

"Well, boys, I'm about ready to go home," said Rusty. "Let's steer towards the station."

"There's a half hour yet," said Tom, looking at his watch. "O, look at this coming," he cried, suddenly, pointing up the street. "What is it?"

The object of their surprise was a tottering, half-drunken wretch coming toward them, incased in about the worst collection of rags they had ever seen. A short distance away he turned, crossed the street and staggered up the broad steps of a magnificent building.

"Well, this is queer. Let's investigate," said Bob Hunter. "That's what we are here for." And the boys followed the tramp.

At the inner doors of the great building a guard stopped them, demanding their business.

"We are from Milton College," replied Tom, "and are just looking about town. What building is this?"

"Well, ordinarily," said the policeman, shifting the tobacco to the opposite side of his mouth, "it's the City Hall, but the mayor has turned it into a poorhouse now, I guess," and his tone expressed hearty disgust. "Go on in and see for yourselves," and the boys entered.

Two hours before these college boys had been seated in the midst of the wealth and fashion of the city. Nearly every one about wore evening dress, and on either side were boxes filled with diamond-studded, pearl-bedecked leaders of society, while they listened to the most celebrated singers in the world. Now, as they entered the great hallway, the under side of the page of Chicago's story was at their feet. They found themselves in a stifling atmosphere, warm but charged with foul breath, for, stretched out on the stone floor, were hundreds of homeless men and boys, the scum of the streets.

Long will the poorer classes of Chicago remember that hard winter of '93, when the great exposition left them not only unprovisioned for the winter, but multiplied in numbers, when the more destitute of them ate at free soup counters and lodged at the City Hall, or equally uncomfortable places, and were thankful to their benefactors for shelter from the winter night. Tom and his companions gazed wonderingly at the sight before them. With heads to the wall, two rows of men arranged them-