call from the woods around him, and the sun warms him and the sweet air refreshes him. Such an one I followed once and watched. He was a young fellow of twenty-one or so, with his wife, a girl of nineteen, behind him. He had taken the pipe out of his mouth; instinctively he felt that the pipe was out of place; he threw himself down upon the grass and clasped his hands under his head. "Gawspel truth, old gal!" he cried, out of the fullness of his heart. "It 's fine! It 's fine!"

It was fine, and it was Whit-Monday, and a hundred thousand others like unto this young fellow and his bride were wandering about the forest that day.

There are not many students of archæology in East London, which is a pity, since there are many points of interest within their reach. All round the forest, for instance, and within the forest there are treasures. To begin with, there are two ancient British camps still in good preservation; there is a most picturesque deserted church, called old Chingford church; there is the ancient Saxon church, whose walls are oaken trunks, put up to commemorate the halt of those who carried St. Cuthbert's bones; there is Waltham Abbey, where King Harold lies buried; and if you take a little walk to the east you will find yourself at Chigwell, and you may dine at the inn where, in the Gordon troubles, as presented in "Barnaby Rudge," the landlord found a trifle of glass broken. But the joy in things ancient has not yet been found out by

the London workman. Now and again he is a lover of birds or a student of flowers; for such an one Epping is a haunt of which he can never tire, for it is the only place near London where he can watch heron, hawk, kingfisher, and the wild water-fowl.

Or the people go farther afield by cheap excursion trains. Their coming is not welcomed by the inhabitants of the towns which are their destination. They go to Brighton or to Hastings; they sit in long rows, side by side, upon the shingle idly watching the waves; they go to Portsmouth and sit on Southsea beach watching the ships. They even get across to the Isle of Wight. Last year I was at a little town in that island called Yarmouth. I there made the acquaintance of an ancient mariner who was employed by Lloyd's to take the names of all the ships which passed into the Solent, here a narrow strait. He told me in conversation that I ought to see their church, which is old and beautiful. I replied that I had attempted to do so, but found the door shut. Upon which he gave me the following remarkable reason for this apparent want of hospitality. I quote his words to show the local opinion of the tripper. "You see," he said, "it 's all along of they London trippers. One Whit-Monday they came here and they found the church doors open and in they went, nosebags and cigarettes and all. Then the parson he came along, and he looked in. 'Well,' says the parson, 'Dash my wig!' he says. 'Get up off of them seats,' he says, 'and take your 'ats off your 'eads,' he says, 'and take they stinkin' bits o' paper out of your mouths,' he says, 'and get out of the bloomin' church,' he says. And he puts the key in his own pocket, and that 's why you can't get into the church." The remarkable language attributed to the parson on this occasion illustrates the depth of local feeling about East London out on a holiday.

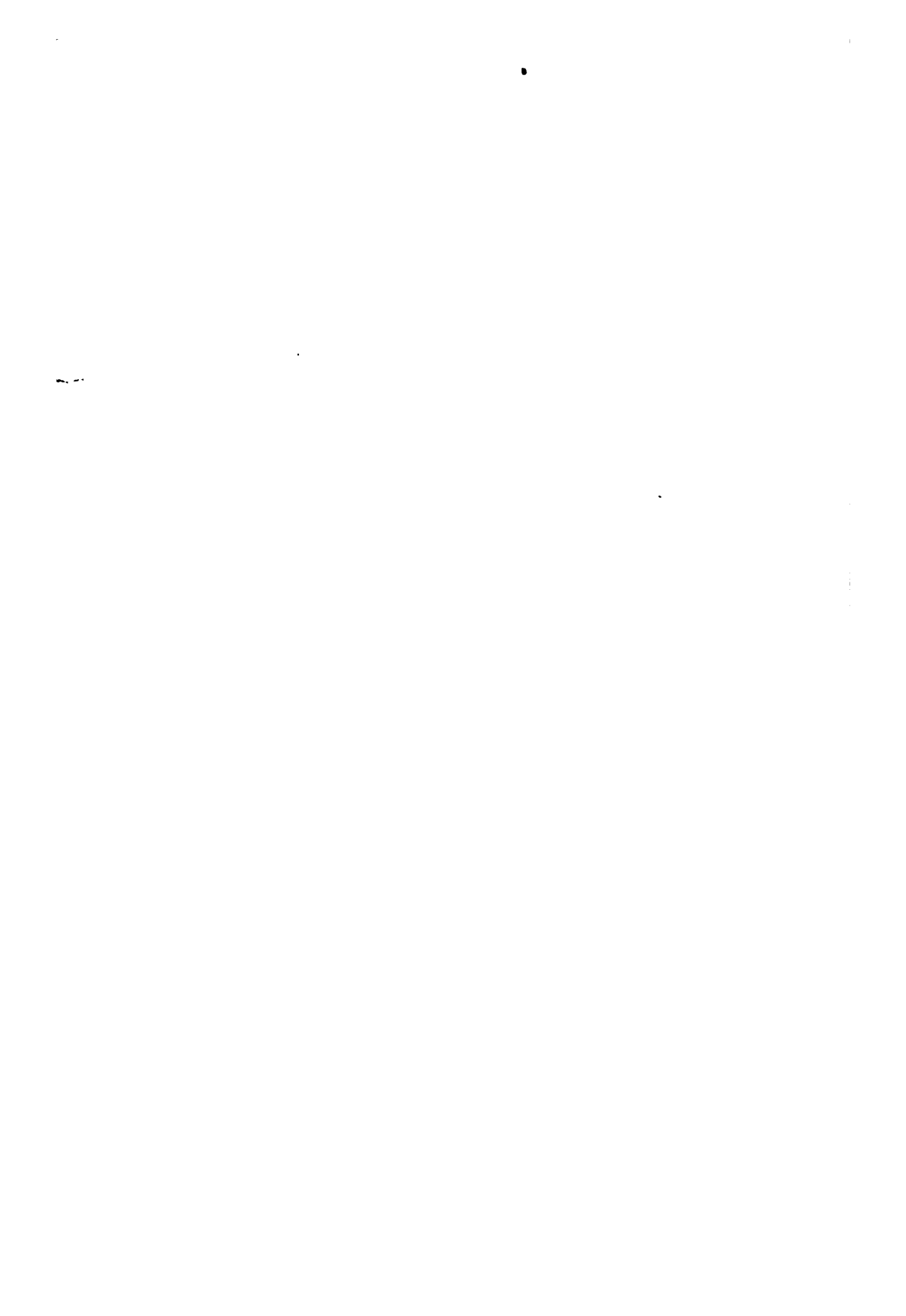
The August bank-holiday is a repetition of Whit-Monday, without the freshness of that early summer day. By the end

of July the foliage of the trees has become dark and heavy; the best of the flowers are over in field as well as garden; the sadness of autumn is beginning. All through the summer, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, the excursion trains are running in all directions, but especially to the seaside; the excursion steamers run to Southend, Walton, Margate, and Ramsgate. For those who stay at home there are the East-End parks, Victoria Park, West Ham Park, Finsbury Park, Clissold Park, Wanstead Park. They are thronged with people strolling or sitting quietly along the walks. All these parks are alike in their main features; they are laid out in walks and avenues planted with trees; they contain broad tracts of green turf; there is an inclosure for cricket; sometimes there is a gymnasium, and there is an ornamental water, generally very pretty, with rustic bridges, swans, and boats let out for hire. Where there is no park, as at Wapping and Poplar by the riverside, there are recreation grounds. In all of them a band of music plays on stated evenings.

This restoration of the garden to the people is a great feature of modern attempts at civilization; it seems terrible that there should be no place anywhere for children to play except the streets, or for the old people to sit except in the public house. London is now dotted with parks, chiefly small and covered with gardens. Nearly all the churchyards have been converted into gardens; the headstones are ranged along the walls; they might just as well be taken away; one or two "altar tombs" are left. The rest of the ground is planted with flowering shrubs—lilac, laburnum, ribes, the *Pyrus Japonica*, and the like; the walks are asphalted, and seats are provided. Nearly all the year round one may see the old people walking about the paths or sitting in the sun; part of the ground is given to the children. It is difficult, indeed, to exaggerate the boon conferred upon a crowded city by these breathing-places, where one can be



On Margate Sands.



quiet. The summer amusements of the people, you will observe, are not all made up of noisy crowds and musical trippers; add the summer evening walk in the park and, all the year round, the rest in the garden that is a disused burial-ground.

For the children there is the day in the country. Every summer day long caravans of wagons filled with children, singing and shouting as they go, drive along the roads to the nearest country place, or excursion trains crammed with children are carried off to the nearest seaside places. They run about on the seashore, they bathe, they sit down to a tea of cake and buns, and they are taken home at night tired out but singing and shouting to the end. This summer "day out" is the one great holiday for the children; they scheme to get put on the lists of more than one excursion; they look forward to it; they count upon it. Every year vigorous appeals are made in the papers for help to send the children away upon their annual holiday; these appeals are of course pitched extravagantly high; they talk a conventional jargon about the little ones who grow up without ever gazing upon a green leaf or a tree. Rubbish! There is not a street anywhere in London where a garden, if it is only a disused burial-ground, is not accessible if the children choose to go there. Mostly the very little ones prefer the dirt pies in the gutter, but even for them the wagonette comes now and then to carry them off for the whole day to the grass of Victoria Park. Still, it is a very great thing that they should, once at least in the year, be carried away into real country and have a glimpse of meadows, woods, and cows and sheep.

