#### The Vacant Niche.

["Old Vicissitudes" in New York Mercury.] Ten years ago I lived for a number of months in the pleasant little city of Johnstown, Pa., and although since that time I have traveled the wide, wide world over, and thousands of places have been illuminated by my graceful presence, yet I have never forgotten Johnstown and never shall, not while memory holds her own. The reason pretty Indian girls, the Mongol-like this city is a historic spot in my private life is because there I enjoyed that rare | ugly and repellant, but after a while oasis of happiness which one only meets this impression wears off; the once in the desert of life, and that is, I women of the country have many there enjoyed the delectable society of pretty little ways and they are that highly important and rose-colored very cleanly. Their hands and section of a young man's existence, my feet are small and well shaped, arms "first girl." She was young, pretty, symmetrical, the head well put on the poor and proud. After we became neck; their carriage is erect; they alvery intimate, as is usuual under such circumstances, we became very confi- on their heads, where it is most dential, She used to tell me, in her luxuriant, and is taken the greatest care sweet, graceful way, what she intended of, tied up a la chinoise, with a wreath to have if they-her father, mother and or garland of flowers entwined; they the balance of them-could "ever afford disfigure their ears which are naturally

Her air castles were about as follows: "I am going to buy the finest organ—you know I love music—and a dear little lady's gold watch, with handsome gold chain, and a nice, sweet little canary bird that will sing all the time. These four things I've set my heart on and am going to have if we ever get rich," with a slight sigh,

"And a husband, too, you will want," I used to frequently add to her little speech, and then she would blush deeply and with downcast glances of her pretty hazel eyes, say nothing. B.—I had not proposed yet.

Well, somehow after a time, I became other young and lovely girls began to crowd in on me, and ultimately I completely lost sight of this fair maiden.

In a few months I left Johnstown and for ten years I did not revisit it. The other day, in passing over the Pennsylvania railroad on a trip to Pittsburg, I concluded to stop over and take a look at the old, well remembered place, and get a glimpse, if such a thing were possible, of my "first girl." After my arrival there I sent her a note to the same aged address I once scribbled so frequently on cheap yellow envelopes-for I was very poor in my younger days, just like all great men. Then I sat down in the hotel and anxiously waited. Maybe, I thought, she has left or is dead or is married, with a family perhaps, or-well, I could not tell what. Ten years is a long time, and, as we all know, many, many changes can and often do take place within such a period of time. Soon the messenger returned actually with a note addressed in the old familiar handwriting, which I at one time watched for so anxiously and kissed so rapturously when I received it. The reply was written in a very friendly spirit. It said she was still single, glad I was ditto (I placed that important piece of the men, the women are inveterate information in my note to her), and she gamblers; at a boat or pony race the would be greatly pleased to see me that men and women bet together freely, evening, giving as her address one of and often a girl, after losing all she posthe most aristocratic and wealthy resi- sesses, will stake herself against what dence sections of the city. Well, I exclaimed to myself, after I had finished the follows the winner, and becomes his reading the note, I guess they can wife or concubine, for the two are nearly "afford" what this young lady once so anxiously desired. I learned afterwards set provocation a woman will commit that her father had acquired a govern- suicide, generally by means of opium, ment contract and had risen in the which, thanks to paternal governworld.

Of course, I called that evening. I was shown in an elegantly furnished parlor by a sable-hued servant. There stood not only a large cabinet organ, but a magnificent piano. At the open window hung a yellow canary captive in a gilded and gold crowned prison. And, sure enough, when the young lady, or 30-year-old lady-she was just 20 when I used to kiss her with such youthful ardor-entered, she wore a handsome gold chain, and I knew very well what him just above the knees, envies his was attached to it. But, great heavens, the change in her greatly appalled rosy cheeked, black eyed, blushing, retiring damsel of 20, she had, by the relentless hand of time, been transformed into a stout, yes fat -without any shape, you know, as it were, only-well, you understand, coffee-dyed and yellow-faced woman of 30 years, with the regal air of a bogus empress, a voice as shrill as a fife and with the bombastic tones of a fog-horn, and all enveloped, as it were, in a personal atmosphere which plainly proclaimed: "If you think you can fool The work of cutting the meat is painme, you labor under a mighty delusion ful. in your upper story." Well, I was so ouffalo, and feels like a fool. The other astonished I could have just laid down there and died. Oh, what-what again -a change!

