LIFE AMONG THE HUMAN FAILURES.

A "Call" Man's Experiences as an Inmate of the Almshouse.

Serious charges have been made against the management of the City and County Almshouse.

One of the head nurses has been charged with extreme cruelty to the inmates, and this charge is to culminate in an official investigation.

The Superintendent has been charged with carelessness and accused of maintaining rules and systems that were cruel and inhuman.

Other charges of a more general character have been made recently against the authorities at this institution.

The source of most of these charges has not been of the best and most reliable, and they have all been vigorously denied.

With a view of ascertaining as nearly as possible, from authoritative and unprejudiced sources, the truth or falsity of these accusations or denials, a representative of The Call went to the Almshouse last Monday in the guise of a pauper, duly accredited from the Mayor, and remained there in the capacity of an inmate until late yesterday afternoon.

The Call man ate and slept in the institution as an inmate, talked with a great many of the men there, and heard both sides of the charges made, so far as could be learned by actual contact with the accusers and with those of the inmates who uphold the present administration.

I.

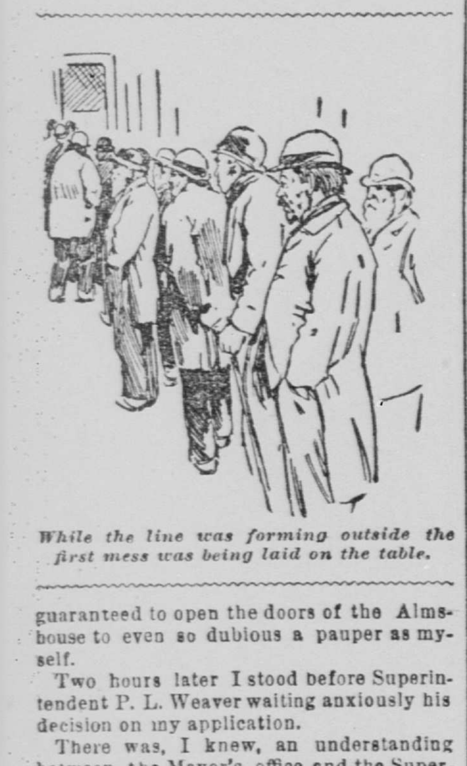
"Over the Hills to the Poorhouse" has a broader, deeper significance to me now than it ever had before.

I have been there.

Not as a visitor, but as a pauper—a pauper among paupers.

It seemed to me like four months, but reckoned by the calendar it could not have been more than four days.

Monday at noon Mayor Ellert affixed his signature to a little blank form which, coupled with a suitable shabbiness, was



While the line was forming outside the first mess was being laid on the table.

guaranteed to open the doors of the Almshouse to even so dubious a pauper as myself.

Two hours later I stood before Superintendent P. L. Weaver waiting anxiously his decision on my application.

There was, I knew, an understanding between the Mayor's office and the Superintendent of the Almshouse to the effect that notwithstanding the committal the latter is to exercise his own judgment in admitting applicants.

So I waited anxiously, fearing the possibility of an adverse decision. Mr. Weaver looked me over from head to foot. Then he said, "H'm."

I said nothing; only waited.

"Can't you work?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, a little; but I can't get anything to do."

"And so you've come out here to loaf on the county, have you?"

Then I poured forth a pitiful tale of woe. There was something in it about having been sick, just come out from the East, no money, no friends, and a lot of the regulation kind.

I have forgotten the half of what I did say, and was conscious at the time that Superintendent Weaver was not listening to my words. He was still sizing me up and saying "H'm, h'm" once in a while.

Along about the end of my story I said something about having the promise of a job next week, and that I only wanted shelter for a few days.

This seemed to strike a responsive chord in the superintendent's breast, and he said he guessed I could stay on awhile.

He added that he didn't think I looked like one who would be coming out there unless it was a pretty desperate case, and then he turned me over to Mr. Castello with the request to "enter this one."