When they grow older they are still better off. It is quite common now for young men who carry on the Settlements and the boys' clubs to get the lads under their care to save up week by week until they have amassed the sum of five shillings. On this capital, with management, they are enabled to get a week's holiday by the seaside. It is a glorious time

for them. A convenient place is found; it must be on the seashore; it should be quite free from any town or village; there must be no temptations of any kind; the lads are there to breathe fresh air and life, quite cut off from any suggestion of town life. They sleep, every boy in his own rug, on dry, clean straw in a barn, which is also their refectory, their lecture-hall, their concert and their singing-room. On the seashore there are boats for them; they row and sail and they go deep-sea fishing; they bathe every day, and they have swimming matches; on the sands they run races; in the evening they sing, they box, they look at dissolving views, and they lie down on the straw to rest. Their food is plain; it consists principally of boiled beef and potatoes, with cocoa and coffee and bread and butter. Of course this magnificent holiday demands a head and leader and obedience. But there is hardly ever any hitch or breakdown or row among the lads.

The hopping, considered as an amusement, should be placed next, but we have already shown the place it takes in the year of the factory girl. It is indeed amusement to all concerned, especially if the weather be fine; it is amusement with profit; the hoppers come home with a pocket full of money; they have left their pasty cheeks in the country, and they bring back rosy cheeks and freckled noses and sun-burned hands, with the highest spirits possible. The hopping, I confess, is not always idyllic. Last autumn it was reported that Maidstone Gaol was filled with hoppers charged with being disorderly; their camps might be conducted with more care for cleanliness; London roughs should not be allowed to come down on Sunday and mar this Arcadia. But the complainant, a well-known clergyman of the district, spoke with moderated condemnation. A more careful classification of the families in each encampment, he thinks; some check on the Sunday drink, which now flows at the sweet will of the people; some hindrance to the incursion

of the Sunday rough; a more careful system of inspection—these things would go far to remove all reproach from the hopping. Meantime, as a proof of the substantial results of the work the roadway outside the principal station for their return was this year observed to be strewn with the old boots discarded by the hoppers when they bought new ones on their way home.

The river Lea, which, according to some, is the natural boundary of East London,—but it has leaped across that boundary,—is part of the summer amusements. The stream at its mouth, where it is a tributary to the Thames, is a black and murky river indeed. Higher up above the works it is a pleasant little river, winding along at leisure through a broad, marshy valley. The ground is soft and easy to be worked, the incline is so gradual that it might easily and at small expense be made an ornamental stream, moderately broad and able to carry racing boats, flowing beside gardens and under summer-houses and between orchards from its source to its mouth. Instead of this, it has been mercilessly divided into “cuts,” channels, and mill-streams running off at wide angles, joining again lower down, separating again into other cuts and channels, again to unite. On its way it receives the refuse of mills, the refuse of towns; it passes Ware and Ryehouse, Tottenham, Clapton, and Hackney; its course unfortunately lies for the most part through a broad level of soft earth—marshy and low—which permits these cuttings and humiliations. It is accused of being a sewer; young men row upon it; boys bathe in it, but with remonstrance and complaint. The stream is, it must be confessed, in its lower reaches, offensive. Sore throats are caught beside its banks; sometimes people write indignantly about it to the papers. There is a little fuss, summer passes, in the winter no one goes near the river Lea, things are forgotten, and all goes on as before.

It is not possible for a river to flow for thirty miles without having lovely stretches and picturesque corners. The

Lea, with all its drawbacks, does possess these inevitable lapses into beauty. But in these pages we cannot stop to point them out. Where the Lea is beautiful it is outside the widest limits assignable to East London. Where the Lea is ugly, dirty, and disreputable, it used to form the eastern boundary to East London.

In the brief sketch of the summer amusements I have said nothing of the bicycle. Now, all the roads outside London are on Saturday and Sunday dotted with the frequent bicycle. It goes out in companies of twenty and thirty; it goes out by twos and threes; it goes out singly. On one Sunday twenty-five thousand bicycles were counted crossing one bridge over the Thames and making for the country beyond. And it seems that there are none so poor as not to afford a bicycle. The secret is, I believe, that a second-hand bicycle, or a bicycle of the last fashion but one, or a damaged bicycle, may be purchased of its owner for a mere trifle, and these lads learn very quickly how to repair the machine themselves.

But the summer all too quickly draws to an end. By the middle of September twilight falls before seven. There are no more evening spins ten miles out and back again; by the end of October twilight falls at five; then there are no more Saturday afternoons on the road. The weather breaks, the roads are heavy, the bicycle is laid aside for the next four months, perhaps for more, because the cold east wind of early spring does not make the roads pleasant except for the hardest and the strongest. The winter amusements begin. For the factory girls and the dockers we have seen what they are: the street first and foremost; always the street, imperfectly lit, the pavement crowded; always the street, in which the girls march up and down three or four abreast. Their laugh is loud, but it is not forced; their jokes and their badinage with the lads are commonplace and coarse, but they pass for wit; they enjoy the quick pulse when all the world is young; they are as happy as any girls in any other class; they need

not our pity; youth, if it has enough to eat and its evening of amusement, is always happy.

They have, then, the boulevard without the café, the street with the public house and the invitation from youth, prodigal of its pence, to step in and have a drink. In addition, they have the music-hall and the theater. For some there is the club; but only a few, comparatively, can be persuaded to go into the club for an hour or two every evening. Most of them have no desire for a quiet place; they are obliged to be quiet in the factory; at night they like to make up for the day's long silence.

So with their companions, the casual hands, the factory lads, the Hooligans, the children of the kerb, they rejoice in the days of their youth.

Let us mount the social scale; we come to the craftsman in steady work, to the small clerk, to the small shopkeeper. Not that these are of equal rank. The working-man consorts with other working-men; the small clerk calls himself a gentleman; the small shopkeeper is a master. What have they for amusements? The small shopkeeper seems to get along altogether without any amusement. He keeps his "place" open till late in the evening; he shuts it, takes his supper, and goes to bed. His social ambitions are limited by the distinctions to be acquired in his chapel; he reads a halfpenny journal for all his literature.

As for what is offered to those who will accept these gifts, there are lectures first and foremost; there are the lectures offered every winter at Toynbee Hall. These lectures are not, if you please, given by the "man in the street"; the lecturers are the most distinguished men in their own lines to be found; there is no talking "down" to the Whitechapel audience; those serious faces show that they are here to be taught, if the lecturer has anything to tell them, or to receive suggestions and advice; they are all of the working-class; they are far more appreciative than the audiences of the

West End; they read and think; they have been trained and encouraged to read and think by Canon Barnett for many years; they are very much in earnest, and they do not come with vacuous minds; as Emerson said of the traveler so we may say of a man who listens to a lecture—he takes away what he brought with him. About the Settlements and the



Toynbee Hall and St. Jude's Church.

gifts which they offer, with full hands, to the people, I speak in the next chapter.

What Barnett and Toynbee Hall have done for the intellectual side the People's Palace has done for the musical side. Its cheap concerts have led the people, naturally inclined to music, insensibly into ways of good taste; the palace was fortunate, at first, in getting a musical director who knew how to lead the people on; one of the most gratifying successes of this institution has been its music. They have now their own orchestra, vocal and instrumental. At the same place are held exhibitions, from time to time, of East London industries, of pictures, of arts and crafts of all kinds.

Here is the finest gymnasium in London, and here are many clubs—for foot-ball, cricket, and games of all kinds.

One omission in the amusements of London must be noted. There are no public dancing-halls. I see no reason at all why a public dancing-hall should not be carried on with as much attention to good behavior as a private dance, or a theater, or any other place where people assemble together. It requires only the coöperation of the people themselves, without the aid of the police. Meantime, there is no form of exercise, to my mind, so delightful to the young and so healthful as dancing; nothing that more satisfies the restlessness of youth than the rapid and rhythmic movement of the limbs in the dance. Nature makes the young long to jump about; education should take in hand their jumping and make it part of the orderly recreation which we are substituting for the old brutal sports. Dancing was tried at the People's Palace; it was a great success; the balls given in the Queen's Hall were crowded, and the people were as orderly as could be desired. But, indeed, the whole feeling of the assembly was in favor of order.

The theater and the music-hall claim, and claim successfully, their supporters; concerning the former one has only to recognize that it may be a school of good manners, as well as of good sentiments, and that it is also an institution capable of ruining a whole generation. The pieces given at the theaters of East London are, so far as I have observed, chiefly melodramas. The music-halls are places frankly of amusement, and for the most part, I believe, vulgar enough, but not otherwise mischievous.

And there is the public billiard-room, with all that it means—the betting man, the professional player, the proximity to the bar, the beer and the tobacco, and the talk. It attracts the young clerk more readily than the young craftsman. It is his first step downward. If it does not plunge him beneath the waves after the fashion that we have witnessed,

it will keep him where he is and what he is—a writing machine, a machine on hire at a wage not so very much better than a typewriting instrument, all his life. Let us rather contemplate the thousands of lads who attend the classes at the palace, the polytechnics, and the Settlements; let us rather think of those who crowd into the concerts, sit as students at the lectures and listen and look on while the guide leads them round the exhibitions.

In this long list of amusements I must have omitted some, perhaps many. For instance, I have not spoken of reading or of literature. The craftsman of East London has not yet begun to read books; at present he only reads the paper; his children read the penny dreadfuls, and are beginning to read books.