After we had conversed a while and got acquainted again, I said: "Well, ie lifts up a forkful, he lets the mass Miss Annie, I see you have got what all. In his embarrassment he upsets a you used to wish for so." "Yes." "I see you have an organ." "Yes." "And a gold watch and chain." "Yes." "But you haven't "Ge finishes the meal is such an unsatyet the last and most important thing sfactory manner that he suffers from of all, a husband. You know in the indigestion during the entire evening. long ago, you used to silently acknowledge that was one of your wishes by not saying a word when I said it was, and you were then aware that silence meant yes." Then she tried to blush some and exclaimed: "No, I haven't got one yet or you would not have been invited here," and then she smiled in a way I cannot describe.

I left early; said I had to take the 10 p. m. train for Pittsburg; "important business," etc. I did not fill the vacant niche.

## Life in a Big City.

[Detroit Free Press.] The New York Hour wonders that so many people want to live in that city. Four small rooms, 100 feet above the ground, it says, "divided amongst a family of six or eight, command a higher price in this city than a cheerful three-story house with two large bathrooms, back kitchen and back stairs in Baltimore or Philadelphia."

Then the nuisances seem almost intolerable. There are "the constant rumble of the elevated railways, day and night, the tinkle of horse-cars, and flies, musquitoes, and the odors of public and private stables." What is equally peculiar is that the large mass of these people are too restricted in their means to partake of many of the pleasures of the city. They do not begin to have the spending money of those in a city like Detroit.

THE WOMEN OF BURMAH.

#### Their Fashions and Personal Habits

--- The Burmese Girls. [Chicago Tribune,]

The Burmese women before they become mothers are noted for their wellproportioned though small figures. To one accustomed to seeing the regular features so prevalent among the many features of their Burmese sisters look feet are small and well shaped, arms low no hair to grow anywhere except small and pretty, by boring huge holes in the lobes, and wear in them either gold or amber cylindrical-shaped earrings; they cover themselves over with necklets, bracelets, rings, etc., and the Burmese gold and silversmiths are nearly as good as those in Cuttack, Trichinopoli, or Delhi.

A Burmese girl who wishes to kiss presses her nose up against a face and sniffs! She is a born coquette, and will spend hours in adorning her person. Their dress consists of a tight underjacket to support the bust, and a loose and flowing jacket over for show; a gaudy scarf hangs down over the shoullers: from the waist they wear either very much engrossed in business and a many-colored silk thamine, which exooses the inside of one leg half way up to the thigh, or a which is more decent, 'loongie,' peing a sort of a petticoat fastened round the waist and exposing no part of the person. All the women smoke and chew betel nut, but have nice white, even teeth; they can swim as a rule, and delight in dabbling in water, and invariably bathe once, perhaps oftener,

luring the day. The Burmese seldom have more than one wife, and she reigns sapreme in the house, and conducts the purchase or sale of all necessaries. A girl's great ambition is to keep a stall in a bazar; it is her introduction into society, and is equivalent to our own girls being rought out. They are a merry, pleasant race, and many of the fodrth seikhs, when they returned to the Punjab, took back with them Burmese girls, preferring them as wives to their own

ar comelier women. Every Burmese girl is a born actress and delights in taking a part in a poey or national drama. There is no stigma sttached to women who take part in these performances, as there is to dancng girls in India, and they are invariably well conducted, modest girls. Like synonomous in Burmah. On the slight nent, can be purchased without restrichon in every bazar.

#### The Tall Man at the Dining Table. [Arkansaw Traveler.]

There is nothing more melancholy han a tall man standing at a dining table on an occasion of a solemn feast, like that closely following a marriage ceremony. Eating is solemn; it is serious, and the tall man who stands and ooks down at the table, which strikes short neighbor, who seems to have been fashioned expressly for such work. The From a slim, bewitching, tall man reaches down and takes up a piece of bread, and as he lifts it to his mouth, he feels that the distance is very great, and that the action of lifting bread to such a height must present a picture extremely ludicrous, not to say distressing. He chews the bread and looks around awhile to note the ef-

