

THE WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE OVER THE EAST RIVER AS IT LOOKS AT NIGHT FROM THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD. Lighted by electricity procured from burning the city's waste gathered by the Street Cleaning Department.

vegetables from the women who were arranging their stalls for the day's sale; odds and ends of salsify, celeriac, dried beans—red, white or green—the smallest contributions were gratefully accepted, and all helped to fill the soup pot with the nourishing potage of which all French people are so fond. But these expedients were rendered unnecessary by the new kitchen garden, and until the death of the baron the work was extended week by week, each successive winter finding the pensioners more numerous than the last.

The sale of the estates of Baron Hirsch left the "Bouchée de Pain" once more homeless, and three or four times it was forced for one reason or another to change its quarters. Now, at last, after many trials, it has a fine installation of its own. A generous friend presented a site and building materials for a large central depot, close to the fortifications and the Vincennes Gate of Paris. It consists of a large, lofty hall, paved with red brick, and containing many deal tables and benches, all scrupulously clean and white. At the further end is the great stove with its bright copper stock pot. Near at hand stands a huge coffee machine and percolator, and a dresser is covered with the bright tin bowls in which the soup is distributed to the pensioners. On each side of the hall is a corridor, one for men and one for women, in which they await their turn to come in for the meal. Across the little courtyard is a clothing depot, for which contributions are also gratefully accepted, and which furnishes from time to time to deserving cases, a warm jacket, a vest or dress.

The work of the "Mouthful of Bread" is of two kinds. The first is the daily distribution at the depot of a bowl of soup and a piece of bread. This takes place at 9 o'clock every day throughout the winter. The second is an outdoor distribution of hot coffee and bread, made at two and sometimes three places in the city. For both of these distributions there is only one condition. Would-be recipients must call in person for a ticket which is given free at the central depot at 9 o'clock in the morning. This ticket is intended to insure the rations falling into the right hands. It is assumed that those in work, receiving wages, will not be free at that time of the morning to go to Vincennes for the ticket. Every day from All Saints to Easter these two meals are given away. The outdoor distributions take place at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The bread is cut up and the coffee made at the Vincennes depot, and then carried in neat little carts to the appointed places for distribution. For convenience of transport the coffee is made exceedingly strong and is diluted with boiling water provided by arrangement on the scene of action. At the Marché de la Cité, between the cathedral of Notre Dame and the great hospital known as the Hotel Dieu, the hot water is provided by the hospital, where the mugs used are also stored after each day's use. At the Place de la Bastille this kind of office is done by the authorities at the barracks situated there, and at the third station by the prefecture of police. The distribution witnessed by me was on the market place close to the cathedral, and the sections of iron roofing provided for the flower stalls were utilized as benches for the lunch. Men were served on the right and women on the left of the great, hissing urn, which exhaled a grateful odor on that cold Friday afternoon. The candidates, all drawn from the poorest classes of the community, the merest wrecks of humanity, stood in a long line, waiting their turn to pass through the barrier and sink on to the bench to enjoy their fragrant meal. The food was dispensed by the delegate of the work with the assistance of a voluntary helper, chosen from the waiting crowd. This voluntary assistance is rewarded by the gift of 15 cents, in addition to the meal. When all have been fed, the utensils are washed and stored at the Hotel Dieu, the urns are lifted into the cart and carried back to Vincennes.

So carefully and well is the work organized that every cent of the subscribers' money goes to feed the poor. All the work of the depot, the catering, cooking and serving are done by one woman, who has devoted the last twenty-two years of her life to the work which she helped to start. For the cleaning, scouring, etc., she has the assistance of a man; the rest of the staff consists of the three persons who undertake the transport and distribution of the coffee

and bread. The work is out of reach of danger of financial difficulties in the future, for its funds are now administered by a committee of very able men, and, moreover, the city of Paris has added it to her budget, granting a subsidy of \$3,600 a year, drawn from the proceeds of the "Pari Mutuel" (the state organized betting system of the country).

The following figures will give an idea of the amount of relief given by the "Bouchée de Pain" in the course of the last year: Eighty thousand portions of soup were given away, and one hundred and fifty thousand rations of coffee and bread, involving an expenditure of 20,000 francs (about \$4,000).

