MOODYS LODGING HOVSE

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MOODY'S LODGING HOUSE AND OTHER TENEMENT SKETCHES

By

Alvan Francis Sanborn

BOSTON
COPELAND AND DAY
1895

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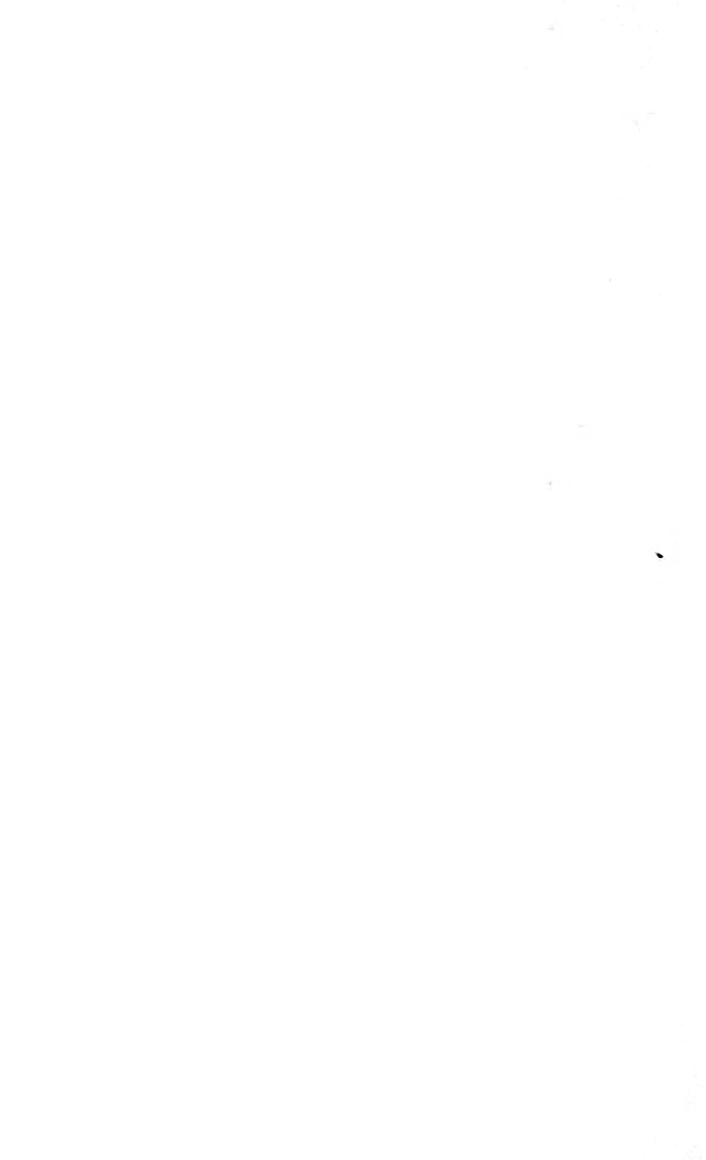
TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER



PREFACE

THE chapters that follow are not essays in sociology. How should they be when I cannot, for the life of me, get a glimmering of what the much-bandied word, sociology, means? Still less are they literary fancies. They are mere transcripts from life. I have written true things, simply, about poor people.

That is all.

Andover House, Boston,
July 29, 1895.

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SEVERAL of these sketches are here printed for the first time. Others have appeared in the "Forum," the "New York Independent," and the Sunday papers.

BECOMING A CHEAP LODGER

THE cheap lodging-house has been defined as a place in which "beds are let out by the night (or by the week) in rooms where three or more persons, not belonging to the same family, may sleep at the same time." Boston lodging-house prices have no bottom limit. A bed may be had for seven cents or for two hours' work; a canvas strip or a settee for five cents; and a piece of a floor for nothing. Fifteen cents, however, is the standard price for a bed. Twenty cents ensures a more comfortable bed nearer the ground; and twenty-five cents, a box-like arrangement open at the top, with just enough space for a single cot.

The best way to get at the cheap lodging-house life is to live it, — to get inside the lodging-house and stay inside. For this, unless one possesses a mien extraordinarily eloquent of roguery or misery, or both, a disguise is helpful.

I began by sacrificing most of the hair on

my head — to preclude insect ambuscades — and my mustache, and by going unshaven for about ten days. When the time for going out came, I thoroughly grimed face, hands, and neck, donned several suits of worn, soiled underclothes (several for warmth and armor), a pair of disreputable pantaloons, a jacket out at elbows, clumsy, discolored shoes, and a hat that was almost a disguise in itself. In certain finishing touches I took a genuine artistic pride; these were a dingy red flannel fastened around the neck with a safety-pin, a clay pipe filled with vile-smelling tobacco, a cheap-whiskey breath, a shambling gait, and a drooping head. Such luxuries as gloves and overcoat were, of course, abjured, though it was severe winter weather.

To enter a lodging-house the first night and ask for a lodging was no easy thing.

Arrived before the building, I was seized with a great diffidence such as might lay hold of a countryman before being ushered into a city drawing-room. I felt myself hopelessly underbred. My parents and teachers had anticipated no contingency of this sort. Plainly enough, I did not possess the *savoir-faire* the occasion demanded. What was I to say and what was I to do once I was within? Back and forth, past the entrance,

I walked, "screwing my courage up," like Bob Acres. I do not know that my courage increased; but the cold increased, and it was that which finally drove me from the sidewalk.

"Some folks," an old lady friend of mine used to say, "are very much like other folks." Lodgers, like other folks, are of two kinds, — those who talk and those who do not talk. At first, as being safer, I joined the ranks of the reticent, took a seat a little in the shadow, lit my pipe with a paper spill (no veteran ever uses a match), and frankly told any one who spoke to me to go to the devil. Listening elicits quite as much desirable and novel information as questioning, and arouses no suspicions; is, in fact, one of the peculiarly blessed privileges of this sort of existence.

The lodging-house makes over the outward man in a single night, and thereafter no dramatic effort need be made. The lodging-house odor never lies. A parched and itching skin, a foul-tasting mouth, smarting eyes, a "big head," and a raging thirst make a man look seedy and wretched, and make him talk and act as he looks, *nolens volens*.

Living does away with the necessity of playing at living.

I was amazed and not a little disquieted to

find myself, after a spell, quite at home in the lodging-house. I did not really become callous to the physical discomforts of the situation, but I discovered that a moderate love of adventure, adaptability to unusual surroundings, and an appreciation of the fun there is in human nature will make up for almost any amount of physical discomfort, — and that comes to very much the same thing.

"Bumming" — I may say it, I trust, without offensive assurance — is as wretched a condition as I am likely to lapse to. "Bums" are, by general consent, the very dregs of society. Is it not, then, worth a bit of suffering to feel certain that the very worst that can befall you (in the world's view) is not so very bad after all? It surely is well to know that life will still be an endurable thing, even if you have to live it as a lodging-house bum. With such knowledge you may snap your fingers in Fortune's very eyes. Almost, you may venture to tweak her by the nose.

MOODY'S

AT the North End of Boston, on a street of sombre warehouses, is a unique lodging-house, which serves as a beggars' headquarters. Its stone front differs in no respect from the other stone fronts of the street, except that it bears a transparency (lighted at night) with the simple legend, MOODY'S.

The first floor is occupied by a ship chandler and the second by the Moodys. It is the tutelage of the Moodys, rather than the fact of its being a beggars' headquarters, that makes the place unique.

Only the two upper floors are open for lodgers. Tom, the head of the Moody family, seldom shows himself on the upper floors. Mrs. Tom, and Mrs. Tom's daughter, Miss Lizzie, run the lodging-house, it may be as a farmer's "women folks" ofttimes run the hen-house, — for what pin-money they can get out of it. Everything is done, to be sure, as from Tom, and such threats as have to be made are always made in Tom's name;

but the only other evidence of Tom's existence is his occasional appearance on the stairs at the dinner hour.

Mrs. Tom is a fat, fierce, spectacled matron, who still dresses in the style of her young womanhood. She it is who, receiving warning of any approach through a glass partition, intercepts all new-comers at the head of the first flight of stairs, and forces them to register and pay in advance for a night, before climbing higher. *Habitués* she knows by sight, and for them she unbars the door without leaving her cooking or sewing, by pulling a string attached to the latch.

Miss Lizzie is a round-faced, soft-skinned, rosy-cheeked, black-haired maiden of, perhaps, forty, to whose child-face a pair of steel-bowed spectacles lends a look of owlish wisdom. She is "the girl" of the family still, and will be, so long as the old folks live. She is almost as broad as long, quivers all over like a jelly-fish, and has neither form nor feature — no waist, no neck, no wrists, no ankles, no chin, and no nose to speak of. Her only visible garment is an enormous, bright pink sleeve-apron. Indeed, but for her glossy black hair, about which a vestal fillet of yellow silk is bound, Miss Lizzie could hardly pass for anything but a pulpy pink cylinder.

At Moody's, card-room, parlor, smoking-room, reading-room, dining-room, lavatory, and office are one room, called, for short, "The office." "The office" is small. It is nearly square. It overlooks a street and a harbor. It has tiny-paned windows, whose dinginess gives to both views an artistic effect of haze. The floor may have been washed; it has certainly never been painted. The walls and ceiling are a close match for the floor in color, in spite of clinging traces of whitewash. The centre-piece is a stove, gray from old age or overheating. In front of the stove is a single yellow settee. A broad, low shelf, quite around the four walls, provides all the other seating capacity needed. These simple furnishings more than satisfy the wants of the guests at Moody's. They are an object-lesson which zealous apostles of greater simplicity in life would do well to study.

Moody's beds cost ten and fifteen cents per night. The ten-cent beds are in vertical tiers like the bunks of a ship. The fifteen-cent beds are cots. No pretence is made of keeping them clean or free from vermin, but the mattresses are fairly soft, and there are quilts enough for the coldest weather.

About five o'clock every night a careful search is made for stowaways. When that is completed, Miss Lizzie comes upstairs. She

promptly clears the office of all who have not paid below, and, standing in the doorway, very much on her dignity, exacts money from each man before he is allowed to pass by her. Sometimes a few pockets are empty, but I have never seen an ejection on that account. Some one is certain to come to the rescue with at least a dime.

In the office, the whole "gang" holds carnival almost every night through the winter, and here some of "the gang" may be seen at any hour of the day. "The gang" (I name only the leading spirits) are, *Gus*, *Scotty*, *Billy*, *Saucer*, *Barney*, *Shorty*, *Doc*, *Honey*, *Charcoal*, *Bottles*, *Ratter*, *Father*, and *The Professor*.

"Gus" is a gentleman bum. He is a smooth talker, well informed, who somehow manages to keep himself respectably dressed. In his favorite character of a reduced merchant he could deceive the prince of deceit himself. Urbanity is so natural to Gus that it appears even in his ordinary lodging-house relations—where it is not at all needed. I remember distinctly the beautiful politeness with which he apologized one afternoon, when he woke me from a sound sleep merely to ask me for a match. A lady disguises an inevitable yawn with a jewelled hand or a dainty fan. Gus, impelled by a

kindred sense of decorum, always pretends to be adjusting a non-existent garter or a suspender, when he is goaded to scratching by an uncommonly virulent bite. Either his manners or his intelligence would be adequate to the most exclusive circles of the city.

"Scotty," red-headed, red-whiskered, canny Scotty, has been a bum in Scotland, and is well versed in the rites and traditions of the Scottish Order. He has seen a good bit of the world, having been, among other things, in the English military service in Africa. He sings rollicking snatches from Burns' "Jolly Beggars," dances the Highland fling divinely, and declaims "Tam o' Shanter" with true Scotch spirit. Scotty is far too versatile an artist to confine himself to any one "dodge," but he is generally soliciting funds to get him back to his wife, dying of consumption in Scotland — not because this is his cleverest dodge, but because it is the one that pays best.

"Billy" is a religious bum. The expression of Billy's face is preternaturally solemn; his voice is as though his throat were a tomb, and his skin is a corpse-yellow, his blood being, on his own admission, "all turned to water through the booze." Billy on the mourner's bench is a sight worth going far to see.

"Saucer," being of English birth, has taken pains to learn the address of nearly every Englishman in Boston and vicinity. In making his appeal, he tells a pitiful story of having been sandbagged and robbed immediately on landing in New York, and curses the day he left his England. Saucer has been, to a degree, my pal, and a very good fellow he is. Should I ever be forced to bum in earnest, I could ask no truer friend.

"Barney," thanks to a rich Irish brogue, gets money and sympathy galore from his transplanted countrymen. Perhaps this is the reason Barney always rallies to the defence of the police when the rest of the gang abuse them.

"Shorty" (six feet two) seems to have been a genuine workingman originally. If his own (unprofessional) story is to be believed, he was kicked out of a job by the "dirty spite" of a petty overseer. Now nothing could induce him to take up the life of a workingman again. He finds that bumming is easier and pays better, and does not leave a man at the mercy of an unscrupulous overseer's caprice. Professionally, Shorty is a shoemaker trying to get to a job that has been offered him in a distant town.

"Doc" is a veteran of pure Yankee breed, with a gift of nasal gab which he turns to

practical account, occasionally, in selling quack medicines by torchlight, but oftenest in simple, whining begging. When Doc comes in, the gang settles itself for a treat. The corner grocery loafer of the golden age of corner groceries could hardly have been a match for Doc in story-telling. Bawdy tale chases bawdy tale from his lips, and every tale is as perfect in its workmanship as if it had been wrought out in the study of a Wilkins or a De Maupassant.

In fact, Doc, without suspecting it in the least, is a consummate literary artist. Furthermore, the prophet has honor in his own country; his talent is appreciated by the gang. From stories the Doctor sometimes goes to songs. He has a thin, cracked voice, but in rendering the spirit of a song he is a second Chevalier. Here is one of his refrains:

"Just a little lager,
Just a little rum,
Just a tattered suit of clothes,
Just a dizzy bum."

Had he not chosen to be a successful tramp, Doc might as easily have been a successful *littérateur* or comedian. Who dares question his choice?

"Honey," a fat and grizzled negro, born and bred in New York city, "makes a good

thing" by claiming to have been a slave "befo' de wah." He boasts at Moody's that he has never done a whole day's work in his life, but such a boast confers no great distinction there.

"Charcoal" is an ex-coalheaver who keeps himself well grimed with coal dust in order to pass for one of the *bona fide* unemployed. And, as a matter of fact, Charcoal's aversion to work is not so strong that he will not do an odd job now and then for the sake of a "booze."

"Bottles," Charcoal's pal, whom no emergency can force to work, is a Bowery boy who has condescended to pass a winter in Boston. He is quite as foul-mouthed as the Doctor, without the Doctor's saving wit. His yarns of the way his New York gang were wont to abuse the intoxication of the hags about the wharves of the East Side by taking turns in outraging them, drawing lots for the turns, may have been fabrications of his filthy mind; but they were just as nauseating to hear as if literally true.

Bottles is always in a maudlin condition at the close of the day, and yet always has some money left in his pocket. He brags of being able to "hustle in the price of a drunk" in no time, the secret of this facility being that so much liquor as would make an average

member of the gang barely thirsty will make Bottles glorious. On the street he asks for small sums only, — two cents to make up five, or three to make up ten. Bottles is an amateur prestidigitateur, and it is no end of fun to see him snap pennies up his sleeve when his legs are so unsteady that he has to be braced by Charcoal on the one side and Saucer on the other.

"Ratter" begs as a discharged convict. He is such a monster of ugliness to look upon that housewives and servant girls generally give him what he asks. Ratter's fierceness is all on the surface, however, and he is quite modest in his demands. He has been to "The Island," to be sure, — who of the gang has not? — but he is passionately fond of children, and would not knowingly hurt a kitten.

"Father" is a patriarchal vagabond very much in his dotage. He seems to have forgotten everything he ever knew except the begging art. He goes out in all weathers, returns at exactly five o'clock, and sits in a corner resting his head on a stick without speaking a word. If he talks at all, it is with his feet. These are constantly moving. May it be they are involuntarily keeping step with the march of time? The old fellow is never imposed upon. In fact, the gang seem to hold his venerable stupidity in a kind of awe.

Many so-called respectable families treat their aged members less decently.

"The Professor" rivals Gus in gentility, but not in intelligence or apparel. Without being many years older, he is many years farther gone into seediness — of clothes and mind. The Professor was blocked out by nature for a great man. He has a massive, intellectual head which not even a rusty, broken derby hat vulgarizes; and the fact that his faded, brown overcoat has only a safety-pin for a fastening does not destroy his original dignity. His left hand is more like a twisted root than a hand, and for this disfigurement, due to the explosion of a shell at Cold Harbor, he receives a pension.

Gus and the Professor are a fine pair of decayed Beau Brummels. They are inseparable friends, and such courtliness as they display when they exchange confidences and compliments this generation is rarely privileged to see. "I've been looking all my life for a man, and now at last I've found one," is apt to be the burden of the Professor's glorification of Gus.

One forenoon they solemnly "swore off the drink" together. They had been talking for hours in a serious strain. Gus had even recited with genuine feeling several little poems his mother had taught him.

They really meant to do better — there is no doubt about it. But unfortunately it was the day for the Professor's pension-money, and less than half an hour after that was received, the swear-off was cancelled by mutual consent. Billy, on the promise of a good drunk, was sent out again and again with a bottle, and each time he returned we were all invited to drink by the hospitable Professor. It was not until Billy collapsed on the floor that the symposium came to an end, and then not through lack of a messenger, for a Hermes could have been found who could still stand upon his pins, but because there was no more pension-money. Several of the gang joined Billy on the floor. Gus was not one of them. He was alternately ecstatic and despondent. His ecstasy was expressed by a simple refrain:

> "We'll be happy, we'll be happy, we'll be happy,
> When the sun rises in the morning."

His despondency, by a single, mighty original oath, I may not quote. For more than two hours nothing came from him except the oath and the song. "It's always so with Gus," the boys say, "when he's jagged."

The Professor showed more versatility in his cups. He talked glibly and grandiloquently

withal on a score of profound themes. As often as he raised the bottle to his lips he quoted with Epicurean relish, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow ye die," only to lapse the next minute into a sympathetic exposition of old-fashioned New England Puritanism, which he interlarded with the baldest vulgarity and profanity. Nothing but drink could bring about such a fusion of opposites.

The majority of the gang being too drunk or too comfortable to go out for supper that night, they made shift with a picked-up meal — a little dried cheese, a few crackers, and a piece of codfish — scraped together by a ransacking of pockets, toasted on the stove and scrupulously divided.

There was just such another jamboree the evening of Election Day, an occasion that means far more than Christmas to the men at Moody's, it being the one time of the year when they are choosers, not beggars.

When the distress of the winter of 1893–4 was at its worst, there was a discussion one night of the causes of poverty.

"It's a man's own fault ef he's poor; I know it by mesilf," said Barney. "Didn't I aften blow in ten or fifteen dollars of a Saturday night in the days whin I was workin' for me livin'? Shure, I know it by mesilf. Ef a man 'ud keep a holt on his

wages when he had 'em, he'd never ask no help of no man."

"You're right there, Barney; I know it by myself." — "That's so; I know it by myself," came from man after man, until it looked as if the whole room was to be self-condemned. At last there was a protest.

"It ain't so. I know it by myself as well as you. It ain't no fault of mine I'm a bum," and the protest had its quota of supporters. Reasons were given. Cases were cited of people who were made poor through no fault of their own, —by the treachery of friends, the sharp practice of lawyers, the brutality of employers, fire, sickness, death.

A diatribe, the same night, by Ratter, against prohibition, did not call out a single protest. "Prohibition makes a town dead," said Ratter. "It knocks all the life out of it. Take Peabody now. Peabody used to be a right good, lively town. Billy knows that's so just as well as me. What is it now? Dead as a drowned rat. Since they've had prohibition the tanneries and everything have moved away. It's going to the dogs about as fast as it can, and all on account of taking away the booze. Prohibition 'll take the vim out of the best town going."

Rumsellers are often arraigned for inhumanity. "They'd see you with your shoul-

der frozen to a cake of ice before they'd give you a drink, if you happened to be busted, no matter if you'd been buyin' of 'em for a whole year," is the accusation; but the accusers are invariably judicial enough to admit that "there are rumsellers and rumsellers," and that "a good many are straight, white men."

Like artists the world over, the "boys" at Moody's luxuriate in shop-talk when they come together at the close of the day. From this talk it appears that they have accurate knowledge, not only of charitable organizations and charitable individuals, but of the vulnerable points of both organizations and individuals; also that they take as keen a delight in enlarging upon their methods as artists do in discussing the processes of painting. They exchange spoils as well as notes. Thus Barney came in one night so fearfully distended that the Doctor prophesied twins. He proceeded to pull from his pockets undervests, drawers, and stockings, which he had been collecting all the afternoon on the strength of a cunningly devised tale of woe.

He sold Ratter the stockings for the price of a drink, and took everything else to a pawnshop.

There is no end of rough horse-play and

good-natured scuffling at Moody's. I have never seen a fight there; though things have occasionally come dangerously near it.