Mr. Castello stood at a high desk between two windows. Over the top of his spectacles he looked at me not unkindly while he folded my committal paper lengthwise and indorsed on the back of it my replies to these questions:

"How old?"

"Thirty."

"Nativity?"

"New York."

"Married?"

"Single."

"Had a bath recently?"

"This morning."

He looked surprised at this. How could a pauper get a bath before coming out there? he wondered.

I explained to him that a man at the Mayor's office gave me a ticket for a bath at the Lick establishment,

"Any money about you?"

I handed over a quarter.

"You better leave it here till you need it. You can come and get it whenever you want it. Any other valuable?"

"No."

"Got a knife?"

"Yes; a little one."

"Let me see it."

I showed him a small pocket-knife.

"You can keep that," he said. "Bring any clothes with you?"

"Haven't got any more than what's on me."

"Are you warm?"

"Yes."

"Well, here, I'll give you a bed."

I followed him along the north corridor, over the blind ward, till we came to room 27.

"You can have that bed up there in the corner," he said, "where there is no card. Read the rules in the reading-room and live up to them and you'll get along all right. You'll have to work to-morrow, unless the doctor lets you off."

I replied at once that I was willing to work without seeing the doctor. Then he said, "All right," and left me to go where I chose.

I tried the reading-room first, because it was nearest, being at the end of the north corridor.

Fifty paupers nearly filled the room. There was a cheerful fire in the grate, but here the cheerfulness ended. There is nothing cheerful at the Almshouse, at least nothing that I saw, except this gratefire, the gratefire in the front office and the sunlight out in the yard.

All else is dreariness and gloom itself.

I am credited with at least the average sense of humor, but I saw nothing humorous in the Almshouse. Sometimes the old men laughed, but younger men would see nothing to excite their risibilities in what they laughed at.

But this reading-room, with its fifty inmates. Here was a study for the painter and the poet. A Dickens would have reveled in it. Everything was somber and sad and silent.

In the center of the oblong room was an oblong pine table with benches at each side of it. All sorts of current literature of doubtful antiquity, with one or two morning papers, lay on top of the table, and much more of the same kind of reading matter was in use by the occupants of the room.

The four walls of the room were lined with pine benches. This was the furniture of the reading-room. It was somber in hue, painted the color of adobe mud, and, to all appearances, scrupulously clean.

Among the fifty occupants of the reading-room—there may have been one or two more or less than fifty—blue was the predominating color. Nearly all of them wore blue overalls, many wore blue coats and some had blue caps.

And all had their hats on. That is one distinguishing feature of the pauper. He never takes his hat off.

Another distinguishing mark is that every pauper has blue about him in one way or another. If none of the other garments are blue at least the flannel shirt is.

Some of the garments were whole and looked rather neat in comparison, while others hung on their owners in tatters and rags. One tall man with a very serious face and a full black beard, who was reading Harper's Weekly upside down, wore a coat that in the number and variety of patches adorning it would outrival the craziest crazy quilt ever built by an esthetic woman. And every patch had broken at least part of the thread that once held it down to the coat. Hence for every patch there was now a rag.

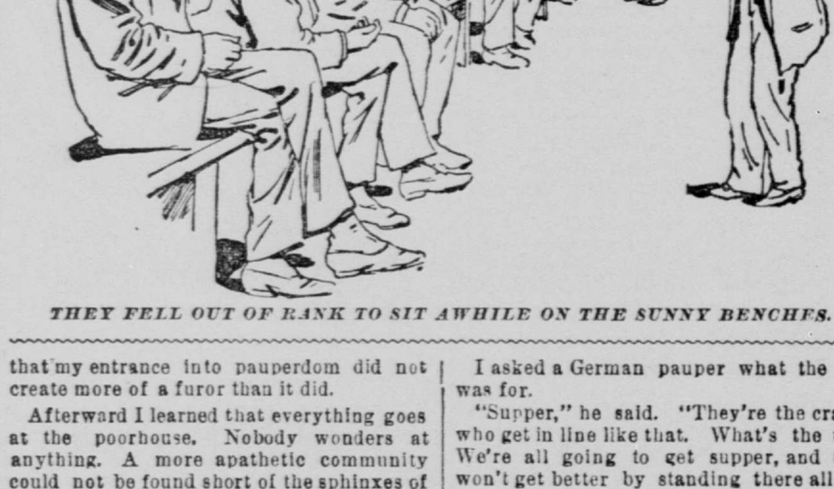
Joseph's coat of many colors would not begin to compare with it, and the "Raggedy Man" was never in it with this grave-looking pauper.

