

Trying an Experiment.

THE EFFECT OF POURING COLD WATER DOWN A DRUNKEN MAN'S SPINE.

He came in with an interrogation point in one eye and a stick in one hand. One eye was covered with a handkerchief and one arm in a sling. His bearing was that of a man with a settled purpose in view.

"I want to see," says he, "the man that puts things into this paper."

We intimated that several of us earned a frugal livelihood in that way.

"Well, I want to see the man which ribs things out of the other papers. The fellow who writes mostly with shears, you understand."

We explained to him that there were seasons when the most gifted among us, driven to frenzy by the scarcity of ideas and events, and by the clamorous demands of an insatiable public, in moments of emotional insanity plunged the glittering shears into our exchanges. He went off calmly, but in a voice tremulous with suppressed feeling and indistinct through the recent loss of half a dozen or so of his front teeth:—

"Just so. I presume so. I don't know much about this business, but I want to see a man, the man that printed that little piece about pouring cold water down a drunken man's spine of his back, and making him instantly sober. If you please, I want to see that man. I would like to talk with him."

Then he leaned his stick against our desk and moistened his serviceable hand, and resumed his hold on the stick as though he was weighing it. After studying the stick a minute, he added, in a somewhat louder tone:

"Mister, I came here to see that 'ere man. I want to see him bad."

We told him that particular man was not in.

"Just so. I presume so. They told me before I come that the man I wanted to see woun'd't be anywhere. I'll wait for him. I live up north, and I've walked seven miles to converse with that man. I guess I'll sit down and wait."

He sat down by the door and reflectively pounded the floor with his stick, but his feelings would not allow him to keep still.

"I suppose none of you didn't ever pour much cold water down any drunken man's back to make him instantly sober, perhaps?"

None of us in the office had ever tried the experiment.

"Just so. I thought, just as like as not you had not. Well, mister, I have. I tried it yesterday, and I have come seven miles on foot to see the man that printed that piece. It wan't much of a piece I don't think; but I want to see the man that printed it, just a few minutes. You see, John Smith, he lives next door to my house, when I'm to home, and he gets how-come-you-so every little period. Now, when he's sober, he's all right if you keep out of his way; but when he's drunk, he goes home and breaks dishes, and tips over the stove, and throws the hardware around, and makes it inconvenient for his wife, and sometimes he gets his gun and goes out calling on his neighbors, and it ain't pleasant."

"Not that I want to say anything about Smith; but me and my wife don't think he ought to do so. He came home drunk yesterday, and broke all the kitchen windows out of his house, and followed his wife around with the carving knife, talking about her liver, and after a while he lay down by my fence and went to sleep. I had been reading that little piece; it wan't much of a piece, and I thought if I could pour some water down his spine, on his back, and make him sober, it would be more comfortable for his wife, and a square thing to do all around. So I poured a bucket of spring water down John Smith's spine of his back."

"Well," said we, as our visitor paused, "did it make him sober?"

Our visitor took a firmer hold of his stick, and replied with increased emotion,

"Just so. I suppose it did make him as sober as a judge in less time than you could say Jack Robinson; but, mister, it made him mad. It made him the maddest man I ever saw; and Mr. John Smith is a bigger man than me and stouter. He is a good deal stouter. Bla—blass him, I never knew he was half so stout till yesterday; and he's handy

with his fists, too. I should suppose he's the handiest man with his fists I ever saw."

"Then he went for you, did he?" we asked innocently.

"Just so. Exactly. I suppose he went for me about the best he knew; but I don't hold no grudge against John Smith. I suppose he ain't a good man to hold a gudge against, only I want to see that man what printed that piece. I want to see him bad. I feel as though it would soothe me to see that man. I want to show him how a drunken man acts when you pour water down the spine of his back. That's what I come for."

Our visitor, who had poured water down the spine of a drunken man's back, remained until about six o'clock in the evening, and then went up street to find the man that printed that little piece.

Our Civilization.