A stranger, a *bona fide* workingman, appeared one night when Charcoal had just enough drink in him to be irritable. Before the evening was over, the latter somehow managed to pick a quarrel with the workingman, who nervously protested himself a man of peace, when Charcoal dared him to fight. Charcoal was forced to a seat by half a dozen of the gang, and the man of peace left the office. Miss Lizzie almost instantly appeared on the scene and warned Charcoal to behave himself or leave the house. Plainly, the man of peace was also a sneak. He had "peached" at headquarters.

It was superb to see the scorn that met him on his return to the office, — a scorn in which, I confess, I shared. Charcoal's rage had quickly given way to contempt. The man had fallen quite below his notice, and he expressed a lively regret for ever having done him the honor of a challenge to a fair fight. Sensing the situation, the man of peace left the office and sat on the steps outside until bed-time. In the morning, he had disappeared.

Notice how much the life of the gang at Moody's resembles that described by Piers

Ploughman five hundred years ago: "Having no other church than the brew-house; . . . filling their bags and stomachs by lies, sitting at night over a hot fire, when they untie their legs which have been bound up in the day-time, and lying at ease, roasting themselves over the coals and turning their backs to the heat, drinking gallantly and deep, after which they draw to bed and rise when they are in the humor. Then they roam abroad and keep a sharp lookout where they may soonest get a breakfast or a rasher of bacon, money, or victuals, and sometimes both, . . . and contrive to live in idleness and ease by the labors of other men. They observe no law nor marry any woman with whom they have been connected. They beget bastards, who are beggars by nature."

The following relic of the sixteenth century is strangely like Shorty's begging story:

"My name is Nicolas Genings, and I come from Lecester to seke worke, and I am a hat-maker by my occupation, and all my money is spent, and, if I coulde get money to paye for my lodging this night, I would seke worke tomorrowe amongst the hatters." (*Told by a begging impostor on New Year's Day, 1567.*)

Quaint phraseology aside, the beggars'

ballads of the seventeenth century, also, still apply.

Whether the gang at Moody's know it or not, they belong to a mystic order with an enormous background of history. And if tradition has not actually preserved the tricks by which the order thrives, I have yet to discover a single trick that was not practised before this century. Indeed, the great original geniuses of the order seem to have lived centuries ago. For generations its members have contributed nothing to the common stock; on the contrary, they have been living as much upon the wits of their forbears as upon the labor of the community. The men at Moody's have real cause to blush for the shameful degeneracy of their wits.

A FREE BREAKFAST: AN EXCURSION WITH BILLY

THE cheap lodger escapes the squalid monotony of a cheap boarding-house table, and once in a great while he may fare the worse for this escape. But he knows, if any one knows, where to get the most food for the least money.

If he chooses to go to a philanthropic restaurant, he can have rolls and coffee for two cents and a full dinner for five cents. At restaurants without the philanthropic taint, he can have doughnuts and cheese and coffee; hot mutton, veal, or chicken pie; potato salad and a frankfurter; lamb stew, fish balls, or pig's feet, with bread and butter, for five cents. Or, for ten cents: baked beans, fish balls, corned-beef hash, sausages, tripe, or liver, with bread and butter, coffee and pie.

But the saloon free lunch is by far his strongest hold. In the saloon he is given for five cents almost as much of a meal as he can get anywhere else for the same money,

and a schooner of beer besides. Now, on three beers and three such lunches a day a man may live and suffer no great distress of stomach.

Such close living is rarely necessary. It is a poor operator who cannot take seventy-five cents a day or its equivalent on the street, and, of this, not more than fifteen cents ordinarily goes for lodging. This means that the lodger has the range of six-course, *à prix fixe* dinners at fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, and thirty cents, and of *à prix fixe* breakfasts and suppers at fifteen and twenty cents, as well as of a large number of comparatively wholesome *à la carte* restaurants. In a word, he can exist on fifteen cents a day for food, live fairly for thirty cents, and like a lord, from his point of view, for sixty cents.

Even thus the possibilities are not exhausted. He is cunning enough to leave a restaurant now and then without paying his bill. He has learned to slink into a bar-room, eat and slink out again without attracting the bar-keeper's notice; and if permitted to loaf about a bar, he stands a good chance of being treated. Then there are the missions, which give a free breakfast or a free tea once a week to their patrons.

It was at a North End mission, by invitation of Billy (the religious bum of Moody's), that I ate my first, and my last, mission breakfast.

This breakfast was well known at Moody's; it was not in favor there. "A feed for a sick chicken," Doc called it, and Charcoal swore that two hours' wood-sawing at Hawkins street was loafing to what you had to do for it. It was so contemptuously held that Billy and I took pains to get away, without letting on where we were going, and we slouched and shuffled and sidled along back streets through fear of meeting some of the gang.

When we arrived, there was still half an hour to the time appointed for the breakfast; but others of our ilk had already come, not only from the North and West Ends, but even from the distant South End. There was a line of outlandish humanity on the sunny side of the mission building, and a pile of boards in a lumber yard close by held up another line.

We joined the men against the wall, and were soon busy, like them, keeping warm,—kicking our toes, humping our shoulders, and crowding our hands deep into our pockets.

"I guess they'll let us in before long," said hopeful Billy. "Hell wouldn't frighten us a speck. We'd just be hankerin' for it if they kep' us out here in the cold too long. They'll be careful not to do that. It 'ud be bad for their sort of business. Every man looks out for his business, you know, even them as

ain't rightly got any, — parsons an' congress-men an' hoboes."

A bloated prostitute came up. She made a vain canvass of our line, then tried the board-pile. There she prevailed on a sodden, blood-clotted wretch to go with her. They left arm-in-arm while the crowd cheered. The woman's motive must have been purely animal, for her victim could not have had a penny in his pocket.

Billy shook his head moodily. "That bloke hain't got no sense. Don't the Scripter say, 'There's a time to refrain from embracin',' an' that's eatin' time, ain't it? Don't he know it's eatin' time? Why don't he wait till after breakfast? She'd keep. Nobody ain't a chasin' after her, now let me tell you."

At 9:15 the numbers had so far increased that it seemed best to get a place close to the entrance. So we left the sunny side for a shady one. Over the door hung a large placard:

BREAKFAST FOR THE DESTITUTE

AT

9:30 A.M.

ALL WELCOME.

"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

A tall cynic just behind me read it through aloud. "Looks a heap like a drive on the Sunday closing law," he sneered; "but don't yer pin no faith on that. They's milk to drink mebbe, canned milk, in the coffee, anyways; but that about the wine's a big game of bluff. Think they'd give you booze? No, damn 'em, they'd see you choked first."

Most of the men were keenly alive to the ludicrousness of their position, and during the fifteen minutes of cold waiting that remained, they bandied jokes upon the breakfast, its donors, and themselves.

I have waited for admission to a building in many sorts of crowds, — never in a better-humored one.

By 9:30 the patient waiters must have numbered three hundred. The opening of the doors, then, was the signal of a rough-and-tumble scramble for precedence, in the course of which hats were crushed in, coats torn, and pals parted. By keeping close in sinuous Billy's wake I entered the building triumphantly among the very first.

Perfect order was enforced inside the doors, and we marched slowly, not to say sheepishly, into a low-studded lecture-room, while a choir sang "Rescue the Perishing," and other hymns calculated to cast aspersions on our characters. The outside doors were

closed when about two hundred had entered, although many hungry ones were still left on the outside. We were assigned to settees so placed, back to back, that the whole company was divided into groups of eight, fours facing fours, an arrangement at once sociable and convenient.

At the close of the hymn-singing, prayer was offered, much to the disgust of the hungrier and more impatient men. Then the feeding began, the feeders being for the most part well-bred young ladies. Billy nudged me. "Keep yer eye peeled now fer the peach with the yeller hair and the big breastworks. That's her comin' this way now. We're in great luck. She's goin' to feed us."

The breakfast consisted of coffee and sandwiches. Both were passed twice. The coffee was insipid, the sandwiches were delicious. Billy, by a clever, well-timed bit of seeming *gaucherie*, tipped over the sandwich plate. In the confusion that followed he managed to slip a couple of sandwiches into his pocket. "That makes the sandwiches all right," he whispered, "but it's too bad about the coffee. There's no pocketin' that. Why warn't hoboes made with camels' throats, that's what I'd like to know?"

The feeding over, the hymn-singing was resumed, and, to its accompaniment, we were

marched by a back stairway and through a back entrance into the main hall above. While we were getting seated, the familiar strains of "Rescue the Perishing" came to us faintly from an invisible choir, and by this, and certain rumbling sounds beneath us, we knew that the breakfast-room was being filled again. Billy was uneasy thereat. He was quite ready for another breakfast, but with all his ingenuity could think of no device for getting it.

A reformed drunkard exhorted us for half an hour, before the end of which the second group of breakfasters had come up. Whether this exhorter was prouder of his former beastliness or of his present saintliness, it was impossible to determine, though it was easy enough to see which phase of his life most interested his hearers.

At 10:30 the hall doors were thrown open to the public for a regular church service, but burly floor-walkers guarded each aisle to see that none of the corralled destitute escaped. The Christian public sat apart from the destitute, a precaution for which they must not be too much blamed. Even thus the lodging-house odor could not be escaped. That had by this time penetrated every nook and cranny of the building; but the danger from crawling things was minimized, an item not to be despised.

The regular church service lasted an hour and a half. Some, the wisest, of whom Billy was, of course, one, took naps. "I'm savin' myself for the pow-wow," he whispered, as he settled himself for his first one. Others extracted a vast amount of whispered mirth out of the situation. The rest, the least experienced, cursed, under their breaths, the diabolical device by which they had been trapped into a full morning church service. The solemn passing of the contribution-box to row after row of confessed "dead beats" was as ludicrous a spectacle as is ever likely to be granted to this world, funny as things are here.

After the benediction, the Christian public withdrew for a breath of fresh air. Not so the breakfasters. An after-meeting for their special benefit was announced. Several of the more aggressive started defiantly for the door. They were quickly ordered back to their seats by the floor-walkers.

I was so incensed that I was on the point of exhorting the men to a charge against their keepers, when a glance at Billy's face recalled me to my senses. "Submission is the line of least effort, therefore the only line a bum should follow," was the meaning of its beautiful unconcern. As an apostle of the Tolstoian gospel of non-resistance, I can

recommend Billy without reserve. He saved me from making a very bad bull, for, in my unsophisticated impatience, I had all but forgotten my *métier*.

The leader of the after-meeting had the stock qualifications for that office; namely, a rusty Prince Albert coat, a white tie. and a marvellous, manual dexterity in manipulating a copiously marked Bible. He was a saintly-mouthed, patronizing youngster, fresh from a theological school, not too long away from his mother, less wise in the wisdom life gives than every one of his hearers, and glorying in his ignorance.

He made a comically desperate attempt to get on to common ground with the men, by telling them that he was out of a job, just as they were. He was waiting for the Lord to call him to a church. Until the Lord did call him, he was going to spend all his time praying and reading his Bible. It would help him to know the Lord's voice when he heard it. That was what they ought to do, too. Then they wouldn't be chasing after the calls of the devil by any mistake.

This after-meeting was up to the average of after-meetings, I suppose. The leader certainly believed it to be rather above the average, for he kept repeating, "The Spirit's coming! I feel the Spirit coming!

The Spirit's here with us! Don't you feel It, brothers? Oh, the great work the Spirit's doing this day! Bless God for it, brothers, bless God!" But, somehow, from the seats it seemed a shameless travesty of religion. There, napping, joking, and cursing increased quite as rapidly as the speaker's excitement, and that is saying a great deal.

Seven men went forward to the anxious seat, where a corps of male and female assistants surrounded them. Finally, Billy went forward too. Billy didn't feel quite right about leaving me behind. He really wanted to do the courteous thing by me; but long habit was too strong for him. "Guess I'd better trot up there too. I may as well get all the fun's a-goin' while I'm about it. Mebbe that woman in the blue dress'll put her arm round my neck to coax me like she's doin' to that hobo with the black eye."

So this was the pow-wow for which Billy had been saving himself. Pow-wow! Billy certainly has as great a talent for nomenclature as for piety.

A portion of the eight declared themselves converted, and there were "Hallelujahs" and "Praise Gods" from both laborers and converts. Far be it from me to deny that the

conversions were genuine; but I have seen enough of these fellows to assert that they have expert knowledge of all the promising signs of conversion and are quite capable of counterfeiting them when they see anything to be gained thereby. Besides, there is a fine, old-fashioned gallantry about them that makes them reluctant to refuse a lady anything she asks, even to a change of heart. "*Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut.*"

It was almost one o'clock when we were unjailed. Even then — as if we had not been sufficiently imposed on already — we were urged to remain to a Bible Class, vague suggestions of overcoats being coupled with the urgings. Needless to say, I withdrew with the majority. I had paid for my breakfast, many times over, by listening to three and a half hours of religious appeal, and I could stand no more. Billy stayed. I shall never cease to wonder at his trained endurance in these things.

When Billy returned at last to Moody's he not only had a tale of a good dinner at the end of his tongue, but a good overcoat on his back. The overcoat pawned well the next day, and we all had a generous smack of the tipple it bought. Thus was the mis-

sion breakfast overruled for good to the men at Moody's. Thus did it become

> "The sweet presence of a good diffused,
> And in diffusion ever more intense."

The mission folk had builded better, far better, than they knew.

RILEY'S: A TEN-CENT LODGING

ALL Boston lodging-houses are not as well managed as Moody's.

About dusk, one winter's afternoon, I entered a house where ten-cent beds were advertised and climbed one flight of stairs. At the top I found a good-natured, round-faced old man, who took my dime and directed me up another flight. He did not register me, as required by law, nor give me a bed number, as is done in most houses. The second flight of stairs landed me in a large, low-studded room containing as many as fifty beds. At a sink in a corner one man was washing his feet and another his shirt. There was a stove in the centre from which a funnel ran to the corner of the room opposite that in which the sink stood. Directly over the stove was an opening in the ceiling letting heat into a loft just under a cupola, where there were a few more beds (at seven cents). This stove was a remarkable one — as large as a small furnace and

shaped like an inverted ale mug. From its lower front, which was open, a fantastic, red glow streamed. The room had no other light except a dingy kerosene lamp at the head of the stairs. Half a dozen greasy-looking pails and kettles of various shapes and sizes were steaming on the stove. Around it a number of ropes were stretched, and on these shirts and stockings were hung to dry.

Beds were boards nailed together into boxes, in their turn nailed to the floor. Mattresses were laid on the boxes. Sheets, blankets, and pillows were very dirty. In the absence of bed numbers it was necessary to sit on the beds in order to hold them against new arrivals. Men were thus seated all over the room, half-dressed and undressed, eating lunches wrapped in newspapers, drinking tin dippers of tea and coffee brewed on the stove, passing black bottles around, smoking clay pipes, mending clothes, swearing and gossiping.

One very pale, emaciated man made frequent journeys from his bed to the sink to vomit. Every few minutes some one would go to the stove, stick a spill into its red eye and light a pipe, thereby illuminating for an instant all the obscure nooks of the room. One of these pipe-lighters was a gray-haired

man past eighty, who hobbled to the stove stark naked. He was not only shrivelled, but badly hunch-backed and otherwise misshapen. As he ducked first into the red light of the red eye and then stood as nearly erect as was in his power, ghastly pale from the yellow light of his spill, I wished myself a thousand times an artist. A more Dantesque theme was never vouchsafed a painter.

A fat man, "jolly drunk," was brought to the top of the stairs by the doorkeeper and left with the order, "Get on to a bed lively now, and don't get off it for no man." Though a bit dazed, he staggered to an empty bed and broke into maudlin singing, fitting the words of several popular favorites to a single tune. After a little he urged any one who could to sing a good Irish song, and as no one did so he sang one himself — of his "love for a maid." Next he opened a bag of cakes. "Is they anybody here wants a cake? Them as wants 'em, can have 'em, that's my motto." Three or four men came towards the bag, cautiously at first, as if fearing some bluff game; then, having received generously of the cakes, turned back to their beds and devoured them. "Yes, them as wants can have, that's my motto," repeated the donor. "I've got some rolls, too; but them's for breakfast. Just call around again in the morning."

These generous expressions were cut short by a series of terrific yells from a bed in the middle of the room. "My God! *My God!* MY GOD!" then an inarticulate screech. "Guess he's in fer the jim-jams." — "That feller yer want ter help yer don't live round these parts; if yer want anything much yer'll hev ter crawl up and git it yerself," came from the other beds. The cries continued at intervals of a few seconds, sometimes "My God!" sometimes "God!" without the "My." At first, everybody laughed, then, as it got monotonous, everybody swore. Finally, a neighbor rolled the sufferer over, and he was quiet for a minute. Then he writhed, sat half-up in bed, and fell backward exhausted, his head striking the wooden back of his cot with a loud noise. When he began the cries again, the generous inebriate staggered and swaggered over to him from the opposite side of the room, boxed his ears and told him to "shut up." He obeyed, but was quiet only a little while, and the boxing and shutting-up process had to be repeated many times during the evening. It was almost a case of delirium tremens.

My nearest neighbors told fish stories — of catching a halibut weighing 300 pounds, and a turtle weighing "1,300 pounds, 14

pounds and 13 ounces exact." A man some distance away raised his voice to say: "Four years ago no man ever seen me in a lodgin'-house. I was workin' with a good man not far from here;" and one of his neighbors raised his voice to query: "Four years, did yer say? An' how long was yer sentence? Three years an' a half?" Then general mirth at the hit.

When I was ready to sleep I laid my coat and hat on my pillow to avoid immediate contact with the dirt. In a few minutes bed-bugs were running over them. The stove was at full blast, not a window was open, the heat was stifling, and the odor worse. I could see the bugs performing military evolutions on the wall and floor, and feel them doing the same on my neck. Finally, I sat up, as a partial escape, and in that position I got several good naps during the night; but in my lucid moments I envied the men who were so drunk they could not sense the bites, the heat, or the stench.

If I were a regular lodger in a ten-cent house, I should get drunk as often as I could find the liquid to do it with.

THE BED I EARNED

I ENTERED the office of the "Wayfarers' Lodge" after a hard, slippery tramp of more than a mile through a storm of alternate sleet and rain. As homeless men do not carry umbrellas, I was drenched to the skin. Yet I was quickly shoved into line to wait my turn with the night-clerk who was registering applicants. "What's your name? How old are you? Where were you born? Next!" was the form with each applicant. When my turn for answering came, I involuntarily leaned over the rail just a trifle in order to make myself heard. "Here, you bum, you, what do you think you're doing there? Get off that rail and stand up straight. Lively!" was bawled at me from behind the desk. I was a total stranger to the clerk, for all that he knew an honest man in real distress. It was a bit of gratuitous blackguardism that almost threw me off my guard. I was on the point of freeing my mind to his picayune highness, when I re-

flected that I really wished to sleep in the Lodge that night. So I allowed myself to be cowed into submission, as the other poor devils who come here do, and was rewarded for my self-restraint with a red card bearing a number — my mark of identity for the rest of my sojourn.

In the basement hallway, where I was sent from the office, a tall, saturnine functionary was crying with the voice of a street-hawker: "Take your hat and shoes to bed. Leave nothing in your shoes. Leave your underclothes loose. Tie your other clothes together in a bundle. Wear your check around your neck." As soon as I had stripped and bundled my outer clothes, I passed through a doorway, where I received a metal check in return for my red card and was relieved of all my possessions except my shoes and hat. Then came the compulsory bath, so very disagreeable an affair that the repugnance of the begging fraternity to it may charitably be attributed to something else than laziness and incorrigible love of dirt. The floor of the bath-room was sloppy and cold to bare feet. If the tubs themselves were really clean, they did not look so; the white linings were badly discolored and chipped off in many spots.

I was directed to a tub containing three or

four inches of warm water. This water had a suspicious look, still I cannot swear that another man had used it before me. Neither can I swear that another did not use it after me. I certainly saw no water changed while I remained in the bath-room. One of the *employés*, to be sure, was posed with a scrubbing-brush in a threatening attitude, but I did not see him use the brush. The towel, which hung over the lower end of my tub, was perfectly clean. The rack on which I was made to stand while wiping was cold, wet, and dirty.

The bath-room was unquestionably picturesque with its clouds of steam and grotesque anatomies, but picturesqueness is not the only thing essential in a bath-room; a spray of clean water is much better for bathing purposes. As I left, a coarse, clean nightshirt was handed me from a bushel basket of the same and I was directed to my room up two flights of stairs. "Take the elevator to the right," said the good-natured shirt-dispenser with a facetious wink.

My bed was one of a number of cots in a clean, steam-heated, ventilated room, without a trace of the familiar lodging-house odor, and so, in spite of the humiliating experiences with the night-clerk and the bath-tub, I was well content to crawl between the blankets

with my metal check about my neck. The novelty of being checked for dreamland, as a trunk is checked for a journey, was, it is true, a little disturbing, but talking aloud was strictly forbidden, and the stillness was highly conducive to sleep.

We were rapped up before light, and within two minutes the dormitory was emptied. Once again in the basement hallway, we waited for our numbers to be called in a perilous, cold draught, — a quite unnecessary hardship, as we might as easily have been sent from the sleeping-room in small squads. The dressing was done amid much confusion, for the hallway was overcrowded and we were in no very good humor over our treatment. My underclothes were still clammy from the steam-cleansing to which they had been subjected during the night, and my outer clothes were nearly as wet as when they were tied up. It was as dangerous as it was unpleasant to get into them. When I was dressed, an axe was given to me and I was set at work in the yard upon wood that was rough and icy to my unwonted hands.

