

### WHERE IS THE NIGHT.

Bright cloudlets decked the eastern sky  
Whose rays bore radiance filled my room,  
While through the open window crept  
Scents of unperfumed clover bloom.  
My nestling woke; the raptured boy  
Rubbed slumber's glamour from his sight,  
Then questioned in a glad surprise,  
"Dear mamma, where has gone the night?"  
And thus, when fades earth's night of stars  
Where restless dreamers moan and toss,  
Where weary eyes that fall on sleep,  
Drop unwept tears their lids across,  
With darkness, weariness all past,  
Waking in dawn's effulgent light,  
The child's "where has gone the night?"  
"Dear Lord, and is it gone—the night?"  
—*Hartford Post.*

### SLAM-BANG.

Who is this that enters my house?  
Old Slam-Bang!  
Who never moves as still as a mouse?  
Old Slam-Bang!  
Flight in with his heavy boots he'll stride,  
Clap! clap! the doors must open wide!  
And he dances a jig on the parlor floor,  
With a whoop, and a shriek, and a savage  
TOOT.  
While the dishes rattle and shake with fear,  
And every one knows Slam-Bang is here,  
Old Slam-Bang!  
Where were you born, I'd like to know?  
Old Slam-Bang!  
Why need you hurry and skurry so?  
Old Slam-Bang!  
If ever you mount a lively steed,  
You think he must travel a break-neck  
speed,  
Over the fences and over the stones,  
With never a thought about broken bones  
Or anything else but to run and race,  
And get your fun at a headlong pace,  
Old Slam-Bang!  
I wish you wouldn't come into my house,  
Old Slam-Bang!  
When every thing is as still as a mouse,  
Old Slam-Bang!  
For then the baby is wide awake,  
And then the doors and windows shake,  
And they might imagine, who heard the  
BOING,  
That, instead of one, there were twenty boys.  
Be quiet a moment, I do entreat,  
Or leave the house and go into the street,  
Old Slam-Bang!  
—*Josephine Follard, in Buffalo Commercial.*

### AMONG THE TRAMPS.

A Novel Experience—A Free Ride and a  
Luxurious Repast—Life in a Tie-house—  
Secrets of the Craft.

[From the San Francisco Call.]

"Now, then, off ye go!"  
"Well, you needn't be so rough about it. I'm going, ain't I?"  
The first speaker was a conductor of the Central Pacific Railroad.  
The second was a curious looking specimen of humanity. He was tall and slightly built, and his slender frame was encompassed by a suit which told unmistakably that he was a tramp, despite his well defined features, which betokened rather the gentleman of sentiment and taste than a vagrant wandering upon the face of the earth. He wore a blue woolen blouse and a sailor's oil-cloth hat. His legs were incased in a pair of overalls, which were so short that they did not reach the top of his heavy brogans, which were evidently about four sizes too large for his small feet, and disclosed to view a pair of old fashioned blue woolen stockings, such as grandmother used to make in the good old days gone by.  
This singular specimen of humanity with an audibly muttered curse on conductors in general, and this special conductor in particular, was thrown from the overland train going East, at about 4 o'clock in the morning, on the 9th of September, A. D. 1877, at Clark's Station, fourteen miles west of Wadsworth. He had been discovered in the smoking-car, quietly snoozing the happy hours away, awakened and found to be without the usual strip of pasteboard eating him to a ride. The car was stopped for his especial benefit, which placed him on a level with kings and emperors and he was summarily ejected. A careful observer might have noticed that the shove which sent him from the car was not particularly energetic; but there were no careful observers to watch his movements. He made a quick bound from the train, landed on all fours, and found himself sprawling at the foot of a huge water tank.  
There were observers, though, although not careful. The moment the tramp regained his feet, which he did with great apparent difficulty, a voice came hissing through the morning air: "Well, pard, you're a jolly 'un, you is!"  
The tramp, gathering himself together, peered through the gloom of early morning at four ragged, besmirched creatures in the shape of men, who were scrutinizing him closely. There was nothing suggestive of evil in their eyes, but they were not pleasant to look upon.  
"Why, what's the matter?"

