

THE LITTLE MAN IN DRAB.

WHY is that fellow crying 'going, going, only one dollar and a half, only one dollar and a half' when there is not a person except himself in the store?" asked a friend, as we were walking along Clark street.

"He's advertising his goods to passers-by; when you hear him shout for the twentieth time that it is only one dollar and a half, the inquiry naturally arises: 'What is it that is only one dollar and a half?'"

"One point is already gained for the auctioneer. If your curiosity is excited to the extent of your stepping into the store, there is a chance that you will not come out before you purchase that very article, be it bogus jewelry, a second-hand revolver, or a summer coat."

"Does he keep up that auctioneering whether he has any customers or not?"

"Nearly the whole day. The best time, however, is near six o'clock, when thousands of people are freed from their work and on their way home, with perhaps money in their pockets. Then you may see a crowd in the rooms; in the evenings also, they do an immense business, and hardly ever fail in selling a large amount of goods. On days, too, when there are a great many people from the country, they gather a rich harvest. There is nothing going on here at present, but if we come here in the afternoon we shall find them in full blast."

When we returned, according to appointment, there was a crowd before the door, and the auction-room was full. Our ears were greeted with something like the following:

"Eighteen dollars and a half, 'n a half, 'n a half! Do I hear any more? Why, gentlemen, that watch is worth one hundred dollars. Once—twice—" turning to a benevolent-looking gentleman in spectacles, and putting on an inquiring air, "Make it nineteen?" Spectacles shakes his head. "Once—twice—and—" Mr. Green from the country bids 'nineteen.'

"Nineteen dollars do I hear—once—we cannot dwell—and gone."

"No more watches at that price," says the auctioneer, with well-feigned disgust.

Mr. Green walks up to the cashier's desk and pays over nineteen dollars, and takes his watch. A week's wear will tell him that "all is not gold that glitters."

This is the simplest phase of the mock auction business. But there are comparatively few such unsuspecting catches as Mr. Green. The gamblers have a card, however, for all grades of astuteness.—There is the countryman who takes the papers and reads accounts every week of how somebody was swindled out of his money in a mock auction room. One of these self sufficient men goes to Chicago; it is possible that he is a thriving merchant, or a grocery keeper, or a lawyer, or a minister. He can step into one of these places with perfect impunity; no fear of his being swindled by bidding on brass watches and bogus jewelry. With what interest he makes note of the poor fools who are the victims of these accomplished rogues. He is a man of deep sympathies. He watches that little man who elbows his way through the crowd hurriedly, and asks the auctioneer in a timid voice if they sell watches for other people. He is dressed in a shabby fustian suit of light drab that does not fit him any too well. It is "ready made," and is evidently the result of a long struggle with poverty. A new hat could not be bought, so the poor fellow has first drenched the old one with water, and then applied his coat sleeve. The hat has a shiny appearance, and with his other clothes mark him to the practiced eye as a first-class dead beat.

The auctioneer has just sold without reserve the bogus jewelry he had in hand when the man in drab first spoke: "Let's see your watch!" he says roughly. He examines it by opening it and turning it over and over, and winding it up.

"My friend," says he, "you cannot get the worth of that watch in this crowd. It is too good a watch to put up here."

The poor man mutters something about "must have the money," "I cannot wait," etc.

"Then you must take your own risk. We will do all we can to sell it at a good figure; but remember, it must be sold without reserve."

"I must have the money," says the unfortunate man.

"Well, then remember, ten per cent. for the sale of the watch, and to be sold without reserve."

"How long have you worn this watch?" asks the auctioneer.

"Six months. I purchased it in Baltimore, and paid \$125 for it."

"Here then, gentlemen, is a watch that must be sold. How much am I offered for it? How much?"

Somebody bids "twelve dollars."

"I told you," said the auctioneer, turning to the man in drab, "that you could not get what it is worth here."

The watch is passed round among the crowd, and is pronounced a No. 1 watch. Our shrewd gentleman from the country examines it.

"No mistake about that watch," says he; "genuine"—and he bids twenty dollars for it.

"Twenty dollars for a watch worth

one hundred and twenty-five dollars. Do I hear any more? We cannot dwell—once—twice—and—"

Here the man in drab nervously asks if he may bid.

"No," says the auctioneer, "you cannot bid; I cannot bid. The watch must be sold to bona fide bidders—once—twice—and gone to Mr. Cash for twenty dollars."

Our sharp friend takes the watch and pays his twenty dollars. He never can explain how the thing was done, but he will tell you that the watch was the poorest quality of bogus article; and that what puzzles him most of all is that it should have been worn six months by that innocent man in drab without its worthlessness being discovered.

