

GANGS OF BAD BOYS HAVE BECOME A TERROR.
THEY DESTROY HOUSES, ABUSE PEDESTRIANS AND
DEVELOP INTO ADULT ROWDIES AND JAILBIRDS.

"Another gang case," mutters the portly door-keeper of the Children's Court after the "Oyezel" boys of the crib.

Three boys have been arraigned before the magistrates. Two appear to be of that rare type who are seen coming home from Sunday school so intent in memorizing a missionary tract that they pass a long fight without seeing it. Their brown hair is combed carefully and brushed smoothly. Their clothes are new and neat. They are apparently ashamed of themselves.

The mother of one of the "darling boys" frequently drags out a handkerchief with such a flourish that even the doorkeeper blinks at it. Her sob is wonderfully regular. Between the sobs there are such appeals as these:

"Oh, judge, it wasn't his fault!"
"Oh, Thomas is such a dear, good boy!"
"Oh, your honor, he was led astray by a bad boy."

"Judge, spare the name of our family!"

The other mother is resigned. She knows that an exhibition of too much feeling is likely to spoil the performance. At any rate, she holds her tears in reserve.

Two fathers are there, too. Both are loudly indignant.

"It's contemptibly mean business," says the first father.

"A dirty piece of politics," says the second father. In no mean time both men frown at the real estate agent who has appeared for the prosecution.

In spite of the fact that the three boys were caught in a private dwelling house, where they were cutting out the lead pipes in order to get corroborative evidence of a plumber, a policeman and a plumber, who estimated the damage at \$100, the fathers characterize the complainant by epithets as "skinflint," "blackmailier" and "scoundrel."

"As if he don't know boys 'll be boys," says the first father.

"As if he never was a kid himself," says the second father.

The third lad has no parents or friends to plead his cause. According to his own stammering statement, he has "got an ole stepmother, as is only too glad when he ain't eatin' her grub." He is the ordinary tow-headed, freckled-faced, snub-nosed, thick-necked, barefooted kind of youth which artists label "An East Side Stud." Of course, the tow-headed youth is to blame for the whole escapade. He is the leader of the gang. He tempted the others. The brown-haired lads were all purity and credibility until they fell into his insidious company. The judge looks wise. The two "innocents" are committed to the custody of their parents.

The actual case of "hoodlumism," however, is like one of thousands which never reach the courtroom and the newspapers. According to certain real estate men, who organized some days ago for the protection of property against these youthful vandals, the "gang" spirit has become fairly contagious and is rapidly spreading from street to street. There have always been bad boys, since the time of Cain, according to these good men, but never before to their knowledge have they become so well organized. As Cain lived before the time of corporations and labor unions, the tendency of the age may therefore explain this new phase of an ancient evil.

There have also been gangs of hoodlums since the earliest days of New York, but they consisted for the most part of boys and young men who were "born bad." Their parents before them were either criminals or consorted with criminals. They themselves when they grew up became criminals. But the street gangs which are now terrorizing residential districts throughout the city are recruited from the best of the well as from the worst. The leaders are for the most part men who are particularly characterized as tough, but many of the "privates" or "non-commissioned officers," as some of these young ruffians dignify themselves, have enlisted "just for fun." Almost every street on the East Side of Manhattan now has its gang, and in some streets the different grades of leadership are those of a regular army, with a general, colonel, captain, lieutenants and subordinate officers.

For example, in One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st., where such an organized gang exists, it has for its general an Irish lad about fifteen years old, who is known by his intimates as "Micky" Mullins. He lives between Park and Lexington aves., and is in command of every "regiment" in the entire street. There is a regiment with its colonel for each block, and a company with its captain for each tenement. "Micky" has won the honor which he enjoys through sheer physical superiority and daring. He is the fastest runner, and consequently he is never captured. At a meeting of the other generals, he knows when a retreat is as good as a victory. In his own language he "can lick any kid in the street," and his commands are consequently obeyed. It is almost safe to say that "Micky" Mullins some twenty years in the future will represent his district in the Tammany Executive Committee.