Down low, at the root of this flower of civilization, lies the wire-worm of crime. After we have necessitated the criminal class, we punish it for being. We know why it is as clearly as we know why fever breaks out by uncleaned drains and round the borders of marsh lands; but we do nothing to hinder or to mend. We send the thief to prison, surely enough; but we do not care to offer him the chance of honesty; holding punishment godlike, but prevention impolitic. Of late, a certain fear of this seething mass of crime, boiling and bubbling in the depths, has set our legislators to work, and we have begun to appoint boards and build schools, like men in a fright, and hurried. But at the present moment things are standing still, that a free fight may go on over dogma. The patient is *in extremis*, but the doctors are quarreling over the pattern of the cup in which the elixir of life is to be administered. This is one outcome of our civilization, and we are proud of it. We hold it to be far more vital to the good of humanity that roughs and gutter-children should have correct ideas about baptismal regeneration and the doctrine of election than be taught honesty, sobriety, and decency of living. To our minds true religion consists of formulas, not in state of life and morals; and we would rather our thieves and murderers continued and multiplied than see them abolished at the expense of corrupt doctrinal mysteries. Our civilization may have done much; but one thing it has not done—it has not destroyed cruelty. We are cruel to each other, cruel to animals, and cruel to all the weak. Strength claims its victims by its own righteousness, and our civilization is built up on sacrifice. No one can see a child beaten for a fault it does not know to be a fault, hear a servant rated for an oversight, see a horse between the shafts, or a dog broken in, without a burning at his heart and a passionate desire for the reality of the state in which we say we live. If we cannot alter the law of nature in its incessant destruction, its death that there may be life, at least we need not inflict pain out of season. There is no absolute necessity for the costermonger to work a raw on his donkey, for a coachman to lash his team till every nerve quivers with pain and terror, for a hound to be whipped out of all courage and consciousness that a horde of men in pink may hunt a miserable little hare to death, for horses to be spurred and swained and may be break their backs or their hearts, in what men call a steeple-chase, and the gods a selfish cruelty. Children can be taught wisdom and goodness otherwise than by the cane; and if we really respected ourselves, we should respect our so-called social inferiors. Were we civilized, the sights and sounds which meet us twenty times an hour in the streets would be impossible. It is all savagery, from first to last; and the brute assertion of strength is not civilization. Pass on to war, which is the culmination of this cruelty; pass on to the prayers for victory put up by nations irrespective of the justice of the cause—to the thanksgiving offered after they have seized their enemy's lands, burned towns and villages, destroyed harvests and machinery, massacred women and children, peasants and peaceable craftsmen, and slain in fairer fight whole armies of brave and beautiful men. Then the victors march back to their jubilant homes, carrying their bloody flags

into the cathedrals, where they shout out anthems of praise to the God of Love and the great Father of us all, for His grace in giving them strength to kill, ravage and destroy their brothers and His sons. This is civilization; and a victorious army would be scandalized in its deepest feelings if a public thanksgiving was not offered to God for what is perhaps the gain of a bad cause, and the triumph of tyranny and injustice.

There can be no true civilization while strife and selfishness continue. Yet what is it with us? We grudge all men's success and fear it, because we want to secure our own only. We prefer competition to co-operation, save as an act of defense against a stronger enemy outside. But the co-operation which means mutual support and mutual self-sacrifice—the co-operation which is Christianity put into action—that we despise as a dream, and the preachers thereof as mischievous agitators. For we like high-sounding words; they are comforting to the mouth, and they obscure the sense. "To do justice, and to love mercy." We have scarcely mastered that lesson yet! But until we have we know nothing of true civilization. We are only lackered, not welded; hunchbacks beneath our coronation robes; barbarians posed for sages; pithecoids under the guise of men; and the devil's journey-men, calling God their master.—*Ex.*

Ruined Lives.

ALARMING INCREASE OF IMMORALITY AMONG YOUNG GIRLS IN THE CITY—HOW THEY ARE LED ASTRAY—THE LOW DANCING SCHOOLS—THE SUNDAY PIC-NICS—THE ASSIGNATION HOUSES.