"Oh, nothin's the matter, only ye've gone and gin' us away."  
"Gin' ye away?"  
"E-a-s, gin' us away. We was a goin' to jump that train, but when the cop (conductor) threw ye off the racket was up. Why, after findin' you he had the whole gang lookin' for us, an' here we're blocked. There ain't another caboose 'till 4 o'clock in the afternoon, an' now here we've got to stay till then or foot it to Wadsworth."  
The ejected tramp expressed his profound regret in the vernacular of the tribe.  
"Why, the —," cried another, "didn't you come the truck racket till ye got here? Don't yer know this is one of our reg'lar stations, and the cop never goes through the car from Wadsworth to Winnemucca?"  
"I didn't know that."  
"Well, you are a green 'un."  
This fact was modestly admitted by the new arrival. He even became frank, and admitted that this was his first tramp. "Bub," he said, in a sudden outburst of ingenuous candor, "Boys, I've made up my mind to lead a free an' easy life after this. I've worked for blasted monopolies all my life; I don't mean to do it no longer; I want to join the jolly boys of the road, will ye take me along and learn me the rackets?"  
"In course we will," said the first speaker, "but the first thing ye must learn is not to give us away. We'd a been nigh on to Wadsworth afore now, but for yer stupid racket on that ere train."  
The morning sun was just sending forth his advance guard of rays to herald his approach; the door of the only house at Clark's Station, that of the tender of the water tank, opened, and the four tramps looked at each other significantly. One of them spoke up; he said:  
"Here's a good chance to learn the green 'un sumthin'! Here, young feller, jest go to the house there an' see if you can get us sumthin' ter eat."  
The new comer started for the house, while the other four sheltered themselves from observation on the farther side of the water tank. Two bits (25 cents) secured a generous lunch from the kind-hearted landlady. Rich bread and creamy butter, three slices of currant cake, two pieces of pie, and some crackers and cheese thrown in, were wrapped neatly in a newspaper a month old, and the tramp returned to his companions rejoicing. "All for two bits!" he exclaimed, as he displayed his treasure to the four tramps.  
"What!" they gasped, as with one voice, starting back in astonishment.  
"That's all. Only two bits!"  
"Gin away agin!" moaned the first tramp in a tone of absolute dejection.  
"Look here, young 'un, you mustn't never give money fur vittles. If ye do that, they'll expect us all to do it. And very naturally they would. Now" (turning an appealing look to his fellows), "ain't that nateral?"  
"Very nateral," came in a dismal chorus from the group.  
Notwithstanding their disgust, however, they pitched into the lunch with an appetite born of long fasting, and so greedily did they devour it that the tramp, whose money had procured it, only secured one piece of bread for his share.  
By the time this magnificent banquet was ended it was broad daylight, and this little congregation of travelers had an opportunity of seeing their surroundings. A water tank and a horse—these were the only signs to indicate the presence of civilization. All around was one unbroken wilderness of sand, relieved here and there by little clumps of Nevada's favorite vegetation, sagebrush. Far away to the south, the beautiful waters of the Truckee could be seen glistening in the sunlight, as they wound their way to the west. To the north stretches the snow-capped chain of the Sierra Nevada, looking down with chilling effect upon the five tramps. A consultation was now held to decide whether the wanderers should press on to Wadsworth, or wait until the afternoon on the uncertain hope of "jumping" the freight train and stealing a ride. After much earnest discussion, embellished by elaborate arguments on either side, it was decided to remain. As one of the tramps elegantly expressed it, "Ef we can't play the racket, there's plenty of grub in that 'ere house, and we won't send a greenhorn for it next time, neither, an' it's better to trot in the night than in the day."

"Wall," said another, "if we're goin' to stay here, let's build a tie house. I ain't goin' to stan' under this tank all day. Ef there was whisky in it 't might do, but I don't want the shadder of no water over me."  
The proposition met with a cordial assent. On the other side of the road was a huge pile of railroad ties, which are always kept on hand at certain stations along the line. To this pile the five tramps immediately proceeded, and made an assault upon it in approved military style. A "tie house" is a novelty in modern architecture to the uninitiated; and yet beneath its protecting shelter many a weary tramp, whose waking hours are passed in concocting schemes of plunder, has slept away his weariness amid pictured scenes of home and happiness drawn by fairy fingers. It is a very simple arrangement. The ties are placed on end and close together, to form three sides of the house. The fourth side is left open to serve as a door. Then across the top more ties are placed to serve as a roof, and the "tie house" is complete, a mansion fit for any tramp that ever infested the railroad. In very high winds, of course, it is not available, for the occupant would be liable to be buried in its ruins. But in a calm, pleasant day, like that of the 8th of July, it was a cosy and comfortable retreat from the rays of the blazing sun.  
The edifice completed, the tramps spread themselves out, some on their backs, some resting on their elbows. Conversation in the slang vernacular of the tribe was now animated, and now flagged. To an observer, these miserable creatures, without home and without friends, hunted down by society (as they should be), and scorned by the honest man who earns an honest living, would have appeared a happy family, or a nest of hornets who had fled from civilization to enjoy life in their own way in the wilderness. It needed but two or three short-dressed girls to give to the house all the characteristics of a gypsy camp—according to the stage notion of gypsy camps. But one brief hour passed in that tie house would have effectually dispelled all romance from the mind of the observer. The conversation was low and vulgar, and plentifully interlarded with most blasphemous oaths. They cursed railroads, they cursed conductors, they cursed the newspapers which exposed them; they cursed every thing but that most deserving of curses—their own miserable selves.  
One by one the tramps dropped off to sleep, after partaking freely of a flask of whisky which had been purchased from a donation in money by an old gentleman who had been touched by the plaintive tale of one of their number, and whose simplicity was made the subject of many a joke and peal of drunken laughter in that novel house of ties. At length but two remained awake—the last comer, who had been thrown from the train, and the repulsive-looking man who had first accosted him.  
"Well, young feller," suddenly exclaimed the latter, "so you want to jine us, do ye? You want to be a jolly boy like old Adam, and jog along through life without any one to bother with or any one to bother ye, do ye?"  
"That's just what I want."  
"Wall, ye'll find it sum'at hard at fust. Trampin' is a perfussun, an' of course ye've got to begin way down. Now, how did ye jump that train that they put ye off'n?"  
"I jest got on at Reno, and when the conductor woke me up—I pretended to be asleep, ye know—I asked him to take me along, told him I was poor, an' all that sort of thing, ye know."  
"All bosh! Do ye think the slaves of that 'ere m'noply would give ye a ride? not much. Ye must beat 'em—that's all ye can do—beat 'em."  
"But I don't know how to beat 'em. They're too many for me."  
"Wall, ye'll find it hard at fust, but (with a nod of encouragement) ye'll learn it. Ye see, 'tain't so easy now as it used to be. Ther's too many on us. The boys is beginning to see what a jolly life we lead, and the perfussun is gittin' crowded. Now, I have been from Omaha to 'Frisco an' back three times, an' rid most of the way free. But in them days ye could get onto the platform, atween the baggage car an' express car, and go right along nice like. But they dropped to that, and now the cursed cops watch ye an' ther's no chance, unless ye're a quick jumper and can catch on after the cars is started.

