



BY HELEN DARE

SLUMMING is a fashionable pastime. Slumming is a diversion of the smart folk.

Slumming is a part of the itinerary of the silk-lined tourist, just as seeing the missions and the Seal Rocks is.

Smart New Yorkers slum in San Francisco, and equally smart San Franciscans slum in New York.

You are invited to a slumming party as inconspicuously as you are to a bridge party, and as confidently expected to participate.

Smart young matrons, belles who are world-seasoned by a season or two, who need no longer play the ingenue, even precocious debutantes slum now and then, for the piquancy of it—as one puts the shake of paprika on the melon, the dash of tabasco on the oyster, the soupçon of garlic in the salad.

Slumming crops up in polite conversation so casually that it might be the most innocent, the most wholesome, the most natural, the most harmless diversion in the world—like golfing, or gathering daisies on an upland meadow.

Indeed, there are good souls who think that it is.

Here and there you will find this delusion is still retained by the old-fashioned few who take things on trust, whose worldly wisdom is in a state of arrested development, and who still believe that slumming is, as it once was, a philanthropic exercise engaged in by the more venturesome good.

Not infrequently these good but unenlightened folk are the papas and mamas, the papas-in-law and mamas-in-law of the progressive young women who slum now as it is slummed, and such expurgated histories as they get of the slumming expeditions do not, of course, disturb their happy belief.

The veiled revelations in the Taggart divorce trial may do that, however, may excite an uneasy wonder, and may, indeed, temporarily discourage the fad for slumming.

"What is it," they will ask themselves, "that is so very dreadful in Mrs. Taggart's slumming that it has to be told behind closed doors? Of course, it is something MY Glendolen, MY Muriel—who have been slumming, too—would never see."

Which, no doubt, is true, for there are degrees of slumming, just as there are degrees of depravity—and curiosity.

The fashionable slumming of to-day is a very different sort of slumming from that which these good folk knew—that Lady Bountiful sort, that left its carriage on the highway and went through the byways, its basket on its arm and its purse and heart open, pouring balm on the wounded.

Common words with new customs take on new meanings.

Slumming is now a lark—a newer, later social dissipation.

If you are behind the times and would know what it is and how it is done, come, join one of these merry slumming parties.

And, while we are about it, we may as

well begin at the beginning and join it at dinner, at the jolly little dinner in the more or less-usually more-Bohemian restaurant, that is a sort of overture to the entertainment to follow.

There is somehow an undefined surreptitiousness about the party, something understood but not quite confessed, for however much slumming is indulged in and prattled about it still has the air of adventure, the flavor of the forbidden, and the party, we observe, is made up of men affecting the ease of sophistication, and of other men's wives.

The man who is host does not, as a rule, extend his hospitality to his own wife, and for the woman who slums there is a want of piquancy in slumming with her husband.

So the dinner, to begin with, has quite a staccato gaiety.

It is a late dinner, too, and lingered over, for the slumming that begins early is like the egg without salt, flat in flavor.

High with expectancy, eager for the unknown, we start on our tour in our astral form, if you so prefer it—first to the music hall whose midnight glitter dazzles us on our home-bound car.

It is brilliant with electric lights and polished woods and polished mirrors, moist with tobacco smoke and stiflingly hot with the steamy smell of beer. There is much music of a sort, music with a feverish, would-be joyousness, above it the screech of foolish song and questionable jest from the stage which is, as it were over the shoulder of the

throng so bent upon its own business, and again above that the confused murmur of many voices in jumbled talk and laughter. Waiters glide hither and thither with their loaded trays at a distracting angle. Every hand grasps

a stem or the slender stem of a glass; everywhere is heightened color and the every eye.

Anonyma is here—everywhere—we are sure she is—in youth and beauty and insolence and fine raiment, flattered and courted; faded, battered, ugly, fawny, impudent, seeking prey and pelf; and on the spot we confess to ourselves that it is Anonyma we have come to see—that slumming, after all, through all the letters of its alphabet, is spying upon Anonyma on her native heath.

Anonyma pervades; we feel sure she is everywhere—over there at the table in the corner in flaunting hat and garish silks ogling the man at her side, and another over his shoulder. We see it all by the aid of the loggnette. Here at the very table beside our own, where we are holding stems and stems ourselves—for one of the piquancies of slumming is to do in Rome as the Romans—Anonyma again, in demure tailor-mades and modish turbans, "really very presentable," we are deciding when, gracious goodness! we discover her to be the bride on our block, our very neighbor in our very exclusive neighborhood.

After that things are confusing. It is very much like attending a dance at an asylum for the insane where your partner may be a lunatic or may believe you are one.

You study the scene from stage to door, from wall to wall, seeking its spirit, and it seems singularly like the egg without salt.