The breakfast to which I was allowed to go after two hours of wood-splitting and piling, was served at a well-scrubbed counter in a cheerless room. It consisted of hard ship-biscuit, an enormous bowl of soup, and

several "hunks" of bread. The soup was ridiculously thin, and so peppery that it nearly blistered my tongue. It did not satisfy hunger and did create a raging thirst for drink, — a sorry turn to serve easily tempted men. No one of my companions ate more than a third of what was in his bowl. The instant I stopped eating, I was gruffly ordered off the premises, and, all things considered, I was not loath to go.

JOE GUNN'S: A TWENTY-CENT LODGING

THE entire front of a certain four-story, brick building at the South End is labelled with painted letters after this curious fashion:

GUNN'S LODGING-HOUSE.

FRIENDLY LODGING-HOUSE

for

SOBER MEN.

Prices:

15, 20, 25, 35, 50 cts.

NO DRUNKEN MEN ADMITTED.

The high moral tone of this label always attracted me. And so it was only natural that I should choose to visit Gunn's, among the first, when I set out to explore the cheap lodging-houses of Boston.

There were two flights of stairs to climb.

At the top of the second was a door with a good-sized hole in the centre like the portal to the hall of a secret order. Through this hole a man peered hard at me, and through this hole I paid twenty cents and told my name, in lieu of giving a password. I was then allowed to go into the office.

A number of seedy-looking persons, several of whom were intoxicated, were seated smoking about the office stove. They paid little attention to me as I joined them. A conspicuous sign over the clerk's desk announced that the office must be vacated every night at eleven o'clock, but as it was already 11:45, I concluded that this law was as much of a dead letter as the sign outside — "No Drunken Men Admitted." The walls had little adornment except a few freshly printed placards of the rules of the house:

I. No Cash, No Bed.
II. No Disorderly Conduct.
III. Loud Talking Must Cease at Ten.
IV. No Smoking in Bed.
V. No Drunken Men Received.

Adornment seems to be the main purpose of printed, lodging-house rules; or, it may be, they are held to give the *cachet* of respectability from their somewhat distant resemblance to the rules posted in the rooms of

hotels. Certainly, there was no pretence here of enforcing any of them except the first, and that was allowed to have many exceptions among *habitués*. In nine cases out of ten, in fact, rules are only intended to impress the imaginations of officers of inspection or philanthropically disposed visitors.

After hugging the stove just long enough to get warm — not long enough to find the drift of the talk around me — I started for bed. Back of the 20 CENT door was a long, narrow, one-windowed room. It was dimly lighted. Two of its walls were of painted brick, the other two of wood-sheathing. Its ceiling was covered with paper, badly discolored by leaks from above, and its floor was carpeted with a thick coating of dirt. It contained ten cot beds, five on each long side, with an aisle between the fives. Of two or three beds still vacant, I chose the one nearest the window. It was woven wire on a wooden frame a few inches high, had a grimy mattress, two dirty sheets, a blood-stained pillow, and a single comforter with a great rent in the centre.

The night being very cold, I did not think it wise to undress, so I crawled in just as I was and tried to draw the comforter over me. The rent, however, made it useless for a covering, and, as it was clammy and far from

sweet, I threw it one side in disgust. That my consciousness of the cold was not entirely due to my tender inexperience, I knew by muttered curses from my room-mates, and this was reassuring. Besides, the cold had its cheerful side. I was not troubled by bugs. I cannot believe that these filthy beds were uninfested. The bugs must have been too cold to crawl.

About 12:30 a man staggered in and plumped down on the edge of my bed as if he owned it. He proved to be a pal of the lodger across the aisle from me, and was probably accustomed to sleep in the particular bed I had preëmpted. He was surprised enough to find it occupied, but not angry in the least.

He got his head down close to me and examined me (while I feigned slumber) by the light from the window at first, afterwards with the help of two or three matches. "Why, the poor little bugger looks sick!" he said at last. "Why didn't he take his clothes off? He'll freeze to death" — getting rather mixed — "if he don't take his clothes off. He's drunk, I guess." He put his arms around me tenderly and tried to cajole me into taking off my clothes, and crawling under the torn blanket, but I surlily turned my back on him and sleepily refused.

"Why, you'll freeze to death before morning!" he went on. "You see you ain't got so much rum on your insides as I have. Mebbe you've had a drop or so, too, but you ain't got enough to keep you good and warm." He would have lifted me off the bed to undress me had not his unsteadiness prevented. He finally succeeded, however, in raising my legs and rolling the old comforter tightly round them — a real kindness (for it helped much to keep me warm), and as such only one of many I have received from hoboes, drunk and sober.

Finding another bed for himself, he slowly undressed, chatting the while with his pal. "This here's a good place to sleep, if 'tis cold, an' I'm goin' to sleep till noon. I'm never goin' to sleep again at the Fairmount House. That's much too bad even for the likes of me. A man paid me a bed there one night last week. Now, you know, as well as anybody does, I always makes it a point to take what's given me, but for all that I had a hard job to stick the night out. This damned yeller thing" (taking up his pillow), "'s dirty enough, but it's better'n the Fairmount House." Then, assuming the lofty air of one who has seen better days, "I didn't always have to sleep in a hole like this, an' I wouldn't have to now if I was willin' to

buckle down to steady work. But I'd lose my freedom, if I took to workin'. Now I've got my freedom, an' I ain't no reason to kick, so long's I can get so good a place as this to sleep in for twenty cents. Besides, ain't I hustled in four ham sandwiches an' three good drinks since suppertime?"

When I reëntered the office in the morning there was a picturesque group about the stove. One of the group, Jonas Brigham by name, was a bent, decrepit Yankee of eighty, who claimed to have been a politician in his young manhood. He was brimful of intimate gossip about Webster and Clay and other men in public life, as far back as the Mexican War. His claim was audacious enough, in view of his present condition, but it may have had a foundation in truth for all that. He may easily have been a page in Congress; he may even have been a lobbyist. Lobbying and bumming are of closest kin in their salient qualities. Scarcely any readjustment of mental outlook or moral standards would be necessary in passing from the former to the latter.

Another was a sturdy young Swede, who was drying by the stove a pair of stockings he had just washed. He was a clean-cut, handsome fellow, neatly dressed, well-man-

nered and fair-spoken; as yet, little, if at all, contaminated by his surroundings.

I remember also a one-legged negro, who was interesting mainly for his sunny-faced silence. He spoke not, except in answer to a direct question, but listened to the talk intently, watching the faces of the talkers with the eager, undisguised delight of a child at a Punch and Judy show. Even when the conversation lapsed, he kept chuckling on, overpowered by the fun of his own thinkings.

Who would hesitate to be a vagrant if being one would make life so perpetually amusing?

"Bluenose," a wild-eyed creature, whose youth was passed in the Maritime Provinces, took to praising drink as a sweetener of the temper. "Before I used to drink," he said, "I used to be ugly all the time. Now, when I'm half full, as I am most of the time, things don't offend me at all like they used to. Let me tell you: Before ever I touched the drink I was working for a man down in Prince Edward Island. One day, when I was skinning sheep, he angered me by pressing my head down (all in fun, you know) and calling me a 'dirty little red-head.' He was twice as big as me, but quick as a flash (with the help of the devil himself, I've always been a-saying) I let him have the knife,

straight in the belly. 'I'm killed!' the man yelled, and I thought sure enough he was, for his guts run out so they had to be held in place by a boy, while he was being taken to his house. He got well, but I had to serve my time all the same, and all on account of not drinking. I shouldn't have been ugly like that if I'd had some rum in me."

There were fond anticipations of the summer, when less hustling would be necessary, because sleeping could be done out-of-doors. Everybody testified that the vigilance of the city police made it more than useless to try to spend the night on the benches of the Common or the Public Garden. But it appeared just as clearly that there were plenty of other areas not so well guarded.

Several open-air sleeping experiences were narrated. Here is one of them:

"Got something of a jag on over in South Boston one night last summer, an' crawled into an old cart on the flats to sleep. About two o'clock, I should think it was, a copper shook me awake an' wanted to know what I was there for. I saw I was like to get pulled in anyhow, so I thought I might as well have the fun of spinning a little yarn.

"I went on an' told the copper as how I had come over from Cambridge the night before on purpose to see a man about busi-

ness. How he was a-bed when I got to his house, an' how I'd got to see him in the morning before he went to his work at six, an' it was so warm I thought I might as well bunk down there as anywhere. Do yer know that copper swallered the yarn straight? He asked me my name — of course I give him the wrong one — an' then told me he didn't mind my staying the night out under the circumstances, so I had a bully good sleep out of it."

"Over on the flats, was it? My eye! but I like that myself, too; there's more hoors sleeps there as men," was the only comment evoked by this tale.

An old fellow who had been washing his handkerchiefs at the sink, and was spreading them to dry over the back of an empty chair, on being twitted with being a "washwoman," retaliated with some caustic observations upon the ignorance and stupidity of his deriders. "You fellers think you're smart, don't yer? Well, you talked more'n an hour last night about the town I was born an' brung up in (I didn't let on, just to see what you'd say about it), an' I'll be blamed if you didn't get so far off that you got paralyzed talkin' about it."

Just as I started away to breakfast, a wordy quarrel was begun between a big

fellow of two hundred pounds or more called "Fatty," and his pal, a little slip of a fellow of not more than a hundred weight, over the question, "Who bought the last pipe?"

"'Tain't that I care for the expense," swaggered Fatty; "it's only a cent anyhow for a T. D., but it's the principle of the thing. I don't believe in being run all over by a flea of a thing like you."

I bethought myself of the recriminations of college chums over matches and tobacco, and realized that human nature in the lodging-house is not essentially different from human nature elsewhere. It was a real grief to me that my empty stomach forbade my seeing the end of this dispute.

BREWSTER'S: A MISSION LODGING

IT may be hard to get a cheap bed even when you have the money to pay for it. So I found one bitter cold night, when I had fifteen cents in my pocket. Moody's, Riley's, and Whiting's were all full, and that is how I came to go to Brewster's Mission.

The mission-hall was low-studded and ill-lighted. Square yards of painted Scripture texts — cheering and otherwise — adorned the walls. Prayer was being offered as I entered, and I was surprised beyond measure at the devotional spirit displayed by the audience. Nearly every head was bowed. The secret of the reverential attitude came out at the end of the petition, inasmuch as the heads continued bowed. What had looked like devotion was really drowsiness. Between prayers, a floor-walker did his best to wake up the men. This he effected, when they were within reach, by a gentle rap on the head; when they were not, he was forced to resort to more heroic measures, such as

roughly joggling the settee. The same heads drooped again and again, and now and then one emitted a series of vigorous snores before the floor-walker could locate and rap it.

The platform part of this meeting was of the conventional city-mission type, but the listeners were strangely unresponsive. Not a person asked for prayers, not one was roused to raise his hand to signify he wanted "to go up into the air with Jesus," and the meeting closed gloomily enough with prophecies from the desk of dire damnations.

The meeting was followed by an angry attempt on the part of the superintendent to eject a man. The latter planted his feet squarely on the floor and refused to budge. He was quite cool. "I'd have gone, if you'd asked it decently," he said, "but you can't put me out." Of course this challenge brought on a scrimmage. A lamp was overturned and broken, and the stove stood on one leg for several seconds, to the intense delight of the by-standers. The frenzied superintendent was no match for his self-contained opponent, and was soon forced to appeal to his floor-walker with a "Come on, Jameson! What are you good for?" Then the man went out without resisting, though he was easily a match for the two. "I told you you couldn't put me out if you

gave me fair play," he said with a laugh, from the sidewalk.

That man, though he is a bum, must have good stuff in him. In this little affair he certainly showed to better moral advantage than the superintendent.

There are only a few beds at Brewster's. A part of these are rented at fifteen cents a night to such as are able to pay; the remainder are assigned to workers in a wood-yard attachment. In cold weather the mission-room is used as a dormitory. Being present at a meeting entitles a man to a settee and a blanket afterward, provided settees and blankets hold out. When they do not, there is still the floor. No one is turned away. I was one of the few who had to be satisfied with the floor. Although the stove heated the air for only a few feet around itself, the majority stripped to the skin before wrapping themselves in the vermin-infested blankets. "Backbiters" the men call the infesters. "There's no fear o' bein' lonely, ef you ain't a married man, with one o' these here comforters to sleep with," said a stripped man as he fiercely scratched himself.

I had only my arm for a pillow; the floor was so hard it made my bones ache, and so icy I shivered with all my clothes on. The

windows were all shut. The only toilet convenience was an uncovered tin pail. The stench was something indescribable, particularly when I sat up to rest my bones, for then my nostrils were brought on to a level with the sleepers. For these reasons, as well as because loud coughing, sneezing, snoring, hawking, and spitting, and other disgusting noises, were incessant, I could not sleep more than a few minutes at a time, and I should have been very miserable had I not been within easy hearing of the entertaining gossip of the watchmen — broken-down specimens who receive little more for their work than their own beds and board. These watchmen had given glorious "testimonies" from the platform during the meeting. It was morbidly interesting to find them adepts in obscenity and vulgarity now that the superintendent (their employer) was gone and the lights were turned down.

WHITING'S: A MODEL LODGING-HOUSE

WHITING'S, the model lodging-house of the West End, has a baggage-room, a bath-tub, a shoe-blacking kit, newspapers, a few books and magazines, a savings bank, a bulletin board of jobs, a restaurant in which a very good meal is given for five cents, a voluntary religious service on Sunday afternoon, a most elaborate set of rules, and a philanthropic backing.

When I first became a lodger there, a free art exhibition was being held in another part of the city, under the auspices of the college settlements. The group I joined, on entering, were talking about this exhibition.

"Let's go to the Art Gallery," said a fellow who answered to the name of "Steve."

"It's too fur off; it's in Copley Square," objected "Shanks," another of the group.

"No, it ain't no such a thing," retorted Steve; "it's on Washington Street, almost opposite the Grand Dime."

"Oh, that sort of a show!" continued the objector; "there's plenty o' that sort down on Hanover Street, an' there's a 'Gallery of Anatomy for Men Only' down there, too. Yer c'n get in fer a dime; but yer don't get yer dime's worth, I c'n tell yer that."

"Bah! this ain't none of your snides," protested Steve, stoutly; "it's a real art gallery with painted pictures, an' electric lights, an' catalogues, an' everythin' else, an' it's free, too; don't I know? It's in the Grand Army Buildin', an' I'm a Grand Army man, ain't I? I should think I ought to know if anybody does."

"Grand Army Building! Why, that's the old Franklin School-house!" Shanks retorted. "Don't I know as much about that as any Grand Army moke? I used ter go ter school in that w'en I was a kid. Nobody thought then a likely boy like I was 'ud turn out a dirty hobo."

This bit of looking backward on Shanks' part started a train of reminiscence, which travelled rapidly to the North End; and the palmy days of Irish supremacy, "when no Dago 'ud have dared to show his face there," were dwelt on with fond regret. Those were the days of Mike Geary's saloon, in which frays, as brilliant and as bloody as any Harry Fielding has portrayed, were frequent.

"Tim" and "Buster," two professional "sluggers," were the heroes of most of these tavern brawls, and their encounters were not by any means confined to Mike's saloon.

"One mornin'"—it was Steve who told the story—"we found Tim sleepy-drunk on the floor of his room, an' the floor all over blood, an' Buster a-groanin' under the bed, with his head rolled up in a towel. When we took the towel off of Buster's head, there warn't much head to speak of, it was so mashed up. You see him an' Tim, bein' cronies, come in full together, an' somehow or other got to scrappin' in the night. There warn't no feller round to stop 'em, an' so they kep' goin' it till one of 'em was knocked out. That must have been a hell of a good fight! An' to think we all lost seein' it! I tell you, boys, the North End was the place to live in them days."

"Jack," one of the deceased giants of the Tim-and-Buster period, was charged by Steve with having sworn off the drink some years before he died.

Shanks' indignation at this attempt to slander the dead was well expressed and was indorsed by the others.

"Yer had a grudge ag'in Jack, or yer wouldn't lie like that. I wouldn't be found dead with them slanderous words in me

mouth. Yer say Jack didn't drink nothin' fer a long whiles afore he passed in his checks? What right have yer to talk that a-way about Jack? Warn't I with him more'n anybody, an' don't I know he boozed so hard he bled at the mouth, an' that killed him? Ah! but he was a fine, good boy, was Jack! There warn't none 'round Mike's nor no other saloon cud lick him except Tim an' Buster, an' I've seen him give them a job."

After a while the reminiscence turned to devices for swindling the kind-hearted public.

Once upon a time, "Shavings" provided himself with a pair of overalls and a carpenter's square. He tried to sell the latter under the plea of being in extreme want from long unemployment. The very first man he appealed to was interested. The man refused to buy the square, to be sure, but he gave Shavings a dinner and a lodging and the promise of a good job with a builder of his acquaintance, if he would call at his office the next day. Instead of showing up for the job, Shavings continued, for as much as a week, on the street, offering the square for sale with surprisingly good results. Then, by a very stupid mistake, he appealed a second time to his first victim and was recognized. He was prompt enough with the natural excuse of having lost the builder's address,

but it would not work. So he had to promise to leave the city to avoid being turned over to the police. Of course, he didn't leave. Still, he was very careful to keep his square and overalls out of sight for a good long time.

"Joe" has known better days, though all he has now to show for it is a set of false teeth. He has held to these teeth religiously through his later vicissitudes, and they have served him more than one good turn.

Last winter, for instance, he was befriended by a lawyer whom he had struck for a dime on the street. The lawyer took him into his office, where he set him dusting law-books. Work of this, or any sort, was not at all to Joe's mind. Cash down was what he was after. So, having first slipped the teeth from his mouth to his pocket, unobserved, he raised a tremendous dust and made a noisy pretence of sneezing them out the window. Diligent search of the court below revealed no teeth, of course. Joe was heart-broken. Such a loss as that he could never hope to repair. "He wished he'd never touched the dirty law-books. He wished he'd never been born." The lawyer was sorry such an accident had happened in his service, and his sorrow, naturally enough, took the shape of money for a new set of teeth. Joe did not return

from his lunch that day. In fact, the lawyer has not seen Joe since. Joe, however, — always from a discreet distance — has often seen the lawyer.

"Spider," in looks and character everything that the name implies, got the address of a well-known clergyman from a drug-store directory and went to him, in a thread-bare condition, one bitter day, with a plea for clothing. The clergyman gave him a note to a parishioner, a wealthy Marlboro Street physician, who fitted him out with an expensive overcoat, that had not been worn more than two seasons. The overcoat pawned easily for five dollars.

A more recent adventure of Spider's did not turn out so well. He found, near a dry-goods' store on Summer Street, a small bundle of red satin marked with the Commonwealth Avenue address for which it was intended. His first thought was to pawn it or to sell it to a little fancy store he knew of; his second was to carry it to its owner for a reward of honesty. The second thought promised the better, and it prevailed. But honesty was valued at only ten cents by the Commonwealth Avenue shopper. "Just paid my car-fare," Spider remarked, contemptuously. "I didn't even get a beer out of it." He was still keenly regretting his mistaken honesty.

"Smithie's" story was the most detailed and interesting of the lot.

"You boys all know I have a knack of lookin' fair an' aboveboard an' talkin' kind o' soft and repentant-like when I wants anything. Well, one day last winter I went out to Cambridge and bummed a breakfast at a house there 'East Boston' told me about. Then I was thirsty, so I went to another house and asked for some money. I sized the woman up pretty quick, and played the racket of bein' willin' an' anxious to work — bore down on it hard, you know. She was so stirred up by the yarn I spun her that she give me a dime and invited me to come round again at five o'clock and get a good hot dinner. She didn't get no noonday meal, she said, 'cause she hadn't no kids, and her husband, he worked so far away he couldn't come home. You'd 'a' laughed yourself tired and hungry to see how glad she was I wanted to work. To spare my sensitive feelin's, she kep' tellin' me as how her husband would find me some wood to saw or somethin' else to do when he got home, so I needn't feel I was takin' charity.

"Of course I was on hand at five o'clock. They made me wash my hands and set down to the table with them. Gee whiz! what grub! That was just about the slickest

dinner ever I set my teeth into. I don't s'pose they's more'n two or three o' you blokes ever had a night dinner; that's the kind this was, handed on in sections ('courses,' they call 'em) by a nigger wench. I may as well own up I felt powerful green myself along at first, an' wished I was eatin' alone so's not to give away what a lot I was puttin' in. But they kep' pilin' my plate up to make me feel easy, and 'twarn't long 'fore I clean forgot all my fine manners and waded in with both feet. Um-m-m-m! I c'n taste them orange fritters now.

"They got through eatin' before I did, an' set to work with their mouths plannin' jobs for me down cellar an' out in the back yard. I felt my appetite slippin' away from me, for I seen I was billed to be a laborin' man, sure enough, unless I sprung some bluff on 'em mighty spry. So, all to oncet, I made like I was took with a big colic. I squirmed an' held on to my stomach and screwed up my face, until they was that frightened they laid me out flat on the lounge an' run for the brandy bottle — real French stuff, mind yer, smooth enough to cut a figure eight on with skates.