> piece of bread, and looks around. "Have some more of the ham," says the hostess, and he passes his plate. He humps himself over like a guests are enjoying themselves, and the short man has told a story that amuses the ladies very much. He takes a spoonful of mashed potatoes and when

fect he is having on the company. Then

he takes a piece of pickle and another

# A Race of Sailors.

Norway Letter in San Francisco Chronicle.] Talking of ships, it is wonderful to see how the hereditary proclivity to get nto a boat and sail somewhere is dereloped among the Norwegian youth and at what an early age. You see parties of small boys in boats that are miniature reproductions of the old Viking ship, rowing and sailing about and managing oars and sails like veteran tars. A little fellow, apparently 9 or 10 years old, will sit in the stern sheets handle his tiller and order about his crew, consisting of three or four urchins of the same age or a year or two younger than himself, with all the sang-froid and selfpossession of an old pilot. Sometimes they come to grief and get drowned, though it is wonderfully seldom, considering the number of almost infantile sailors, that accidents occur. As for attempting to keep them away from the water, I am sure a timid mother would have as hopeless a task in trying to keep her offspring of the male sex on dry land as an old hen to warn her brood of duck chicks from a neighboring pond. Seeing the juvenhe population paddling about one ceases to wonder that little Norway should boast a commercial navy of sailing ships second only to that of THE PUEBLO INDIANS.

#### Peculiarities of These Children of Montezuma and Their Quaint Cus-

[ Taos (N. M.) Letter in Inter Ocean.] Archæologists say that the Taos, or, as they are generally called, the Pueblo Indians, of the territories of New Mexico and Arizona, are of the same race as the Aztecs of old Mexico. This seems very probable. The two people have many points of resemblance. Their appearance is the same. They both build their houses of mud; and their habits of eating and drinking are

nearly identical. In New Mexico the largest pueblo is that of Taos, situated at the northern end of Taos valley, and having a population of some five hundred Indians. The other pueblos of Santa Clara and San Juan are located on the banks of the Rio Grande, and are further south. How long ago the Taos pueblo was built no one knows. To all appearances it has existed for thousands of years. It is as scarred and baked as hard as any of the monuments of Egypt, and it is certain that when the Spaniards visited New Mexico in 1540 they found this pueblo looking the same as it does to-day.

Once only have the Pueblo Indians shown any hostility toward the whites; that was in 1847, when they joined forces with the Mexicans and attempted to defend their village against the forces of the states.

At Taos are the ruins of an old cathedral which was demolished by the government forces when the Mexicans and Indians had taken refuge there. The crumbling walls of the old place are now used to protect the graves which have been dug in the weed-grown nave. Before 1847, and always afterward, the Indians have attended strictly to their own affairs. They live by agriculture and raising goats and sheep. Primitive in their manner of living, they are equally so in their style of working. Their wants are few, and they raise only what they need for themselves. They hunt with the bow and arrow; live mostly on fruits and cakes made from the wheat they have raised; have a simple form of government; are quiet, peaceful and contented, and dress in garments made by themselves, and which are picturesque and original.

It is a curious fact that hardly any two of the Pueblo tribes speak the same language. When the village of Pecos was almost decimated by smallpox, the pueblo was deserted by the few who were well enough to travel, but they had to pass by three pueblos before they found one where their own language was spoken; but notwithstanding this fact, the religious belief is the same between the tribs. Their ancient god was called Montezuma, and it is said that a sacred fire is kept forever burning to light the return of this mythological character when he shall be brought back by the eagle which carried him away. This connection between the eagle and the god of the people explains the reverence with which the bird is treated at the pueblos to-day. In any one of the pueblos the plause and laughter from audience and has a home and heer of all the children.

A few centuries ago-one very soon grows used to using the word-a high wall surrounded the Taos pueblo; but in this time of peace it has been allowed to fall down in many places. Just beyond the town is a grove of sacred cottonwoods, lining the banks of a stream, and which is resorted to for the cool shade which is given there.

At the northern end of the two piles of houses there are three deep caves, entered by a ladder through an opening in the roof, where the secret councils are held, and where, if hearsay is to be trusted, the flame to Montezuma is cept burning. The peculiarity of the pueblo consists in the angles at which the several houses are planted, and the fact that the entrances are by holes cut in the roofs. Ladders take the place of stairs in all instances.