He reads with more interest than ever accounts of swindling in mock auctions; but none of them hit his case exactly.

The truth is, these rogues do not run one plan a great while; as soon as its peculiarities are discovered they invent a new way of covering their rascality, and thus the public is continually entertained with some new way of operating, and the man who is on guard against any particular mode of swindling is almost sure to be roped in on some other trick. He shuns one slough only to run into another prepared expressly for him. When it is remembered that there are hundreds of susceptible points in every man's mind, by the touching of which he may be led hither and thither almost at will, it is no wonder that accomplished sharpers who are thoroughly familiar with the characteristics, tastes and peculiarities of the general public, can devise schemes without limit by which a large proportion of this general public can be deceived.

Success in such schemes is not chance work. It is the result of thorough knowledge of the weak points of human nature, and bold unscrupulousness in using that knowledge to advantage.

Here we must protest again against a great deal of sympathy that is manifested for the numerous swindled public.—There are plenty of phases of business of swindling which call for our deepest sympathy; such as deceiving old and inexperienced people who are traveling, by means of playing upon their fear, ignorance, or credulity, and thereby getting their money away from them. But, as a general thing, people who enter a mock auction room deserve but little sympathy. If a man buys for twelve dollars a watch he supposes to be worth one hundred and twenty-five dollars, he must know that somebody is to be the loser, and it is all the more discredit to him that he sees the unfortunate possessor of it before him, and believing him so hard pressed that he is obliged to part with his gold watch at that ruinous figure, he still bids, and finally secures it at ninety dollars less than its actual worth. The fact that the auctioneer is a swindler, the man in drab clothes an accomplice, does not make him any the less an incipient rogue. He is undeveloped and inexperienced, and is, therefore, beaten at his own game. He should be the last man in the world to go whining to a newspaper office to ask them to expose that wicked establishment that has bent him out of twelve dollars in cash. He should pocket the loss, and congratulate himself that he only needs experience and opportunity to become a first class swindler.

The great source of success in all such schemes is, that there are crowds of people who are ever on the watch to get something without paying anything like its actual worth. They are ready to become the passive recipients of others' gains; while the rogues who carry on swindling establishments are bold, active, and unscrupulous. The people that frequent mock auction rooms are the negative poles, while their audacious managers are the positive poles of these great batteries of rascality. They are complements of each other, and each is necessary to the schemes of the other. They are both swindlers; one positive, the other negative.

A few days after our visit to the auction room I met my friend.

"I have something to tell you," said he; "out of curiosity, I have given some attention to these auction rooms for the last two days, and I have seen that little man in drab come in with tears in his eyes no less than ten times, and inquire if they could sell watches for other people."

"Well, what of him?"

"Why he is a regular penitentiary bird, known to every detective in the city."

Rather Old.

The inundation of 1771, which swept away a great part of the old Tyns Bridge, Newcastle, was long remembered and alluded to with emphasis as "the flood." On one occasion Mr. Adam Thompson was put into the witness box at the assizes. The counsel asking his name, received for answer:

"Adam, sir—Adam Thompson."

"Where do you live?"

"At Paradise, sir."

Paradise is a village about a mile and a half west of Newcastle.

"And how long have you dwelt in Paradise?" continued the barrister.

"Ever since the flood," was the reply made in all simplicity, and with no intention to raise a laugh.

It is needless to say that the judge asked for an explanation.