Considering that Sunday afternoon is especially the time of rest, we must not forget one form of recreation peculiar to that time. It takes the form of an address given in some chapel. There is generally a short service, with prayer and the singing of a hymn; the people who attend and crowd the chapel seem to like this addition to the address which follows. It is intended to be of a kind likely to interest and to instruct; the first duty of the lecturer is to choose a subject which does both; I have myself on more than one occasion attempted to address working-men on the Sunday afternoon; I have found them easy to interest and quick to take up points. As at Toynbee Hall, one must not talk "down" to them. Indeed, the men who come to such lectures are the most intelligent and the best educated of the whole population. It is pleasant and restful for them; the chapel is warm; the singing is not disagreeable, even though in their own homes psalmody is not commonly practised; to be called away on a dark and gloomy November afternoon and led gently into another world, with new scenery and other conditions, is that complete change which is the best rest of all. The lecturer need not be afraid of tiring his audience; he may go

on as long as he pleases; when he leaves off they will crowd round him and beg him to come again.

Many other omissions I have made purposely. There are the drinking and the gambling clubs, the betting clubs, haunts, and dens, if one choose to consult the police and to hunt them up, which would enable one to finish this chapter with a lurid picture. Where there are so many men and women there will always be found a percentage of the bad, the worse, and the worst. It is the hopeful point about East London that wherever the better things are offered they are accepted by the better sort; not by a few here and a few there, but by thousands who are worthy of the better things.

XII

THE HELPING HAND

XII

THE HELPING HAND

THE work that lies before us in every city waiting for the Helping Hand—the human wreckage, bankruptcy, age, sickness, poverty, which must always be forming anew however we may meet it and find alleviation—will certainly not decrease as the years roll on. The point for us to consider here is not the volume and variety of the forces which cause this wreckage, but the attempts which are now being made to find this alleviation and, if possible, a remedy.

The Helping Hand has a history, and it is very simple:

1. First of all it threw a penny to the beggar because he was a beggar.

2. Secondly, it offered free meals and free quarters in every monastic house to every beggar because he was a beggar.

3. It continued to give the penny and the free meals and the lodging to the beggar because he was a beggar, but it ordered the beggar to go back to work.

4. It arrested, imprisoned, branded, and flogged the beggar because he was a beggar. It continued also to give him a penny for the same reason.

5. It founded almshouses for some of the aged poor; those who could not get in continued to receive their penny and their flogging because they were beggars.

6. It founded workhouses, Bridewell, and houses of cor-

rection for the beggar. And it continued to give that penny to the beggar because he was a beggar.

7. It built houses for the reception of the poor who could no longer work, infirmaries for the sick, orphanages and homes for poor children, casual wards for the homeless. It made begging an offense in the eyes of the law. Yet it continued to give the beggar a penny because he was a beggar.

8. It discovered that a multitude of rogues and people who will not work trade upon the charity and the pity of people, sending around letters asking for help. It therefore established an association, with branches everywhere, to expose the fraudulent. Yet it continued to give the beggar a penny because he was a beggar.

In other words, the Helping Hand has never been able to refrain from giving that penny which encourages the "masterless" man, and the man who will not work, and the fraudulent, and the writer of the begging letter. Could the Helping Hand be persuaded to refuse that penny for a single fortnight, to turn a deaf ear resolutely to the starving family on the road, to the starving children on the pavement, to the starving woman who stands silent, mournful, appealing with mute looks of misery, only for a single fortnight, the existence of the beggar would come to a sudden end. This the Helping Hand can never be persuaded to do. Therefore we have with us not only the real misery caused by fate, by fortune, by the natural consequences of folly and weakness and crime, but also the pretended misery of those who live upon the pity of the world and trade on that strange self-indulgence which gives the dole to remove an unpleasant object out of sight and to awaken the glow which follows with the sense of charity.

I leave aside in this place the casual dole—the penny to the beggar because he is a beggar; it is illustrated for all time by the partition of the cloak between St. Martin and the beggar. The saint, then a gallant cavalryman, did not

stop—or stoop—to inquire into the merits of the case; here was a beggar. Was he really starving? could he work? were his sufferings pretended? was he really cold? did he deserve any help at all? Was he, on the contrary, well fed and nourished, money in purse, food in wallet, a sufficiency of clothes on his back, a fire and a pot over it at home, with a well-fed family and a wife on the same “lay” at the other gate of the city? Let us leave the Bishop of Ligugé as a type for all the centuries of the unthinking charity which gives the penny to the beggar because he is a beggar.

Let us turn to other and later developments. The Helping Hand has founded and endowed and now maintains by voluntary contributions hospitals of every kind for the sick; by rates and taxes, workhouses for the poor, schools for the children. Yet there has passed—there is now passing—over the work of charity a great and most remarkable revolution; it is a revolution characteristic of a time in which every theory of social life, social conditions, and social responsibilities has been completely changed. The old duties remain still; schools and hospitals have been multiplied; if almshouses have not increased, the workhouse system has become better organized. But we have become aware of other duties, of new responsibilities. It is now understood that it is not enough to put the children to school from one to fourteen; they must be looked after when they leave school; it is not enough to provide for the diseases of the body; we must make provision for the diseases, and the cause of the diseases, of the mind. The Helping Hand is at work in these days for the arrest of degeneracy; for the opening up of art, literature, music, science, culture of all kinds, to the better sort among the working-classes; for the wider extension of the area and the depth of culture; for the creation of that kind of public opinion which, more than anything else, makes for public order and the maintenance of law; for the care and safeguarding of young people at the perilous time

of emancipation from school; for the rescue of those who can be rescued; for the cleansing of the slums; for the restoration to the world of those who, as we have seen, have dropped out; and for the prevention of pauperizing by ill-considered schemes of ill-informed benevolence.



The New Whitechapel Art Gallery.
(The building to the right is a free library.)

These are general terms.

In order to carry out its work in detail, the Helping Hand looks after the children in their homes, while the Board-school looks after their teaching; it provides cases for the hospital, and aids the parish authorities during sickness in the home; it introduces the social side into the lives of the better sort; it devises attractions for the young people who stand at the parting of the ways, where temptation is strong and the primrose path is bright with flowers; it teaches the lads a trade, and the girls a

love for the quiet life; it wages war with the public house and the street; it endeavors to bring back the lowest strata to a sense of religion which they have come to think the peculiar and rather unaccountable property of "class"; it brings friendliness among folk who have only known the order of the policeman.

These are some of the functions which to-day are exercised by the Helping Hand. In East London we can see

the hand at work with greater energy, wiser supervision, and in directions more varied than in any other city of Great Britain. I do not venture, for the obvious reason of ignorance, upon comparison with American cities, but I should think that we have in East London, with its vast population of working-people of all kinds, ranging from the highly-paid foreman to the casual hand, the lad of the street, the wastrel, and the wreck, a mass of humanity which is not paralleled anywhere, and a corresponding amount of philanthropic endeavor which it would be impossible to equal elsewhere.

In this immense multitude there are many slums of the worst kind; but they are now much fewer, and they are much less offensive, than they were; the most terrible of the plague spots seem to have been improved away; to find the real old slum, the foul, indescribable human pigsty, one must no longer look for it in East London. That is to say, there are, I dare say, a few of the old slums left, but the places—there were then many of them—into which one peered, shuddering, twenty years ago, have now vanished. The police, the clergy, the ladies who go about the parish, can still take the visitor into strange courts and noisome tenements, but he who remembers the former state of things feels that light and air and a certain amount of public opinion, with some measure of cleanliness, have been brought to the old-fashioned slum by the modern Helping Hand.

If the American visitor to London desires to see a real old-fashioned slum—one where all the surroundings, physical and moral, are, to use the mild word of the day, absolutely “insanitary”—I would recommend him not to try East London, where he would have to search long for what he wants, but to pay a visit to Guy’s Hospital on the south side of the Thames and to seek the guidance of one of the students through the courts of crime and grime which still lie pretty thickly round that fortress of the army of health.

If you read novels of the day describing things brutal be-

yond belief, it will be well to suspect that the situations are a little mixed. Art must exaggerate; art must select; art must group. In this way it is quite possible that a picture tendered as of to-day may really belong to twenty years ago. There is still plenty of misery left in East London—we need, in fact, no exaggeration; I could fill these pages with lamentable histories; the people are still very much “down below”; some of them are a long way down; they are not only suffering for the sins of their fathers, they are busily piling up by their own sins sufferings for their children. Terrible has been their own inheritance; more terrible still will be the inheritance of the children.

Among these people, being such as they are, a whole army is at work continually. Let me now, in such short space as is at my command, consider in detail some of the more important methods by which this army is at work. It is not yet an army completely drilled and subdivided and commanded; some of their work overlaps, or hinders, other work. Perhaps it is not to be desired that this army should be completely drilled and organized. We do not ask for the crystallized methods of French education, or the iron drill of the Prussian sergeant. Let us leave some room for individual choice. Given certain principles of action, the element of personal freedom in carrying out these principles becomes of vital importance.

I have spoken of the revolution in opinion as to the responsibilities of the better educated and the wealthier toward those below them. Perhaps the situation may be illustrated by considering the change that has passed over us in our conception of what civilization should mean. The view of the eighteenth century was that civilization, culture, the pursuit of art, reading, learning of all kinds, science, the power, as well as the right, of government belonged essentially to the upper classes. When the good people of Spalding, for instance, in the year 1701, founded a literary society they

called it the "Spalding Gentlemen's Society"—only gentlemen, you see, could be expected to take any interest in things that belong to civilization. It was further considered that it was impossible to expect civilizing influences to bear upon the working-classes. They were kept in order by discipline, by the prison, and by the lash. To open the doors of education, to give them access to the tree of knowledge, would be a most dangerous, a most fatal, mistake. Even at the present day one hears, at times, the belated cry that the working-classes need no more than the barest elements of learning.