"'Poor man!' they kep' sayin'; 'he must 'a' been half-starved.' You see they thought I'd been hungry so long that a square meal

had did me up. I played off I was easier after the brandy, as, in course, I was; an' when I got strong enough to walk, they give me more brandy, an' money enough for a lodgin'.

"I promised to call around in the mornin' an' do the work, if I was well enough, but I warn't well enough, an' I hain't been well enough since. If any of you's got a hankerin' for the nicest feed goin', I can tell you how to find the house, an' if you're cooney, like I was, you won't have to lift your hand for the grub. Only you'll have to get up a new game. Colic won't work in that house for some years to come, I take it."

I witnessed a sad struggle with pride that night at Whiting's, the struggler being a clean-looking man in overalls and jumper — a teamster out of a job. He would start down the stairs and come back, walk nervously through the rooms and passageways and start down the stairs again, only to return and repeat the entire process. "I can't do it! I can't beg!" he muttered as he passed near me, and with such an accent of despair that it fairly wrung my heart to hear him. Finally, he sidled up to Smithie, selecting him before the others for his good-natured face, and asked him, with a rush of color, for the amount of a night's lodging. Smithie could not understand the man's sen-

sitiveness and told him so, but he let him have the money all the same. A fortnight later the proud teamster was begging on the street as boldly as ever Smithie did, nor is it likely he will drive a team again.

Jack Gordon's struggle to hold off from the drink was almost as harrowing to witness. There was nothing priggish about it. He was so honestly earnest and humble, and was known as so brave and free-handed a drinker, that no one thought of taunting him. There was gay raillery, to be sure, but it was absolutely without a touch of contempt, for Jack was a favorite with everybody.

"The booze 'as taken the kick all out o' me, boys," he said. "W'y, w'en I was a kid, I was that tough I could a' played out-doors bare-skinned such weather's this an' never felt it. Now I can't stan' nothin'. The least bit o' cold makes me rattle all over like an old woman with the palsy. I might 'a' been still in a good place on the Wabash Road, if I'd 'a' had sense enough to let alone the booze. But I'm goin' to try, boys, by God I am, an' yer won't think it mean o' me, will yer now?"

The boys assured me confidentially it was all right. "Jack's sure to come round again an' drink more'n any of us. He's often took this way, you know. It don't last. I don't

reckon he can help it. Jack don't mean no harm."

On a later visit I had the good luck to fall in with two oldish men, who were pals in vagrancy. One of them enlarged on the warmth and unchangeableness of their affection. His talk ran on in this style:

"Yes, Dan and me quarrels sometimes, that's a fac', but there ain't no sense in Dan and me quarrelling. Dan, he'd give me the last cent of money he had, and I — why, I'd do the same for Dan, of course. But we quarrels all the same. Dan, he damns me and I damn Dan. I call Dan a liar and he calls me a liar, but it wouldn't do for nobody outside to do nothing of the kind to neither one of us. A long time ago — that was when we was both working for a living before we took to hustling — there was one mighty hard winter we didn't neither of us have no work. Dan had a wife he set a heap by then, and two or three kids. I didn't have nothing but my own measly self to look out for. I had a bit of money left over from my wages, and I gave Dan five dollars. Dan, he got mad. Wanted to know what I done it for. 'I ain't no beggar,' says Dan — these days he ain't so techy about begging, not by a long shot. I says, 'Danny, my boy, let it go. There ain't no use getting riled. You're

a family man. You've got a wife and kids. I hain't.' Dan, he'd done the same for me, you know, if ever I'd been crazy enough to get hitched. I never talk to Dan about owing and Dan don't to me. When either of us has chink we shares and shares alike. When we hain't we sucks our thumbs sociable-like together. In them days, when Dan's wife was living, we used to be what you call 'mechanics,' 'scientific mechanics,' and we worked at our trade like good, honest, respectable men, until the work give out. Now what are we, me and Dan? Just nothing at all — bums. 'Hoboes' they call us. But what's the odds? What's money, anyhow? Only the other day a man what rides in a carriage of his own, with a nigger on the box, axed me what was 'chewing my pardner,' meaning Dan, just because he was walking a little crooked after a whiskey or two. No cop on the street would have been mean enough to do that. What's money, anyhow?"

"Jerry," a phenomenally lean, good-natured old Irishman, was the butt of the establishment. Notice the sort of talk he was beguiled with:

"Is Jerry going to be in the parade to-morrow?" (St. Patrick's Day.)

"You bet your life he is, an' he's goin' to

wear a white plug hat with a green silk band around it, or, if he can't get silk, a band of the cloth that comes off that game they play with a stick. The Parker House 'll give him a piece of the cloth on their tables, 'cause he's one o' their best payin' customers."

"I hear he's goin' to ride in a hack with four horses."

"No, he ain't goin' to ride in no hack, but there's a stable over to the Back Bay has promised to lend him the loan of a pea-green mare an' a Mexican saddle all tied up wi' grass-green ribbons an' jinglin' wi' brass bells."

Jerry grinned at and acquiesced in it all, as though it were the very best fun in the world and another than himself were the victim

All efforts, however, to cajole him into singing an Irish song were bootless. When pressed, he blushed and fidgeted and refused as coyly as a girl. An Irishman beside him thought to start him off in spite of himself by singing a few bars of a favorite Irish air in a soft, high voice. Jerry felt the full force of the temptation. He swayed back and forth, beating time with his whole body and seemed several times on the point of vocal expression; but, for all that, he did not vocalize. He was quite too cunning to be trapped by any such trick.

A fat, nervous, little French notion pedler afforded the room much sport; but he did not, like Jerry, take the raillery in good part. His irritability so delighted his persecutors, some of whom were intoxicated, that they began to emphasize their jokes by physical means (slaps on the back, etc.), and the desk-clerk was finally obliged to interfere in Frenchy's behalf. Such a fussy, fastidious little fellow as he was quite out of place in the midst of the rough jocularity of a cheap lodging-house, though he appeared contented enough as soon as he was well rid of his tormentors. He deftly rearranged his pedler's pack, darned a pair of stockings, carefully brushed his tiny "peanut derb," cut away the frayed edges of his collar and scrubbed its soiled spots. Then he took from his pockets and spread out on a newspaper a little meal of bread and cheese. Finally he rolled and smoked a cigarette with the air of a Sybarite.

Although the office-clerk felt it his duty to rescue the little Frenchman when the fun waxed too furious, he himself put up a practical joke on Steve, the irony of which was much appreciated. Calling Steve to his desk he offered to pay him well if he would carry a pair of worn shoes to the nearest cobbler's. Steve went willingly. On his return he was rewarded with a pint bottle half

full of whiskey, which he accepted with a curiously crestfallen air. It seems that the night before Steve had put under his pillow a pint of whiskey, which he had forgotten to take out in the morning. This whiskey, in the natural course of things, had fallen into the hands of the desk-clerk, and he had taken toll of it to the extent of a full half pint before making up his mind to return it.

Soon after this a wonderful little scene was enacted. A long-armed, big-handed, shovel-footed, cross-eyed, unshaven, pimply monster, of not more than nineteen years, called "Loony," because he was only half-witted, took a small plug of tobacco from his coat pocket, and with a display of tragic emotion (as superfluous as that of a lover in burning the letters of a discarded mistress) placed it in the hands of one of his comrades. Then, fishing out from somewhere in the depths of his trousers, a soiled, crumpled scrap of paper, he borrowed a stub of a pencil from another comrade, and begged a third to write down plain on the paper these words: "On Wednesday, the sixteenth of March, the day before St. Patrick's, Loony Horrigan gave up the chew." When Loony was satisfied that the writing (which he could not read) was properly done, he made a tour of the room, proudly displaying his pledge. Then he

stowed it away in his vest pocket as solemnly as if it were a keepsake locket. Several times later in the evening I saw him take it out, spread it flat on his knee, and fondly trace the lines of the writing with his fingers. Whence the impulse to such a grotesque ceremony of abjuration came to this poor, addled brain it is idle to surmise.

THE FAIRMOUNT HOUSE: THE WORST OF THE LOT

THE Fairmount House bears a particularly hard name. There walls are blacker, windows duskier, sheets yellower, wash-basins greasier, towels stickier, and floor accumulations of bacteria-filled saliva older than in any other lodging-house of Boston. Worse still, bed-bugs and fleas are there supplemented by the far more noxious body-lice.

The missionaries are down on the Fairmount House because it refuses them the privileges of exhortation and tract-distribution. The better class of lodgers shun it because of its disorder and dirt. And the police call it "a nest of thieves." Its notoriety is amply deserved.

It is altogether the worst of a bad lot. Yet, with a certain class it is very popular. Indeed, I have found it far from easy to get a bed there. Several times I was turned away because every bed was taken, and I

barely succeeded, finally, by applying very early in the evening. The desk-clerk at first shook his head, then relented. "Yes, I'll give you a bed," he said, "just to teach the other fellows a lesson. Some of them will loaf around till eleven o'clock at night before they step up to pay for their beds, and then expect them to be ready. I'm not going to reserve beds that way any more, and the sooner they find it out the better for them."

There were several settees in the office, but no chairs, settees having been put in the place of chairs, for the same reason, it may be, that the second Napoleon substituted asphalt for paving-stones in Paris — to avoid *mêlées*. I took the only available seat. This was next a settee completely occupied by a sleeping man whose bare feet were very black from walking on the floor. The feet were towards me and near me.

The walls were free from printed rules and Scripture texts, and this was a real relief. There is no check on revelry except that which is imposed by the fear of attracting the police from the street. This lodging-house, at least, has no taint of hypocrisy.

Only a few of the men present had the bearing of honest laborers. The majority had all the marks of vagrancy; some were

unquestionably "crooks." Of the last class, a small group, mostly young men, was holding an earnest consultation in a corner. They cautiously employed whispers and undertones. Still I was able to catch scraps of their talk; enough to make it plain they were busily devising swindles and other knaveries. These men were veritable citizens of the world, quite as familiar with New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Glasgow, Liverpool, and London, as with Boston.

Their business attended to, this whispering row of crooks began to circulate a brown bottle, and soon they were talking loudly on indifferent themes. They compared the jails and prisons of various sections, displaying as much pride of connoisseurship as other men do in their talk of wines and horses. One prison, for instance, was especially undesirable because the food was bad and not even your most intimate friends or relatives were ever allowed to see you; another was especially desirable because you had excellent food, could see all the company you chose, and were liberally supplied with pipes and tobacco. And so on.

That these men were aware of the bad name of the Fairmount House was plain enough. "Once you spend a single damned night in this lodging-house, you're set down

by the cops as a stealer or a bum," said East Boston, and no one of the group thought of denying that he was right and that the cops were right, too.

After a time they somehow fell discussing the possibility of passing foreign coins in the United States. In this discussion some had recourse to experience and some to *a priori* reasoning. The evident leader of the gang waited, with an air of forbearance, till all the others had talked themselves out; then, without deigning an appeal to either experience or reason, summed the case up and settled it with a single dogma. "It can't be done. Taking foreign coin? That's broker's business, you damned idiots." Just at this point, by a remarkable coincidence, a man entered and tried to make the clerk give him a bed for an English shilling. The clerk refused flatly, whereat our dogmatic friend was jubilant, plainly looking upon the clerk's refusal as a direct interposition of Providence in his favor. "There, do you see that?" he cried; "that proves it. Didn't I tell you? Why, it's broker's business; of course it is."

Later in the evening, this man took me one side, under pretence of asking for a chew of tobacco; in reality, for the sake of sounding me. It may have been my tart

answers to his questions, or it may have been my disreputable trousers. At any rate, whatever influenced him, he was quickly satisfied that I was "solid." He promised to let me in on the ground floor of a scheme that would fill my pockets with money in no time, and was just about to do so when our attention was diverted to "Chubby," and — I am still poor.

Chubby is a sensual-eyed pugilist. He looks too much of a porker to be a pugilist, but he is really a marvel with his fists. When he yarns about one of his fights, nothing else goes on — the whole room is breathless.

Listen to Chubby yarning:

"Yer knows Meg Riley, the old girl wid the pink rims to her eyes like a ferret's got an' the water sizzlin' out of 'em, an' the copper-wire hair; her w'at hung 'round Foley's all last fall fer any sort o' booze yer'd tip her. — *You* needn't look so set up, Bruiser McFee, just because she's 'been complaisant to yer,' as the novel-books say it. Many's the jay as the old bitch's 'been complaisant to' before yer, fer a five-cent whiskey; an' she cost you a quarter, an' the whiskey fer luck, an' that yer can't deny. — Well, I'll be damned ef there's a female refuge in Boston w'at hain't done its part to set Meg up in business again, w'en she's been played out, though little they

knows it. Meg's that sly they don't smoke her, no more nor Bruiser here does.

"Just now, they tell me, Meg's took a suite at the Chardon Street Temporary Home, one of her favorite hotels. Yer see she's got inter bad shape lately from hellin' 'round wid Bruiser an' a lot o' scaly hoboes w'at can't show no clean bill o' health like I can. She's not much shakes now, I c'n tell yer, even if Bruiser here does think he picked a whole crate o' Crawford peaches w'en he got a holt of her.

"But w'en Meg first give up the bloods fer the bums, yer c'n jest bet she was one o' the finest, an' I never had a better two summers than the ones she took to the road wid me. She was that faithful to me, too, as you couldn't believe, considerin' of her past. W'y, barrin' the fac' we didn't have no kids, 'twas that domestic 'twas most ekal ter bein' a family man, an' havin' yer pew in church an' payin' yer poll tax, an' eatin' baked beans reg'lar Saturday nights an' fish balls Sunday mornin's.

"'Twas all along o' her I had my last fight. Yer see ther' was a stranger chap come inter Foley's one night dressed like a sport. Meg up an' asked him fer a drink (as is always the privilege of a lady) as perlite as ever she did anythin' in her life, an' Meg warn't never

no slouch for manners. Any hobo'd 'ave given it to her if he'd had it ter give, but this washed-out pimp of a sport insulted her straight to her face.

"He looked 'round waitin' fer us fellers ter laugh, an' I waited fer him ter 'pologize. Well, we didn't laugh and he didn't 'pologize — that is, not then. Quick's he seen he'd made a mistake, though, he took kind o' dazed like, an' begun backin' away, a feelin' fer the door. Then I lit on ter 'im, an' I stuck to 'im like a puppy sticks to a root till yer couldn't tell no more by lookin' at 'im w'ether he was a sport or old Foley's mop rag, he was that juicy. Much's ever's he cud get breath ter 'pologize or find where on his face his mouth was ter do it wid. If he didn't sleep that night an' one or two more at the City Hospital, my name ain't Chubby Bronson.

"W'ile I was a-doin' the fightin', Meg was that wild fer fear I'd get hurted it took three men ter holt her off. Ef she'd got a show at that sport she'd a clawed his eyeballs out an' chawed 'em mushy an' spit 'em back in his face. God! but the old girl's got life in her yet, if she does have to go into dry dock for repairs middlin' often! I'm no hand to pick up a row" (it is true that Chubby rarely fights nowadays except for a woman), "but

if Bruiser here, or any other dorg-gasted mick, don't be respectful wid Meg, he'll find himself a bunkin' in the hospital same way's that sport. Meg can't hold out much longer, 'thout she strikes an easier gait, an' she's goin' to be treated square w'ile she lasts, an' don't you think she ain't."

Chubby's half-noble tale called out tales of winter debaucheries in low dance-halls and hotels, cheap boarding-houses, and bawdy-houses, and summer wickedness under the stars; tales that may not be told for their vileness — even sodomy had its leering enthusiasts.

This sickening display of filth, for its own sake, was followed by a grotesque religious conversation between a Catholic Irish-American and a colored Baptist. The colored man did not wish to talk, but he was forced into saying a few words by the aggressive disputatiousness of the Celt.

"I never seen only two niggers," the latter began, "I'd call half-men. All the rest o' the niggers 'll razor yer when yer back's turned. These two was priests. They's no niggers good only nigger priests. Ef you niggers 'd only get ter be Catholics yer might make some decent sort o' men o' yourselves."

Here the Baptist objected to being called a "nigger."

"Well, that's what y' are, ain't ye?" continued the other. "Yer ought ter be glad ter be called what y' are. Ain't I Irish, and ain't I glad ter be called Irish? No, yer can't come none o' yer high-flappin' airs on me. Yer can't pull me down, ef I am a muck."

"Ah wan' yo' t' talk sumfin' else'n 'ligion. Ah don' nevah talk no 'ligion wif no man nor no pol'tics."

"Who said anythin' 'bout politics? Politics hain't got nothin' ter do with it. Religion's got ter do with good men; politics with God damned frauds. An' you here try ter switch me off on ter politics, 'cause yer hain't got the sand to talk 'bout the kind o' religion you've got. Yer call yourself Baptist, an' think Baptist's got somethin' ter do with religion. Baptist! It hain't got nothin' more to do with religion than politics has. Who's the great man yer can name's a Baptist? John L. ain't no Baptist, an' Corbett ain't no Baptist — yer know that yerself — nor nobody else that ever did anythin' worth talkin' of. Now, then, what is Baptist? Can yer tell me that? What does Baptist signifercate? Ef yer asked me what Catholic is, I could tell yer."

"Ah a'n't a-goin' t' ask yo'," was the cunning reply. "Yo' talk to' much wifout no askin'."

"Well, I c'n tell yer, just the same, an' I want yer to onderstand I know all about what Christian'ty is, ef I am a muck, and Christian'ty hain't got nothin' to do with Baptist, that's sure. That's sure."

The Baptist made no answer, but clapped his hands to his ears and beat a hasty retreat for the street.

There was a melancholy interest about finding people on this low plane of life sure of their own orthodoxy and burning with zeal to damn others for heresy.

The elaborate method by which confusion and dispute are avoided, in taking the beds at the Fairmount, is worthy of a better house. When a lodger is ready for bed, the desk-clerk gives him a number and takes charge of all his belongings except the clothes on his back. An *employé* named Peters, stationed at the foot of the stairs, shouts this number to another *employé* named Nolan, stationed at the head of the stairs. Nolan repeats it in a loud voice for accuracy's sake, and conducts the lodger to his proper cot.

The experienced lodger, after undressing, carefully tucks all his clothes — even his shoes — under the pillow and mattress. At Moody's it is safe enough to leave your belongings on the office benches through the day, and your clothes on the bed-room floor

at night. But, at Moody's, is only one gang. At the Fairmount House are several gangs, and they prey on each other mercilessly. Woe to the man who prowls about — however innocently — after the lights are blown out for the night! Ten to one he will be roughly handled. According to a Fairmount House tradition, a somnambulist was nearly pummelled to death there once, before explanations could be made.

Still, bed-time at this house did not mean sleeping-time, by any means. The fun, begun below, waxed more uproarious, if possible, above. The swearing, drinking, and smoking went on. There was coarse, half-witty chaffing from bed to bed, sometimes across the room, and there were pillow fights, and rough, good-natured scufflings by stark-naked men. At midnight, after about an hour of this sort of revelry, which, low-lived as it is, yet goes far to atone for the squalor of the surroundings, we were ready to sleep.

Ready, but not permitted. For fully an hour and a half we were kept awake by the crazy garrulity of an aged man. At first his ape-like jabberings were diverting; later, as we got really anxious to sleep and could not, our amusement naturally turned to anger. But no threats of violence affected this talking-

machine in the least. The more we tried to shut him up, the firmer he held his right to "thalk far ter kape awake" until 2:30, when he had to go to West Somerville to "take a job in a shtable." He also claimed plenary indulgence on the ground that within a month he was going to be shipped to San Francisco at the expense of a son-in-law, though what that had to do with the case we were quite unable to see.

"Shure an' oi'm goin' out at har-r-f-past two, oi am, now. Oi'll be tin thousand miles beyant here, fine on me way to San Fanchusco, on the inside av a moonth," he kept repeating.

The old man was too feeble to be "slugged," but the night-watchman (whose threats availed as little as our own to stop the old fellow), fearing violence to himself if we were exasperated much further, ordered him out of the house. He was willing enough to give up his warm bed for the sidewalk, but not to stop talking. In this respect he was game to the last. He was allowed, before starting, to cover his wrinkled nakedness with his shirt. In this simple process he managed to consume much time, and his tongue wagged faster than ever. Consequently he was directed to take the rest of his clothes in his arms and finish dressing in the office.

At the head of the stairs he suddenly bethought himself of his shoes, which he had purposely left behind under his pillow, and in the journey to and from his bed, this cunning of his made necessary, he "trailed clouds" of talk, of course. Even when he was got into the office, his high-pitched, rhythmical voice continued to be heard in the sleeping-room. How long I cannot say, for it served as my lullaby — is, in truth, the last thing I remember of the night, except an occasional twinge of pain, as the bite of an insect, of more prowess than the common run, roused me into a brief semi-consciousness.

APPRECIATION

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON claims to have known a beggar-tramp in Scotland whose chief diversion was reading and exploiting the English poets, notably Shelley and Keats. I have not yet discovered an American lodging-house tramp with a Shelley-Keats enthusiasm, but I do not despair of doing so, for I have had among my lodging-house room-mates several men who showed traces of refinement. Indeed, the intelligence of the lodging-house tramp seems to be very much underrated.