A silly boy sat on a long bench between two very old men who were thinking. And he was crying, not boisterously, but constantly and chronically. Only his voice broke the silence of the room.

A great many of the fifty were reading. The others were thinking or dreaming. All of them were past fifty. They were clean, as paupers go, but as much could hardly be said for their coats. The blue overalls showed evidences of frequent washing, but the coats lacked sponging and pressing.

My entrance into the reading-room was almost unnoticed. One or two old men raised their eyes as I opened the door, but that was all. They must have recognized in me a new-comer, but they gave no sign.

For the first few hours I wondered a little



THEY FELL OUT OF RANK TO SIT AWHILE ON THE SUNNY BENCHES.

that my entrance into pauperdom did not create more of a furor than it did.

Afterward I learned that everything goes at the poorhouse. Nobody wonders at anything. A more apathetic community could not be found short of the sphinxes of the great desert.

Everything is taken as a matter of course. Nothing ever does happen there, but if it should it would attract less attention from the inmates than the ringing of the dinner-bell.

II.

I sat in the library awhile, read some of the papers upside down and the rules right side up; tried to read some of the old, weather-beaten faces about me—tried and failed; for you can't understand the pauper till you know him.

You look him over carefully, think you know him and set him down in this or that category. Then the next day you talk to him or hear him talk, and you find your reading has been false.

I sized up one old man that afternoon, and put him down as an ex-laborer, who had grown old in the service of the pick and shovel. He seemed so much at home that I could not imagine that he had ever seen much better days or a life of more refinement.

The next day he sidled up to me as I was sunning myself in the yard.

"Did you come out from the City Hall?" he asked me.

"Yes," I said. "How long have you been here?"

"Oh, a long while. I guess I'll end my days here."

"No work, eh?" I hazarded.

"Can't work. The doctor out here don't let me do a thing. I've got heart disease. I'd rather be doing something, then the time wouldn't be so long."

There was a long pause here.

"Broke?" I ventured, by way of keeping up the conversation.

"Not a cent. And I had $10,000 six years ago. I ran one of the finest saloons in San Jose. Had a wife and one grown-up son and one little girl."

"Are they living?" I asked.

"Only the boy. I got on a big tear once and it killed my wife. I was drunk for six weeks that time, and when I sobered up I was in the inebriates' home and my boy in jail waiting trial for manslaughter. Wife and girl were dead. It took every cent I could raise to get the boy out of trouble. Then he went down to Mexico and I haven't heard from him since.

"I came up to San Francisco and tried to start in the saloon business again, but couldn't make it go. I got drunk a few times up here and two years ago I got in this place. It's about the best I can do, I guess."

He told this story quite as a matter of course. There was no quaver in his voice, not a touch of remorse or sentiment as he spoke of his better days, his wife or his children.

He puffed away on a corncob pipe and didn't seem to have any regrets for the past.

His pipe nearly went out as he told me the whole story. When he had puffed back the sparks to their full vigor he asked me why I couldn't stay away from such a place as the poorhouse.

"Been sick and can't get any work," I said.

"Too bad, too bad," he said, but there was nothing in the tone of his voice in keeping with the sentiment expressed by his words.

"Do they treat you well here?" I asked of a mild-faced old man who raised his eyes to me as I came out of the blind ward on the first day of my arrival.