The utility of the work is incontestable. It reaches the most helpless class, and gives immediate succor. So simple is the machinery re-

quired that a similar organization could be started in a few hours. Yet such relief given in this way cannot be charged with the offence of pauperizing the recipients; only the really destitute would go far for dry bread, and the very plainness of the fare might well stimulate the poor to bestir themselves to find some work they can do. And this has in fact proved to be the case. Several women living at a distance from Vincennes have been allowed orders on their nearest baker for bread while getting started in some honest work. Sometimes, too, orders for milk have been added, with good results. The "Bouchée de Pain" is far reaching in its effects.

A SPEEDY RECOVERY.

On one of the visits of the American fleet to English waters, Admiral Erben, now retired, was in command, with Captain Alfred T. Mahan, the writer on naval affairs, as his flag captain. One morning Captain Mahan came to his admiral with an invitation to dine with a duke, which he had received.

"I can't accept this," said Captain Mahan, "as they forgot to invite you."

"I should say you couldn't," growled the admiral. "I'll answer for you."

Whereupon the admiral wrote: "Admiral Erben, United States Navy, regrets that Captain Mahan, his flag captain, cannot accept the invitation of the Duke of Blank. Captain Mahan is on the sick list."

An hour or so later a messenger from the

duke returned with invitations for the admiral and the captain. Whereupon the admiral wrote again:

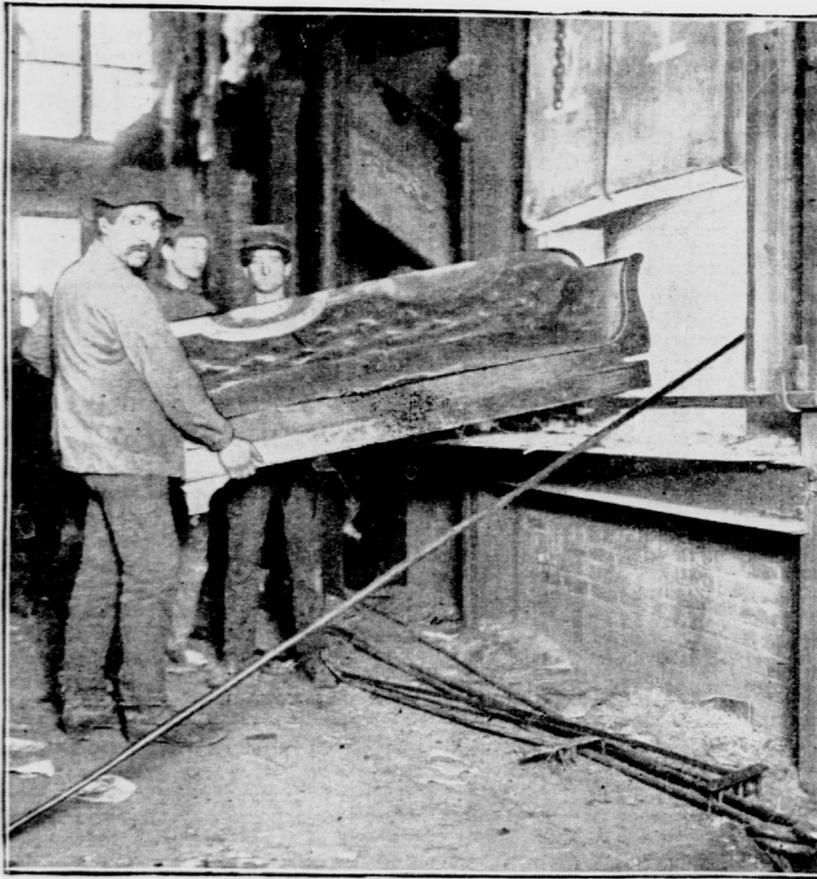
"Admiral Erben accepts with pleasure the invitation for Captain Mahan and himself. He wishes also to advise the Duke of Blank that he has taken Captain Mahan off the sick list."

A NEAT RETORT.

Senator Foraker was contradicting a certain statement.

"Though this is a firm contradiction," he said, "I want it to be a pleasant and polite one. It is not necessary, when men tell falsehoods, to call them liars and club them over the head. Their error can be pointed out in neater and more graceful ways.

"For instance:



UGLY SOURCE FROM WHICH THE GLITTER OF THE SPAN ABOVE IS PRODUCED. Scene in the rubbish burning plant at Delancey-st. and the East River. Street Cleaning Department men thrusting an old sofa into the furnace.

LIGHT FROM RUBBISH.

Williamsburg Bridge Illuminated by Burning Waste Material.