One climbs from the ground to the first house-top by one ladder, and then descends through a hole in the roof to the interior; and another ladder leads to the second terrace, so that the whole pueblo is covered with a net-work of stairways, up and down which the inmates of the houses are continually climbing. No abode has ever more than two rooms, but both are equally clean and comfortable. The walls are of whitewashed adobe, and so is the roof and the floor. In some instances a narrow strip of paint runs around the lower part of the four walls, and the roof exposes the heavy timbers which support it. The rooms are not over eight by ten feet in size and seren feet in height, while in the topmost houses the ceiling is too low to admit of one

standing in an upright position. The younger children of the pueblos run naked, but the older ones wear a single garment which but half hides their brown-hued person beneath. The women wear a short skirt, reaching about to the knees, and a jacket which is caught over one shoulder and is drawn across the breast under the right arm, leaving the neck and one shoulder and a good part of the bosom exposed. Over the head they invariably wear a shawl, which is kept in place in some dexterous manner, no matter what occupation the woman may be engaged in. The men wear breeches and buckskin jackets, and are usually wrapped up in a blanket of gay colors. The breeches are in two parts, and are separated near the loins, a "breechclout" or piece of cloth clinging closely to the body hiding the otherwise exposed person. Bucks wear moccasins, but the women indulge in such luxuries only on fete days, at which time they also wear a more elaborate dress and ornaments.

## Ravens as Carriers.

[Chicago Times.] An interesting and successful attempt has just been make in Prussia to make ravens do the work of carrier-pigeons. A few days ago three of these birds, which had been especially trained for that purpose, were thrown up at Coblenty, and all three arrived at Thurant, a distance of about thirteen miles, in eighteen minutes. Their flight is somewhat slower than that of pigeons, but less exposed to hostile attacks.

Fans and Fan-Making.

[Pall Mall Gazette.] For more than a thousand years fanmaking has been a principal industry of Japan. In this branch of manufacture about 100,000 persons are engaged out of a population of 1,500,000 in the three fan districts of Osaka, Kioto, an Nagoya. Millions of fans are made every year, of which there are many varieties, differing in strength. Other materials used for the fan-sticks are bone, ivory, and wood. The ivory is sometimes carved and inlaid with mother-of-pearl, gold and silver. The wood used for sticks is abony, mahogany, and chestnut, and is generally lacquered. The tops of the Japanese fan are made of paper, parchment, cotton, and silk. The paper is the fibre obtained from boiling down the bark of the paper tree, to the cultivation of which whole districts are devoted. Mulberry bark is also used for the same purpose, though it is much more expensive. The Japanese so-called parchment comes from a rare tree, and is favored because of its strength. The prices vary largely with the "tops," silks costing twice as much as any other material. The Japanese palm-leaf, or, as it is sometimes called, the "church fan," is still popular.

Most of the dress fans come from France, though the Viennese dress fan has of late found favor. The French fans in the cheaper grades have sticks usually of wood or bone, and the tops of cretonne, silk or satin. The French dress fans have their sticks made of shell, mother-of-pearl, or ivory; the tops are either of silk, ostrich feathers, or lace, sometimes satin and kid. The shell-stick fans have usually no painting on their tops. The lace fans usually have sticks of mother-of-pearl. The ivory sticks are seldom combined with lace tops, silk being preferred. In the decoration of the silk topped fans Albert, of Paris, has won an especial reputation. The mourning fan most popular is a combination of black

silk with ebonized wood or dark shell. In the cheaper grades of Vienna fans two peculiarities are noted, namely, leather sticks and the inlaying of the figures in silk tops. This latter effect is produced by having two layers of silk, the lower one stamped with its figure, just above which the upper layer will be cut out. As yet, American fans are confined for the most part to the cheaper grades. The sticks in these fans are made of wood only, the tops being muslin, cretonne, silk or satin. One kind of American fan, however, is very popular-the "extension fan," with a stick of plush or leather. Of this fan more are sold than of any kind produced, a large number being exported to England.

The Gallie Idea of Sport.