"Oh, yes," he said.

"Get enough grub?"

"Y-e-s," he said slowly.

"Good kind?"

"Good for a poorhouse. Better than the poorhouse grub in a good many places. This is a place for poor people, you know. It's an almshouse. Got to take things as they go. Don't you go expecting anything fine here. Then you won't get fooled."

"Warm bed?" I asked.

"Plenty warm enough. I ain't been cold any night here, and I been here all winter. Last winter I was in Kansas City. I was nearly froze to death there. A couple of times the fire went out and all the water-pipes froze up. Nothing like that here.

"Yes; I go to a different city every summer. I'll leave here soon now and go down South. It's better to tramp it when the weather is nice.

"Yes; I've been in nearly every poorhouse in the country, from Boston down to Texas, and all around."

I gave him a pipeload of tobacco and a match, then joined the procession.

Now the procession is a great institution on sunny days at the Almshouse. Nearly all day long the big courtyard in the rear of and to the north of the main building is sunny.

And all day the procession moves backward and forward, from east to west, up and down that big courtyard, but always keeping in the sun.

The incurables who are housed in the main building and those too feeble to walk join the procession right after breakfast.

Sometimes they walk four abreast, sometimes more and often less. Now and again some of the stragglers get tired and fall out of rank to sit awhile on the sunny benches.

Sometimes the ranks of the marchers are thinned down to half a dozen, and sometimes they are swelled to 200. But always—except at meal times—the procession keeps moving, moving, eternally moving.

You have seen wild beasts tread backward and forward with tireless tread in their narrow cages.

Something like this is the procession.

Only the marchers don't look very wild and they walk to kill time rather than to find a weak spot at which to break out.

I staid in the procession this time till its numbers were quite depleted and the line had already been formed in front of the messroom.

It was only 3 o'clock, and supper time was a full hour in the future, yet the old men stood there in line, waiting, waiting.

I asked a German pauper what the line was for.

"Supper," he said. "They're the cranks who get in line like that. What's the use? We're all going to get supper, and they won't get better by standing there all this time. Just come in?"

"Yes," I answered. I'm green yet."

"You'll get on fast enough," he said. "Got a bed?"

"Yes."

"Got your clothes? No? Well, you want to get them right away and watch out some one else don't steal them."

"Who?" I asked.

"Oh, I aint saying who. Guess you know. A hint's pretty good, don't it?"

Now I was very anxious to know who would steal my clothes, but the Teuton shut up tight when I questioned him further on this subject.

I learned afterward that it was the paupers themselves, or some of them, who would be liable to purloin my pauper clothes.

They cart them off to town and sell them for a "drap of the old creathure." This is a common occurrence I learned from the inmates themselves. Some of the paupers have been caught at it time and again, but reform methods are of no avail, for their love of liquor is the only strong passion left them.

A big, sturdy looking fellow, who sat on the bench near me, with a gunny sack over his shoulders, was talking about the war with a stout-looking Irishman, who could not have been 40 years old.

"Yes," said the fellow with the gunny sack, "they used to call Grant cruel and inhuman, but he was just the other way. Diggin' trenches, diggin' trenches, they used to cry against him, but he knew that it was more human to starve the rebels out than to fight 'em.

"Cut off their supplies, then they had to surrender. That was his game. He had a long head."

The Irishman shook his head in appreciation of this sentiment.

Then the elder man broke out again, this time with a sociological problem.

"And they call this liberty," he said, "and here's forty million of us just bare slaves. That's what they call a free country."

I sized this man up for a kicker, so I shoved up toward him and asked him how the grub was.

"Oh, it's fine," he said, "turkey and eggs, and bacon and ham, and fresh mutton and porterhouse steak, and canned fruits and oranges, and pudding and mince pie."

"You don't get all that to eat, do you?" I asked in astonishment.