He can usually read and write, and does read the newspapers. Within the range of his profession (a somewhat narrow range, it is true) his perception of the workings of the human heart and mind is keen, almost unerring. The lodging-house, in which he passes a large part of his time, affords abundant mental friction. Every conceivable topic is freely discussed there, where propriety bars out nothing. I subjoin a list

of the topics of a single day: Millionaires, John Boyle O'Reilly, the suppression of prostitution, Barnum's Circus, the Pope's last Encyclical, President Cleveland, David B. Hill, the characters of aldermen, the Salvation Army, the Turco-Russian War, Sunday closing of saloons, the Australian ballot, the Corbett-Kilrain fight, the expulsion of the Jews from Russia, and Home Rule for Ireland.

Points of criminal law which only legal experts are able to decide, are favorite subjects of debate. Over the right to self-defence I have seen a room divided into three boisterous factions: 1. Those who held that you must do all you could to get away before you had a right to fight. 2. Those who held that you could "slug" back if you were "slugged," but that you could not use a dangerous weapon unless you were attacked with a dangerous weapon. 3. Those who held you could fight in any way you pleased. The faith of the disputants is always sufficient for much betting, but, as in disputes the world over, a conclusion is rarely reached.

Thus the men are, in effect, members of a flourishing debating club, holding nightly meetings. Each, without conscious effort, becomes a repository for the facts and ideas

belonging to all the others. That these facts and ideas are often of slight value is true enough, but so, for that matter, are the facts and ideas bandied about in "society." And yet "society," whatever its defects, does unquestionably develop versatility and ready wit. It is the same with the lodging-house.

Furthermore, the tramp-lodgers find the Public Library a handy place to take naps in, at the cost of a modicum of reading. Above all, they have the unhampered leisure which we are often told is indispensable to culture.

They display many interesting human qualities. There is real *esprit de corps* among them. The social obligation is heartily accepted. "Bearing one another's burdens" means more to the average lodger than to the average church member. "You wouldn't pick a man up and give him a drink if you found him layin' pegged out in the street. No, you wouldn't, not even if you had had a good day," I heard one lodger say to another in a white heat of anger. Not to share one's luck with one's pals is the only unpardonable sin.

For all that, there are hard and fast class distinctions. The man who pays twenty cents for a bed lets no chance slip to display his superiority over the fifteen-cent lodger, and

so on down, and the less ignorant have a comical way of patronizing the more ignorant.

Reflections upon the respectability of the tramp fraternity are bitterly resented. My Scotch friend, Sandy, happening to overhear a lodging-house keeper call his patrons "hoboes," was almost beside himself with rage. "I dinna care what we call oursel's," he blurted out; "but it's no right for him to talk about hoboes. He couldna keep this place gaein' but for you and me, wha hustle on the street. It's no right!" There was an amusing assertion of self-respect on another occasion, when one of the men ventured to speak slightingly of the lodging-house. "We're glad enough to get it, you know that yourself, and you ought not to run down the House. It's just as respectable as the big hotels. Don't we pay our way? They say the cops are goin' to bag us, if we don't quit hustlin' on the street. I'd like to see the cop that could call me down for strikin' a man for a nickel. I'd say it to his nose, too."

The sense of justice is crude but strong. There was a general outburst of righteous indignation when a newspaper item was read aloud announcing exceptionally light sentences for two murderers. "It's a dirty

shame! Why, tramps get more than that! Tramps are getting treated worse than murderers nowadays, if that in 'The Globe' is true, and nobody can say tramps does anybody any harm."

Criticism of penal institutions is always satirical — sometimes more satirical than just. For instance, this on the prison physician:

"He just takes a look at you when you're sick, and for all of him you'll be dead in half an hour. What does he care? You're nothin' to him. You're lucky, I'm thinkin', if he don't give you medicine to kill you, so he can have the fun of cuttin' you up. That's what he likes best of all, the bloody butcher."

Sensitiveness to slight or insult is at once greater and less than elsewhere, which really amounts to saying it works along different lines. Direct personal abuse is ignored, while serious imputations against character are discerned in the most trivial and impersonal remarks. Once discerned, these imputations are resented by words, and not blows, for the most part. Threatened blows rarely materialize.

Lodgers are, oftener than not, polite in their dealings with men, and chivalrous in their treatment of women. In lines formed for the receipt of food or raiment from

bureaus of charity, the women are unhesitatingly given precedence by them.

In the last analysis, the lodgers' code of honor is not essentially different from that which prevails in the world of trade, and, granted the code, they are as loyal to it as other people are to theirs. Even the crooks of the Fairmount House were fierce in their denunciation of "a man who would sell himself for a dollar," when it looked as though a lodger, who had been sent with that amount on an errand, was not coming back.

They are philosophers, these lodgers, and their philosophy is not to be despised. They literally take life as they find it and question not the mystery of the future. If business is bad to-day, they are not depressed. They simply shrug their shoulders with a "Well, we'll have to hustle to-morrow." "Don't go a-wranglin' about that. There are plenty of tens in the street," I heard one of the adepts say to two comrades who were disputing about ten cents in change; and that settled the dispute.

Furthermore, they are so consistent in taking life as they find it that they appreciate the humor of their very hardships. "Never mind, it's only for to-night, we'll take apartments in the Vendome to-morrow," counselled

Fatty when Snipe cursed the cold beds at Gunn's. The very audacity of Fatty's suggestion supplied inordinate mirth to a roomful. "I wouldn't dare to go near any doctor now," grimly remarked my friend, Ginger, as he coolly examined the painful vermin bites all over his body. "If a doctor should catch a sight of a spotted thing like me, he'd send me to Honolulu for a leper."

The cheap lodging-house is not an accident in city life. In the first place, it is the poor man's hotel. A poor man must sometimes travel, and when he does travel he patronizes such hotels as he can afford. He cannot pay a dollar a night for a room, and if he could he would not feel at home in it.

It satisfies the social instinct. A permanent private lodging with more physical comforts can be had for about the same money, but the public lodging is more sociable. The latter has all the salient attractions of the country corner grocery and the city club. For this reason it attracts all sorts of unattached men — sandwich men, street hawkers and pedlers, street musicians, cheap showmen, fakirs, teamsters, and even mechanics and cheap clerks, as well as beggars.

It admits of rare freedom of movement. Bad habits render the tenure of private lodgings insecure, and, in any event, there are

chafing restraints about private houses. The freedom Charles Lamb predicates of the beggar is that also of the lodging-house *habitué*:

"He is the only man in the universe who is not obliged to study appearances. The price of stock or land affecteth him not. The fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity touch him not, or, at worst, but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one. No man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics. He is the only free man in the universe."

It favors the lazy carelessness that regards all forethought as waste thought, and that makes it a rule to follow the line of least resistance, wherever it may lead. Regular weekly or monthly payments of rent must be wearily planned for; daily payments cast no shadows before.

It satisfies the gaming instinct. Every day is an uncertainty; every day is a lottery-drawing. The prize — a bed, a meal, a drink, a smoke, and fireside gossip; the blank — none of these luxuries, or the first two only, spoiled because worked for and accompanied by the indignity of an involuntary and disagreeable bath.

To sleep for the first time in a tramp lodg-

ing-house, to beg for the first time on the street, induces the same gasping faintness and chill along the spine as does the first projection from a toboggan trap; but the glide that immediately succeeds is almost equally swift, smooth, and delicious with the glide along the toboggan chute. Here the analogy ends. The toboggan soon stops gliding, — the beggar never, at least not in this world, and in the next? *Quien Sabe?*

When the discouraged out-of-work becomes a street beggar, there is no temptation to become anything else — for once the barrier of pride is thrown down, it is far more interesting, if not far easier, to beg than to work. And I am not at all sure that vain pleading for work, week after week, and month after month, does not produce a more despicable abjectness than begging.

"I have picked up boys from begging to serve me, who soon after have quitted both my kitchen and livery, only that they might return to their former course of life, and I found one afterwards picking up mussels in our neighborhood for his dinner, whom I could neither by entreaties or threats reclaim from the sweetness he found in indigence. Beggars have their magnificences and delights as well as the rich." So wrote Montaigne, wisest of men, three hundred years

ago, and in this, as in many other respects, his wisdom is surprisingly up to date.

Tramp lodging-houses may be a perpetual menace to the well-being of the community. I do not deny that they are. But to the lodgers themselves, the absolute freedom of movement, constant excitement and good-fellowship of the lodging-house life make it, in spite of its many hardships and vulgarities, a fascinating thing withal.

Small wonder that once a bum is always a bum.

A TENEMENT STREET

TURLEY STREET is about one-eighth of a mile long and fifteen feet wide from curbing to curbing, and has three-and-a-half-foot sidewalks. Brick and wooden houses are in about equal proportion. Many of the wooden houses are thirty years old — a few are still older. These are small and low. The brick houses, belonging to a later period, are four-storied. The street is in a transition from wood to brick. Not more than a block to the right is a street whose houses are all of wood — this is Turley Street as it was. Not more than a block to the left is a street whose houses are all of brick — this is Turley Street as it is to be. The half of the street known as Upper Turley stubbornly resists the march of progress. Several of its wooden houses even have little grassless yards at one side, and one of these yards is shut off from the street by a tall picket fence and a padlocked gate. The brick houses of Lower Turley, however,

stand wall to wall in evidence of the increase in land values: eighteenfold within the century is the record of a spot not far away. The houses with side yards dry their clothes therein; those without, are forced to use the roofs, which are made fit and secure by high, unpainted scaffoldings and fencings.

Three small one-and-a-half-story houses are occupied by a single large family each, the rest by three to ten families.

Tenements have from one to six rooms, most of them three. Rents of three-room tenements vary from $1.75 to $2.50 a week. One of the best of these is the second floor of Number 9, Upper Turley, rent, $2.50. The kitchen is a twelve by fifteen room, lighted from a single window which overlooks a five by eight back yard, odorous of the garbage-barrel. It has a rough, unpainted floor; high, dark-colored mopboards; painted walls, a small sink with a water-faucet, a fair-sized dish-closet, and a diminutive chimney-cupboard, which must be very handy for keeping things dry and warm. Out of one end of the kitchen opens an eight by ten room with a tiny closet, and with two tiny windows also overlooking the back yard. Like the kitchen this has dark woodwork, painted walls, and an unpainted floor. The third room is about the same size as the kitchen. Its two win-

dows command the street, and it alone, of the three, gets sunlight enough to have a real cheerfulness. This cheerfulness is increased by bright wall-paper and white woodwork. The floor once had paint, but it has about as little to show for it as an exhumed Greek statue or the face of a *demi-mondaine* after a bath. Two small holes in the wall serve for clothes-closets. All the rooms are low-studded; all have mantel-pieces and whitewashed ceilings. Between the front room and the kitchen is the stair-landing, lighted by a ground-glass window in the daytime, not lighted at all at night. Its floor and the stairs leading to and from it have so rolling a surface that they induce a sensation not unlike intoxication, particularly in the dark.

In this tenement live the MacGregors — father, mother, and six boys and girls. The front room is sitting-room and parlor. As the show-room of the house it has pictures and a carpet. It has to be used as a bedroom, however, by Mr. and Mrs. MacGregor and the two youngest. The vulgar disguise of the folding-bed has not yet invaded Turley Street; consequently the functions of the room as a chamber rather overshadow its other functions. The rest of the MacGregors are packed away at night in the

small back-room. The stair-landing, so far as the landlord allows, is used for storing slop-pails, swill-buckets, and similar non-stealable articles. The MacGregors have the good sense to take no lodgers. The same cannot be said of all their equally cramped neighbors.

Number 9, and all the other houses of the street, are connected with the city water and sewerage systems; but no one of them has gas, a hot-water heater, a bath-room, or — trifling but portentous detail — a fly-screen. One badly kept water-closet, located in the cellar, has to answer for all the families of a house. Padlocked wood-boxes and coal-bins, as many as the number of families, are also in the cellar. Many of the cheaper tenements are squalid and out of repair and have very defective drainage.

Turley Street is between, and at right angles to, two of the great highways of the city, Lafayette and Greenwood avenues — Lafayette given over to business, Greenwood, to factories and tenements. It debouches, however, not into either, but into two unimportant back streets, Cumston and Green. Upper Turley, so narrow is Cumston Street, seems to impinge on the back of a four-story brick stable, whose lower doors and windows (not being in use) are barricaded with weather-

stained planks. The upper windows are grated, begrimed, and cobwebbed. A dismal, jail-like prospect for every day of a man's life! Lower Turley faces a more animated if not more cheering picture. Green Street, at its junction with Turley, has a large vacant lot, which leaves the tenement-houses of Greenwood Avenue uncovered in the rear, with all their unsavory details of roofs, back windows, and outbuildings.

Turley Street has little warmth of color except that of nature at sunset and that which an occasional massing of bright dresses about a door-step or an array of gay woolens on window-sills or clothes-lines provides. The original dull-gray paint of the wooden houses has grown duller and grayer with age, where it has not entirely disappeared by peeling; the bricks have lost their pristine freshness; the blinds have faded from green to a color sombre and unnamable. Nevertheless, if the street has not brightness, it has scraps of picturesqueness — a dormer-window to which a discouraged plant or two is clinging; a shingled, unpainted, weather-beaten house-side bearing a three-portalled dove-cot and green trailing vines; and terraces of roofs crouching about the base of a lofty church with true Old-World humility.

The rough cobblestones with which Turley

Street is paved are rendered well-nigh harmless to the feet by the accumulations of dirt in their interstices, as well as by the miscellaneous rubbish with which they are more or less thickly strewn,— rubbish which might prove the key to the cipher of scores of human lives, if the man appeared with wit enough to use it. Here are apple cores, decayed peaches and tomatoes, cabbage stalks and corn husks, slices of fly-blackened watermelon, fishes' heads, a dead rat; broken bottles, dented tin dishes, rusty iron hoops, pasteboard boxes, crumpled newspapers, an unwound broom-head, a piece of carpet, a leg of a chair, a wrinkled show-bill, a decrepit umbrella, a ragged, black stocking, a lacerated section of window curtain, and a dismantled mop. True, a courtly member of the Street-Cleaning Department occasionally stalks through in the wake of the city garbage cart, selecting from the litter with the glance of a connoisseur such occasional pieces as seem consistent with his dignity; but a visit of this kind makes no perceptible impression. Rarely does the street get a more thorough cleaning. Only when rain enough falls to flood cellars does it appear unsoiled.

In Turley Street live about four hundred and fifty persons — a hundred families. Of this

hundred, three-fourths are Irish, and of this three-fourths less than half are Irish-American. Seven families are from Canada, five from Scotland, and five are native American. Of the remaining eight families, two are German, two Italian, one English, one Hebrew, one French, and one Negro. In religion, eighty-one families are Roman Catholic, ten Protestant, and one Jewish; the rest claim no church whatever. Of the heads of families, more than half are common laborers. Six are carpenters, four teamsters, three storekeepers, two hostlers, two brick masons, two engineers. Here are also a lineman, a carriage-washer, a fireman, a lather, a roofer, a cobbler, a piano-maker, an organ-varnisher, a machinist, a sailor, a fisherman, a bridge-builder, a bartender, a cook, and an *employé* of the City Street Department. Highly skilled labor, it will be observed, is very scantily represented, so that the men must be very few who make a wage of $2 a day the year round.

A majority of the mothers work out, though in a sadly irregular fashion, as washerwomen or scrubwomen. Some are dish-washers and seamstresses. One keeps store, one is a nurse, another a dressmaker, and two, at least, sell liquor. Others take in work to do at home. Very few confine themselves to their own housework.

The bulk of the young men are not content to follow in their fathers' footsteps as common laborers, or even to learn skilled trades. They try to enter what they consider more genteel callings. They become, among other things, cheap clerks, bartenders, ushers or ticket-sellers at theatres, assistants in pool-rooms, and managers of little cigar stores. Jim O'Brien, an erratic genius of thirty, living at Number 15, has been successively grocer's boy, telegraph messenger, blacksmith, wheelwright, coachman, teamster, bartender, handy man, and saloon scullion. He will probably end as a tramp.

The girls and young women, eager as the young men for genteel work, scorn not only washing and scrubbing but all sorts of domestic labor. They have not yet, however, caught from their strong-minded sisters the desire to forge independent careers. They are eager enough to marry. Consequently, they marry young, and after a few years of child-bearing are only too glad to wash windows and scrub floors, as their mothers did.

The boys nearly all sell papers (some only the Sunday papers), and on Sunday mornings a few black boots also. They drive parcel-delivery wagons and wear the uniform of the Western Union, and are

grocers' and market-men's errand boys on Saturdays; but these employments are looked upon as temporary expedients. The thing really desired is a place, no matter how humble, in some monster mercantile establishment. As a rule, nothing but the law keeps them in school, so keen are they to earn money and become merchant princes, victims of the fiction that, in America, a boy in a business-house has only to be honest and industrious to get to be, in a few years, a member of the firm.

As the body, physiologists tell us, is renewed every seven years, so in just about that time is the population of Turley Street renewed. Only a half-dozen families and a few old men and women persist like the enamel of the teeth.

There was a time when Turley Street had its resident landlords. That time is no more. To-day every resident is a tenant. Not a house is owned in the street. Within limits, the people are nomadic. The Whitings have changed their residence sixteen times in eight years, and there are many more families like them. Moving from house to house in the street is perpetual. And, once a family is out of the street, it describes a sort of circle in its migrations, like a pedestrian lost in the woods, eventually getting back, as a rule,

to the identical point it started from. It is also a curious fact that there is more moving between Lower Turley and half a dozen other streets within a radius of a quarter of a mile, than between Upper and Lower Turley. In the summer, Turley Street men occasionally work in the country on the farms of relatives or friends. Jim Boland, for instance, is just now taking care of pigs in Dedham. But there is practically no emigration to the country and very little new blood comes in from the country.

In the matter of worldly possessions, also, there is a very unstable equilibrium in Turley Street. Fluctuation is constant between comfort and poverty. Two-thirds of the families are on the lists of one or more charitable agencies. Of these, one-third are hopelessly dependent, another third periodically so. Very few of the independent third have bank accounts of any size. Whether the permanent trend is toward more comfort or more poverty it is impossible to determine.

Death makes widows and orphans in Turley Street as elsewhere. Of both, it has more than its quota, and the widows and orphans, almost without exception, are on the charity books. Economically considered, accident, illness, and desertion are, for a time, the same as death. John Jameson was a

good provider, but he disappeared one day, and Mrs. Jameson and the four small children have had a hard time to get along. Mr. Jameson is still alive, for he has been seen in California. He has not written home, however, since he went away, and has done absolutely nothing for his family.

When Mr. Johnson, a carpenter living at Number 35, was paralyzed by a fall from a staging a dozen years back, there was no longer a bread-winner for Mrs. Johnson and her five children. From that single point of view Mr. Johnson might as well have been killed by the fall.

Three summers ago Mr. Reagan was taken to the hospital very ill of kidney trouble. Mrs. Reagan was at that time in the last stages of consumption. Josie, aged fifteen, the eldest child, had bronchitis. The family not only got badly behind with their rent, but they were obliged to sell their bedding and clothes for food. It is hardly to be wondered at.

Improvidence works sad havoc with the family exchequer, and the havoc, cruelly enough, is as great when caused by inculpable ignorance as by wanton extravagance. Wasteful cooking, buying on instalments, insuring children, mortaging furniture at exorbitant rates, and other equally disastrous

practices, are far too common. When John Gorman, of Number 40, died, his wife received a $400 death benefit. She indulged in the luxury of a $110 funeral, and within a year was in need. But however much suffering is caused by the slackness and ignorance of the women, it is the rarest thing for a woman to be possessed of a clean devil. In Turley Street spring house-cleanings are no great hardships. Even dirt, it seems, has compensations.

Overproduction of children is another source of trouble. Whether the children live or whether they die, they are about equally expensive. There must be a sort of fatality about it, for the more desperate the family circumstances the faster the children come. And yet nature seems to smile on this form of improvidence in the long run. Children are transformed to bread-winners by time — the more children, the more bread-winners. Thus, the family dragged down at first by its surplus of children is often exalted by this very thing at the end. Comfortable old age comes quite as often to the heads of these large families as to childless couples, since the latter have no bread-winners to call on when they themselves cease to win bread.

Youthful marriages may end in pauperism. Seventeen-year-old Tim Flaherty mar-

ried fifteen-year old Annie Mulligan on little more than boys' wages. Now they are hopelessly involved. Annie might have deferred the evil day a trifle had not the children come so fast that she could not keep her working-places.

Terence Gorman, who had worked as a compositor twenty years, was thrown out of employment a couple of years ago by the substitution of female for male help. He has not been able to get work at his trade since, and he is totally unfitted for anything else, even day labor. He still has a little money left, but his prospects are exceedingly dark.

Annie Grogan has for six years been the mainstay of a fatherless family. At the beginning she earned high wages making gossamers. She still has fairly steady work, but wages in the rubber industry have been so reduced of late that the family have been running behind. They will soon have to apply for help, unless some of the younger children can be put to work.

Irregular employment is quite as disastrous in the long run as low wages. The person with steady, low wages always knows what *not* to depend on, and, given a fair amount of intelligent will-power, "cuts the garment according to the cloth," while the

person fitfully employed is always on the brink of a precipice.