In certain circles the distinction between the cultured class and those outside was marked by artificial notes of manner and of speech. The limits were intolerably narrow; outside these circles there was no leadership, no statesmanship, possible.

But apart from the pretensions of the eighteenth-century aristocracy it was considered by the middle class and the professional class alike dangerous to interfere with Providence; the working-class were born to do service; let them learn to do it. Religion, of course, they could have if they wanted it; the church was there, the doors were open every Sunday, anybody might go in; the clergyman would visit the sick, if he were invited; the children were baptized in the church; some of the people were married in the church; all the people were buried in the churchyard, with the service of the church by law established. That was all; there were very few schools; education, even if the parents wished it, was not to be had, and the folk were left altogether to their own devices. They had been forced out of the City to make room for warehouses and offices; they lived in their own quarters, especially along the riverside and in White-chapel, and they were left quite alone to their own devices.

There were no police; the hand of the law among these crowded streets was weak; they did what they pleased. There

is a story belonging to the year 1790, or thereabouts, of a man living in Wapping, just outside the Tower of London, which was always garrisoned with troops. This man gave offense to his neighbors by complying with some obnoxious law. He heard that they were going to attack him, meaning that they were going to murder him. The man had the bulldog courage of his time; he sent away his wife and children; he got a friend as brave as himself to join him; he closed his lower shutters and barricaded his door; he laid in ammunition, and he brought in and loaded two guns, one for himself and one for his friend.

At nightfall the attacking party arrived; they were armed with guns and stones. They began with a volley of the latter; the besieged paid no attention; they then fired at the windows; the besieged received their fire, and while they were loading again let fly among them, and killed or wounded two or three. They retired in confusion, but returned in larger numbers and with greater fury. All night long the unequal combat raged. When their ammunition was spent the two men dropped out of a back window into a timber yard, where they hid in a saw-pit. Observe that this battle lasted all the night, close to the Tower, and that no soldiers were sent out to stop it till the morning, when the mischief was done and the house was sacked. And no one was arrested, no one was punished, save the men who were shot. Can any story more clearly indicate the abandonment of the people to their own devices?

Reading these things, remembering how brutal, how ignorant, how degraded were whole masses of our people at that time, I am amazed that we came out of that long struggle of 1792-1815 without some awful outburst, some *Jacquerie*, like that of the Parisian mob, which might have drenched our land, as it did that of France, with blood and murder. And I think that when the social history of the nineteenth century, which we who have lived in it cannot grasp,

save in parts, comes to be really and impartially considered, the chief feature, the redeeming point, will be that it began to recognize in practice the elementary truths that we are all responsible for each other, that each is his brother's keeper, that no class can separate itself from the rest, and that no civilization is durable or safe unless it includes the whole people.

What, then, have we done? What have we attempted? What are our present aims? It is not my purpose either to defend or to attack. I have only to state what is being done. Nothing can be attempted in this direction that is not open to abuses of one kind or another. The relief of distress encourages the idle; help of every kind is seized upon by the fraud and the impostor; if we feed and clothe the children their parents have more money for drink; the most we can do is to choose the line that seems open to the fewest objections and to exercise the most unremitting vigilance, care, and caution. The worst feature in the whole chapter of modern charity is that love and forbearance the most unwearied, devotion the most unselfish, seem too often only to pauperize the people, to induce more impudent frauds. But not always; we must take the line of the greatest, not the least, resistance,—that which is hardest for the worker, and certainly most unpopular with the subjects,—and we must judge of results from what follows. All modern philanthropic effort must, in order to be successful, be based upon the people understanding quite clearly that such effort cannot, by any ingenuity or any lies and legends, be turned to the encouragement of those who will not work.

I begin with the parish. There is at the present moment no more active clergy in the world than our own; there is no organization more complete than that of a well-worked London parish. The young men who now take Holy Orders know, at the outset, that they must lead lives of perpetual activity. There are the services of the parish church, with

outlying mission churches; there are Sunday-schools, there are clubs, there are mothers' meetings, there are amusements for the people—concerts and entertainments for the winter; there is the supervision of the visiting ladies who go about the parish and learn the history of all the tenants in all the courts. There is the choir to be looked after, there are the sick to be cared for, there are always people in distress and in need of help—people for whom the vestry officers and workhouse officers can do nothing; the despairing young clergyman very soon finds out that the more you give to people who want help, the more people there are who clamor for help; he has to learn, you see, the great lesson that in certain social levels, where not to work should mean not to eat, no one will do a stroke of work if he can avoid it. Some of the clergy never do learn this lesson; they go on, all their lives, giving, doling, distributing, and pauperizing.

The organization of a London parish on the modern line is amazing in the extent of the aims and the variety of the work done. I have before me the annual report of a parish. From this document, which is like most of the other parochial annuals, it would seem the resolved endeavor of the clergy to make every kind of helpful and civilized work spring from the church and rest upon the church. In this report there are notices of seventy-five associations of various kinds; among them are guilds and fraternities, schools and classes; there are institutions purely religious and purely secular; with the Bible classes and the guilds we find the penny bank, the sharing club, the sale of clothes, the library, the maternity society, the mothers' meetings, the cookery class, and the blanket society. All these associations are conducted by the vicar and his four curates, assisted by a voluntary staff of about twenty ladies. It is evident that without unpaid and voluntary assistance the work could not be even attempted. The remarkable point—the "note" of the time—is that this voluntary assistance is like the widow's cruse—it never fails.

If, on the other hand, it is asked how far the people respond to the assumption that everything is done by the church, it is necessary to reply that the church, as a rule, remains comparatively empty. We have seen elsewhere that the percentage of attendance at the Sunday services of the



The East London Mission.

parish or the district church was, fourteen years ago, a little over three. Occasionally, however, when the vicar is a man of exceptional character, one who succeeds in winning the respect and the affection of the people so that they will follow him even into his church, the services are well attended, and in the evening crowded. There is, for example, a church in a district—a very poor and humble district near Shoreditch: the church was built through the exertions of the present vicar, who has succeeded in making the people attend. The

history of the man partly explains the phenomenon. Fifteen years ago, when he went there, the place, consisting of a dozen miserable streets, was one of the vilest kind. Violence, robbery, drunkenness, murder, life in the most uncleanly forms imaginable prevailed in this slice of a large, crowded parish, which this man cut off to make a parish by itself. He sat down in the midst of them all, and he began. Observe that the first lesson he had to teach them was that he was not afraid of them; he was neither afraid of their threats nor of their proffered violence nor of their tongues; he went about among the women—the owners of those tongues—and opened up conversation with them; he spoke them friendly; they gave him the retort unfriendly; he replied readily and boldly, carrying the laugh against his adversaries; the common bludgeon of Billingsgate he met with the gentle rapier of “chaff,” insomuch that the women were first infuriated, then silenced, and then reduced to friendliness, and, in this more desirable frame of mind, so remain. He put up a temporary church; beside the church he started schools; he opened a club for lads and the younger men; he provided his club with things that attracted them—rough games and gymnastics; more than this, he gave them boxing-gloves and taught them how to fight according to the strict rules of the prize-ring. You think that this is not the ideal amusement for a clergyman—wait a bit. The rules of the prize-ring are rigid rules; they demand a good deal of study; they make boxing a duello conducted according to rules of honor and courtesy. Now, when a lad has learned to handle the gloves according to the rules he becomes a stickler for them. Like Mrs. Battle over a game of whist, he exacts the rigor of the game. As for the old methods—the stones in the knotted handkerchief, the club, the short iron rod, and the cowardly boot—he will have no more of them. Moreover, fifteen minutes with a stout adversary, two or three returns to earth, and a shake-hand at the end, knock the devil out of a lad—the devil of

restlessness and of pugnacity—give him a standard of honor, and make the rough-and-tumble in the street no longer worthy of consideration.

Then the vicar built a “doss-house,” a place where men could sleep in peace and cleanliness. And he lived among his people, spending every evening of his life in club and doss-house and all day in the parish, so that the people trusted him more and more; and not only did his club overflow, but his church also began to fill—by this time it is no longer a temporary thing of iron, but a lovely church, with painted windows and carved work. In his services there is plenty of singing; he has processions, which the people like, with banners and crosses, the choir singing as they go. He also has incense, which I have never understood to be other than a barbaric survival. Nor can I understand how any one can endure the smell. Still, I suppose the people like it or he would not have it, and, after all, for those who do like the smell it is apparently harmless.

How many others have tried the same methods, but have failed! Why? Because the one thing necessary for success in such work as this—nine parts philanthropic and one part religious—is the magnetic power which we call, in practical work, sympathy, and, in art or literature, genius.

The clergy, with or without this magnetic power, work day and night. Never before has the Church of England possessed a clergy more devoted to practical work. Never before, alas! has the Church possessed so few scholars or so few preachers. Learning, save for a scholar here and there, has deserted the Church of England. Eloquence has passed from her pulpits to those of the Nonconformists. But the clergy work. Unfortunately, the parishes are large; even a district church has often ten thousand people or more, and those mostly poor, so that the struggle would be, if it were not supplemented, almost hopeless.

It is supplemented in many ways. To begin with, in its

civilizing work, by the Board-school. The action of the London School Board is always subjected to the fiercest light of hostile criticism, especially that of the ratepayers, who have seen with disgust the rate mounting year by year. There is, however, a consensus of agreement that the influence of the schools has been to humanize the people in a manner actually visible to all. The results are before us. The children of to-day are, it is confessed even by opponents to the policy of the School Board, in every respect better than those of twenty years ago, and this although, despite laws and inspectors, there are still many children who escape the meshes of the school net. The mothers understand that the teachers demand certain things of them; that the children must present themselves with hands and faces washed and with some attempt at neatness in their dress; this gives rise to a certain shame at letting the children go unwashed; perhaps, also, the thought of the school tyranny makes the father remember on Saturday afternoon the responsibility of the children, even to knocking off a pint or so.