"Oh, yes, we do; over the left. But all them things come out here. You can see them for yourself. But they're for the superintendent and his pets. We're only paupers.

"Oh, there's piles of good grub here, but we don't get it. You'll see what we get. They're saving a cent a day on every man here. There's 800 to feed, that's $8 a day, $240 a month, $2880 a year. A nice little sum, ain't it?"

"Who gets that money?"

A shrug of the shoulders and a wink of the eye was the only answer.

In bare justice this conversation ought to be succeeded by one I had during the last day of my stay at the Almshouse with an inmate who has been there five years.

He was quite rational in his conversation and is employed in the stables.

"That old man is crazy on the subject," he said. "He sits there and does nothing but figure out how much somebody else is robbing him of.

"The grub is better now than it was when I first came here. We get what the appropriation calls for. We don't get any more and we don't get any less. The Supervisors give out the contracts, and if anybody makes anything out of it its the city. Those that work get good enough grub and them that is too weak to work can't eat as much as them that do.

"We get three-quarters of a pound of meat every day and more bread than any one can eat. They waste lots of bread here. The men carry it away and then don't eat it."

"How about Tillson—the one they are complaining about?" I asked.

"He's all right. If you don't give it away I'll tell you something."

I promised solemnly.

"He's an Orangeman. That's where the shoe pinches. He's all right, but the other Irishmen don't like him."

"But he struck this man Luce, didn't he?" I asked.

"Well, I hope he did. Luce came at him with a hatchet. I was here at the time. Did you see Luce? Why, that man is so quarrelsome that he couldn't live here, so they let him build a hut upon the hill there over on Sutro's place. He was always fighting when he was here. He can't live with decent men.

"Yes; he came at Tillson with a hatchet because Tillson told him to keep the cow off the flower garden he had planted."

"Who had the garden?"

"Why, Tillson. He had a little patch of violets on the hill back of the New House, and Luce's cow used to trample on it. That's how the fight started, and that's over a year ago. Why didn't Luce make a kick at the right time? That's what I say."

W. H. Tillson, about whom this investigation has been held, is the chief nurse of what is called the New House. It sits on the next hill above and to the north of the main building.

From what the inmates of the New House told me he must be a strict disciplinarian, but the more intelligent ones spoke well of him, and one man told me that the old fellow who died up there and had $400 in his pocket was all alone in the room with Tillson when he drew his last breath.

"Tillson might have kept that money," he said, "for no one else but him knew about it. He found it on him and took it right over to Mr. Weaver."

III.

When I came back from the New House the gong had struck for supper, and the first mess had been served. Some of the old men were walking about the yard, eating bread.

"Join in line, young fellow, or you'll get left," said a kindly faced old man.

I followed his advice and presently found myself in a long, narrow room, not too light, but clean and well ventilated.

Perhaps the room was fifty feet long—I did not measure it. It was wide enough to give space for three long tables, with benches on each side of them and a reasonable passage-way between them.

While the line is forming outside the first mess is being laid on the table. There is a superstition among the inmates that the fellow who gets inside the dining-room first has the best choice of places and hence the best viands.

By personal experience I learned this to be a pure fallacy. The loaves are cut into seven slices by an equal measurement. The other edibles are portioned out as exactly as may be, and the result is that when the mess table is spread any two dishes are as much alike in quantity and quality as twin monkeys.

I learned, too, from personal experience, that the much-talked-of line in front of the dining-room is a piece of foolish obstinacy on the part of the men who form it that cannot be dispensed with by the governing powers of the institution unless actual force is employed.

These old men have lost their faith in human nature. What they have seen of the world and its workings has impressed them with the fact that first come best served is the rule of civilization.

They are unable now to understand that they are in a community where every man is served alike and no man goes without.

They might just as well sit still on their benches in the sun, or on the porch, or in the reading-room when it is raining, or in the sleeping-rooms before breakfast, as to form in that long line and stand there shivering—always in the shade, in the chill morning air before daylight, and often in the rain.