The men, for the most part, look bored and over-red when they do not look over-fat in liquor; the tables are sloppy with little pools or uniformly moist after the hasty swipe of the waiter; the atmosphere grows heavier and heavier; the talk and laughter have too much noise

and too little mirth, and Anonyma, poor Anonyma, piles her arts with too much eagerness—as though the haymaking season were short—and too little of the languorous fascination that makes her feared as an unknown quantity.

When X represents Anonyma she is far more formidable than when she sits at the next table but one.

The sophisticated man who is host, or the quiet man in plain clothes, lent you by the police if your party is of sufficient consequence to be personally conducted, points out the celebrities of midnight life, this character and that, man and woman, who has made a mark in the devious ways, and they seem not very different to the "characters" in life aboveboard—merely human and some times pitiful.

There are more music halls which your sophisticated host or the plain clothes man guides you to and through—but there is no more variety. They differ only in degree.

You go up Kearny street and down the Barbary Coast, out even upon the water front, diving down stairways and through swinging doors, and always it is the same.

The smoke-thickened, beer-moistened atmosphere.

The tinkle-tinkle or twing-twang of tawdry music.

preached, all the professional preachers would be out of a job inside of a week.

But to return to the particular Old Grad who had been separated from his alma mater for a number of years. He was passing prosperous as the world counts prosperity; that is to say, he could afford to buy a new winter overcoat without waiting to find out the price of coal, and he had grown very solicitous of the welfare of such established institutions as the church, the state, and the railroad lobby.

When a man reaches that point, he is in a fair way to be reckoned among the solid citizens of the country, or the oppressors of the poor, as you may look at it. For a long time he had been considering the advisability of returning to the town where he had absorbed knowledge and other solid and liquid refreshments, but the established institutions aforesaid had kept him busy and it was not until his eldest son was entered in the Sheepskin Handicap that he could see his way clear to renew his youth by a short trip to the college that carried his name on its rolls and stuck him for a subscription to the deficit fund about as often as it dared.

It happened that it was in the foot-

ball season when the deadly pigskin was raging and the gridiron was claiming its daily roll of the young blood of the land. The day after he struck the town there was a big football fest scheduled between his old college and Kalamazoo University, and the Old Grad bought a box seat in the front row and assured his offspring that if there was anything doing he wanted to be in at the death.

When the time came for the slaughter to begin he was in his place and panting for the fray. He had never seen a game as it is played in these degenerate days, but he had been on the floor of the stock exchange when the shorts were being pinched on Hot Air common, and he had ridden the storm-tossed elevator from Rector street to Harlem twice a day, six days in the week, for a large number of weary years, and he thought he was up on conflicts. Football, as he had known it in the early seventies, was a very mild, indolent game, about as much like the modern article as a tomato can is like a man-of-war.

The game was started by the young gentleman with the longest hair making an earnest Christian endeavor to kick the unoffending ball over into the next ward. Another young man with a pair of sofa pillows tucked into his trousers

put it down out of the atmosphere and set off in the direction of South America in more or less of a hurry. This so enraged the others who were running with open arms to greet him that they threw him down and jumped on him to keep him amused till the doctor came.

After the pile of arms and legs had been blasted away they did the same thing over again with variations.

That was about all that the Old Grad could make of the game. Sometimes he was informed that the proper way to celebrate a victory on the ensanguined gridiron was to pour copious and frequent libations to the slain and to put out the lights in all the theaters in town. He didn't intend to participate actively in the ceremonies of the evening, but he was prepared to observe the proceedings from a carefully selected vantage point if he could find one not already occupied. His start was decorous and seemingly as befitted a gentleman of his years and discretion, and all went well until he leaped into the public eye through the declaration by a young man with a red and green necktie that the esteemed parent of their colleague was suffering from a restricted circulation of the flowing hose, and that all sincere friends of the dear old college would see to it at

way up something cracked and his voice fell back all over him. Then his offspring came around and told him that the game was over and that according to the official surgeon's tally the home team had won by three dislocations and a compound fracture. The Old Grad was in somewhat the same mental condition as the late renowned Little Peterkin, but he was quite as sure as was that young gentleman that 'twas a glorious victory.

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The aimless, mirthless men in varying stages of inebriety.

The spiritless clatter and murmur and shuffle of forced hilarity.

And Anonyma—always Anonyma—sometimes in evening dress, sometimes in the liberty and abandon of the variety stage dress, sometimes in sleazy silk or flimsy satin, but oftentimes in shirt waist and skirt. Always Anonyma—smiling, smiling drearly, mechanically. Anonyma, young and old, fat and lean, white and black and brown, in the gaudy, glittering, spacious music hall, the basement dance hall, the squalid cubby holes that honeycomb the Barbary Coast.