As for the children themselves, they love the school and the teachers and the lessons; this part of the day is their happiness. Whether in the after life they will remember much of the scraps they learned—crumbs of knowledge: the historical crumb, the geographical crumb—I know not, but the important lessons of order and obedience are not readily forgotten; they will remain; when these children grow up some of them will perhaps join the company of disorder; but they will be rebels, not untaught savages who know no law.

I have already spoken of the clubs for boys and girls. These clubs are simply invaluable. They take the young people at a time when habits are most easily formed, at a time of life when it is most desirable to give them occupation and pursuits which will take them away from the dangers of the streets.

For the better class of boys, those who should be taught

the better trades, especially those which require a knowledge of drawing, designing, or machinery, there are the continuation schools, which are carried on in the evening, and the Polytechnics. A Polytechnic is to the young working lad what a public school or a college is to the upper class. It not only teaches him a trade, that by which he is to live, but it gives him discipline, obedience, responsibility, and the sense of duty. It makes a man of him; it gives him honor and self-respect. There are now lads in the London Polytechnics by thousands; many of them will go out to the colonies; whether they emigrate or whether they stay at home, they will become the very cream and flower of the working-people; they will stand up wherever fate leads them as lifelong champions for soberness and for industry. Not for them will be the wild dreams of anarchy; not for them the follies of an impossible socialism; not for them the derision of religion; not for them the hatred of the rich or the jealousy of class. Not the least among the benefits and advantages of the Polytechnic is the *esprit de corps* promoted among them; they are as proud of their "Poly" as any lad of Eton or any man of Balliol. And the latest arrival from the place, wherever he goes, is sure to find friends and advisers and helpers among the old boys of his "Poly."

The Helping Hand in education is of such great importance that one may dwell a little upon the machinery by which a clever and persevering lad may rise from the very lowest levels to any honor or distinction which the country has to offer. It is chiefly the Technical Education Board, a body which has been in existence for some ten years, which supplies the ladders. This Board is empowered by the London County Council to assist in supplying technical instruction to schools and institutions which are not conducted for private profit. The Board spends the sum of £170,000 a year in maintaining and developing classes for technical education. The most important of these institutions are the

Polytechnics above mentioned. There are twelve of these in and about London, of which two are in our quarter of East London. The number of students in Polytechnics—all of them, it is needless to say, of the working-class—amounts to 45,000. The cost of maintaining them is £120,000, of which the Board of Technical Education contributes £30,000; a large sum is given by the City Charities Commission, and the rest is given by half a dozen rich City companies. It is evident we have here a very serious attempt at providing technical education for lads who are to become the skilled workmen of the future. Formerly they were apprenticed to various trades; the system of apprenticeship has fallen into disuse; but it is found highly necessary, if this country is to hold her own against foreign competition, to train the lads in workshops and laboratories where they may learn every branch of their own trade. There are excellent and fully equipped laboratories at the People's Palace and one or two other Polytechnics. As for the trades taught, they are far too numerous to set down. All those trades which are connected with engineering, with metal work, with gold- and silver-smiths' work, with enameling, wood engraving, bookbinding, decorating and painting, carpentry, furniture- and cabinet-making, and a hundred other trades are taught in these colleges of industry. There are art schools also for the teaching of design, decoration, and all the art requirements of the trades.

For the encouragement of the lads who have left school and are willing to carry on their work the continuation classes were formed. The Technical Board has established a system of scholarships by which a ladder is placed in readiness for any boy or girl who can climb it. There are six hundred small scholarships given every year by examination to boys and girls who have passed the sixth standard in the elementary schools; they are in value £8 for the first year, and £12 for the second year. After two years the

second ladder is reached. The student who has shown, so far, that he is able to climb the ladder and would now give further proof of ability, must be under sixteen, and his parents must not be in the receipt of more than £400 a year. He may then gain by open competition a scholarship giving him free education at some recognized college of higher education, together with about £30 a year in money. After three years, if he is able to climb still higher,—the number of competitors now narrows,—he has a grand chance before him; he may win a scholarship giving him free education at any university he may choose, with £60 a year, tenable for three years. There are at present many such scholars in residence at Oxford, Cambridge, and other universities.

In addition to these, the Board gives scholarships for art, for science and technology, for horticulture, for sanitary science, and for domestic economy. Besides this industrial help, the Board provides lectures, especially for clerks, on commercial subjects.

It will be understood that by means of these scholarships a boy may work his way, at little or no cost to his friends, from the position of craftsman to that of a graduate in honors of Oxford and Cambridge. Think what this means! The boy is lifted straight from the life of manual labor, very likely monotonous labor, which is the lot of most, in which he can never attain to fortune, honor, or distinction, to the life of intellectual work; his companions will be those who stand in the very forefront of science, literature, and art. A fellowship at his college will enable him to be called to the bar; he may then aspire, with reasonable hopes of success, to the honors of Queen's counsel, Judge, Solicitor-General, Chief Justice, or even Lord Chancellor. He may go into the Church, and look forward, if with learning he has acquired administrative power and preaching power, and, let us add, manners, to becoming a bishop; he may remain at the university, a lecturer and teacher of his own subject;

he may become a professor of science, or he may become an expounder of history. He may become a physician or a surgeon. He may become a journalist, a dramatist, a novelist, a poet. Whatever line he enters upon, he has climbed, by means of these three ladders, up into the higher ranks, with all that the word means. He has become, if he chooses,—and he cannot help choosing,—a gentleman. The poor lad who climbs up does not always, it is true, become a gen-



The New Model Dwellings.

tleman. Sometimes there remain still clinging to him certain rusticities; sometimes ancestral traits, such as a thirst for strong drink, seize him. As a rule, however, the lad who has climbed remains, he and his children after him, in the rank, so dear to the British soul, of undoubted gentility. If the sins of the father are visited upon the children, then, surely the achievements and the virtues of the father shall bring their rewards to the children—yea, even unto the third and fourth generation.

After the parish work and the work of education I had placed that of housing, but this has already been sufficiently considered.

The care of the sick comes next upon my list. There is a continual cry ascending to the regions of the rich concerning the insufficiency of hospital endowments. There is certainly no city better provided with hospitals than London, nor any city where more money is annually subscribed for their maintenance, nor any where the medical staff are paid so little and do so much. In East London there is the magnificent foundation of the London Hospital, which receives 11,500 in-patients every year, has an endowment of £20,000 a year, and an additional income, from voluntary subscriptions, of £40,000 a year. The story of the Children's Hospital and its beginnings in the hamlet of Ratcliffe has been already told. And there are, in addition, "homes" of all kinds, crèches for infants, nursing societies, and dispensaries. One mentions these in passing, but a catalogue of endowments is not necessary.

Among the organizations for help must not be forgotten the fraternities for mutual assistance, such as the Odd Fellows, the Foresters, and the Hearts of Oak. These associations do not belong exclusively to East London, but they have extensive branches here, and are, I believe, well managed and on sound principles. They offer assistance in times of misfortune, medical aid in sickness, and care of the widows and fatherless. In this place they can only be mentioned.

For the women, a very large society is that called the M. A. B. Y. S.—*i. e.*, the "Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants." It began by befriending young servants from the workhouse—girls generally friendless and very forlorn—and has now extended its work to include all young servants. Every lady in the society undertakes the care of one or more servants, whom she visits or invites to her own house on the Sunday "out." These friendships are often lifelong, and produce the best possible results.

The position of the workhouse girl is sometimes very pitiful. One such girl recently came to my knowledge. In

this case the girl had been picked up as a baby in the streets; she had no family, no name, no friends, no birthday even. When she found a friend in the M. A. B. Y. S. she asked permission to take her friend's birthday for her own, and to call her friend's cook her aunt, so that she might feel that she too could enjoy, if only in imagination, what all the rest of the world possesses—a birthday and a family.

There are six or seven free libraries in East London. Who was the benefactor to humanity who first invented or discovered the free library? Who was the philanthropist who first advocated the free library? I do not know. But when one realizes what the free library means one is carried away by admiration and gratitude. By means of the free library we actually give to every person, however poor,—we *give* him, as a free gift,—the whole of the literature of the world. If he were a millionaire he could not acquire a greater gift than the poorest lad enjoys who lives near a good free library. He can take books home with him; he can study any subject he likes, if he is a student; or he may read for his own pleasure only, and for amusement. More than this, since none but good and worthy literature should be admitted to the free library the readers cannot use its treasures without forming, purifying, and elevating their taste. Now, taste in literature leads naturally, it is believed by some, to corresponding preferences as regards the major and the minor virtues and their opposites. For my own part, I regard the librarian of a free library as a guardian of morals, a censor, a teacher; those who receive books of him receive the continual admonitions of the wisest and the best of men. A course of Shakspeare is in itself an education; a course of Scott may be said to teach history; and a course of the best fiction in our language teaches what is meant by the grand old name of gentleman. I look for the time when the demand for books by the mass of the public will be in itself a selection of the best and finest; when it will be impossible

to reproach the people, as is done to-day, with buying the ephemeral trash that is offered at a penny, and neglecting the scholars and the poets and the wise ones of ancient days. The free library is doing for the working-people what the circulating library cannot do for its readers who go in broad-cloth and in silk. In the time to come, in the immediate future, it will perhaps be the latter who read the rubbish and the former who will create the demand for the nobler and the higher work.