The number of young girls, oftentimes mere children, brought before the Police Judge every month for commitment to the Magdalen Asylum—though representing but a very small fraction of the number who have left the path of virtue to seek the hollow and transitory pleasure of vice—is still sufficiently large to call for a word of warning to parents. Of late years the spread of immorality among young girls in this city has been unprecedented. There is no use in trying to disguise the fact, for it is notorious, and it is the subject of general comment. And perhaps the most alarming feature of the matter is the extreme youth of many of the erring girls.

For instance, within the last three or four months there have been thirteen commitments to the Magdalen Asylum by Judge Louderback, and in nearly every case that course was pursued at the request of some grief-stricken father or mother. Of the thirteen girls two were sisters, of the respective ages of ten and twelve years; there was another child of twelve and four of thirteen years of age; one was fifteen, and the remaining five, sixteen. As already stated, the number of cases thus brought to public notice gives a very inadequate idea of the extent of the evil; for it may be safely assumed that hundreds of girls have been led astray, and are now on the broad road to ruin whose parents or other guardians are unaware of the terrible truth, and of those who do become cognizant of their children's shame, the great majority will risk any consequences rather than seek the aid of an officer and the publicity attending a commitment to the Magdalen Asylum.

For many months Chief Crowley kept an officer specially detailed from his slender force to look after young girls who were in the habit of visiting disreputable "dancing schools" and associating with notoriously depraved characters of either sex. This officer was instructed whenever he found a young girl under such circumstances, to ascertain her name and the residence of her natural guardians, and to make known to the latter the dangerous path the girl was treading. If their efforts failed in reclaiming her, she was to be brought in as a candidate for the Magdalen Asylum. In carrying out these orders the officer naturally became familiar with the manner in which most of the unfortunate girls were lured into vicious habits, and the various gradations through which they passed until the House of Refuge was reached or until they developed into utterly depraved and irreclaimable cyprians.

Thinking he might be able to give some information on these points which would be of service to careless parents a *Chronicle* reporter held a short interview with him a few days ago. The reporter began by asking him how the girls generally started on the downward track.

OFFICER—Well, they start in all sort of ways. Once in a while we find the daughter of well-to-do people in this kind of business; but generally the parents are of the poorer class, and don't have a chance to look after their girls. A great many of the female hoodlums begin as nurse-girls. They hire out in some family and have to take the babies out for an airing every day. They pull their little baby-carriages through the streets until they get tired, and then go into some of the public squares, perhaps, and sit down to rest. The town is full of young loafers who are always on the watch for these girls. The loafer comes along and talks to the baby and then to the girl and tries to scrape up an acquaintance with her. If he succeeds in doing this the first step in the girl's ruin is accomplished. He meets her next day, and the day after, and then comes an invitation to some of those dead-fall dancing schools, or a picnic, or something of the kind. Generally, though, the dancing-school is the main reliance. If the young girl agrees to go there with her sidewalk acquaintance, the chances of her dying a decent woman are considerably reduced. The fellow induces her to wait for the last dance, and then takes her to a restaurant for coffee and cakes, or oysters and wine, according to the weight of his purse. I'm telling you now the story that several of these girls have told me when I handed 'em up, you understand. Well, when they leave the restaurant, perhaps it is 1 o'clock, or 2 o'clock in the morning. The girl begins to feel troubled now about going home so late, having to wake the family up, and perhaps be scolded or discharged. This is the time the fellow generally selects to complete his designs. He advises her not to go home at all that night, and finally induces her to accompany him to his lodgings. The next step downward follows as a natural consequence. The girl is ashamed to go back to her work next morning, and acting under her "fellow's" advice, takes a room down town or goes to live with him. She soon picks up an acquaintance with other girls who are father gone than she is, and they show her the way from bad to worse, until she becomes a regular visitor to assignation houses. This goes on sometimes for months and months without the girl's parents knowing anything about it. She goes to see them once in a while, and tells them she's still working for Mrs. So-and-so, and brings home her "wages" of eight or ten dollars a month, just as she always did. The father, may be, is a hard-working man, out from daylight until dark; and the mother has all she can do at home and no time to be looking after the girl; and so the poor people never suspect anything is wrong. If the mother asks her daughter where she got that new hat, or those fancy boots, the girl says her mistress is very kind and makes her lots of presents. And so the thing goes on until some day I hunt up the parents and have the disagreeable duty of telling them the true state of affairs.