Chronic intemperance of one or both parents, old age (prepared for, perhaps, seldom adequately prepared for), laziness, and pure "cussedness," all help to swell the amount of Turley Street poverty. Even United States pensions have worked indirect damage there.

During its thirty years or more of comparative seclusion, Turley Street has developed a life of its own that is far from being the dull, colorless, inhuman thing that popular opinion assigns to a tenement-house district; and this life resembles no one thing so much as the life of the typical New England village. This little community of four hundred and fifty people has: (1) A small bake-shop, about six feet by six, opening out of Mrs. Flanagan's kitchen and presided over by the genius of the kitchen, Mrs. Flanagan herself, who, like Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon, is apprised of customers by the tinkle of a little bell. (2) A cobbler's shop, installed as cobblers' shops are apt to be, in a tiny, dimly-lighted shed. The picturesque litter and rich, leathery odor that make cobbler shops perennially enticing, are both abundantly present. The cobbler is an old, gray, spectacled, long-bearded man who is very much

of a philosopher and an epigrammatist withal — the most flaring sign of his shop, "No trust, no bust," being an admirable example of his epigrammatic talent. The shop is a rendezvous for other (though inferior) philosophers and wits, and this is as it should be. (3) Three stores, one corner and two basement groceries, with bread, bundled kindling-wood, milk, and salt pickles for staple articles of traffic, but without the dry goods and the intellectual glory of the country corner grocery, for this — the glory, not the dry goods — is divided between the cobbler's shop and the kitchen bar-rooms, of which the street has at least three.

Like the calm of a village is Turley Street's atmosphere of deliberateness. Nervous prostration is unknown even by name. Joanna Murphy, a parchment-faced, swaying-gaited, thirty-years' resident, who buried her husband from this street and from it sent her children out to make their way in the world, frequently consumes half an hour in going from her house to the little bake-shop. On her way she chucks the tiny children under the chin, delighting their baby souls with grotesque Celtic baby talk. Everybody speaks to her and she speaks to everybody. Nor is this sociable dawdling confined to Joanna and those of her age. Rarely do

men or women go by an occupied door-step or window without "stopping," as the good old rural phrase is, "to pass the time of day."

In spite of the presence of the groceries, there is the same borrowing from door to door — a lump of butter, a cup of sugar — as in the village; the same calling in of neighbors' children to run errands, the same use of "Miss" for "Mrs.," the same strictly confidential tittle-tattle, the same habit of loud talking, the same impressive spending of pennies by the children, the same petty cabals, jealousies, and intrigues, the same eagerness to exhibit one's own bruises or deformities, the same willingness to show the sick and the dead to strange visitors, the same superstitions, the same, or rather a fuller, worship of the tea-pot, the same feeling of isolation from the rest of the world, the same pride in the petty things that differentiate one family from another, the same bragging over bygone prosperity.

"I used to be able to tell a good cigar," said Jack Watson, regretfully, but proudly, at a time when a cigar of any sort rarely came his way.

The Turley Street women talk across the street as village women do across back yards. They hold informal receptions on the door-

steps, go about bareheaded or with little shawls over their heads — never with hats on, except when they are going as far away as the avenues — and array themselves (when they go out *en grande toilette* to shop or to make calls) in the figured shawls that all country women wore a score of years ago and some wear still. They are quick to note a stranger, and almost equally quick to ask him his business. They crane their necks for a better view out of second, third, and fourth story windows, and scrutinize him from behind the first story blinds. After he is out of sight, they talk him over.

But the most significant expression of the spirit of village life in Turley Street, and a truly beautiful one, is the readiness of neighbors to help each other out of trouble. Prudential motives force this exercise of brotherly love to be kept so far out of sight in streets of this kind, that its amount is absurdly underestimated as a rule. The well-dressed visitors of charitable societies, however remote from charity their fabricated excuses for calling may seem to be, are yet known for what they are — a charity picket-line.

Eighty-year-old Bridget Mulcahy, toothless, but still bright-eyed, may be seen almost any fair day smoking her pipe on the

stoop of Number 20. Bridget has lived on Turley Street as long a time as anybody. Her husband, Jim, a day-laborer, died eighteen years ago. For seven years before his death he was blind, and this misfortune, joined to his good-nature, made him a favorite. Soon after Jim's death Bridget dislocated a shoulder, thereby permanently losing the use of her right arm. She became destitute. The neighbors lent her many things (cooking dishes and a comforter among them), and after a little, Michael Roe, who was himself behind with his rent, gave her a home in his family. Then her friends, "the boys from Ireland," "put up" a raffle for her which netted forty dollars. She rented a cellar room for fifty cents a week and took in two girl lodgers at ten cents a night. From that time to this she has lived in a cellar or a garret, and shared her room with girl lodgers; but she has depended for a large part of her support upon the raffles which the "boys" have continued to "put up" for her once or twice a year.

Three years ago, Michael Roe, by that time a widower, was stricken down with a fatal sickness. Then the "boys from Ireland" got their heads together again, and "put up" a benefit ball for Bridget's former benefactor. Tickets were fifty cents.

COMPLIMENTARY BALL

FOR THE

BENEFIT OF MICHAEL ROE

Will be given by his numerous friends

AT

UNITY HALL,

COR. TIFFANY ST. & LAFAYETTE AVE.,

FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 9, 1891.

MANAGERS.

(A list of thirty good Irish names.)

GOOD MUSIC. DANCING 8 TO 1.

The ball netted seventy-five dollars. There was something left toward funeral expenses when the old man died. Then another ball was given for the benefit of his three orphan children. Poetic justice even in Turley Street!

Raffles and balls are not the only Turley Street methods of fulfilling the law of Christ. The Talbots had been in the street only a week when their little boy died. Nevertheless, the neighbors went in with their sympathy as soon as a white rosette was tied to the door-bell. Frank Whitney, hopelessly in consumption, but possessed of a super-

stitious dread of going to a Home, has been taken in by Thomas Wood, who promises to keep him as long as he lives. The little help about the house that Frank can give Tom's wife is Frank's only possible return for the kindness. Neighbors send in little treats to the sick, share with each other the good things they have humbugged out of the charities, "mind" each other's children, give the use of their cooking-stoves, take in, for a time, evicted tenants, or women and children when the father is on a dangerous spree, and shelter unfortunate women during confinement.

Inspiring contrast all this to self-conscious, feather-pluming, race-benefacting charity! So natural and so human!

There are a freedom and a flexibility about Turley Street life quite unknown in the old-fashioned village. Familiar as village life is, it would scarcely tolerate a woman's combing her hair on the sidewalk, or such a race between married women, holding their dresses to their knees for greater freedom of movement, as this street witnessed and applauded a few weeks ago, particularly as one of the runners nearly lost her petticoat and was obliged to retire to a doorway to repair the damage, while the whole street jeered. It is significant of much, too, though a trifle in itself, that no Turley Street woman

would think of washing on Monday if it chanced to be a holiday, or even if there was anything else than washing she wanted particularly to do.

In fact, self-sufficient as its local life appears to be, Turley Street does not by any means escape the influence of the metropolis that surrounds it. The life of the great city acts constantly and strenuously upon it. Before all else stands the influence of the church. And, because Turley Street Protestants are only one in ten, and many of these hopelessly irregular in church attendance, it is fair to speak of the Catholic church alone — St. Stephen's — which splendidly dominates this and scores of other streets. Upon its stalwartness the people lean, and without its ceremonial sanction few important events occur in family life. By its pomp and circumstance this little band of vulgar people is brought into a conscious relation with nearly two thousand years of glory that is past, and with the present glory of Catholic Christendom — a relation that extends to a sense of ownership. Mysterious as the true nature of this relation and the true value of this ownership may be to them, it is none the less inspiring on that account. These people "believe in soul." They are "very sure of God," Christ, the Virgin, the saints, the Pope. A great

deal to be sure of at this end of the century! — enough, certainly, to impress their imaginations with the perpetual presence in the world of a Power, not themselves, "that makes for righteousness," enough, too, to lift them now and then out of themselves into union with that Power. Furthermore, the church, and the church only, to any considerable degree, diffuses the warm glow of ritualism over a life that otherwise would have little beauty and poetry in it.

How far the offices of the church affect the daily thinking is illustrated by the good Catholic mother with five children who only "counted them four" until the youngest had been christened. Turley Street tradition demands at the ceremony of confirmation a new dark suit and a soldier cap for boys, and a white dress and white slippers for girls. When, after many days of anxious preparation on the part of parents and relatives, the trim procession moves along the sidewalk of the avenue or up the church aisle, each boy with a white satin ribbon on his left arm and each girl with a white gauze veil, "they show like troops of the shining ones." That day brings presents of nickels and dimes and confectionery from godfathers, godmothers, and benevolent grannies, as well as a second name from the priest. Rarely, it is

easy to believe, does a boy grow into so hardened a villain as not to recall at times with a glow of true feeling the day of his confirmation; never does a mother forget the confirmation of her boy.

Extreme unction distinctly sobers, for a moment at least, the whole street. Then the priest becomes the visible messenger of Destiny. "Anointed for death!" The grim popular phrase goes up and down. The sign of the Cross is made, a prayer is murmured. Relatives who are not near enough to be torn with grief take a harmless vanity in the prominence into which their family name is brought, and in the assurance that all things are being done decently and in order.

The observance of Fridays and holy-days and Lent, as well as Sundays, is another factor in making religion palpable; and the Sunday-school and the sodalities play a prominent part in the lives of the children. The very money this church relation costs enhances its value as a religious force.

That the schools, with all their defects, materially modify the ideals of the children for the better is clear from the way in which, during the school season, they talk about their school work, and bring their out-of-school disputes to the touchstone of the teacher's dictum.

The city evening schools get very little patronage from Turley Street. Unfortunately nearly all its youthful ambitions are of the very near-sighted order. But the theatre is much patronized by all, and in its influence upon the young it comes after the church and the school alone. The two theatres close by are the only ones much attended — another evidence of the strength of neighborhood feeling. Both these theatres are low-priced, and present, at the rate of a play a week, an almost uninterrupted repertory of highly moral melodramas whose sombreness is lighted by "variety" between the acts. As the patrons detect neither the improbability of the plots, the fustian of the sentiments, nor the crudity of the art, the influence of the plays they hear may be adjudged, in the main, uplifting. Stage-fever is often induced, no doubt, but it is rarely dangerous. It usually disappears at the first suggestion of stage drudgery.

Other outside factors of more or less importance in the life of the street are labor organizations, benefit and insurance orders, newspapers, prize-fights, races, ball-games, and ward politics.

Turley Street family life differs in important respects from the family life of the typical village; in nothing more, perhaps,

than in the parents' treatment of the children. Although the children have quite as much direct attention from the mother as in the wealthy city families which employ nurses, still they are not properly cared for. Vicious cruelty is rare. Mothers lavish affection enough upon their babies, but they are ignorant and thoughtless, and, above all, over-indulgent. If the family is eating corned beef and cabbage and the baby cries for it, the baby gets it. So with green fruit, liquors, and other equally unsuitable things. Anything rather than have the baby cry. Drugging is occasionally practised, usually for this same reason. Tiny creatures, one and two years old, who ought to be in bed at six o'clock, are allowed to creep or toddle around till ten; and children of four or five are sent on errands as late as eleven.

Respect for parents and obedience to parents are not largely inculcated; but this, sadly enough, is a growing evil in all grades of American life and does not reflect especially on these people. Filial relations, though they have less of courtesy, probably have as much sentiment here as in more prosperous streets. Boys are put to a good deal of cursory work for what it will bring, but they are not thoughtfully set to trades suited to their

tastes and talents, and encouraged in them. Girls grow up densely ignorant of housekeeping and needle-work.

Parents who have themselves never been able to save money are not likely to insist on their children's doing so. The little girl who conscientiously saved thirty-seven cents and then as conscientiously spent one, because her purse would only hold thirty-six, and so "mama wouldn't mind," does not live in Turley Street. Such financial precision is unknown there. True, several of the small boys have gathered money for the Fourth of July and the circus. Little Mamie Flanagan (daughter of the keeper of the bake-shop) has been saving for several weeks to get her pet dog licensed. Teddy Jameson is hoarding for an utterly impossible bicycle. But these are exceptions for which the parents are scantly responsible, and of which they are probably ignorant. The children know only too well that, sooner or later, they must forfeit to the family exchequer any considerable sum they succeed in putting by.

Inconsistencies are common, of course. The very parents who take real interest and pride in their children's progress at school thoughtlessly keep them out for a day or more whenever it happens to suit their own convenience; other parents make their chil-

dren lose whole terms by being too careless or bigoted to have them vaccinated.

Besides the change in the younger generation, shown by its eschewing manual labor, — would that this were an infallible proof of growth in character! — are occasional signs of change in the taste or in the code of etiquette of the elder. A house that makes any pretensions at all to gentility is pretty apt to have gaudy plush furniture — it makes an impression on the daughter's beau, you know — and a few cheap lithographs or chromos. It is sure to have a plush album. Mrs. Kimball, of Number 1, buys bottled beer and has it delivered at the door; she has grown too high-toned "to work the growler." Mrs. Butland regularly washes off her sidewalk. Mrs. Boland and Mrs. MacGregor have peep-curtains; Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Conlon lace curtains, and Mrs. Jackson a $2.00 copy of Scott's "Lady of the Lake," not to mention a flamboyant subscription-book, "Ireland in Poetry and Song," and Moore's "History of Ireland." Mrs. O'Toole's Katie has a blackboard in her bedroom, and Mrs. Budlong's Josie is taking lessons on the violin. Mrs. Grogan has stopped going without stockings. And while Mrs. Brannigan still smokes a pipe and Mrs. Quinn still wipes her nose on her apron, they are both a little ashamed; they do these things on the sly.

In Turley Street, as elsewhere, the children are easily first in amusements. Among them are pale, dirty, ragged, undersized, drawn-faced, vermin-infested specimens. Others are sickly, deformed, broken-spirited. There is an occasional mute or half-wit. The majority have to sell papers, run errands, mind the baby, forage for wood, and do other equally tiresome things. They are perpetually liable to summons and scoldings from doors and windows, and occasionally liable to "clubbings." Their most radiant sports are shadowed by fear of the "cop," for whom they are obliged to set a watch at each end of the street. Their fear of the truant-officer is still greater, in the school season, inasmuch as the blessed old privilege of "playing hookey" at the risk of one or, at most, two thrashings (at school and at home) is no more. Truancy is now barbarously classed as a crime, and may result in imprisonment.

In spite of all these drawbacks, the children of Turley Street, taken as a whole, appear as buoyant and happy as other children, and, in this matter at least, children are no dissemblers. They squat as readily in the middle of a street as they do on a chair or a door-step, play without stint in the dirt, — an only dreamed-of Paradise to many a well-groomed child! — and yet, with a

laudable catholicity of taste, take quite as keen a pleasure in fine raiment, when they have it put on them for state occasions, as if they were induced into it every day.

The older boys hie away to a distance to play ball, fish, swim, steal rides on trucks and market-wagons, and despoil aristocratic gutters and ash-barrels of fruit and finery. The younger boys occasionally visit Bowditch Square, a small park about a quarter of a mile away, to give a dog a swim in the basin of a fountain or to take turns in riding a rickety wooden bicycle. The girls, too, stray away at times, impelled by milder motives.

But, in general, the sports of both boys and girls are confined to the street or its immediate vicinity. Leap-frog, hide-and-seek, marbles, peg-top, jack-stones, stick-knife, cat's-cradle, duck-on-a-rock, shinny, snap-the-whip, and blind-man's-buff are as familiar to them as to other children. They swing, jump rope, blow soap-bubbles, walk on stilts, make mud-pies, build bonfires (in the middle of the street), pitch quoits, box, jump, and wrestle with as keen a zest. They have the same pets (not perhaps in as great numbers) — dogs, cats, doves, rabbits. Some of their pastimes are as distinctly perquisites of city life as bird-nesting, for example, is of

life in the country. Such are: seeing games of the national baseball league and the sports of the big athletic clubs, stealing rides on electric cars, practising high-kicking on the fenced-in roofs, dancing the skirt dance — it is beautifully done sometimes about a hurdy-gurdy or a German band — above all, going to the theatre.

They revel in plays of the imagination: play house, horse, school, and cars; white man and Indian, with a few clubs, some dirty, colored flannel, and, for a scalp, a shred of a fur carriage-robe; circus, with their dogs and cats; funeral, with a dead rat; Salvation Army, with a tin pan and a shattered, quavering old zither; Christmas-tree, with a dilapidated clothes-horse; and Robinson Crusoe, with a faded yellow parasol. They get up shows and charge pins for entrance.

They are normal enough to love disputes. Katie Townsend's proud display of a pear, one day, gave rise to a wordy altercation, the point at issue being who had had the most good things to eat since breakfast; and the boys have wrangled not one day only, but many in succession, over this question: "What one of youse could get a bicycle quickest ef he took a mind?"

The boys, furthermore, have a healthy fondness for a reasonable amount of fisticuffs.

The gang known as "the Turleys" thus settle a baseball dispute with the gang known as "the Greenies;" or they prevent "the Greenies" from giving a show in which "the Turleys" are reported to be satirized.

Who would not be a child again? For that, one would almost be willing to be born in Turley Street. If one were to be only a child and die in early life, it were as well, perhaps, to be born there as anywhere, for the end of childhood — to be happy — is fulfilled.

The German and Italian poor have a commendable habit of taking many of their pleasures out by families. Not so the people of Turley Street. Large numbers of family men forsake their families for the saloons and kitchen bar-rooms; a few for the theatres. The rest smoke their pipes stolidly in the window, on the doorstep, or in the kitchen, too tired to move about, too inert, too ignorant, or too much hampered by insufficient light to read — even the newspapers. The men who go to the saloon are not necessarily the worse; they may be simply the more enterprising. They go, no doubt, because they are thirsty, but also because of a strong social instinct. And in at least one of the saloons frequented by them there is considerable mental stimulus in the talk at the tables.

There are women in Turley Street who work regularly for others during the day, and wash, iron, and sew far into the night for their own families. These are exceptions. As a class the women here have more leisure than those of better-to-do streets. They ignore utterly the trifling household cares that worry the life out of the conscientious middle-class housekeeper, and they have none of the burdensome society obligations of the wealthy. They are always gossiping on the stairs. They stop for a chat at the grocery or the beer-shop. They often take possession of their doorsteps early in the forenoon and hold them until bedtime, leaving them only for meals or for other more animated doorsteps, sometimes pretending to sew, sometimes without even that pretence. A few women take their pleasures in the kitchen bar-rooms with the men, and some of these have brutal faces. But the faces of the majority of the Turley Street men and women are neither wicked nor wretched. They express stolid, animal content.

The young men and women, more sophisticated than their elders, dress in their best and betake themselves to the avenues: the young women to attend the dancing assemblies or theatres, or to flirt up and down the avenue sidewalks; the young men to be

where the young women are and to visit the saloons and pool-rooms besides. If they remain at home after work-hours they keep on their old clothes. Then the policeman on his beat is as much a Godsend to the young woman as he is to the traditional park-nurse. And there is curbstone love-making with the local beaux, whose amatory manners are little above those of country bumpkins.

Early quitting of work on Saturday afternoon gives the men time to rest and to change their clothes before evening. Saturday night is a lively occasion in the bar-rooms, the favorite season for avenue assemblies and for newsboys at the theatres. More people forsake the street in consequence, and from seven until eleven it is quieter there than on other nights, in spite of much passing in and out with pails of beer and Sunday provisions. After eleven o'clock the aspect of things changes. Intoxicated merry-makers straggle in. Jim O'Grady has an attack of vomiting on the sidewalk. Young Jerry Flanagan rattles the shutters and pounds the door of the bake-shop in vain. His mother will not let him in. She is giving him a much-needed lesson. Mrs. Mahoney and Jim White fall a fighting in the alleyway beyond the cobbler's shop and

are separated as dogs have been ere now, by having the contents of a slop-pail poured over them. Old Dolan, crazy drunk, emits a series of such unearthly yells that the people of Green and Cumston streets, who ordinarily pay no attention to drunken yelling, come in to investigate. At Number 27 and Number 40 carousing will go on until morning, and it will be a wonder if indoors does not become so cramped before then, that an adjournment is made to the roof.

A poor but pious Scotch Presbyterian widow, who wished to bring up her children to observe the Sabbath, differentiated Sunday from other days by keeping the children out of the square, putting starched clothes on them, and giving them a stew for dinner. The efforts of the people of Turley Street to distinguish Sunday are equally noticeable. No family permanently ignores it. And if any does so, temporarily, it is an infallible sign that it is "down on its luck," or that one or both parents are on a protracted spree.

The newsboys have to rise even earlier than usual in order to get their papers folded and be at the church gates with them by 6:30 — the closing time of early mass. All make, or have made for them, great efforts at fixing up. The men shave, put on white

shirts, polish their square-toed shoes, and conscientiously make themselves physically uncomfortable. Then, very ill at ease because of their unwonted smartness, but with a proud sense of being gentlemen — wearing good clothes and having nothing to do — they sit about in their shirt-sleeves, read the papers and smoke, not the every-day pipe, but, if may be, a cheap cigar.