Mention has already been made of the Sunday afternoon lecture. Other attempts have been made to brighten the Sunday afternoon, always in winter a difficult time to get through. There are organ recitals at the People's Palace, social meetings, with talk and sometimes lantern views, and short addresses.

Perhaps the work that is done in East London for the waifs and strays is the most remarkable, as it is certainly the most interesting.

Those who have read Defoe's "Colonel Jack" will remember the wonderful picture which he presents of the London street boy. That boy has never ceased to live in and about the streets. Sometimes he sleeps in the single room rented by his father, but the livelong day he spends in the streets; he picks up, literally, his food; he picks it up from the coster's barrow, from the baker's counter, from the fishmonger's stall, when nobody is looking. For such boys as these there are Barnardo's Homes, where waifs and strays to any number are admitted, brought up, trained to a trade, and then sent out to the colonies. Five thousand children are in these homes. The history is very simple. Dr. Barnardo, a young Irish medical student, came to London with the intention of giving up his own profession and becoming a preacher. He began by preaching in the streets; he picked up a child, wandering, homeless and destitute, and took it home to his lodgings; he found another and another, and took them home

too. So it began; the children became too many for his own resources; they still kept dropping in; he took a house for them, and let it be known that he wanted support. The



Dr. Barnardo's Home, Stepney Causeway.

rest was easy. He has always received as much support as he wanted, and he has already trained and sent out to the colonies nearly ten thousand children. There are also many less important homes and associations for indigent children. homes for homeless boys, homes, refuges, and societies for

girls; industrial homes, female protection societies, orphanages, in long array. Most of these societies are, however, limited as to income; a great part of their funds goes in management expenses. If they would be persuaded to unite, a great deal more might be done, while each society, with its honorary officers, could be carried on in accordance with the intentions and ideas of its founders and supporters.

Homes and schools for the boys and girls, hospitals for the adult, there remain the aged. Dotted about all over London there are about a hundred and fifty almshouses; of these about half are situated in and about East London. Not that the people of East London have been more philanthropic in their endowments than those of the west, but, before there was any city of East London, almshouses were planted here on account of the salubrity and freshness of the air and the cheapness of the ground. Some of these have been moved farther afield, their original sites being built over. The People's Palace, for instance, is built upon the site of the Bancroft almshouses, founded in 1728 for the maintenance and education of one hundred poor. Their original house has gone, but the charity is still maintained.

I have always been astonished to think that this most excellent form of charity, one least of all liable to be abused, has gone out of fashion. If I were rich I should rejoice in creating and founding an almshouse for the admission and maintenance of as many old men and old women as I could afford, or as the college which I should build would admit. There are still some delightful almshouses left in London, although so many have been removed; those that remain stand beside the crowded thoroughfares, each one a lesson in charity and pity; there is the stately Trinity Almshouse in the Whitechapel road, with its two courts and its chapel and its statue of the founder and the good old men, the master mariners, who live there; and close beside, unless it has been lately removed, an almshouse of the humbler

kind, but quite homely and venerable. My almshouse, if I were privileged to build and endow one, should have its refectory, as well as its chapel; my old people should have their dinner together, and their common hall for society in the winter evenings; they should have, as well, their gardens and their quadrangle and the sense of belonging to a foundation beautiful in its buildings, as well as charitable in its objects.

The existing almshouses by themselves go very little way toward keeping the aged out of the workhouse; but there are other aids which carry us on a little farther, societies which give annuities and pensions to various persons. On the list more than a hundred different trades are represented. Among them is one for flower girls and water-cress venders. This, however, despite its unpretending title, has grown into a very large and important society. Under this title are conducted industrial and servants' training homes, a cottage hospital, a home for waif girls, an orphanage, a shelter and clubroom for street flower-sellers, and a seaside holiday home for blind and helpless and crippled girls, ineligible for ordinary homes—the whole with an income of over £7000, and giving assistance to 12,000 girls a year. This, like the association for befriending young servants, has grown gradually out of small beginnings, and in a space of thirty years has attained to its present dimensions.

So numerous are the societies and the charities of every kind that one thinks there ought not to be any distress, any destitution, any vice in this City of London. Alas! It is a city of five millions, and out of this multitude there are many who will not work, many who deliberately desire the life of vice and crime, and still more who, if the Helping Hand offers relief without question or condition, will swell the numbers of those who are wilfully helpless and deliberately destitute. The power of working is easily lost, and with difficulty regained. The administration of charitable funds is a most difficult task.

Fourteen years ago, in a time of exceptional distress, the Lord Mayor, in the kindness of his unreflecting heart, opened a subscription for the relief of the unemployed. A very large sum was collected in a few days. Of course this became known not only over all London, but over the whole country. Then there began a mighty migration; wave after wave of hungry applicants arrived by every train; the glorious prospect of obtaining a gift of money without doing anything for it attracted thousands; they gave up work in order to be eligible; they magnified the amount of the gift, in anticipation; when the day of distribution arrived they fought for admission, they threatened to brain the distributors, they took tickets which entitled them to food and sold them at the public house; in the end that act of charity developed and strengthened the pauper spirit in hundreds of thousands; those who had been working for the better exercise of charity were in despair; to this day the memory of that day of free gifts, without question and without conditions, lies in the mind of the working-man who will not work, and nerves him for another spell of idleness and starvation.

In this attempt to stay the hand that grants the unthinking dole the Charity Organization Society stands in the forefront. It has offices and branches everywhere; it intervenes between the rich man and the poor; it says to the former, "Never give him money, you will only keep him poor; make him understand that money means conditions of work and effort; do not turn the unemployed into a pauper." To the workhouses the Charity Organization Society says, "Do not give outdoor relief; do not accustom the sturdy poor to look for doles of bread and orders on the butcher. Make them go into the house if they want help." It is better to be cruel when kindness means weakness, and doles mean pauperizing. The temptation to give is like the temptation to take opiates. To give relieves the discomfort of knowing how others are suffering. To give brings food to the children, fire to the

hearth; it also enables the breadwinner to spend in drink what he should take home to his wife, and it makes the wives and children accustomed to receive alms, and to look to alms for the supplies which are only deficient through their own improvidence and vice. The Charity Organization Society is known and detested by every thriftless loafer, every beggar, every impostor, every begging-letter writer in the country; it is also known and detested by that large class of sentimentalists who give money wherever there is none, who bribe the women by doles to come to church, and who interpret certain words of our Lord, as they were interpreted by the monastic houses, into an injunction to give without question and to relieve without condition.

I come next to a form of philanthropic endeavor concerning which it is difficult to speak unless in terms of extravagant admiration.

I mean the Settlement, which is spreading and taking root in all great cities both in America and in Great Britain.

The Settlement very properly began in East London, as the place which stood most in need of it. There are now some thirteen or fourteen Settlements in London, of which six, I believe, belong to East London. There are Settlements in Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, and Edinburgh. There are, I believe, speaking under correction, more than twenty in the greater cities of the United States.

It is now fifteen years since the first creation of the Settlement. What is it? What was at first proposed? What has it done? We may answer these questions by the help of Canon Barnett, its real founder. (See "University and Social Settlements," chapter ii.)

The Settlement sprang out of a profound distrust of the machinery by which the Helping Hand could reach the people. It seemed to many that this machinery hindered rather than helped. The Charity Organization Society was prov-

ing with pitiless statistics and cruel logic that the widespread system of doles was crushing the spirit of independence in the poor; the experience of the present, as well as that of the past taught them that laws cannot touch the restless and the improvident; they saw that refuges might receive the unhappy, but could not touch or remove the cause of unhappiness; they discovered that societies for relieving the poor were too often machines which blindly acted by a hard-and-fast rule, maintained many officials, and made no attempt at prevention or improvement. Also they saw that with all the machinery of the parish and despite the self-denying work of the clergy there had been little less than a complete failure in inspiring among the people the faith and hope of religion and its self-restraining powers.

There was also, thanks to certain influences which it would take us long to discuss, a growing recognition of certain evils, such as the separation of the rich from the poor, the withholding from the poor of so many things enjoyed by the rich, the condescension of rich to poor, an exclusive spirit on the one side and a natural resentment on the other, and a conviction that something should be done to resist these evils. In other words, the feeling was gradually growing, especially among certain groups of young men of Oxford and Cambridge, that civilization should belong not to one class but to all classes; that the things which we believe to be the most important—knowledge, art, manners, beauty, purity, unselfishness—should be made possible for the working-man, if he will accept them, as well as for the rich. The root idea, therefore, of a Settlement is the example, the teaching and the maintenance of what we call the life of culture among the working-classes.

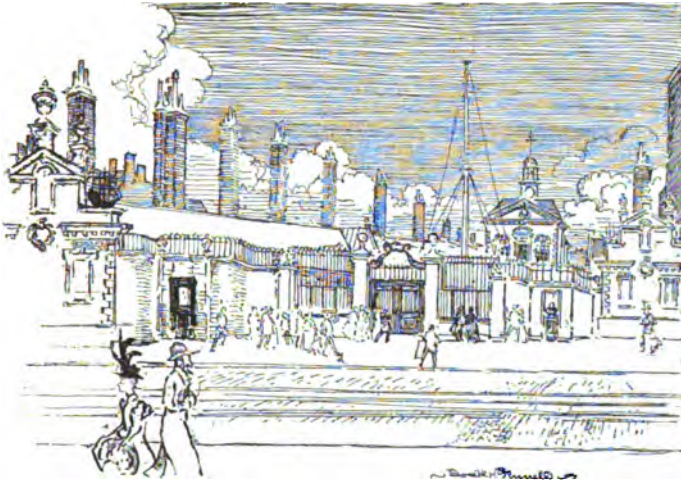
By example—for the members of the Settlement live among them, go about with them, live in the sight of all. The working-man dines with them, spends the evening with them, talks with them. He finds that their mode of life is simple; that

the luxury he has been taught to believe as the common rule among the easy class does not exist among these members of that class; that cleanliness, using the word to cover everything—the home, the meals, the person, the daily habit—is the first thing necessary; that knowledge may be pursued for its own sake, and not because it has a commercial value and is saleable; and that these men and women have come to live in his quarter without the least intention of giving him any money or of taking off his shoulders any one of his own responsibilities.

