

IN THE BOWERY.

A PENNILESS MAN IN A CHEAP LODGING-HOUSE.

Something a Little Better Than "Carrying the Banner"—Thirty Lodgers Allowed to Each Floor—A Gray-Bearded Unfortunate.

[New York Mail and Express.]

Suddenly a familiar voice greeted me. "Hello, Tom! what are you standing there for? You look as if you had struck bad luck. Come and take a drink." How natural it seems for men to proffer a fellow in distress that which will do him more harm than good. However, I was in no mood for moralizing, and I accepted. In the glow of a neighboring bar my friend inquired how the world was using me, and was surprised to learn that I anticipated carrying the banner for the night. To the uninitiated I will explain that "carrying the banner," among independent printers and newspaper men generally, signifies being obliged to walk the streets all night.

"Well, you shan't carry the banner tonight if I can prevent it," said my good-natured friend. "Come with me to my hotel in the Bowery and I'll see what I can do."

I had a natural antipathy to the Bowery as a place of residence. I associated it with glaring lights, clattering horse cars, brawling roysterers and all that is foreign to the conception of home. But I was homeless, and unprepared to make conditions. On we went up to the Bowery, its objectionable features forcing themselves upon me more than ever before. Finally we halted before a four-story brick building, over the door of which was a large sign inscribed with the name of the hotel, and the further information that lodgings were only 20 and 25 cents per night, or \$1.20 and \$1.50 per week.

On opening the door at the head of the stairs we were confronted by a stern, keen face at the window of an office about 200. Its possessor was the sentinel who stood guard over the interests of the house at night, and it must have been an insinuating individual indeed who could pass him without the necessary coin.

I followed my friend into what was called by courtesy the sitting-room. Seating myself in the "jovial ring," I began to look about me. On my right was seated a man of fine physique, clad in garments that spoke of other and better days. His handsome, intellectual face was fringed by a heavy beard sprinkled with gray, while his broad forehead, bright eyes and well-poised head told me that he was the possessor of attributes which, properly directed, would certainly have placed him beyond a Bowery lodging-house. During a general conversation I happened to quote from a poet not widely read.

"Beg pardon," said he of the gray beard, "but you have misquoted that line," and to my amazement he proceeded to recite the entire poem to which the line belonged.

From further acquaintance with this man I learned that he was graduated with honors from Trinity college, Dublin. I also discovered that he had been a scout and guide on the plains; had kept a grocery in San Francisco; had been a railroad surveyor; had charge of an oleomargarine factory in New York; had traveled for several commercial houses, and been engaged in various other enterprises, only to fail in each. Lack of application and directness of purpose had been his faithful Nemesis. Yet he was a capital fellow.

Midnight sounded and the clerk, emerging from his crib, quietly turned off the gas unceremoniously, enveloping the guests in darkness.

"Come, get to bed," he commanded; "skip it's orders from the boss."

All but two or three moved. Those who remained, I afterwards learned, were hatter carriers who availed themselves nightly of the privilege of passing the first half of the night in congenial company by a good fire.

My "apartment" was next the one occupied by my friend, on the second floor. It was not spacious, and was boarded about six feet high all round, leaving a space between the partition and the ceiling. At the head of the stairs was a notice by the board of health, that only thirty lodgers should be allowed on each floor, and that this order must be obeyed or the license would be revoked.

My bed was a cot just wide enough for a very quiet man to sleep in without rolling out. The mattress was as unyielding as a landlord on rent day, and the coverings were a narrow sheet with an unconquerable penchant for becoming a necktie during the night, and an army blanket that had somehow escaped duty to Uncle Sam. Amid these Oriental surroundings I turned in.

At the first glimpse of daylight over my partition I arose and went down-stairs to find respite for my thoughts, in the Sunday papers. The first to salute me were the three worthies who had carried the banner. They looked none the worse for their outing, and talked joyfully of their experiences during the night. One met a friend who lacked just 5 cents of a night's lodging, and together they made merry over 5 cent hot whiskies. Another walked to Central park and attended first mass in a church on Sixth avenue. It had been a "move on" all night, every policeman begrudging him his stolen nap in a friendly doorway.