[Amos Keag in San Francisco Chronicle.] In the pause which followed the waltz the true French spirit began to show itself. Half a dozen or more of the young men formed themselves into a sort of skating club and went sliding across the by no means smooth floor, running into anybody and everybody who came in their way. These collisions often resulted in a tumble and a scramble on the floor, each sprawl calling forth an immense amount of apparticipants. Others amused themit was, too; for all it consisted there was no room for deception. The somebody or something, until he found some unsuspecting player with his back turned. Then the sneaker would suddenly spring out upon his victim and give him a rousing slap in the face and disappear. Each attack was greeted with a good deal of laughter by those standing around; while the victim, hand to cheek and sickly smile on face, turned hunter and sneaked about until he could find some one to slap. Sometimes, however, just as one of the players was about to spring out and slap some one else, he himself was the recipient of a stinging whack alongside of the face, which turned his contemplated joy into sudden dismay and chagrin. Such little episodes as these gave the crowd great joy. and every one was applauded to the echo. Besides all these noises, there were several young men who went running round and round the hall, giving vent now and then to a yell. What particular kind of amusement there was in this performance I don't know; but there must have been some amusement in it or they would not have done it. Whatever their motives were, they kept steadily at work during every pause, and sometimes, even during the dancing.

Clumsy Farming in England. [Cor. Boston Commercial Bulletin.] In New England, two young farmers running a farm of eighty acres would do about all the work themselves. I have only time to hint at the clumsiness of English farming methods and machinery, as often, though of course not always, exhibited. I have stopped by the roadside and looked with astonishment and amusement at the sight of three horses dragging a heavy iron plow, one man driving another man solding plows moving at a snail's pace, turning the furrows in a field where a New England farmer would have done the same work alone with a single stout horse-holding plow, and driving with reins over his neck. So it was all round-two or three men to a single man's work, and teams of horses out of proportion to the labor required

Their Petting Propensities.

The New York Journal has been ascertaining the petting propensities of a number of leading actresses, from which it is learned that Mrs. McKee Rankin's favorite is a Mexican dog, Ada Gilman's a squirrel, Agnes Elliott's a monkey. Mme. Ponisi's a cat called Methusalem, Agnes Booth's a parrot, Alma Stuart Stauley's a dog, given to her in California; Ada Dyas cultivates white mice, Rose Coghlan divides her affection between a pug and a Skye terrier, Fanny Davenport keeps fish in an aquarium, Alice Harrison inclines to numerous dogs, Ettie Henderson dotes on poultry, Mary Anderson has a passion for flowers and curious shrubs, and Sarah Jewett has no pet but her-

## No Vacation.

W. D. Howells, the novelist, says vacations are not necessary. He is under year's end to another and neverrests.

The Forests of the Gulf Stream.

[Philadelphia Times.] "Human knowledge lies on the surface," said Prof. Rothrock, in his new lecture on the "Forests of the Sea." "We know next to nothing with certainty have to work want. I don't blame concerning the interior of the earth we inhabit. What wonder, then, that the don't pay. sea, ever changing in its surface, should would rather be "salesladies" at \$5 or the belief of the lecturer, much had been | would give them \$8 or \$10. (Speaking revealed of the wonders of the deep; of salesladies, you may have heard that scientific research had opened ways and the superlative idiot who invented that means unknown to the searcher after word died lately of softening of the knowledge of a quarter of a century age | brain, but I am sorry to say it is not and the present and future opened to true; he didn't have enough brain to the eye of the naturalist hitherto inac | soften.) A great many young women cessible fields of investigation. Not now take to bookkeeping. They would least were those most wonderful do much better by taking to millinery creations, the forests of the sea. Other or dress-making, but these look more ages had woven about these forest like real work than bookkeeping. The growths a web of mystery. Modern bookkeeping ranks are terribly over-science had torn the veil and revealed crowded already. structural existences in the deep waters of the ocean more marvelous than earth which the ocean forest flourished with special luxuriance. Between the twentieth and forty-fifth degrees of north of west longitude they occupy sreas that have been estimated at 260,000 square miles. Though storms at times detach fragments from the whole, yet for centuries these forests have held essentially the same position.