Next, by teaching. The Settlement has its library, its class-rooms, its lecture-room, and its fifteen hundred students—yet it is not a college. The residents do not all teach. The visitor thinks perhaps that if they are not come to teach, their object is to preach temperance and to get a hold over the criminal classes. Nothing of the kind; the Settlement is not a mission. Nor, again, is it a Polytechnic, despite the manifold studies that are carried on. The lads of the Polytechnic learn a trade by which to live; the students at the Settlement make a study of some science. Nor is it in the narrow sense a charitable institution. In a Settlement every resident carries on his own life in his own way; he does not stoop to the ways of the people around; he is not their benefactor; he is not a superior person; he is just one man among the men all round him into whose interests he enters and whose ideas he endeavors to understand.

In all countries governed by our institutions or by those which have our institutions as their basis the duty of the individual citizen to his town and to his state is assumed as essential for the government of the people by the people. A man who deliberately abstains from exercising the right to vote, who leaves to any who please to snatch it the government of his own city, is little less than a traitor to the cause of freedom; he enjoys rights which have been won for him by his fathers, but refuses to watch over and to defend those

rights. It is the work of the Settlement to teach this duty and to set the example. The constitution of a municipality assumes that citizens will give, freely and without pay, such time as is wanted for the conduct of the municipal affairs. In local government the Settlement carries on a quiet work which is perhaps more effective than its classes and its lectures. The members become guardians and vestrymen; they



Mile End Almshouses.

sit on school boards, they are school visitors, they inspire every branch of local government with the sense of duty and of principle. For the members themselves the Settlement teaches and requires, as Canon Barnett points out, "the surrender of self-will and of will worship."

For those who come under the influence of the Settlement it destroys class suspicion, it removes prejudices; the working-men discover that those whom they call, in a lump, the rich are not what their radical orators of Whitechapel Waste believe and teach; they make friends where they thought to find only enemies; they learn the things in which the rich

are happier than themselves—the cleanly life, the power of acquiring knowledge, the possession of, or the access to, art of all kinds, more gentle manners, greater self-restraint, and in the cases before their eyes unselfishness and the power of working without pay, without praise, without apparent reward of any kind. Above all, there is no hidden motive; Canon Barnett's church stands beside the Settlement of Toynbee Hall, but there is no invitation, no condition, no pressure put upon the people to step out of the Settlement into the church. There is no teaching of politics; there is no attempt to introduce shibboleths; there are no bribes, unless it is the pressure of the friendly hand and the pulse of the sympathetic heart; the evenings spent with gentlewomen and gentlemen, the patient teaching, the lecture by a man whose name is known over the whole world—unless these things be considered bribes, then the Settlement offers none.

In education, then, the Settlement has classes which learn all kinds of sciences, but not for trade purposes; it has lectures by great, or at least by distinguished, men; it offers exhibitions of pictures the same as those presented to West End people; it encourages the formation of clubs and associations of all kinds; it opens the library to everyone; it leads the way in local government; it offers recreation that shall be really *recreative*; it enrolls the boys in athletic clubs, and gives them something to aim at and to think about; it gathers in the girls and keeps them from the dangers of long evenings with nothing to do; it is a center for the study of the labor problems and difficulties of all kinds. In one word, the Settlements of East London, where I know most of their workings, are set up as lamps in a dark place; they are not like an ordinary lamp which at a distance becomes a mere glimmer; the lamp of the Settlement, the more widely its light penetrates, the farther the darkness recedes; the deeper is the gloom, the more brightly shines the light of this lamp so set and so illuminated and so maintained.

Should the workhouse be considered as any part of the work of the Helping Hand? It should be, but it cannot be. Whatever the state touches in the way of charity or philanthropy it corrupts and destroys, whether it is the workhouse or the prison or the casual ward. As for the London workhouse, it is simply a terrible place. It is a huge barrack; it contains over a thousand inmates; they are all alike herded and huddled together, the respectable and the disreputable; there is no distinction between misfortune and the natural consequence of a wasted life. The system is a barbarous survival of a time when the system was not so barbarous because the respectable poor were much rougher, coarser, ruder, and nearer to the disreputable poor. It must be reformed altogether. There ought not, to begin with, to be this kind of barrack life for the respectable poor; there should be municipal almshouses. Meantime the poor folk themselves hate the workhouse; they loathe the thought of it; they are wretched in the shelter of it; you may see the old men and the old women sitting in gloomy silence, brooding over their own wreck; they have nothing else to do; they are prisoners; they cannot go in and out as they please; they are under strict rule, a rule as rigid as that of any prison; they have no individuality; they all try to cheat the officers by smuggling in forbidden food; they are at the mercy of Bumble, who may be a very dreadful person, not comic in the least. The most unhappy are those who should be the objects of the greatest pity, the brokendown, able-bodied man, too often bent with rheumatism—the English agony—or some other incurable disease. Such an one enters into this place, where all hope must be abandoned; we use the phrase so often that we hardly understand what it means. No hope at forty but to lead the rest of life without work, without change, without comforts; to be deprived of tobacco, beer, meat, society, mental occupation; to live on among the other wrecks of humanity, with so much bread every day, so much suet pud-

ding, so much cocoa, so much pea soup, so much tea. Can the workhouse be truly called part and parcel of the work of the Helping Hand?

Let us end, as we began, with the lower levels. Very far, indeed, below the working-men who attend the lectures and the drawing-room of Toynbee Hall are the submerged and the casuals, the dockers, the wanderers, and the criminals at large. What is done for them? They are, of course, looked after with the utmost zeal and attention by the police, by the officers of the vestry, and by the magistrates. But these agencies are not exactly reformatory in their character.

I have spoken of the Settlement as one of two forces now acting upon the mass of the people which seem to promise the most powerful influence upon the future. The second of these two forces I believe to be the social work of the Salvation Army. I am not speaking of their religious efforts; they do not appeal, as a rule, to the educated; on the other hand, I would not speak a word in disrespect of efforts which I know to be genuine and which I know to have been attended with signal success in the reclaiming of thousands from evil ways.

The first step in the social work of the Salvation Army is the opening of a lodging-house of the cheapest kind. So far, against great opposition, they have, I believe, succeeded in keeping it free from the ordinary law as regards common lodging-houses—viz., the visit of the policeman whenever he chooses either to see that there is no disorder or because he "wants" somebody, and so in the middle of the night tramps round the dormitories, turning his bull's eye upon the faces of the sleepers. It is most important that the poor creatures in the place should feel that in that shelter at least they will not be hunted down. The men have to pay for their lodging—the price of a bed varies from twopence to fourpence; the beds are laid in bunks; they are covered with American cloth; they are provided each with a thick blan-

ket; foot-baths and complete baths are ready for them; a cup of cocoa and a large piece of bread cost a trifle; they are received in a light, warm, and spacious hall; they are invited every evening to join in a short service, with singing and an address. In the morning those of them who choose lay their cares before the superintendent, who sends them on to the Labor Bureau, where in most cases, if the man is willing to work, something is found for him.

They have, next, workshops where all kinds of work are undertaken and turned out; homeless and friendless lads are received in these workshops and taught trades. Whatever may be the previous record of a case, the man received is treated as a friend; his past is regarded as already finished and done with, perhaps already atoned. He is made to understand that if he would return to the world he must work for every step; by work alone he is to get food, shelter, and clothes; beside him at every step stands the officer in whose charge he has been placed. He is constantly watched, without being allowed to entertain any suspicion that his conduct is under careful supervision.

If you visit one of these workshops you will be astonished at the show of cheerful industry. Everyone seems doing his very best. Some of this apparent zeal is genuine; some of it is inspired by passing emotion and evanescent passion or repentance; out of the whole number so many per cent. give up the work and go back to the old life. But some persevere.

I have already spoken of the English prison. The cry of the wretched prisoner goes up continually, but in vain. The long agony and torture, especially to the young, of the solitary cell, the enforced silence, the harsh punishments, the insufficient food, the general orders which will allow of no relaxation in any case, the system which turns the most humane of warders into a machine for depriving his prisoner of everything that makes a man—these things crush the un-

happy victim. After a long sentence—say of two years—this poor wretch comes out broken; he has no longer any will, any resource, any courage; he is like a cur whipped and kicked into a thing that follows when it is bidden.

Let me again recall the appearance of these unhappy creatures on the morning of their deliverance. They sit spiritless, obedient, not speaking to each other or to their new friends, waiting for some fresh order. It is pitiful to look at the semblance of manhood and to think that this—this is the method adopted by the nation in its wisdom in order to punish the crime and to reform the criminal. When the sentence is over they escort him to the gates of the prison; they throw the doors open wide and say, "Go, and sin no more." What is the wretched man to do, but to go and sin again? No one will employ him. He has lost his skill and sleight of hand. He has lost his old pride in his work; he cares for nothing now. It is a hard world for many; it is a black, hopeless, despairing world for the man who once enters or comes out of an English prison. There is a poem, written the other day, by one who endured this awful sentence—a scholar and a man of culture:

" With midnight always in one's heart,
 And twilight in one's cell,
 We turn the crank, we tear the rope,
 Each in his separate hell.
 And the silence is more awful far,
 Than the sound of a brazen bell."