But, (looking mournfully at his companion), ye couldn't do that. Ye haint got practice 'nough. No, that won't do for you."  
There was silence for a moment. Then the professional spoke again. He said:  
"Now, ye might git locked up in an empty freight car, but ye want plenty o' grub and plenty o' water, fer ye never know how far ye're goin'. Ye might go clean through to Omaha, an' that's a pretty long ride."  
"Yes, and get arrested when I get there. No; I don't want any o' that."  
"Look a here, now! who's doin' this talkin', is it you or me? Don't you go fer to make no mistake. If ye git to Omaha the cop'll let ye out and gin ye a partin' kick. He ain't goin' to tell on yer an' have yer 'rested. Not much. He'd be kicked off hisself fer lettin' ye beat him. That ain't his game. He'd sooner give ye a drink to git out the way an' keep yer mouth shut. But the trouble with the racket is that ye never know where ye're goin' to fetch up. I got locked in once in Sacramento, an' after runnin' five days was let out in Sacramento. They had telegraphed—cuss that telegraph an' the man that got it up—to Ogden to send my car back, an' so when I thought I was goin' right on East, I was goin' West. I hev allers thought (reflectively) that I lost five days of my life on that ere trip."  
"Well, I don't think I could manage that business very well."  
The tramp meditated for a while. Then he said slowly and very softly, as if speaking to himself:  
"There's the brake racket now—"  
"The what racket?"  
"The brake racket. But I don't b'love ye could manage that."  
"I might try."  
"Yeas (sneeringly), ye might try to walk that wire up ther (pointing to the telegraph), but ye'd slip up; ye couldn't do it. Howsumever, I'll tell ye all about it, an' then ye can try it if ye like—no; I'll show it to ye—come along."  
He arose, passed out, and then the newly fledged tramp followed him. Standing on a side track was an empty car. He passed to the rear, took hold of the bolt which connects the handles of the brake with the chain, placed one foot on the little iron projection near the base, and left the other swinging in the air. Then he leaned as far back as his arm would allow, and his head was thus brought below the level of the dashboard. Having thus exemplified the mechanical part of the operation, he stepped down and proceeded to dilate upon the details of the "racket."  
"Now, ye see, when the train starts the cop comes to the door an' looks out on the platform for tramps, ye're hangin' on here so he can't see ye. He goes on and gets his tickets, and ye swings yerself round on the steps. When he gets out of the car ye gets in, sits down, and snoozes off like any other gentleman. Ye'll git to Winnemucca afore he comes round agin, and then ye must come the racket agin. I know a feller that went clear through from 'Frisco to Omaha on this racket, without stoppin'; but it's rough on the arms. Some times ye'll have to hang on an hour or two before the cop goes through, an' there ain't no fun in it."  
At this moment the whistle of an approaching train was heard in the distance. "By —, there she comes!" he exclaimed, and started on a dead run for the house. He awakened his companions from their drunken slumbers. One vigorous kick demolished the little house, and the tramps scrambled behind the water tank to make preparations to jump the train.  
"What ye goin' to do?" asked one of the apprentice tramps.  
"I'm goin' to try the brake racket."  
"Wall, it's dangerous, but I like your spunk. Go it, young feller. You'll make a good 'un."  
When the train had gone the four tramps had disappeared. They had jumped her by means of some one of their many "rackets." The apprentice, however, remained stationary on the platform. An hour later he boarded a West-bound emigrant train, paid his fare to Reno, and rode with as much comfort as one can while inhaling the odors of Limberger cheese and sauerkraut. Arrived in Reno he crossed to the hotel, divested himself of the miner's suit of clothing which he had borrowed at the Consolidated Virginia, arrayed himself in purple and fine linen, and stood revealed as your very humble correspondent.  
Zir.