The most curious form is the sargassum, or gulf weed. It is olive green in color, with round stems and large leaves. It is found on the surface of the deepest water in mid-ocean. It bas no soil and no roots. It lives and grows upon the water alone. At times its growth is sparse and irregular, but often it grows so thickly as to impede the progress of vessels. In such places the sea has the appearance of a vast inundated meadow. It was the wonderful form of vegetation which the vessels of Columbus encountered on their memcrable voyage to the new world. The gulf weed is capable of infinite reproductions and a single float ing bulb will in an incredibly short time cover the surface of the water with

its curious vegetation. There are other forests of the sea, more prolific of life than the iorests of the land, formed by the macrocystis pyrifera, the mammoth of all known ants. Differing from the gulf weed, it is attached to rocks on the bottom of the sea and marks with infallible certainty the shallow portions of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The otterkohl, or cabbage, has also its peculiar work in the formation of the forest. Not so large as the macrocystis, it yet has an important bearing on the formation of the whole. There are others. They each have their peculiar functions and uses in the economy of nature, but those functions and uses are as yet but dimly understood. To the future belongs the understanding of the marvels that fire our zeal for research while they fill us with wonder at their magnitude.

# Chinese Magic.

[Chicage Times.] A gentleman who has lived among the Chinese tells, as an illustration of their abilities as magicians, an incident selves by playing a sort of "tag." that took place under his own eyes, and Rather a boisterous sort of game in his own room, where, apparently, in was for each young man to go sneak- | magician was naked from the waist uping about in the crowd, hiding behind | ward, and his magical instrument seemed to be a strip of white cloth twisted about his loins. Taking a dish of uncooked rice, the juggler covered it with his mysterious girdle, squatted before it and began his incantations, which continued half an hour. During this process his bare arms were passing to and fro beneath the cloth, and this was all the gentleman could see him do. At last the linen was removed, and lo! there were six plates filled with cooked edibles of various kinds, while a dish of boiled rice had replaced the one con-

taining raw rice. Another gentleman, describing how he was deluded, says: "A juggler in the open street seized a boy 5 or 6 years of age, dragged him struggling into the circle, threw him on his back, and, in spite of the boy's agonized cries and the remonstrances of the people, apparently nearly decapitated him. The victim gradually became motionless, while the blood streamed from the wound. Finally the magician removed the knife, muttered a few words, called aloud to the child, who soon showed signs of life, and at last raised him to his feet, when the boy appeared unharmed. Both actors in this strange scene were liberally rewarded by the crowd, and the boy ran off to play with his wondering companions."

## The "Oil Spot" of the Sea.

[Milwaukee Wisconsin. "So much has been said of late regarding the use of oil by vesselmen during heavy storms," said Lieut. Stamm, of the revenue cutter Andy Johnson, "that many people are led to believe it reduces a curling, smashing sea to a liquid mound. It does not exactly flatten things about just in that way, but its use causes good results, there is no doubt of that. And speaking of oil in water reminds me of the wonderful 'oil spot,' a freak of nature that I believe was never fully described.

"The 'oil spot' is situated about ten

miles south of Sabine Pass, into which flows the Sabine river to the gulf of Mexico. The river forms the boundary between the states of Louisiana and Texas. The 'oil spot' extends two miles along shore and seaward about three-quarters of a mile. A storm from the northeast, by way of east to southeast, has a rake of from 300 to 700 miles across the gulf of Mexico into this mystic haven. During a gale this spot is wonderfully defined. Looking seaward, the scene is grand. An acre of towering foam marks the abrupt dissolution of the lashing seas as they thunder towards the shore. This occurs in about three fathoms, or eighteen feet of water, from which the stormdriven craft, creaking and straining in every timber, emerges and suddenly finds herself reposing like a child rocked in its mother's arms, hemmed in by a wall of wrath, where the weary mariners can be lulled to rest by the roar of the winds. The place is termed the 'oil spot,' not from any known analysis of its nature, but simply from its condition; it has no troubled water. It they are safer as carriers, as they are tremendous mental strain from one is to be hoped that some scientist will sight of in the close reading met in so unfold its wonders."

Bookkeeping and Rag-Picking Com pared.