Toward 3 o'clock the "ragged, jovial ring" began to form about the stove again. They all evinced a lively desire for information and the morning papers were in demand. Reading aloud brought out much lively discussion of popular topics, handled with an intelligence that would have done credit to happier surroundings. These unfortunates, denied the comfort of even a nourishing meal, forgot all their troubles in the mental banquet that a free press had provided for them.

When my friend, who, by the way, is something of a Mark Tapley, appeared, I hoped that the same spirit that had prompted him to obtain me a night's lodging would move him in the way of breakfast. I was not disappointed. A short distance from the hotel we descended a short flight of stairs into a basement, on each side of which were variegated placards announcing several "luxuries of the season." There was "a cup of splendid coffee and a real 5 cents," "Mutton chops, 8 cents," "2 fried eggs, 5 cents," etc. We sat down to a meal within the limit of his capital. Thus refreshed, and it being Sunday, I spent most of the day in Cooper institute, reading. Late in the afternoon I returned to the lodging-house and found several of the lodgers who had funds industriously engaged in getting themselves and their less fortunate associates drunk. With drunken arguments and ribald songs the afternoon wore into evening.

About 9 o'clock there came a lull. The roysterers had gone out to replenish their inspiration.

THURLOW WEED'S STORY

OF How He Came to Leave Off Smoking—A Cigar from Grant—(Cor. New York World.)

Appropos of Gen. Grant's illness the late Thurlow Weed once told me a story that it recalls. I asked the venerable editor to what he attributed his firm health and length of days. "I see that Peter Cooper assigns rigid temperance as the cause of his," he answered with a laugh. "Mind I do, I think, to having always sat up all night and eaten and drank whatever I pleased. For forty years I took a hearty dinner, generally at 12 or 1 o'clock every night, and I never had any trouble to sleep. I always drank with the boys and politicians; I drank everything, but not much at a time, and for more than half a century I smoked ten or twelve cigars every day—when I could get them."

In the summer of 1867, being in Saratoga, I lounged down to the spring one morning with a cigar in my mouth. On the way I met an old friend, Dr. Freeman, coming back with some other gentlemen. As we passed each other he leaned over to me and exclaimed, "Top smoking! The salutation was so sudden and such an odd one that it stuck in my crop. I thought about it all day, and wondered what it meant, and after dinner I called up at his room. He explained to me that he thought I had smoked long enough; that I was an old man, and habitual smoking was sure to hurt me—in fact, he wasn't sure but it had already hurt me. I was convinced, and told him I would never use the weed any more. He said I had better taper off, but I told him I didn't believe in taperings and never smoked again. I never did, but I thought about it a good deal for awhile.

"I had written to Gen. Grant that he must be our candidate for president the next year. He had shown my letters to friends, and some correspondence had resulted. I came back to New York, and found a note from the general asking me to come and see him at Long Branch. I went down with John F. Henry. As we were taking, Gen. Grant took out his cigar case and offered us cigars, taking and lighting one himself. I took one, excused myself from smoking at the time, and stuck it in the breast pocket of my coat. Well, I became better acquainted with that cigar than I ever did with any other, for I carried it in that breast pocket for a year and took it out every day—probably several times every day—and looked at it and smelt it and rolled it in my fingers and silly nibbled at the end. But I never consumed it." And Mr. Weed transferred to the chair-back the pet pigeon he was fondling at the time, rose painfully from his seat, went across the room, and took from a drawer and handed to me a tough-looking cigar with both ends somewhat masticated. "That's it," he added. "I never smoked it, and now I don't want it."

The Tri-Color Over Strasbourg. (Chicago Times.)