Few of the many thousands who nightly cross the East River, and who look toward the new Williamsburg Bridge, with its mile or more of brilliant electric lights, are aware that all this dazzling illumination is derived entirely from the burning up of a portion of the city's discarded rubbish. Such is the fact, however, and the great shining arch marks the first successful municipal lighting plant in the city operated by the burning of waste rubbish. This economical achievement has been brought about by Commissioner John McGaw Woodbury of the Street Cleaning Department, who thus saves about \$30,000 a year for the city, which would otherwise be paid out for electricity for lighting the bridge.

New-York's first municipal lighting plant is situated directly under the new Williamsburg Bridge, at Delancey-st. and the East River, and consists of two structures, one containing the furnaces and boilers and the other the generating and electrical machinery. The most animated and spectacular place in the whole plant is the receiving department, where all day some 180 carts, piled to the top with all sorts and conditions of waste material, including a dozen different kinds of paper, cardboard, milk cans, bedsteads, sofas, mattresses, crockery ware—in fact, every conceivable discarded remnant of the East Sider's household and trade establishments—are here unloaded. Each wagon averages about 1,000 pounds.

With pitchforks the smaller articles in this almost mountainlike mass of waste substances are thrust on an incline, or apron conveyer, four feet wide and eighty-nine feet long, which carries the material to a platform above, where it falls into a chute leading into the furnaces below. Along both sides of the conveyer the Italian contractor, who pays in the neighborhood of \$250 a week for the privilege, has stationed a gang of sorters, who pick out the desired grades of paper, pasteboard and other salable articles. Near by are wooden bins, into which the various classes of material thus rescued are thrown and kept separated. The bins have openings at the bottom from which the sorted stuff is delivered to the floor for packing. This tramway, or conveyer, travels a foot a minute, which gives the army of pickers just about time to do their work. About 60 per cent of the whole mass is thus sorted out. The Italian contractor is said to be reaping a good harvest and clearing several hundred dollars a week out of his rubbish picking monopoly. This, however, in the future will be open to public bids.

When the remaining matter reaches the top of the conveyer it falls on a sheetiron platform containing openings which lead into the furnaces. Through several separate chutes the rubbish is pushed down by men with long shovels.

Along the outer edge of the building, in order to save time and labor, an inclined wagon road is arranged, which is used only by the carts containing such bulky material as will require no picking or breaking into pieces or assorting, such as large blocks of wood and lumber, whole barrels, chairs, sofas, etc., which could not go through the chutes. These are dropped down and shoved directly into the furnace on the lower floor.

One of the novel sights to be seen is when one of the huge furnace doors is opened and some East Side heirloom in the shape of an old sofa or lounge is shoved intact into the burning and crackling interior, furnishing enough fuel probably to keep one of the big arc lights going for several hours on the bridge at night.

Two boilers are employed, which have a capacity of 200 horsepower apiece. The constructive features of the plant were worked out jointly by Engineer Parsons and F. L. Stearns, engineer of the Department of Street Cleaning. By experimenting Mr. Stearns has found that one pound of the material burnt in these furnaces is capable of evaporating one and a half pounds of water from 212 degrees Fahrenheit, and two inclosed arcs could be lit one hour from the heat obtained by the combustion of eight pounds of rubbish. It is also estimated that ten thousand pounds of rubbish can be disposed of in an hour.

"In a small town in Indiana a group of drummers were assembled. They sat in the reading room of the country hotel. On the flimsy hotel paper they had finished writing to their firms with the lumpy ink and the rusted pens which the hotel management provided, and now, with newspaper reading and desultory talk, they whiled away the tedious evening.

"A young drummer in a red tie took the cigarette from his mouth and said:

"Well, my day's sales here reached \$5,000. Not bad for a small town, eh?"

"An elderly drummer looked up from his newspaper and said quietly:

"Not bad at all. It is wonderful what one can sometimes do in these little places. On my last trip here my commissions came to just what you say your sales did."

"The young man reddened.

"This isn't a lying competition," he said gruffly.

"Oh, excuse me," said the other. "I thought it was."

MARK TWAIN'S TOAST.

Mark Twain, who celebrated his seventieth birthday not long ago, is still able to enjoy life with the zest of a Peter Pan, nor has he apparently forgotten the delights of stolen sweets, for the other day, when temperance organizations were under discussion, his contribution to the debate (and whether he spoke for or against, he left his audience to decide, as the true humorist always does) was this brief remark: "Taking the pledge will not make bad liquor good, but it will improve it."