Sunday is almost the only day on which it is possible to tell exactly how the children look, for then their faces are scrubbed and polished until they shine, and their comely little bodies are draped with garments that are not always clean, it is true, but are always fetching. A new toy is brought out for them or a new cart turned over to their use, and they are expected, except for the restraint that a consciousness of fine clothes naturally imposes, to frolic as vigorously as on week-days. The women array themselves in dresses of astounding fits and colors. Widows' weeds are common and are, as a rule, dirty, crumpled, and rusty from overmuch wear or neglect. Occasional instances appear, however, of excellent taste in dress, particularly among the young women. The young man decks himself out so loudly and clumsily that he appears a strange sort of cross between a green-goods man and his country victim.

Brand-new clothes, whoever wears them, never fail to attract the attention of the neighbors. When Jack O'Toole appeared in his first long-trousered suit, a new Derby hat, a standing collar, and an ambitious tie that nothing could keep from climbing the collar, every one took note and guyed him mercilessly about "looking so foine." Old Mag Maguire, "happy Mag," the street calls her, drunk as she was, sensed the humor of the situation and plastered him with burdocks in her mirth. All day long, poor Jack's face betrayed his misery, and his attempts to appear manly grievously miscarried. Even his five-cent cigar was a dismal failure.

Grown-up married children come home to the Sunday dinner. Here and there a devoted mother reads aloud stories of the saints to her children. Excursions are made by a few to the parks and the beaches. In the evening many are attracted to the theatres by the "sacred concerts," or stereopticon lectures. Most important and distinctive of all are the church services — early mass from 6 to 6:30, low mass from 9 to 9:30, high mass from 10:30 to 12; and to one or another of these services nearly every Catholic finds his way.

Backbiting is common enough in Turley

Street. Still, among themselves, in their simple neighborhood life, the people are so natural and so loyal that frankness and honesty prevail to a large degree, partly, perhaps, because there is so little to be gained by crookedness that it has not seemed worth while. But their relation to so much of the outside world as they are in any way physically dependent on — principally employers, landlords, and the visitors and agents of charitable societies — is one tangled web of deceit. Anything and everything asked is freely promised; in part, it may be, out of a false notion that a refusal of any kind is not good breeding. But promises once made are done with; thereafter they are naïvely ignored.

Successful perjury is venial. Mrs. Jenkins, for instance, almost begged to be allowed to swear in court that her Frank was a hopelessly stubborn child. She was really proud of his being quite the reverse. But she desired to have him committed for stubbornness instead of truancy, her reason being a more or less well-grounded preference for the institution to which stubborn children are sent over the one devoted to truants. That in perjuring herself thus she would not be doing a mother's full duty she never had a glimmering.

Men and women, unasked, assert that they would not touch a drop of liquor for the world, though they drink as a matter of course and are, at bottom, not ashamed of it. They have learned by hard experience that there is an absurd lack of distinction on the part of their would-be benefactors between drinking and habitual drunkenness. It is only natural that they should utilize their dearly earned knowledge to the best advantage. The parents are imitated by the children, of course. More than that, many of the children are forced to be steady deceivers for the benefit of the parental purse.

All of which causes one to wonder how much of the chronic untruthfulness is due to real moral depravity and how much to good-intentioned intermeddling with their affairs by the well-to-do, since this intermeddling has not only made it pay well to deceive, but, as in trampdom, has made success in deceit a thing to be mightily proud of. Temptations to easy living are hard to resist, and are none too much resisted in any grade of life. These people must not be judged too harshly for yielding to their peculiar temptation. There is little hope of integrity in Turley Street, until private haritable impulse, instead of indulging in the

exquisite luxury of giving, shall practise the difficult self-denial of leaving the people there, in matters of finance, to their own natural, noble village communism.

Many of the charity visitors have resorted to diabolical sharp practice in ferreting out damaging facts under the guise of friendship. These have found apt pupils, so apt that they are now being fleeced by their own tricks.

Servility, another striking moral defect, is really only another phase of this deceit for commercial ends. Flattery and cajolery, in fact, as well as direct deceit, have been put at a high premium by being too often mistaken for gratitude, and bountifully rewarded as such.

Intemperance is found in both sexes, and as much in the one sex as in the other. Speaking broadly, everybody drinks some. A majority, it may be, drink to excess now and then. On Christmas or on the Fourth of July it is *comme il faut* to be full. But this is not habitual drunkenness, nor anything like it. Habitual drunkards are, unquestionably, in a small minority.

Sexual immorality exists here as everywhere; it is not common enough to be appalling. There are no houses of prostitution. There are loose women, who, as the neigh-

bors express it, "have men hanging round them," and there are some couples living in *union libre*. The home life of the latter, however, cannot truthfully be said to be any less well-ordered than that of their more conventional neighbors. Mrs. Brannigan's Jenny, aged thirty-three, is officially known by the name of Mrs. Duncan, from Jim Duncan, with whom she has been living for several years without benefit of clergy; but her three children all bear the name of Brannigan. Rosa Brackett, now twenty-one, at fourteen a homeless orphan in a dance hall, was taken in by John Belasco and given a home. She has lived with him ever since. They have two children, and are apparently happy.

The dreariest feature of the Turley Street life is, oddly enough, the very thing that makes it superficially bright; namely, the perfect content with a low standard of living which springs from an extreme poverty of ideals. This is evidenced by nothing so much as by the ignoble things that kindle pride. The men, in particular, take their hard work unquestioningly, though they feel no pleasure in it.

One of the saddest manifestations of this sad satisfaction is a benumbing of the energies of the young, when they leave school, or when, outside incentives to work being taken

from them by the necessity of bread-winning, they are left practically at the mercy of their immediate environment. Growth is at once arrested and rarely recommences. More than that, these young people often lose so large a part of what they have gained as to fall back to the level of their parents' lives. Energy and persistence — strenuousness of every sort — is lacking. Over work and poor food alone are enough to render flabby any sort of original sinew.

Content becomes positively harmful, when it results, as it does here, in a moral denseness which amounts to an absolute inability to make distinctions, — to appreciate that anything whatever may not be done that does not bring reprisal from the priest or the policeman.

There is desultory thieving by the Lower Turley toughs. Some of the women who work out pilfer from their employers. Gangs of imaginative boys occasionally get into serious trouble with the police. There is, however, no thieves' passageway from this to another street, as in some sections, and no organized band of adult thieves.

In conversation, the people have a refreshing habit of calling a spade a spade. Pregnancy is nothing to be ashamed of, and does not force retirement from society. Conven-

tional sensibilities would be shocked by the vulgarisms of Turley Street, but deliberate obscenity is hardly more common than among the better-to-do.

To further illustrate the life, no better way appears than a history of a day, for, in a street, which, like this one, is not a highway, everything has significance.

At four A.M. nothing is stirring but cats and milk teams. In between the rumblings and the yawlings there is a great silence. Light is just beginning to break.

At 4:30 Barney Quirk's chanticleer — faithful monogamist perforce, inasmuch as Barney keeps but a single hen — crows his first crow. He is answered by another chanticleer a block away. Pigeons light in the street and eat diligently, taking advantage of this their only opportunity in the day to feed undisturbed by children. Soon smoke begins to issue from the chimneys, showing that breakfast is being prepared under roof.

It is 4:45 when the first person appears out-of-doors — Tom Fitzgerald, lame, bent, and haggard, known as "Lame Tom." He lights his clay pipe on the doorstep and hobbles reluctantly to work, earlier than others, probably because his bad leg makes walking slower.

At five o'clock the stores have taken down their shutters, and shawl-wrapped women are getting breakfast supplies from them. Occasionally a shawl disappears around a corner; when it reappears, it shelters a pitcher of beer. A lean, chalky, bare-legged, twelve-year-old girl crawls along with a milk can. Other pipe-smoking laborers are starting to work. There is more and more smoke from more and more chimneys. The sizzling of frying fat is heard on every side; the combined odor of smoke and cooking is generally diffused.

At 5:30 some of the women who have secured work for the day are leaving, and by six, the newsboys have gone for the morning papers. The tiniest boys and girls, stiff, shivering, and sleepy-eyed, are doing errands at the stores. Talk has swollen to an audible buzz.

Until seven o'clock the exit of men, women, and children goes steadily on. Then there is a lull of half an hour, at the end of which a few nattily dressed young women and cigarette-smoking young men pass out to genteel pursuits.

At 8:30 the first huckster appears. "Potatoes, twenty cents a peck! Tomatoes, five cents a quart, four quarts for fifteen cents!" This is the opening cry. Mrs. MacGregor is

the only person to respond. She takes three quarts of tomatoes.

"Milk! Fresh-skimmed milk — two quarts for five cents!" comes next from the driver of a faded-red, two-wheeled cart, drawn by a lean, sorrel horse — a red-bearded man who, from his little seat (made out of a piece of a bed-spring) nods and smiles in true professional style at every woman he can catch sight of. His nods and smiles are thrown away, however, upon all but Mrs. Johnson, who gives a double order — four quarts — and then, as if to be sure of getting her money's worth, detains him long in talk.

"Apples, fifteen cents a peck! Pears and peaches, five cents a dozen!" is the cry of a vender who knows his business well. He not only has an apple and a joke for every woman who shows interest in his cry, but he throws out apples for her children to scramble for. His jokes and presents count for more than the smiles of the skimmed-milk pedler, and he drives a lively trade.

Mrs. Talbot haggles for more than fifteen minutes with a weary-looking man whose entire business outfit consists of a wheelbarrow, a dirty sailcloth, and a single bucket of clams; then decides she don't want clams anyhow.

Mrs. Gorman, from a third-story window,

applies uncomplimentary epithets to the man below who is selling watermelon in five-cent sections. The cause of her anger is an over-ripe section purchased the day before, for which the dealer stoutly refuses to refund the money. "You picked your own piece," is his brief but able defence. "I had green ones enough if you'd 'a' wanted 'em."

In spite of his bad odors the soap-grease man is popular. He tickles the children, ogles the young women, and compliments the old women. His jolly face and his cart, littered with bones and bar soap, would be sadly missed.

"Bananas, all ripe, five cents a dozen!" — "Haddeck! All alive! Nice fresh haddeck! They're lovely; ye see the class they are! Haddeck, five cents apiece!" — "Sweet corn! Ten cents a dozen for corn!" — "Onions! Four quarts for ten cents!" Closer together come the cries. A coal seller, a split-wood seller, a Jew notion pedler, appear. At last the criers are too numerous for record, and their mingled cries are almost deafening. Strange as it may seem, the people like this daily invasion of the hucksters — the noise, the movement, the zest of the bargaining, are all seductive.

A smart-looking carriage, drawn by a well-groomed, white horse, a landlord's equipage,

drives up to Number 10, and a small boy earns a nickel by holding the horse. Mrs. O'Brien sharpens her bread-knife on the curbstone with a pleasant sound not unlike the whetting of a scythe. Two Sisters of Charity, in the chaste black and white of their order, call at several of the houses. A kerosene cart, a gaily-painted market wagon, a grocer's order cart, and an ice cart come in quick succession. The last is a great boon to the children as well as to old Joanna Murphy, who hobbles up to it and scrapes out her chip of ice with as much eager glee as the children themselves.

A straggling line of boys and girls coming from wood-hunting turns a corner into the street. Today's hunt has taken them fully a mile from home, and some are by this time staggering under heavy loads. Others are drawing the wood on carts, and these are not tired. The carts, some of which are home-made, are provided by wily parents. They are toys and tools at once. By them a necessary piece of work is made a real pleasure.

A load of unchopped kindlings arrives at Number 8. No one there has ordered them. Mrs. Flaherty, of Number 3, says she ordered them; but the driver has been sent to Number 8, and fears a trick. A hot dispute follows (more or less shared in by the neigh-

bors), which is only settled by Mrs. Flaherty's showing the irate driver her receipted bill. Two men, one on each side of the street, distribute fliers of a bargain sale on an adjacent avenue; the fliers are read and discussed while the housework waits. A gray-uniformed letter-carrier cries out in a loud voice, as he passes along, the names of those who have letters. A letter is a rare enough thing in a family to be an event; consequently pride is flattered by this publicity.

A black, shiny, covered cart drives to Number 21. Soon a white rosette appears on the doorpost. A child has died.

A horse falls in a fit at one end of the street, breaking his leg. The ambulance is sent for; but the poor creature writhes so with pain that a policeman finishes him with a pistol-shot. The ambulance arrives and hurries the carcass away.

As noon approaches, boys and girls are sent out with dinner pails and women "rush the growler." Onion and cabbage odors begin to circulate. The few fathers and bread-winning sons who come home to dinner arrive about quarter after twelve, bolt the dinners set out for them on bare or oilcloth-covered tables, and hurry away with freshly lighted pipes, their nooning not being long enough for a comfortable after-dinner smoke.

Tom Wood, however, of the third floor of Number 9, somehow finds time to play a couple of tunes on his cornet.

Friday is distinguished from other forenoons by a veritable avalanche of fish-pedlers. Then by some strange, eternal connection between fish and invective, Billingsgate is most rampant among the women.

The afternoon is quieter than the forenoon, because there are fewer hucksters. Those who do come, however, are more insistent, offering rare bargains in their zeal to sell out and get home. Skimmed milk that was two quarts for five cents in the forenoon, becomes three quarts for five; "haddecks" at five cents, two for five; tomatoes at four quarts for fifteen, four for ten, and so on.

So many women are in sight, it would seem that all must be. They are in the windows, on the doorsteps, on the curbstones; a few braiding rags, shelling peas, paring vegetables, the most doing nothing with their hands, much with their tongues, flashing joke and chaff and blackguardism across from window to window, sidewalk to sidewalk, and sidewalk to top story.

A little after four o'clock there is a sudden darting of children around one of the upper corners of the street. The movement is understood by the women, many of whom

follow less speedily, but not less eagerly, to the police station a block away, where the police ambulance has just arrived. There they push and stretch and swear in their determination to see the victim. The show over, they walk slowly back to curbstones and doorsteps and windows with a pleasant sensation of satisfied curiosity and a new topic of conversation. Nor is it long before the same police ambulance is needed in the street itself, where a crowd is gathered, quivering with mingled excitement and mirth, to see big Mrs. Delehanty drive her poor little husband with the coal shovel. Mr. Delehanty is half-paralyzed with fear, and no wonder. As the police approach, Mrs. Delehanty is hustled out of sight by her friends and the ambulance is forced to return to the station empty.

There is a decided lull during the supper hour; afterwards things grow lively again. In spite of absences on the avenues, men, women, and children are all very much in evidence. The children, especially, instead of showing weariness, as by good rights they should, have, at this time, some of their wildest frolics. A few of the more industrious women make into kindlings the wood brought in by their children during the forenoon. They use the curbstones for blocks and their

feet for hatchets. Only the men appear tired.

When it is dark, gas-lamps are lighted, one at each end of the street, and one in the middle, making just glow enough to throw most of the street into shadow. The lower light is affected nightly by a gang of young toughs, among whom are several "students," a student being in the phraseology of the neighborhood a "bum" with a home, as distinguished from a common lodging-house "bum" or a tramp. The middle light projects from the most respectable and exclusive house of the street (the same whose sidewalk is washed regularly once a day), and is not at all popular. The upper one has been preëmpted for the evening by a group of fourteen to fifteen year old boys who are giving selections from the most impassioned scenes of the plays of the week. Their voices are hoarse with droll, melodramatic exaggeration. As an exhibition of memory, rather than of mimetic power, the performance is truly marvellous. Through the open windows of the boldest of the kitchen bar-rooms men and women are seen drinking.

The arrival of a hurdy-gurdy not only sets the young people dancing, but it stirs the musical talent of the street to emulation. Music sounds on every side. Jack Caddigan

(Upper Turley) plays a harmonica, Tom Bullard (Lower Turley) an accordion, and Tom Wood's cornet is always to be depended on for excruciating versions of all the "home classics." A hoarse, male vocalist seated in a third-story window drapes the words of half a dozen different songs on a single tune, blissfully unconscious of the misfits. Jack O'Toole's father, a veteran of the late war, has kept a genuine army trumpet all these years, upon which Jack, who aspires to be a veteran himself some day, performs a few calls with considerable skill. Pat Geoghegan, at Number 12, renders some real Irish songs in a sort of tuneless recitative teeming with weird Celtic melancholy. Eighteen-year-old Katie Rafferty follows him with half a dozen popular concert-hall melodies, delivered with the strident voice and ultra-serious air peculiar to concert-hall soloists. Both Pat and Katie are vigorously applauded from the street. Six months ago Katie sang at an "amateur night" at the nearest of the two theatres. Since then she has affected a professional swagger.

At ten o'clock an impatient mother shrieks to her daughter: "I'm going to bed now. If you don't come in right away you'll stay out all night for all of me. I won't get up to let you in." The girl's reckless answer,

"I don't care," bodes evil. For half an hour longer she loiters in the darkest portion of the street; then a well-dressed man appears, and they go off together. Plainly, it is a *rendezvous*.

By this time Mrs. Whiting, a Protestant, who "never drinks a drop" and who considers herself far superior to her neighbors in consequence, "has," as said neighbors put it, "a talking jag on." For almost three-quarters of an hour she berates her poor husband without seeming to take breath. It is to be feared that the self-righteous Mrs. Whiting abuses Mr. Whiting otherwise than with her tongue, for the dramatic crises of her invective are invariably accompanied by the sound of a falling object. Mrs. Whiting's voice is the last considerable noise to persist in the street. Even that is quiet at last.

Such is the summer life of Turley Street.

The winter life is not essentially different. The principal scene of action is then transferred from outdoors to indoors. There is a little less sociability, and poverty gripes harder — that is all.

A TOUGH ALLEY

NO one who knows the West End of Boston intimately will object to hearing Bickford Alley called tough. To those who do not so know it, a few of the characteristic happenings of a twelve-month will be convincing.

A man and his wife had a sturdy dispute as to which of them was to blame for the lack of children. The man fancied he had vindicated himself when he pointed to the children by his first wife. He was never more mistaken in his life. The woman was too clever for him. She dared him to prove himself their father, and more than insinuated she, too, might have children if "she'd go gallivantin' round with every bloomin' man as winked at her." When the police ambulance arrived, as it did in due season, the man's head and chest were badly raked and bloody, and he was pleading for mercy on his knees. The woman had been as easy a victor in the mill as in the argu-

ment. It took three policemen to get her into the station wagon, and by the time the station was reached, her tangled gray hair was flying in every direction, and there was hardly a rag left on her ugly body.

A big fellow and a little fellow, after blackguarding each other vigorously across the alley, from their respective windows, mounted higher and blackguarded each other even more vigorously from their respective roofs. The little fellow chanced to be the sharper-tongued. Finally, the big fellow, goaded to desperation, strode across the bridge between the roofs, and lifted his puny antagonist off his feet. He was exasperated enough to do murder, and, in all probability, would have done it, had he not been roughly dragged back before he could get his struggling armful over the guard-rail.

A negro who was living with a white woman, became jealous, on her account, of another negro. Surprising him one day in her company, he drew a razor and carved him most artistically. Then he kicked him into the street, whence he was hastily picked up and carried to the hospital by a passing grocer's wagon.

Two negro women, after no little preliminary skirmishing, got their hands locked tightly in each other's wool and thumped

their heads together so viciously that the detonations resounded for a block. Spite of its brutality, this was a positively ludicrous *rencontre.* No wonder the people of the alley gloated over it and cheered on the combatants. Indeed, had it depended on these spectators to separate the wenches, their heads would be thumping yet. The black hands were finally ungripped by the police, not, of course, without a considerable sacrifice of wool and some trickling of blood.

The alley was enlivened for at least three successive afternoons by an exchange of Billingsgate between the female proprietor of a kitchen bar-room and the female proprietor of a basement grocery. There is a point beyond which endurance in listening to oral abuse ceases to be a virtue, and when the grocer had devoted about fifteen minutes to elaborating the details of a comparison between the liquor seller and a female dog that point was reached. For over a week thereafter, the grocer's head was so swathed in bandages that she was ashamed to show it outside her shop.

St. Patrick's night, a man was killed by falling from a third-story window. At least, that was what the newspapers reported the next day. There were neighborhood rumors, however, of a long-standing feud and a

drunken quarrel, more suggestive of tragedy than accident.

A Saturday night prize dance ended in a free fight and many broken heads. But it was a purely Irish affair; so no knives were drawn and there were no fatalities.

A case of champagne was stolen from a disreputable apartment-house on a neighboring highway. The same day a Bickford Alley resident was found dead-drunk in the cellar of the house. This man was innocent of the theft, but Bickford Alley was not. He had been dumped into the cellar for a scapegoat by the gang who really did the business, and this gang belonged to the alley.

A thirteen-year-old girl had a still-born child. The girl's mother had turned her over, for a small sum of money, to the use of a former paramour of her own.

A young mother was arrested for drugging her children and otherwise abusing them. The charges were substantiated. The children were put into a home and the mother was locked up.

A boy of eight, living with a drunken father, in a tenement from which many of the windows were broken, had his feet badly frozen.

A baby was smothered to death by being taken into the bed of an intoxicated mother,

and a two-year-old boy, who had been locked in a second-story kitchen, fell out the window. That he was uninjured by the fall was something little short of a miracle.