In Brooklyn, as in Manhattan, the gang spirit is rampant. Here a lad was recently killed as the result of a fight between rival street gangs. Up to that time, however, the police of that particular neighborhood, as in many other districts of the city, paid little, if any, attention to the hoodlums. Many a citizen who complained of their vandalism was merely told by the policeman to whom he appealed that both were boys themselves once. For example, the Rev. E. H. Wellman found it necessary the other day to get a deputy sheriff's badge in order to legally protect himself against a gang of hoodlums who made his life miserable.

The hoodlums have also proved a particular terror to women. Some tear the purses of shoppers from their hands, or in the surging of a crowd they

explore the mysterious pleats and folds of skirts for the fugitive feminine pocket. The term of "hoodlumism," however, which has most terrors for the women is the "stickpin game." Outright robbery, the women say, is far preferable to the pin evil, which is not only rude, and sometimes painful, but, most of all, injurious to a perfect toilet.

The "stickpin game" is said to have originated in Brooklyn because of the greater number of safety pins which are to be found on the sidewalks of the baby carriage borough. It was brought over the Bridge and is now rapidly working its way into Manhattan.

LATEST PRANK OF THE BAD STREET BOY.
Bad boy just about to strike woman with stick through which a long pin is thrust.



Manhattan. The operation of the game is simple, and can be learned much more quickly than shorthand. The way it is played, as told by an expert who is the leader of a Willoughby-st. gang—a hoodlum, not a political, gang—is as follows:

"It takes two kids to work de needles," began the Willoughby-st. urchin. "One ter swing de stick and de ladder ter watch fer cops. To begin wid, 'er want ter take a long pin and fix it linter a stick, so de pin'll stick out. Sumtimes we use hairpins, but dem's dangerous. Dere like to stick inter a bone and give 'em blud pizun. Wall, when a woman swings de corner as 'tinks she's jest lovely, an tries to walk like an ostrich, wid er head way forward and her feet way aft, we lays low. Dat's de kind we's lookin' fer. But w'en we can't get swell girls, as is stuck on 'emselves we takes any old 'ting. Dat's right."

"The kid dat's watchin' fer a copper signals w'en dere none in sight. Den the kid wid de needle comes up behind, slow, and gives the lady a good whack. De needle always drops 'tair pocketbook, and den we can grab it up and run. Most women, 's'er know, never 'tink to yell fer a cop, or chase a teller. De only stan' an' say:'

"'Oh, my! Oh, my! That was jes' awful. Did it spoll my dress?'"

Those who are leading the crusade against the street gangs of Harlem comprise a grievance committee of the Harlem Property Owners' Association. Its five members are Cyrille Carreau, of No. 654 Madison-ave.; Edward J. Murray, of No. 2,684 Third-ave.; H. C. Foster, of No. 1,971 Third-ave.; John Armstrong, of No. 1,884 Third-ave., and Charles E. Mayer, of No. 68 East One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st. At a meeting of the association on May 8 a resolution was unanimously adopted empowering the committee to employ counsel, and Ira J. Ettlinger, of No. 99 Nassau-st., is now engaged running down a half dozen gangs that operate in the vicinity of Park-ave. and One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st. The notice of the action was furthermore sent to the Board of Police Magistrates.

The dime novels which divert the minds of street hoodlums contain hardly more thrilling narratives than are enacted by those who read them. In many cases a novel prompts an escapade recently attempted. The "kidnapping" of one of the St. Paul girls students by the first lieutenant of "Micky" Mullins shows so much of the melodrama of crime, as he the deed doubtless originated in some such literary production as "The Mystery of the Convent; or, Who Stole the Sister Superior,"

The name of "Micky" Mullins's lieutenant is still a matter of conjecture, though this bandit is chiefly referred to as "Brass Check Bill." How he came by such a pseudonym no one of his gang will say.