A Paris newspaper prints a sensational paragraph to the effect that the French flag floats once more over the spires of Strasbourg. The statement has a very slight foundation in fact. Everyone has heard of the storks that, next to the cathedral, have been for centuries the pride of the town. These birds, having obtained their food on the ground, are accustomed to fly upon the roofs of the highest buildings, not even neglecting the most lofty church spires. A dyer succeeded in capturing some of these storks, which he proceeded to ornament in a manner that would give expression to his patriotism. He colored one wing red and the other blue, leaving the body white. The body and extended wings resembled a flag, and represented the three colors of the French ensign.

Having colored the birds in his fancy, he restored them to freedom, when they at once rose high over the city and settled on the roofs of the churches. Many of the old French citizens raised a shout of joy as they again saw the once familiar tri-color in the sky. The fury of the German authorities was so great that they at first proposed to shoot the innocent standard-bearers. Before the order was given, however, they concluded that would be better not to appear to notice the apparent insult to them, and to trust to the rain and sun to obliterate the colors on the wings of the birds.

Insured to It. (Philadelphia Call.)

"Yes," remarked the Mean Customer, diving into a fresh box of raisins, "experience has shown that clerks and salesmen stand a campaign in the field better than laboring men."

"That's so," said the Sharp Grocer, absent-mindedly shoveling a few scoopsful of 20 cent coffee into the 40-cent bin; "true as preaching. I remember during the war that the young fellows from business houses stood the fatigue better than the volunteers who had been out-door workers. I suppose it is so in the English army, too. Five pounds of sugar I believe you said."

"Right; five pounds. Yes, it is the same in the English army. They say the only soldiers who were not affected by the sand winds of the Soudan were those who had worked in the grocery stores."

Horseflesh in Paris. (Brooklyn Eagle.)

The curious toleration of the French for horseflesh as an article of food was probably disappeared before a large importation of American beef. Meantime the fifty-eight horse butchers in Paris have distributed to the population of that city 9,271 horses, asses and mules during the past year, against 6,865 of these animals slaughtered in 1883. At a meeting held recently a society, formed for the promotion of the use of horseflesh for food, awarded a silver medal to the owner of the first establishment opened for the sale of that meat at Lyons, and a gold medal to the proprietor of nine horse meat shops in Paris.

Supplying a Long-Felt Want. (Chicago Times.)

Instruction in mechanical trades has been introduced in the Maine state reform school at Cape Elizabeth, and has enlisted the interest of many of the boys, who have made very good progress under it. The boys are carefully taught first the names and uses of tools, and then how to use them and keep them in order. They are also taught the names of the different kinds of wood used in carpentry, and how to distinguish them. The trustees of the institution in their annual report for 1884 say that the department supplies a long-felt want in the school.

"And No Questions Asked." (Inland Printer.)

There is a law in England which makes it a criminal offense for any person to advertise a reward for property lost or stolen, where the advertiser states that no questions will be asked. The law is comprehensive, for it punishes by a fine of 50 pounds sterling not only the author of the advertisement, but the publisher also, and the printer who puts it in type.

JOHN BULL AT HOME.

A GOOD HOST AND GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY.

Gentility Next to Godliness—Domestic Servants Uniformly Civil—A Guest in an English Family—Training and Manners of Children.

[Robert Laird Collier's Letter.]

John Bull is bluff, but in his best estate he is ceremonious, if he cannot be said to be polite. Gentility with the English is not only next to godliness, but it will stand one in good stead for godliness itself. Be what you may, you must not be vulgar. Though you are on your way to the gallows you must respect the proprieties. As between the keeping of the ceremonial or the moral law the rule would be that it would be less risk socially to be improper than ungentle. Children are certainly not told that wickedness may be winked at, but they are given to understand that violations of the social proprieties are almost an unpardonable sin. This does not in the least qualify the truth of what has been said about the impoliteness of certain classes of the English; for these details of the social code are observed in a very matter-of-fact way, and the observing is rather in the letter than in the spirit.