" And never a human voice comes near,
 To speak a gentle word.
 And the eye that watches through the door
 Is pitiless and hard;
 And by all forgot, we rot and rot,
 With soul and body marred."

The officers of the Salvation Army's Home welcome their guests with warm hand grasps and friendly words. What, however, is to be done to find them work to go on with? Not far from the home there is a disused chapel; in this place some thirty or forty of the discharged prisoners are engaged in sorting waste paper. Others go out and collect it; there is paper of all sorts—fine note-paper, coarse paper, packing paper, newspaper, everything. The men sort this in crates, and so earn a few pence a day. It is a rude beginning for the new life; many of them lose heart; the uphill fight, the long strain of patience until work of a better kind is found is too much for them; they relapse, they disappear in the streets, they are seen no more for a time, until one day they are met again at the prison gates and are led back to the home they deserted, where they meet with the same welcome and where they are encouraged to make another attempt.

Some five and thirty miles from London on the east, where the coast of Essex rises in a low hill facing the Thames estuary and overlooking an island which has been reclaimed from the mud, there lies a large farm, which is unlike any other farm in the country. It is, in fact, the colony of the Salvation Army. Here they bring men whom they have dragged out of the mire and the depths. They bring here the clerk who has ruined himself by a loose life, the working-man who has fallen by reason of drink, the weak creature who has habitually taken the Easy Way, the criminal from the prison, the sturdy rogue, the slouching thief—they are all brought here and they are turned on to the farm. There are between two and three hundred of them. When they come here they are for the most part unable to do a day's work; they are unable to lift a spade or to wield a hoe. They are set to light work until they recover a little strength and muscle—there is work of all kinds on a farm. On this farm they grow fruit and

vegetables; they have dairies, and make butter and cheese; they have cattle and sheep and pigs and poultry. And they have a very large brick-making industry. The men live in small detached barracks; there are not many rules of conduct; they are paid by the piece, and they buy their own food, which is sold at prices as low as will pay for the cost; they may smoke in the evening if they please; they may read; they may go to bed when they please; they are not perpetually exhorted to religion, but they are made to feel that the house rests on a religious foundation.

How does the farm get on as a commercial venture? Does it pay its way? To begin with, it belongs to the Salvation Army; there is consequently no rent to pay; against this advantage must be set the fact that the men, when they are first sent down, are practically useless, and that it takes three or four months before their strength returns to them. The farm, however, pays its way, or very nearly. If it did not, it would still, with certain limits, be an economical concern. For, if we consider, every one of these men, if left to himself and his own promptings, would cost the country, including his maintenance, without counting the loss of his labor and including the expenses of prisons and police to take care of him, at least £100 a year. We have, therefore, a very simple sum. How much can the colony afford to lose every year, and yet remain an economical gain to the country? On a roll of 250 there is the gain to the community of £25,000 a year. If, therefore, the colony shows a deficit of £3000 a year the country is still a gainer of £22,000. Any one may carry on this little calculation. Suppose, for instance, that even fifty per cent. of the cases prove failures; the remaining fifty save the country £12,500 a year. And, what is much more, they, being honest themselves, bring up their children to ways of honesty—their children and their grandchildren for generation after generation, and who can calculate the gain in a single century?



"The Bridge of Hope," a Well-known East End Night Refuge.



I do not speak here of other branches of the Salvation Army's social work. To receive the discharged prisoner, to find him work, to train lads to steady work, to give back to the soil the wastrels who were devouring and spoiling honest men's goods in the cities, to restore to a man his pride and his self-respect, to give him back his manhood, to fill him with new hopes and a new purpose—this is surely a great and a noble work.

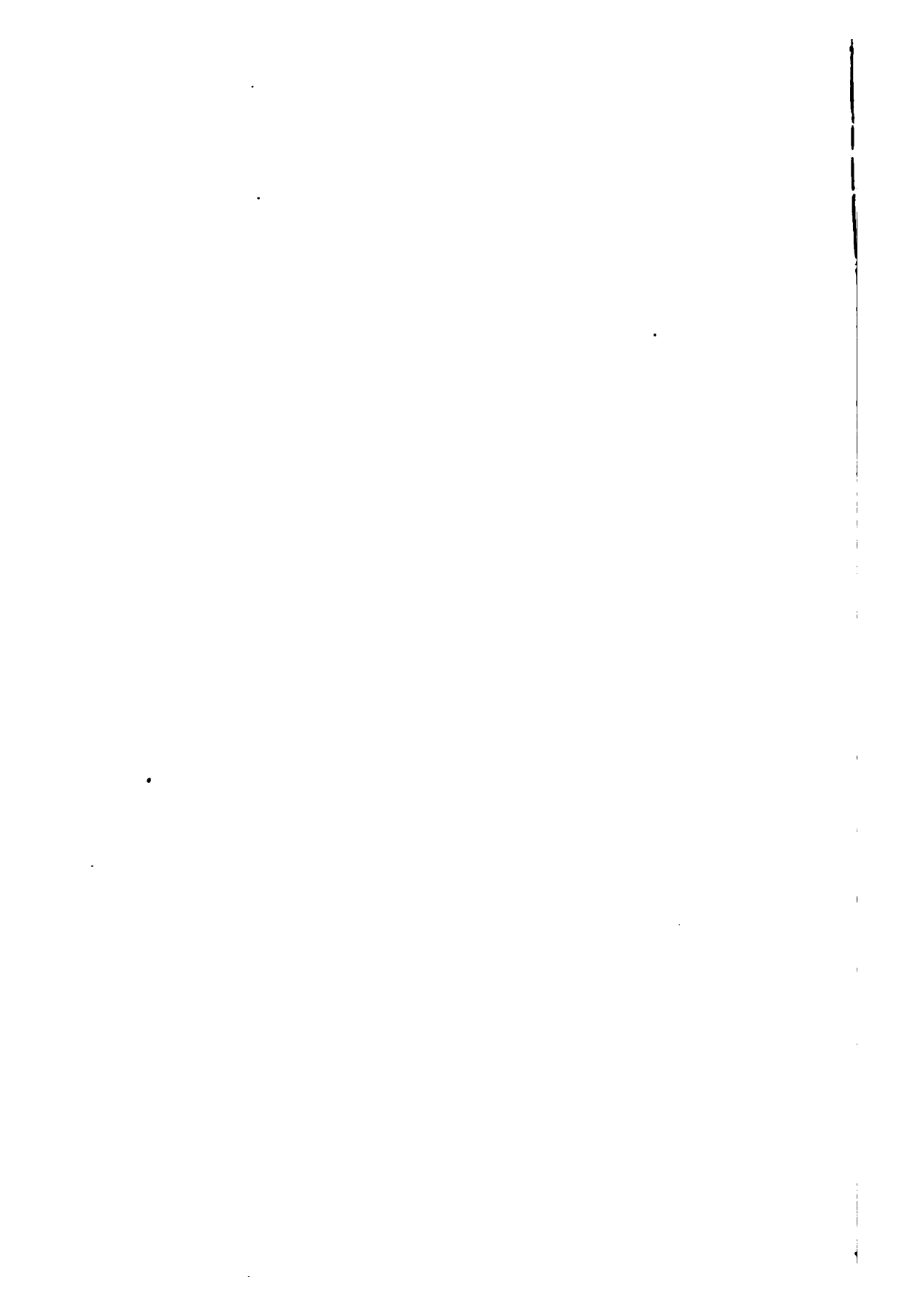
On more than one occasion I have publicly testified to my own belief in the efficacy of the social work of the Salvation Army. There is one point on which it contrasts with every other effort either of philanthropy or of religion. The work is carried on by a vast multitude of eleven thousand officers, men and women, young men and maidens. They are bound by no vows; but they might, if they chose, wear the rope with the triple knots of the Franciscans. For they follow, without vows, the three Franciscan virtues of obedience, poverty, and chastity. Add to these, if it is a virtue, total abstinence from strong drink. They go where they are sent, they do what they are ordered to do, they carry out the military duties of obedience, they draw pay barely enough for the most modest standard of living, and their lives are blameless on the score of purity. So long as these virtues remain with them, so long will they prevail. If, as happened with the Franciscans, the praise of the world, which certainly is coming to the Army as well, turns their heads and corrupts their zeal, if they take money and make money by their work, then the social side of the Salvation Army will, like so many human systems, fall to the ground and be trampled in the dust. At present they are all poor together; poor and not dissatisfied; not a man or woman among the whole eleven thousand has a bank account of his own; they all live from hand to mouth, and when the word comes from headquarters that there is to be a week of self-denial they live for that week as they can, without any pay. And if we are fain

to confess that their work is good for the unfortunates, whom they chiefly befriend, what are we to say or to think of the good which their work confers upon themselves? Surely, the Helping Hand raises its owner as well as those whom it lifts. The twopenny doss-house, the refuge, the home, the rescue, the colony—do they not also raise and rescue and strengthen the people who administer and direct them?

Matthew Arnold once visited East London in verse:

“ I met a preacher whom I knew and said :
‘ Ill and o’erworked, how fare you in this scene ? ’
‘ Bravely ! ’ said he ; ‘ for I of late have been
Much cheered with thoughts of Christ, the living bread.’
O human soul ! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses’ ebb and flow,
To cheer thee and to right thee if thou roam—
Not with lost toil thou laborest through the night !
Thou mak’st the heaven thou hop’st indeed thy home.”

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