The St. Paul's Roman Catholic Parochial School is at No. 114 East One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st., between Park and Lexington aves. The headquarters of the One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st. gang is only a block distant in front of a row of tenement houses, known in the directory as Nos. 154, 156 and 158 East One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st. There are generally a few boxes in front of a grocery store here, and lounging about them there are usually from a half dozen to a score of street gamins waiting for "somethin' doin'." From the way the kidnapping plot was put into execution its details must have been worked out with profound foresight. In the main the scheme was to catch the prettiest girl of the school as she was coming out at three o'clock in the afternoon, and hide her in a vacant house at No. 128 East One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st. The house had been

neighbor's child, and, with his three companions, he mysteriously disappeared. It was only after a two days' hunt that their pursuers found them, footsore and hungry, at Liberty Corners, nine miles from home. Little Theresa appeared to be dying.

"Willie shot me," she sobbed, as her brother, who was one of the captives, looked tenderly at her. "Yes, I think I am dyin' now. I feel so weak like. I got tired and said I couldn't go any further. Then Willie shot me with his rifle. 'Girls are no good, anyhow,' he said."

The little victim of Willie James was taken to a hospital, and the surgeons, on examining her, found that one bullet had shattered a hand and the second had penetrated the abdomen. She died soon afterward. The boy was sent to jail. His mother said: "Willie has made so much trouble. I never could do anything with him after he began to read those dime books."

The gangs love baseball, and every block has its baseball nine. A game is generally going at all hours in the day. There is a law against such "games," but the police do not seem familiar with this ordinance. When the pitcher is not engaged in a regular league game he is wont to practise with rocks, and studies the evolution of the out-curve by seeing how nearly he can miss the windows of adjacent houses. For example, there is an excavation for a new building on the southwest corner of Park-ave. and One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st. The excavators encountered rocks, and on quitting work in the recent strike they left a mine of variously shaped stones for boys to practise with. For several days the neighborhood was treated to a virtual downpour of rocks, every day and every hour of the day. It is the fashion that stockings this summer should have "open work" windows and glass front doors in the face of the storm of stones followed the prevailing fashion. Old women who cared for babies and trundled them up and down the sidewalks while their young mothers went to "bargain sales" were compelled to run to cover.

"We had four window panes broken in one week," said Mrs. Charles E. Mayer, of No. 68 East One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st., who lives in an apartment house directly adjacent to the corner lot. "Ever since the excavators struck the other day there has been an actual reign of terror. I would be sitting here in the parlor talking with some friend who had come in to see me, when a sudden rock would come smashing into the room right past my head. A window broken now and then is to be expected in a city like New-York, but four in one week is too much like war."

"I asked the police to do something, but they shook their heads and said, 'Oh, boys will be boys.' Then we got a watchman for the excavation, who stands guard until 30 o'clock in the evening, and after that time the boys find attractions somewhere else. Oh, these boys are dreadful. Besides breaking windows they are up to every other kind of prank. There used to be a heavy board fence around that corner lot. One night they came, tore it down and carried it off. They built a bonfire with it. It's the One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st. gang we dread the most."

Only a block away from Mrs. Mayer's home, on the south side of One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st., between Park and Lexington aves., there is a building which might interest an archeologist. It is a two-story wooden structure whose youth dates back a good fraction of a century, and which is, in all senses of the word, a ruin. The house used to bear a silver plate fastened to its lintel with the figures 123. The plate has long since disappeared, leaving behind only two spider webbed screw holes. The windows are smashed in, and in the area be-



BAD BOY STRIKING WOMAN WITH LONG PIN THRUST THROUGH END OF STICK.

loaned for the occasion by the general of the One-hundred-and-seventeenth-st. gang. "Den," Mullins is reported to have said to his lieutenants at a meeting of his staff officers, "We'll put an 'ad' in wun of de yellars, as'll read like dis:

"Girl, held for ransom.—Swiped from the St. Paul's School nine hours before midnight. Ransom to be handed over in gold, \$200 or the black deeps of the East River. Will treat only with responsible parties. No triflers need apply. Address, Police Commissioner Greene."