Domestic and public servants are uniformly civil, and, indeed, wherever it is to their advantage, as has been said, they are obsequious. Shop-keepers and their attendants have a soft and sleek manner, an overwilted air of being honored by your custom, which is habitual with them and which really means nothing, and which is, or ought to be, to Americans, disgusting. These class distinctions beget in limited classes of English society a degree of snobbery and a long train of offensive and hateful apeings and servilities such as I have met with in no other country. It is very pleasing to the flesh to have men show awe in your presence and to have maid-servants speak in low tones and make profound courtesies, but after all one only respects one's self when he has learned to honor the humanity of every other human being. These class distinctions, and all social customs growing out of them, are little less than a moral wrong to any people.

It is also a most delightful sense of freedom that comes to one who is a guest in an English family to know that he is not taxing the resources and time of the family to entertain him. He is left wholly to his own devices and plans for breakfast till dinner if he wishes to be. It is not even expected that he will turn up at luncheon, or will join the family or other guests during the day, unless he arranges to do so. He may be asked if he will ride or drive or visit, but he is perfectly free to accept or decline any proposals, and the pleasure of the guest is the host's only concern in the case. One can sit in the library, write in the dining-room, or walk through the grounds, or go into town, or take the train for a neighboring village, or ride or drive—in short, do just what one has a mind to do, and no questions are asked and no explanations are desired or expected. This custom makes it delightfully easy to be either a guest or a host. Indeed, all through English society one of the most charming facts is that people's personal affairs are not public or socially canvassed.

The English are good hosts, and are given to hospitality. English houses are seldom without guests. Young folks bring schoolmates and other folks home with them, and relations are constantly visiting among each other. The habitual presence of others than the family in the house leads to good and systematic house-keeping, and helps enormously in the training of servants, who are always expected to do their best. It also gives ease and grace to entertaining when it is a custom and not an infrequent and ceremonial occasion. It is also potential in the good training and manners of children, who usually will not presume upon visitors as they may upon the family, and will be more careful in their deportment.

The rule is that English families spend their evenings together, and not in a very hilarious fashion either. The men folk may play billiards, when the women will sit by and do needle-work and chat. Or, the family may retire to the smoking room after dinner, which is the usual custom, and have music and cards, according to the taste of each, or one is left free to read. Certain periodicals are regularly taken in, such as the illustrated, the society, and the comic papers, and these are always to be found, with the last new novel, on the drawing-room table. Circulating libraries are very generally used, and so by paying a small annual subscription one may get all the latest books and periodicals, and the rule is that every family of any sort of social standing or pretension will have half a dozen of the most recent books in the house at a time.

A Merry Day in Russia. (Foreign Letter.)

The other day over 50,000,000 Russian peasants assembled in all the churches of the empire, offered their thanks to God for their liberation from serfdom. March 3, or Feb. 19 O. S., 1861, the late czar, in his famous ukase, used these words: "Cross yourselves, orthodox people, and ask God's blessing for a new life." And that day a new era was inaugurated in Russia. Chateaus became freemen.

On the anniversary of this day the freed serfs of Russia voluntarily abstain from work and dedicate the day to thanksgiving and prayers. In the last year of his reign the czar liberator ordered, and the holy synod sanctioned the decree, that henceforth the 19th day of February (March 3) should be observed throughout Russia as a legal and church holiday. In Russia they have about two-score church holidays and about a dozen czar's holidays, but this is the only holiday of the peasants.

An Ancient Nebraganan Project. (New York Sun.)

It is a curious fact that 325 years ago the king of Spain proposed a canal across the isthmus and had the same route surveyed that is now under discussion. He tried to raise money enough to do the work, and negotiated with Amsterdam bankers for a loan, but failed. A company was afterward formed in Holland for the purpose of constructing the canal, but the scheme fell through because of the belligerent attitude of England.

Florida's Moss Crop. (Chicago Herald.)

The moss crop of Florida is said to be worth more than the cotton crop, and it can be placed on the market at less expense. The demand exceeds the supply, and there is not a county in the state in which the product is not going to waste.

In some of the rural districts of the Netherlands it is customary for the male portion of the congregation to stoke during service.

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HORACE B. HORTON,
at Dighton Furnace Co.

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S. P. HUBBARD, M. D.

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