The sophisticated man or the plain clothes man tells us he is taking us "down the line," and his phrase is unconsciously, unintentionally graphic.

So he is in very truth, from the first insidious sparkling sip of folly down through all the nice degrees, graduating so imperceptibly into the dark and bitter waters of the last vanquishing drink.

The slumming goes even to the Cuckoo's Nest, that marks the last degree in the low degrees of the Barbary Coast.

The plain clothes man himself needs the help of the "special" to discover in the murky fog end of this Coast of the Derelicts the feeble glimmer of the Cuckoo's Nest.

If slumming should be done at all it should surely include the Cuckoo's Nest, and if every pair of little high-heeled shoes that are tripping heedlessly into the path that leads to it were guided there first there are few, I'm sure, that would travel that swift descending way.

The swingmen doors, greasy to the touch, that open the way into the Cuckoo's Nest, show a squalid saloon interior, an interior in truth of saloon-junk over which smoky oil lamps throw an orange glow.

Wilted curtains stringily covering a doorway, also greasy to the touch, give perpendicular strips of a still more squalid interior in a sort of panel-poster effect a few scattered dishes with unpleasant broken food on a bare table, two awful ancient harriads picking at it with their fingers, smiling hideously at us out of their drink-bloated, evil old faces as we part the curtains, another sitting on a humpy, lumpy greasy sofa putting the last bandage around an ailing foot, with her remnant of late supper on a chair beside her.

They give us, heaven pity them, a chirpy, cheerful welcome.

"Sure, 'tis not very lovely this night, an' we're glad enough for company," and they "set" chairs for us, first dusting them with a whisk of their limp dragged skirts.

They greet the "special" with gentle endearment as "Jee," and "Joey, dear," and make a feint to claw him into the playful embrace of dirty, withered old arms. He sidesteps brusquely, and yet not unkindly—somewhere in the bottom of every even fairly good man's heart there is that everflowing spring of chivalry that makes him gentle with even the worst of women.

They prattle to us the gossip of their fetid neighborhood—how the Spanish woman on another block—"a young thing, an' pretty, too, the Lord have mercy on her, dhrank carr-bolic an' committed soo'cide the last week," and how "the young woman next door—from Porthorick—took the same," and "what a row" it made.

They cackle in their cracked old voices over the events, and one looks on them, these evil old women, so simple in their vice, with their matted straggling locks over their faded eyes, the old, old women who make gay with the old, old, battered, tattered wrecks stranded on the Barbary Coast, and one thinks that perhaps the way of the Spanish woman who "dhrank carr-bolic" and "the woman from Porthorick who took the same" was, after all, the better way.

There are only two stages beyond the Cuckoo's Nest, and we make them—as the Barbary Coasters do—in order.

The first is the City Prison.

There at the booking desk, his dirty finger nails clutching the counter, is one of the "drunks"—there are pages and pages of them on the big register—gath-

ered in from the Coast, with trembling legs and lattered clothes and glazed eyes, giving his name and his age—fifty-four—in quavering voice.

"Did ye have a good time, Pat?" asks the sergeant.

"Grand time—haddagran'time," muttered the tottering derelict as he tucks to a cell in the wake of the turnkey, and then—this also being a part of the merry slumming expedition—see him slowly sinking in a dirty heap on the floor, sighing and muttering.

Girls are brought in, girls with vacuous, glazed, set eyes and shrill laughs and pretty, red lips dripping ribaldry, and they leer at the sergeant while they answer his questions, and then they are hustled away to the women's quarters, where the slumming parties can't follow them, unless they are specially privileged slumming parties, for even the big, husky police, used, and presumably hardened to such sights, hold a deterring hand between woman's shame and idle laughing curiosity.

From the City Prison—where? Where would you think?

To the To Dunbar Alley—

Where the lights shine down upon the still cold forms waiting to be claimed.

Oh, dear no—this isn't the end of a fashionable slumming expedition.

There are still other sights to see—as many as you can stand.

Of course the slumming path lies through Chinatown where you stop for a moment to see old Charley Lee and his pipe and his opium smoking cat, and where, hanging at the Chinaman's portal waiting for the crumbs that may fall from the yellow man's platter, is the white man, your brother in blood, waiting with his little candle end and his cocaine needle to demonstrate to you what his particular kind of fiend is—selling his depravity grain by grain as it were. He is a mere incident, of course, this broken brother of ours giving his curbstone show by the light of the candle end.

But there are other sights to be seen—undefined, unspeakable sights, some of which the unhappy Mrs. Taggart of the divorce suit is alleged to have witnessed.

What they are only the men and the women with the money to command and the shamelessness to behold them may say. The plain clothes man plants himself on the steps of the Hall of Justice and says:

"THIS is as far as I go. What I haven't shown you you've no right to see."