"Say, won't dat throw a scare inter de reformers," said "Spittoon Charley," whose father got his start in the saloon business by cleaning out the river front from the street "Brass Check Bill" was to capture the maiden.

All would have gone well had there not been a Judas in the camp. When the gang had been ambushed on either side of the schoolyard on the appointed afternoon the girls poured out into the sidewalk amid a buzz of voices and a medley of giggles. Everything looked favorable for the fell swoop and a successful capture, when the titter suddenly ceased. Three strong armed women came striding down the street.

"Vere's dose vicked boys," exclaimed the foremost of the trio, whose features as well as her method of using the English language betokened a Teutonic ancestry.

"'Til smash de fust wun that shows his lanterns," cried the second mother. The third woman had already run forward and grasped the Marguerite against whom the gang had conspired against bringing her home to the consternation of her girl companions, who doubtless pitied her for the fate they believed awaited her. The gang had taken flight. "Micky" Mullins, who boasted he could "put daylight through any stiff of a cop," fled at the sight of more terrible women. Why the plot flashed in the mind still perplexes Mullins, and, as he the plot still perplexes "Say, who tipped off de mudders?"

The dime novel had a similar effect on Willie James, of Plainfield. After he had read of the exploits of Jesse James this ten-year-old Jersey boy thought that he must have some of the bandit's own brand of crime. Accordingly he started out on a blood in his veins, and accordingly started out on a career of crime. At the point of his rifle he compelled Ethel and Orville, his younger sister and brother, to run away with him. He used the same means of persuasion upon little Theresa Watson, a

heaps of broken glass. Some thoughtful minded soul once closed the blinds, but these offered only a weak defence against the volleys to which they were subjected. Through the gaps one may see rooms barren of any decoration except rocks here and there which made their entrance uninvited at one time or another through the windows. The front steps and stoop had been torn off and carried away. The door knobs have been wrenched out, and in the keyhole, dangling from a rusty nail, as inconspicuous as a jest at a funeral, hangs this placard:

"Quit. Will return in half an hour."

Beside No. 128 there are two other buildings near by which present almost as sad an appearance. They are Nos. 122 and 124. They are empty, with the exception of the basement of No. 124, which is inhabited by a caretaker. When a Tribune reporter called one afternoon recently the caretaker was away to work, but his wife was at home with her children.

"Sometimes I'm afraid we'll be burned out," she said, as she patted the head of a curly haired daughter. "It's grown worse and worse here. It's got so these boys don't stop at anything. They come in bands of from fifteen to twenty, and swoop down so quickly that they get in their work before one knows what they're up to. Why, one night we heard a noise as if a New-York Central train had jumped from the viaduct. It was an awful crash. My husband ran out as quickly as he could, and there he saw the stoop of No. 128 moving down the street as if it was alive. About twenty boys had hold of it with a rope. When they saw he was on to them, they dropped it and ran every which way. My husband went around the corner for a policeman, and when he came back, why, that stoop was gone. There wasn't so much as a nail left."

"No. 128 is where the One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st. gang was going to hide the St. Paul schoolgirl, so I heard. Oh, you can't tell what these hoodlums are up to. The police don't seem to mind. One night the Mullins gang, from One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st., set fire to the fence on the corner, and then sent in an alarm. The engines, hook and ladder, hose carts and all came dashing up, and then what did the boys do but throw stones at the firemen. When they saw these hoodlums are up to. The police don't seem to mind. One night the Mullins gang, from One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st., set fire to the fence on the corner, and then sent in an alarm. The engines, hook and ladder, hose carts and all came dashing up, and then what did the boys do but throw stones at the firemen. When they saw these hoodlums are up to. The police don't seem to mind. One night the Mullins gang, from One-hundred-and-eighteenth-st., set fire to the fence on the corner, and then sent in an alarm. 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