A Historical Sketch.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago Friday, (July 7.) Commodore Sloat raised the American flag over Monterey, then the capital of California, under Mexican rule, and proclaimed the Province a portion of the United States. He arrived at Monterey from Mazatlan five days before, with the frigate Savannah and five other vessels, under instructions from Secretary of the Navy Bancroft (now Minister to Berlin.) to watch the drift of events, and, in case of a breach of peace, to employ his fleet for hostile purposes. The real object of Sloat's expedition was to prevent California from falling into the hands of the English, in case of war with Mexico. War actually broke out in May, 1846, two months before Sloat reached Monterey; but while he suspected this, he did not know it, though he had probably heard of Fremont's Bear flag insurrection at Sonoma. He was decided in his course, however, by observing that a British fleet of ten vessels on this coast were watching American movements, and nursing some design in opposition to them. When Sloat left Mazatlan on the Savannah, the British flagship, the Collingwood, carrying Rear-Admiral Sir George Seymour, left San Blas, and the two vessels had a race for Monterey. The Savannah was the fastest sailor and reached that port first, where Sloat learned that the English had nearly perfected a plot to put California under British protection, as security, or equivalent for the Mexican debt to British subjects, the transfer to be followed by a scheme of colonization in the San Joaquin valley and around the bays of Monterey and San Francisco. Sloat did not know that instructions were then on the way to him, directing him to seize and hold Mazatlan, Monterey, and San Francisco, and take all measures in his power to secure the conquest of the country; but he knew this was within the plans of the government, and saw that unless he acted at once, the British would supersede him and California be lost to the United States. So, on the 7th of July, 1846, he sent a force of 250 men ashore to hoist the stars and stripes and make proclamation as above. The act was not only not opposed, but was hailed with cheers by the people, who were generally anxious to separate from Mexico, and had been plotting more than once to act for themselves. On the 8th of July, in compliance with a message from Sloat, Commander Montgomery, of the United States sloop of war Portsmouth, raised the American flag at San Francisco, on the plaza which has ever since borne the name of his vessel, and took possession of the then pretty village of Yerba Buena, in the name of his country. On the 10th of July, Montgomery sent the national flag to Sonoma, where it was gladly accepted by the Fremont revolutionists in lieu of their rude bear flag. These acts, followed by various land operations at a later day, insured the acquisition of California by the United States, which was completed by a formal treaty at the end of the war with Mexico. The feelings of Admiral Seymour, when he tardily reached Monterey and saw the American flag flying over the town, may be imagined. It is pretty certain that if Sloat had not got ahead of him the British flag would have been hoisted instead, and California might either not have been an American State to-day, or else have become so only after war with Great Britain.

Jack's Proposal.

One evening as I was sitting by Hetty, and had worked myself up to the point of popping the question, sez I, "Hetty, if a feller was to ask you to marry him, what would you say?" Then she laughed, and sez she: "That would depend on who asked me." Then sez I, "Suppose it was Ned Willis?" Sez she, "I'd tell Ned Willis, but not you." That kinder staggered me, but I was too gute to lose the opportunity, and so sez I again, "Suppose it was me?" And then you ought to see her put up her lip. Sez she, "I don't take no suppose." Well, now you see, there was nothing for me to do but to touch the trigger and let the gun go off. So bang it went. Sez I, "Lor, Hetty, it's me! Won't you say yes?" And then there was such a hullabaloo in my head I don't know zactly what tuk place, but I thought I heard a "Yes" whispered somewhere out of the serim-age.

Not to be Beaten.

A distinguished ex-Governor of Ohio, famous for story telling, relates that on one occasion, while addressing a temperance meeting at Georgetown, District of Columbia, and depicting the misery caused by indulging too frequently in the flowing bowl, his attention was attracted by the sobs of a disconsolate and seedy-looking individual in the rear part of the room. On going to the person and interrogating him he was told the usual tale of woe—among other sad incidents that, during his career of vice, he had buried three wives. The Governor, having buried a few wives of his own, sympathized deeply with the inebriate, and consoled him as much as was in his power. Said he: "The Lord has indeed afflicted you." The mourner sobbing replied: "but I don't think the Lord got much ahead of me, for as fast as he took one, I took another."

SUNDAY READING.

Now is the Time.

DURING a violent storm, a trading vessel was driven upon a high rock on the Western coast of England, and immediately became a perfect wreck.—Many of the crew perished, but the captain and his wife were providentially enabled to reach this rock and clambered up its sides to escape from the waves. But all danger was not over. Their place of shelter was a crag separated from the main land by a deep channel, where the sea rushed with terrific violence between the rugged cliffs on both sides. The cold was intense, and they had neither covering or shelter. The tide was running rapidly, and night was drawing on. It was plain that unless prompt assistance was rendered, they could not hope to survive. Happily they were seen from the neighboring shore, and a boat immediately launched to attempt their deliverance. For the boat to approach the rock was found utterly impossible, and the alternative was to project a rope towards them from the shore, by means of a rocket, and then haul them through the surf within reach of the boat. After many fruitless trials the attempt to throw the rope was successful. The captain grasped it with life and death tenacity, and by means of it a second was drawn from the shore, and one made fast to the person of each. The mountain waves with every successive flow surged up their feet, and then receding laid bare the broken and pointed rocks which were spread out below. It was thus rendered clear that their only way of deliverance was to spring upon the bosom of the wave at the moment of its highest swell, and thus be borne safely over the danger and death which slept beneath the raging billows.