He laughs, but he means just what he says.

The natural histories tell us that the hyena, lifting his head and sniffing the breeze, can scent the carrion from afar; that the buzzard circling, a more black speck in the vaulted blue, can discover his putrid food in the hollow of the hillside.

Perhaps it is some like instinct that stirs in the slumming woman the willingness and eagerness to sound the depths of depravity—to go on from where the plain clothes man leaves off.

Yet she is, after all, the exceptional slumming woman.

But the ordinary woman who slums,

who makes diversion of this dreary round—how about her? Why should she go slumming?

Nothing could be more dreary and depressing and spiritless than these sights she sees when she makes one of a party seeking recreation in this strange way—nothing could be more dispiriting except a great railway station in the small hours of the night, when the lights blink and the trains are few and the waits long.

It is perfectly true—and there's no use dodging or denying it—that it is Anonyma she wants to see, Anonyma in all her variety.

Why? Why should the fortunate woman, the respectable woman, the sheltered, protected, cared-for woman, the gentle, modest, virtuous woman—who can afford to be gentle and modest and virtuous—wish to go forth with her mantle of righteousness about her to spy upon and make a holiday of her sister's wretchedness?

She doesn't go in charity, with a helping hand outstretched.

The chances are she'd be hooded if she did.

But she does go with a loggnette and a laugh, for the amusement of the thing and to tell clever stories about it afterward.

To make such painful study of our poor human weaknesses in the interest of art, of science and of charity is admittedly legitimate.

But in wanton frivolity and prurient curiosity—for a night's recreation and sensation—and by women—

Then this fashionable fad for slumming seems very like vivisection.

once that the sad condition was relieved.

That was all that the Old Grad could remember, however, when he awoke in his room in the hotel about noon the next day and made a dash through center for the ice water pitcher. Before he had succeeded in inducing both of his eyes to stay open at the same time his son sauntered in, looking as though he had just been unpacked from his handbox, with a flower in his button hole and a complexion as rosy as the dawn. The old man gasped when he saw the dewy condition of his offspring, but that was nothing to what he did when that young man, who he fully inquired why he hadn't been to church.

The Old Grad, after mature deliberation, came to the conclusion that when a man had reached his age and condition of servitude it was too much of a strain to attempt to renew his youth all at once and the next day saw him once more in the haunts of the peaceful ticker and on the floor of the restful Stock Exchange.

His brief and strenuous sojourn in the cloistered halls of learning had given him very positive opinions on two subjects; namely, the cheerful individual who sought some person or persons, names and addresses not specified, to give me, oh, give me my childhood again, was either jolly or else wasn't aware that his particular brand of childhood was no longer kept in stock. Furthermore the Old Grad was convinced that people who prate of the desirability of inducing the growth of old heads on young shoulders are not aware of the amount that the youthful variety of heads can stand in excess of the capacity of the old mind.

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ONCE upon a time there was an Old Grad who had not sat at the feet of his alma mater for 10, these many years; or about that long. An old grad, it must be understood, is not generally speaking a man; he is an institution designed by nature and the college faculty for the express purpose of impressing on the so-called minds of cellow undergraduates the fact that the old college is not what it was in the early '70's. His chief function is to show up about the time that a fresh bunch of enterprising youngsters is being turned loose on a helpless world and tell the particular bunch that happens to be going over the bars "what a green and generally unfinished lot of specimens they are." At other times he is supposed to drop in occasionally to sit on the chapel platform and look wise and weary and envious of the carefree life of the college youth. On special occasions the carefree youth is allowed to lap up a little distilled wisdom as it flows from the lips of the old grad.

Then is when the latter gentleman gets in his fine work. In impressive tones that come straight from the northeast corner of his manly chest he assures the budding intellects that the only sure way to be happy is to be good; he knows because he has been told by a man who tried it once, but he usually neglects to add that they are not apt to have any fun. It is one of

# THE OLD GRAD RENEWS HIS YOUTH

Fables for the Foolish—By Nicholas Nemo

the most touching sights known to man to observe one of these samples of the genus homo urging his young friends to cultivate the beautiful habits of patience, industry and the toilsome accumulation of great gobs of knowledge in order to seize the golden opportunity by the mane and tail when it comes around their side of the corral. To be sure, it often happens that this beautiful homely on human happiness is a trifle marred by the fact that the man who is reeling it off has come straight from the witness chair, where he has been sedulously avoiding telling the facts about the organization of the last corporation for the distribution of the hard-earned savings of the common people or has been holding the wrong end of the telescope to the eye of the tax commissioner in order to make a personal property list of about \$100,000 look like 30 cents; this is very sad, if true, and it is usually true, but the educated fledglings are not likely to be wise in such games, so that no great harm is done. If all men were compelled to practice what they