The near presence of the Charles Street Jail does not seem to deter from youthful crime. Three boys — ages ten to twelve — entered a hardware store by night and stole a quantity of knives and fire-arms. A gang of six, still smaller boys, determined to celebrate a holiday after the most approved fashion, delegated one of their number to steal a bottle of whiskey from Rafferty's saloon. The theft was successfully accomplished and the six got beastly drunk.

These things are bad enough, are they not? And the half has not been told. Still, the trained eyes of the guttersnipe find treasures in gutters and garbage barrels. And an intelligent, sympathetic search into the noisome life of Bickford Alley reveals unsuspected good qualities there.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Slattery are subject to terrible sprees. The last time Mr. Slattery was taken, he held his wife over the ledge of a third-story window just to hear her scream, and he generally beats her black and blue when he is in liquor. When father and mother are taken together, as sometimes happens, the children (with a foreseeing wis-

dom quite out of proportion to their years) seek refuge with the neighbors. Nevertheless, there are frequent, if brief, periods when the home-life of the Slatterys is almost beautiful. The parents are passionately fond of each other and of their children. Mr. Slattery is a true Jack-at-all-trades; and no matter how badly a tenement has been devastated, will restore it to thriftiness in a very short time, by means of divers hammerings, sawings, nailings, paintings, varnishings, gluings, and glazings. The restoration made, father, mother, and children are all as proud and happy over it as if it were to last forever.

Mrs. Rhodes has sold liquor off and on, ever since her husband died ten years ago, and her various tenements have witnessed some very disastrous carousals. Annie, her youngest child, is not quite five years old. Who Annie's father is, is unknown. Scarcely a record to be proud of! And yet Mrs. Rhodes works hard and well fully ten months of the year, rarely drinks to excess, and is genuinely solicitous for the welfare of her children. She has done her best to keep them in school, and often goes half-fed and half-clad herself for the sake of having them plump and prim. Only a little while ago she gave a dollar and a half outright to her son Joe to go to a funeral with. When her next-door

neighbor, Mrs. Knollys, had her household goods put into the street by the landlord, Mrs. Rhodes not only took in Mrs. Knollys and her three small children (almost any woman in Bickford Alley would have done that), but she made two of her boys take turns in watching Mrs. Knollys' possessions through the night.

Mrs. McCloskey — familiar as a basket-beggar to many householders — is the most disgusting creature in the alley; she is blear-eyed and dripping-eyed, pimply-faced and smutty-tongued. She is very loyal to her husband, who has been in an insane asylum for the last thirteen years. She has relatives in Ireland who would look out for her the rest of her life if she would go to live with them there; but she will not give a thought to leaving this country till she has 'laid her husband's bones away.' She takes the best care she knows how of three motherless grandchildren — "just for the love of God."

Mr. and Mrs. McAinsh, whose "chulder" were taken away because they were not fit to bring them up, were so abject at their loss, plead so piteously and persistently for their return and promised so solemnly to do better, that the "chulder" were given back to them. And the remarkable thing is that their

promises were kept with a fair degree of faithfulness as much as two years.

Tom Richmond, a widower, who kicks and beats his four children shamefully, when he is in temper or in liquor, gave up several entire evenings to making a bedstead for five-year-old Teresa's doll. He often carries two-year old Celia to the nearest stable for a look at the horses as late as ten o'clock at night; because, forsooth, the little schemer positively refuses to go to sleep without. And when Celia insists on taking to her own tiny, uncertain feet, as she sometimes does, he watches her anxiously and admonishes her with a "Tak' keer, Ceely, doan't fall!" that has a depth of tenderness in it. Tom helps old Bridget Murphy out with her rent, Bridget's only other support being what she gets from charity and the ransacking of ash and garbage barrels.

Jim McFee's mother caught him in a lie one day. She thrashed him well for it. Then she made up a bundle of clothes, set him in a chair, and frightened him half-sick by telling him the "cop" was coming to take him to The Island. "O'ill sthand the divil av a lot from me bhy Jim, but o'ill not sthand the onthruth. O'ill not put up with the loikes o' that. O'ill be damned fust," she explained to a chance visitor. It was an awkward at-

tempt to inculcate morality, this of Mrs. McFee's, but it was a genuine one, and was not, it is to be hoped, entirely without effect.

Mrs. McFee boasts she has trained her oldest boy, Terence, to an almost incredible honesty. "Wull ye belave me now?" she says. "I'm thinkin' ye wull not, but on me sowl I c'n lave money on the thable an' Terence not put his fingers to't; and that's more'n I c'n be sayin' for mesilf or me auld man." The head of Mrs. McFee's baby is one mass of eczema. She is very unhappy because the doctor has told her it cannot possibly live to be over a year old. She coddles it and croons to it and passes many sleepless nights ministering to its whines. And yet her grim sense of humor sometimes gets the better of her. During the Christian Endeavor Convention, for instance, she boasted (as often as she held the loathsome red head to her white breast) that she was "a celebratin' wid a dishplay av the Yankee church flag" (referring to the Christian Endeavor colors).

Mr. Bullen, who married a paralyzed old woman for her savings, and keeps her in constant terror of losing, at his hands, the little trembling life she still has in her, is very good to his step-children. He rescued from the street and nursed to comfort a maimed dog. Furthermore, he allows Mr. and Mrs. White,

a childless couple, too old and feeble for work, to live in one of his rooms rent free.

Mrs. Tobie, while with child, was so brutally kicked by her husband that she had a miscarriage. Certain philanthropically-minded people, hearing of the outrage, tried to bring Mr. Tobie to justice. Mrs. Tobie refused to appear against him. "'Twas all a lie. He hadn't kicked her at all. 'Twas the wash-tub fell on her did the damage. She'd thank people to mind their own business an' let her an' her husband alone." Her loyalty went still further. "What if he had kicked her? Hadn't he a right to if she had a mind to let him?" When the danger of a trial had blown over, husband and wife celebrated what they regarded as their mutual escape from the clutches of the law by a good long drunk together.

A South End house of prostitution was broken up by a police raid. The scattered inmates found such quarters as their age and physical condition permitted. Fan Rollstone somehow drifted to Bickford Alley, where she is now doing an independent business. To satisfy an ardent but vain desire for a child, she has practically adopted a little boy whose mother, now at the Island, deprived him of the use of his legs by pounding him with the coal shovel.

Beth Bristol is well known in the police courts. She lives just now with a "big buck nigger" in a room whose only furnishings are a table, a chair, a mattress, and a cheap framed print of "Uncle Tom and Little Eva." Beth has poor but respectable relatives in South Boston, where she goes by another name. Through all her vicissitudes she has managed to do something regularly for her aged mother, who, finding her a model daughter, suspects nothing of her crooked life. Reckless and hardened as Beth Bristol is, the fear of discovery by her mother is a perpetual nightmare to her.

Bickford Alley breeds sad thoughts, and the saddest — *horresco referens* — is that its life is essentially like other life. There, as in Verga's "Cavalleria Rusticana," the crude elemental passions of untutored humanity stand out.

Civilization has taught other ways of breaking women's hearts and warping children's lives than beating and kicking, — other ways of wreaking vengeance than slugging and kniving; other and crueler ways. It is easy to see the squirming, wriggling things in bottled vinegar that may be held up to the light, as may the life of Bickford Alley — and they make us shudder. But

how about the hypocrisies and chicaneries and velvet sins of that other life, which may not be so easily illuminated? Are they not squirming, wriggling, shuddersome things too?

AMONG THE SANDWICH MEN

DURING the early winter of 1892 a tall man stood daily in one of Boston's busiest squares, wearing a long, black, rubber coat. On the front of the coat these commonplace words were painted in white:

TO-DAY!

GET YOUR TEETH CLEANED.

ONLY FIFTY CENTS.

MANHATTAN DENTAL PARLORS,

29 FAIRFIELD ROW.

The same words were on the back of the coat. The sleeves bore other words: the right, *Teeth Extracted without Pain*; the left, *This is the Place.*

The man had a smooth, gray mustache and a finely-chiselled face, over which a soft

hat was slouched far, as if for disguise. There was something of real distinction in his bearing. He was superseded, after a time, by a thick-set, red-faced, vulgar creature. Then the few observant ones, who had wondered how such a man happened to be in such a place at all, wondered equally what had become of him. He was, in reality, just as much above the sandwich business as he looked to be. He was a real-estate broker from a city of the far West who was subject to periodical drunks. He had begun a debauch at the P—— House, Chicago, continued it at the Q—— House, Boston, drifted into a second-class hotel, and then into a cheap boarding-house. There, what little money he still had left was stolen. Cast into the street, sobered and penniless, he was right glad of a chance to wear an advertising coat, until he was sufficiently reëstablished to justify telegraphing to his friends.

A back alley restaurant first forced itself into notice by keeping living sign-posts on the nearest thoroughfare. For four days one of these sign-posts was a Greenfield (Mass.) saloon-keeper. He was getting over a bad spree, and was ashamed to ask help of his townsmen in the condition in which he found himself. At least, that was the sign-post's

own story, and there is no good reason for doubting it.

ROAST TURKEY

with

CRANBERRY SAUCE, VEGETABLES,

and

TEA or COFFEE,

ALL FOR 25 CENTS,

was the proclamation clamped to his shoulders.

Only last spring, there died in a New York Bowery lodging-house the son of a man who is well known in insurance circles. At one time he had shared his father's business. For some years before his death, however, he drifted from city to city, little better than a vagabond. He often wore a sandwich coat, and carried a sandwich board in Boston.

Let it not be concluded that every sandwich man on the street is a person of brains or affairs, temporarily undone. *Au contraire!* Tommy Brown, for instance, — he is dead now, poor fellow, and God rest him! — never did anything above dray-work, and for a

good many of the later years of his life did not do even that. He lived with and on a sister, who herself lived in part on charity. "Tommy was e'en a'most always a deal lackin' in his mind;" that is the way the sister characterized him, and she did it about right. The year Tommy was seventy-one, an interested friend used her influence to get him a place as a board-carrier for a corn doctor. Once in his uniform, Tommy was puffed up with an exaggerated sense of his own importance. He thought it very fine indeed to attract so much attention — more in a single day than in his whole life before. But the poor half-wit's happiness was brief. It seems the chiropodist had another man in his employ whose minutest movements Tommy (resolved to do the proper thing) insisted on imitating. He would hurry when he hurried, stop when he stopped, eat when he ate, and go on an errand whenever he was sent on an errand. From the points of view of both the chiropodist and the other man, such over-zealous service was absolutely out of the question, and Tommy was ruthlessly dropped back into the obscurity from which he had been so delighted to emerge.

A young fellow in a white coat with red-and-yellow inscriptions, who is as witless as ever Tommy was, has begun persuading the

Boston public to submit their "corns, bunions, and in-growing nails" to free treatment. He has a husky voice with a comical hitch in it, drooping eyelids, a diabolical grin, and a curious way of moving all over at once that comes very near being St. Vitus' dance, if it is not quite that. Every now and then he jerks his arms spasmodically, exactly as a bantam rooster flaps his wings when he is about to crow. Had he but the wit for it, he would be an ideal circus clown without the help of a speck of make-up. At present he is surely persuading the multitude. That he will be a permanent success as a persuader is not so clear. Mental freaks may be fetching, but they cannot be depended on. It does take a scrap of brains, after all, to be even a sandwich man.

Physical defects do not stand so much in the way of success.

Irish Tim, beguiler to "Bargains in Underwear." is no beauty. He is lean as a lily-stem, his cheeks are like bog-holes, his lower jaw projects like a window-awning, and his gums are as guiltless of teeth as a freshly stropped razor. He has a stiff right leg which gives him an awkward Hephaestean gait. Nevertheless, old Tim Dugan is a credit to his craft.

Jim Westcott, a dwarf, has a back like a

dromedary's. He has never shaved, and the soft, straggling hairs this omission has left to his face, make it suggest that ugliest of ugly things—the body of a young robin. He has the rasping, startling, disproportionate voice common in dwarfs. His voice is, in a sense, his fortune, for he is a capital puller-in for an auction-room. This is really his trade. He shifts to coat-wearing only when circumstances oblige it. Even then, so strong is the talking habit, he depends quite as much on his voice as on his uniform for his effects. Jim has a quick wit and kindly manners, and is an almost morbidly conscientious worker. "My t'roat's all dry from de talkin'. I want a drink o' water bad, but I can't leave for to get it," is a common complaint with him.

Mention should also be made of a one-armed giant, a sore-eyed surd and a bow-legged runt, who looks vicious enough to sandbag a man, but who wouldn't even "shy a stone" at a cat.

Whether Grand Army Joe, the veteran, should be included in this list of the physically defective, it is not easy to decide. By his own telling, his poor, old body is perforated like a pumpkin-sifter. But the U. S. Government has not been able to see him so, even by holding him up to the light, and he is likely to die without a pension.

Although sandwich men have many traits in common, the sandwich type is not very clearly defined. In the matter of temperament, at least, a highly interesting diversity prevails.

To begin with, there is the humorist, who urges you, from a crowded corner, to

TRY MOULTON'S

TWENTY-FIVE CENT DINNER.

11 TO 3 AND 5 TO 8.

The humorist is a lank, red-mustached, loose-jointed chap with a sly wink and a rakish air. He takes an impish sort of glee in noting and commenting on the idiosyncrasies of the people who pass, whether there is any one by him to catch his comments or not. He gets boys to bear him company and do small jobs for him in the same way Tom Sawyer got his fence whitewashed. A swift glance out of the corner of one eye towards the boy, and a slow wink with the other away from him, signify to those who understand sign language, that another clever lad has been gulled.

The sandwich man on the opposite corner, though he is dressed in exactly the same

manner and bears exactly the same message, is in striking contrast to the humorist. He is a venerable, gray-bearded person with one of the most serious miens in Boston — a veritable stoic philosopher. The flippancy of his colleague is plainly distasteful to him. Still he does not hesitate to exchange corners or banners or even coats with him for the sake of varying the monotony of his work. And he is philosopher enough to recognize the value, in the great world's economy, of things he does not like.

After observing for several days the movements of the delegates to a religious convention, he remarked: "They seem to think they're having a mighty fine time, and if they think they are, they are, that's a fact. I can't make out, though, what 'tis they do gives 'em a good time. Well, everybody has their own way of enjoying themselves, and that's right, I take it, for if they warn't all kinds we couldn't have a world. Now, if all this crowd of visiting folks liked a drink, like I do, I'd have to stand in line no knowin' how long for my beer. Seein' they don't I get it just as easy as if they warn't in town." And with this deliverance he deliberately shuffled round the corner to his favorite barroom, where he methodically devotes about half an hour each afternoon to beer and med-

itation, without being detected by his employer, and yet without making any effort to elude his notice.

Daniel Grimes is a sandwich pietist. He attends mission services, evenings, out of pure love of them as other people attend the theatre. In talk, he falls into a religious strain on the slightest provocation.

He always has much to say about his fixed determination to earn an honest living and lead a Christian life. It is to be feared he does not succeed too well in either. He rarely keeps the same job more than a week at a time, and, between jobs, he is apt to be "hustling" on the streets or snoozing off an over-dose of whiskey in Drunkard's Row — as the Park Street Mall of the Common has been aptly named. The last time Daniel was in evidence as a sandwich man his appeal to the sinful world was:

TRY IT!

TO-DAY

THE FAMOUS BOILED DINNER,

ONLY TEN CENTS.

SALEM LUNCH COMPANY.

What a pity his message cannot be a spir-

itual one! He would carry it with such a holy zest! Had his lot but been cast in London instead of in Boston he might have been the herald of the "knee drills" and "devil drivings" of the Salvation Army. Still, Daniel Grimes may not complain. His lot, after all, is the common one. The perverse fate that makes him announce boiled dinners and roach poison keeps a would-be poet selling *bric-à-brac* in a millionaire's bazaar and a would-be financier hoeing corn.

If fate could only be cajoled into making the Boston evangelizers imitate the advertising energy of their London brethren, Daniel would find a heaven here on earth. As it is, the nearest approach to bliss his profession allows him is carrying a banner for a bath establishment. While thus engaged, Daniel constantly assures you that "Cleanliness is next to godliness," with all the more emphasis, perhaps, because he himself claims only the superior virtue. He furthermore brings out ingenious connections between his bath and the Atonement, juggling freely with such phrases as "There is a Fountain filled with blood" and "Washed in the blood of the Lamb." Then there is the whole disputed field of baptism.

Not only are there a humorist, a philos-

opher, and a pietist among the sandwich men of Boston, there are also an optimist and a cynic.

The cynic flaunts on a yellow banner the merits of a patent hair restorer — more appropriate occupation for the optimist. Perverse fate again! He wears a battered Derby hat and a frayed, rusty, and spotted Prince Albert coat. His shoes have a bad habit of coming unlaced, and his overlong trousers' legs of getting mussed up with the shoe-tops. His voice would turn milk sour in winter, and his face is even more acidifying.

He was scornfully surveying a great civic parade one day. "What a set of plumb idiots those men are anyhow!" he drawled as the aldermen passed in carriages. "They think they're the biggest things out just because they've got a chance to ride along with the swells. But aldermen ain't no great lot so long's they last — they can't do nothin' much but draw their pay, and can't do that half honest — and I'm just a tellin' you they don't none of 'em last long neither. Like's not some o' those in that there carriage with the jumpin' white horses 'll be doin' what I'm doin' inside o' ten years an' glad to do it.

"What's city offices anyhow? This whole bloomin' gov'ment business 's a damned fraud;

but them as know it best, bein' in it, ain't goin' to give it away. They just keep a-gulpin' an' a-gulpin' what comes their way like toads do, an' bime by get so swelled they can't see out of their eyes plain enough to tell what's cheat from what ain't."

The optimist is in the employ of a cut-rate ticket dealer, and is one of the few sandwich men who have worked steadily in one place for as much as a year. He is bright-eyed, alert, and good-natured. This summer, owing to a sudden influx of visitors, cut-rate ticket offices sprang up like mushrooms all over the city; and the sign-posts of the permanent establishments were obliged to break their usual silence, and persuade with their tongues as well as with their uniforms and banners.

Our optimist rose to the occasion splendidly. A laugh, a joke, or a rallying word was always on his lips; and these were all just as fresh, and breezy, and hearty at six in the afternoon as at nine in the morning. His fund of animal spirits was inexhaustible. They showed no signs of abating when his voice grew so husky from over-use it could hardly be heard. Then it even became a part of his fun to make fun of his own huskiness. The optimist has only one grievance against the world; at least he has expressed only one. That is, being forbidden to smoke his pipe while on duty.

The electric brush advertiser, with the white mustache and imperial, must not be forgotten. He has the engaging ways of a Southern gentleman, even to the deliberate and masterful skill with which he manipulates his quid. It is a beautiful sight to watch him open a letter-box for a lady or direct her to the street or shop she is in search of. In the absence of contrary information, he may as well be labeled, "The Southern colonel."

Where do the sandwich men live? Here, there, and everywhere, according to their tastes, the steadiness of their employment, the amount of their wages, and their conjugal condition.

The very few who are family men occupy tenements in the poorer tenement districts. Most of the others patronize the common lodging-houses and the cheap boarding-houses. Jim Westcott, the hunch-back, shares a back chamber, up a blind alley of the North End, with five teamsters. The room across the hall is sleeping-room for the boarding-house keeper and her husband, and dining-room and sitting-room for the couple and all their boarders. Jim lights a straight-stemmed corn-cob pipe the moment he has doffed his sandwich suit for the day. On his way from work to supper he stops to listen to street music sometimes; always, to

pore over the full-page pictures of the "Police Gazette" in the window of McGillicuddy's little stationery store.

The men who live in the cheap lodging-houses are likely to go at once for supper into a restaurant near their place of work. The family men strike directly home, or, at worst, drop into the bar-rooms, on the way, just long enough to give the good word and swallow an appetizer.

Of the sandwich men as a class, as of the lodging-house bums, sociability is the most salient characteristic. Rarely do they pass each other on the street without recognition. They contrive, like policemen, to meet for gossip at the ends of their beats. During the noon hour, they gather together in knots to compare notes; and at night they walk homeward in company as far as their respective roads permit. They are also on remarkably cordial terms with the street venders and the newsboys, the latter frequently loaning them papers. A certain sandwich man who is jealous for the honor of his profession and proud of its possibilities, has a speaking acquaintance with many of the shop-keepers on his route, and chats with them as familiarly as if he belonged himself to the mercantile class, as he no doubt imagines he does.

The sandwich men with their gaudy cos-

tumes, quaint figures, and expressive faces add much to the picturesqueness and human interest of our streets. We can ill afford to spare them. Fortunately the grumpiest of the grumbling political economists can find little fault with them, and we are not soon likely to be called upon to spare them.

A toast to them, then, and this let it be: "May their tribe increase! May their jobs be softer, their wages higher, and their work-days shorter! And may there always be plenty of 'beer and skittles' for each and every one!"

By the same token, another toast — in whispers, lest the economists overhear it — "To all the 'good fellows' in this little book!"

And now that hearts are warm, and the tap is flowing, and the mood is on, a toast — with a shout this time, never mind the economists! — "To all the 'good fellows' in this little round world!" Yes, even to those, not to be snobbish, who live elsewhere than in cheap lodging-houses and back alleys! "Long life and good cheer to them all, and confusion to their enemies!"

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