[New York Letter.] Something light and genteel is what most of the young women who them for it, but as a rule it Ninety-nine in 100 withhold her secrets from us?" Still, in | \$6 a week than take hold of a trade that An item now going the rounds says a

New York business man who lately adcould produce. There were latitudes in vertised for a bookkeeper at \$10 a week, received 700 applications for the place, and that there are 500 bookkeepers out of work in this city. It seems fatitude and west of the fortieth degree to be the same old item that has done service the same way any number of years, but though an exaggeration, it contains enough truth for a moral anyway. New York certainly has an enormous number of bookkeepers and miscellaneous clerks out of work. The kind of work they have to sell is not indemand-at least, there is an immense deal more of it than the demand calls for. All the Italian rag-pickers can find plenty to do. The Chinese washee washee men are busy all the year round. Most men who know how to sweep the streets can find employment. Ninetenths of the hod-carriers are always at work. Blacksmiths, carpenters, masons. bricklayers, cabinet makers and so on, who know their trade, need not be pinched except in very bad times.

But the bookkeepers and miscellaneous clerks are all the time walking the streets looking for something to do. A great many of the poor fellows may be found every night in the cheap lodging houses along the Bowery and Chatham square. The rag-pickers, streetsweepers, hod-carriers, etc., don't have to go to those wretched places. I don't mean to say that it is better to be & rag-picker, street-sweeper, or hod-carrier than a bookkeeper, but what I do say about plenty of work for the former and very little for the latter is a fact Some bookkeepers in New York are paid as high as \$10,000 a year, and many get from \$3,000 to \$5,000; but two-thirds of the whole number regularly employed are glad to get \$10 to \$15 a week. I have myself had men offer themselves at \$7 and \$8 a week. RED HOT PORTRAIT SKETCHING.

#### The Artistic Work that Can be Done with a Red-Hot Poker.

[New York Tribune.] "In 1845," said a New York art dealer to a reporter, "there lived in the city of Boston a worthless vagabond named Halden, a man who had seen better days. He was an artist-had wonderful talent, and during his periodical sprees would devote himself assiduously to his peculiar work, though he was never known to do anything while sober. Halden's portraits were the best specimen of his art, and they were marvels of correctness. They were generally burned on a thin board of bird's-eve maple with a red-hot poker of the ordinary shape, after which they received two coats of varnish which was put on to preserve them, and set in deep, heavy frames. He called them 'poker sketches,' and on the back of each was burned this inscription: 'This sketch was burned

with a poker-Halden, sculpsit." "His likenesses are striking, and the three of them now in existence, although executed from memory, are perfect in every respect. He had seen Webster only once in his life, but the portraitwhich he burned with his hot poker has been pronounced one of the truest like-Desses ever seen of the great statesman. Webster's strong features and dark complexion admirably suited the character of the work, which has a peculiar brown appearance when finished. His picture of Clay is owned by his banker friend, who also once owned the other two, but presented them to some southern friends. One of them, Shakspeare, is in the possession of Francis Fontaine, commissioner of emigration of Georgia. Webster was presented to a humorous writer of the same state, and now hangs in his parlor, an object of wonder and admiration to visitors.

"Poker sketches are durable and will last for centuries. In doing them it is literally a case of 'burn while the iron is hot.' One mis-touch of the poker ruins the board; there is no erasure, no wiping out. A board so spoiled the only remedy is to begin on another and do the whole thing over again.

"It is wonderful to see the variety of shades and colors which may be produced by this burning process. After the application of the varnish it more resembles oil work than anything else, and the deception is so complete that a touch of the finger is required to remove it. The indentures may be plainly felt with the hand. It may seem strange that this art has never developed, but probably there are few people who would care to sit over a fire pot all day and continually suffer from burned fingers for the sake of art alone.

#### The Preacher of the Future. [Christian at Work.]

We believe the preacher of the future will never rustle the leaves of his sermonic manuscript in the pulpit, or read off from the written page his invitation to sinners to forsake their sins and become reconciled to God. And we believe this will be accomplished, not by writing the sermon and then committing it-which is simply burning the candle at both ends-but by a return to the practice of the times when written sermons were unknown. This method involves one's saturating himself with his subject--clothing a thought here and there in particular form if he please—and then delivering his sermon after the fashion of the great orators and speakers. Webster pronounced spontaneity to be one of the chief characteristics of true eloquence. We believe it to be reasonably characteristic of the powerful sermon as well as that it is almost wholly lost many of the pulpits to-day.