The wife is the first to make the attempt and is instructed what to do. All is ready! The great wave is seen from a distance sweeping on nearer, nearer, and nearer with majestic grandeur. At last it swells full at her feet. "Now! now!" shouted the crew. "Spring upon the wave," cries her husband, with passionate earnestness.

Alas! she trembles, hesitates, delays only for a moment; but that moment is fatal. She leaps at last, but the wave has rolled by, and she falls upon the rocks beneath a mangled and lifeless corpse.—The ocean billows become her winding sheet, and the restless winds moan her requiem.

Her husband, ignorant of her hapless fate, takes the wave at its swell and is saved.

Now is the accepted time.

One of the Saviour's most delightful discourses, second only to the sermon on the mount, is that delivered at Jacob's well to but one listener—and that one a poor despised Samaritan woman. It encourages the heart of a minister of course, to be able to preach to multitudes—often it fosters vanity and pride. But let him not count it condescension, when the occasion calls for it to speak the truths of the gospel to solitary listeners, or to "two or three," gathered together in the name of Jesus. For he that converteth one sinner from the error of his way, saves a soul from death, and hides a multitude of sins.

Humility.

If thou art a vessel of gold, and thy brother but of wood, be not high-minded; it is God that makes thee to differ. The more bounty God shows, the more humility he requires. Those mines that are richest are deepest; those stars that are highest look smallest; the goodliest buildings have the lowest foundations.—The more God honoreth men, the more they should humble themselves; the more fruit, the lower the branch on which it grows. Pride is ever the companion of emptiness.

Would Lose It.

Colonel —, reflecting on his ill life and character, told a certain nobleman, "That if such a thing as a good name was to be purchased, he would freely give ten thousand pounds for one." The nobleman said, "It would certainly be the worst money you ever laid out in your life." "Why so?" asked the honest colonel. "Because you would forfeit it again in less than a week, for a good name cannot be secured by purchase."

The sovereignty of Divine grace, and the impartiality of Divine justice, are points difficult to reconcile; but it is a mercy to know that God has not imposed on us this difficult task; we are commanded to believe, but nowhere required to unravel such difficulties.

Love is the diamond amongst the jewels of the believer's breast-plate. The other graces shine like the precious stones of nature, with their own peculiar lustre and various hues, but the diamond is white. Now, in white all the colors are unite, so in love is centered every other Christian grace and virtue—love is the fulfilling of the law.

The preaching of the word in some places is like the planting of woods, where though no profit is received for twenty years together, it comes afterward.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Has been tested by the public FOR TEN YEARS.

Dr. Crook's Wine of Tar

Renovates and Invigorates the entire system.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Is the very remedy for the Weak and Debilitated.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Rapidly restores exhausted Strength!

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Restores the Appetite and Strengthens the Stomach.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Causes the food to digest, removing Dyspepsia and Indigestion

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Gives tone and energy to Debilitated Constitutions.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR.

All recovering from any illness will find this the best Tonic they can take.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Is an effective Regulator of the Liver.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Cures Jaundice, or any Liver Complaint.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Makes Delicate Females, who are never feeling Well, Strong and Healthy.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Has restored many Persons who have been unable to work for years.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Should be taken if your Stomach is out of Order.

Dr. Crook's Wine of Tar

Will prevent Malarious Fevers, and braces up the System.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Possesses Vegetable Ingredients which make it the best Tonic in the market.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Has proved itself in thousands of cases capable of curing all diseases of the Throat and Lungs.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Cures all Chronic Coughs, and Coughs and Colds, more effectually than any other remedy.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Has Cured cases of Consumption pronounced incurable by physicians.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Has cured so many cases of Asthma and Bronchitis that it has been pronounced a specific for these complaints.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Removes Pain in Breast, Side or Back.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Should be taken for diseases of the Urinary Organs.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Cures Gravel and Kidney Diseases.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Should be taken for all Throat and Lung Ailments.

DR. CROOK'S WINE OF TAR

Should be kept in every house, and its life-giving Tonic properties tried by all.

Dr. CROOK'S Compound

Syrup of Poke Root,

Cures any disease or Eruption on the Skin.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Cures Rheumatism and Pains in Limbs, Bones, &c.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Builds up Constitutions broken down from Mineral or Mercurial Poisons.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Cures all Mercurial Diseases.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Should be taken by all requiring a remedy to make pure blood.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Cures Scald Head, Salt Rheum and Tetter.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Cures long standing Diseases of the Liver.

DR. CROOK'S COMPOUND

SYRUP OF POKE ROOT,

Removes Syphilis or the diseases it entails more effectually and speedily than any and all other remedies combined.