REPORTER—What course do the parents generally adopt in such cases?

OFFICER—Well, different people act differently, you know. Sometimes the mothers take on so that it would make a wooden man's heart ache to see them, and sometimes they don't believe me and get furious. There was one woman who went for me with a kettle of scalding hot water when I told her how her daughter was living, and I had to leave the house in a hurry to avoid her.

REPORTER—What I wanted to know was, whether, when their own efforts to reclaim the girls fail, the parents are generally willing to have them sent to the Magdalen Asylum?

OFFICER—Oh, no. As a general thing they are bitterly opposed to that course, on account of the exposure. Although there is really a great deal more danger of exposure and shame in letting them run on, for the newspapers seldom publish the girls' names.

REPORTER—The *Chronicle* makes it a rule never to publish the names, except where the girls have

already become notorious characters.

OFFICER—It is a very good rule, too, because a great many of the younger girls are thoroughly reformed in the Asylum, and they ought to have a show.

REPORTER—You spoke of the public squares as the favorite resorts of the scoundrels who make the ruin of young girls their principal occupation. Is any one of these squares particularly noted for this?

OFFICER—Yes; Columbia Square, between Folsom, Harrison, Sixth and Seventh Streets, is about the worst of the lot. You can go there any day in the week, and see these young hoodlums playing their games with the little nurse girls—"baby hawkers" is the name the boys have for them. Union Square is also a favorite resort for these fellows. It does seem as if something ought to be done to stop the business at the start, but of course we policemen cannot interfere so long as the girls have no complaint to make. The young fellows are always very polite and well-behaved at first, and the silly girls are rather disposed to be pleased than offended.

REPORTER—Is there any house particularly noted as the resort of depraved young girls?

OFFICER—I don't know of any one house in particular, except that one house on the northwest corner of Third and Stevenson. We took a girl of fifteen out of that place only two or three days ago. That's a regular hell-hole, and something ought to be done to break it up.

REPORTER—Well, why don't you go to work and break it up? The law provides a method, does it not?

OFFICER—Not that I am aware of. You see, to all appearances, it's nothing but a lodging house, and it's no easy job to get a legal grip on the place. There's a very bad woman in that house. She is a noted procuress, and I have heard of her going to people's houses and getting well acquainted—playing herself for a respectable widow or something of that kind—with the object of working the ruin of some girl in the family. In one case she persuaded the mother to let her daughter visit her room several times, and finally to spend a few days with her. The girl's ruin was accomplished by this means, the she-devil having introduced her to one of the patrons of the house. I could give you the name of some men in this city who pay this woman handsomely for that kind of work. You would be astonished to hear the names.

REPORTER—Perhaps so. But I shall want some more information from you on this subject some other time.

OFFICER—All right. I think the *Chronicle* can do the community a great service by exposing these things. I know parents are often to blame for not looking more closely after their girls. You can make them open their eyes in time.—*San Francisco Chronicle, July 14.*

— A lately married couple came near separating on account of a squabble over their wedding presents.

— the greatest revivalist of the age?" and on all "giving it up," said, "Because at the close of every sermon there is a great awakening."

— The editor of a Pennsylvania paper, having failed to get a pass, congratulates himself on the fact that Tom Scott can't control the through road to heaven.

— A traveler in Wales, seeing a sign over the door with this one word, "Agorsequedere," asked the woman what she sold, when she said she did not sell anything, but that "agues was cured here."

— That was a good, though rather severe, pun which was made by a student in one of our theological seminaries (and he was not one of the brightest of the class either), when he asked, "Why is Professor

— The Danbury *News* says that a homesick San Franciscan, who is visiting the East, finds occasional relief by having sand squirted in his face and down his back with a bellows.

— A Georgia man being asked if he thought a certain politician in that State would steal, replied: "Steal! Why, by Jove, if he was paralyzed and hamstrung I wouldn't trust him, in the Desert of Sahara, with the biggest anchor of the Great Eastern. Steal! I should think he would."