This is no conclusion of my own. I saw and heard it. A score of the older and more sensible inmates—that is, those older in the service—told me the line business was foolish and showed me why it was.

They pointed out to me that a certain number of rations were served or plates laid at every meal. Only about seventy or eighty of the men could be accommodated in the dining-room at one time. Those who eat with the second and third messes gain nothing by standing in line.

And the men themselves do not complain of the line, though they suffer much inconvenience from it.

The complaint comes from strangers who

He gathered in my leavings with a sudden, jerky movement.

see it for the first time and, knowing not its cause, are shocked at the hardships, not to say sufferings, it imposes.

I know that these sufferings and hardships are entirely voluntary and self-imposed.

The first night I imposed them upon myself, and stood shivering in the shade and sharp wind till my teeth chattered.

Once inside the dining-room I did as the others did—sought out the first plate of mush and bowl of tea that lacked a pauper in front of it.

I had walked two miles over the hills from the terminus of the Haight-street cars, and by all ordinary methods of deduction, ought to have been as hungry as a wolf—or as a pauper, which is a much more pregnant metaphor.

But the somber surroundings, the multitude of aged faces, bent, crippled and distorted figures, were things that I had to get used to before I could eat bread without butter with a hearty relish.

Though my hunger was gone, I made a pretense of eating, staring all the while at the strange, strange scene about me.

Every face was old and weatherbeaten and time-stained. I was in a world of old old men.

I noticed that some of the men washed their hands at the hydrant by the roundhouse before going in the line, but only a few of them.

And no man took his hat off at the table. They eat without napkins, their coatsleeves or handkerchiefs answering that purpose.

The long narrow tables were covered with a white and blue marbleized oilcloth. On this were the rations before each man. A large soup plate filled with rice and milk, a pint bowl filled with tea, and one-seventh of a loaf of good white bread before every pauper.

These were the supper rations for the first night I passed at the Almshouse. The monotony was varied the next night by the substitution of cornmeal for the rice, the third night by cracked wheat, and the last night of my stay oatmeal mush was the mainstay of the meal.

I ate a little of the rice and milk. Both were good and seemingly pure and sweet. You would eat the same thing in the restaurant or at your own home, amid different surroundings, with a good relish.

The bread was as white and as good to the taste as any I had ever eaten before.

It went awkward without butter, but I ate half of the seventh.

The tea. Well, I am not going to brag about that, and one of the oldest inmates told me that Mr. Weaver himself had often said it was not good tea, but it was contract tea, bought by the Supervisors as per sample furnished for 13 cents a pound.

You can't get good tea for that price.

The inmates of the Almshouse do not get good tea. That is conceded on all hands, and the inmates themselves are not backward about mentioning the fact whenever they get a chance.

I found the tea palatable, however, and already sweetened to about the proper degree, according to my individual judgment in the matter.

I heard complaints that the tea served that night was too sweet, and other complaints that it was not sweet enough.

The average physician will tell you that these old and worn-out men sleep sounder and better for the weak tea they drink before retiring.

But it doesn't please them, and they believe some one is robbing them at that point.

At last I could eat no more, so I rose slowly and went out.

As I rose a much-bewhiskered old man, who had been eying my tea and rice from the opposite side of the table, made a grab for the more than half-filled dishes I left.

He used both arms and gathered in the leavings with a sudden, jerky movement. It was the quickest movement I saw while I remained in the institution.

IV.

Outside I lit my pipe and joined the procession for a while. It did a heap of countermarching now, for the sun was low in the west and the shadow made by the north wing was increased till it filled nearly half the yard with its chill and gloom.

And it is a strict rule with the procession never to march in the shade.

Presently a kindly-faced old man with a gray beard a la Galway, and but one good eye, who seemed to take a fatherly interest in me, joined the procession at my side and told me I had better go in and get my clothes at once before it was too late.

Mr. Castello asked me what I needed and then gave me a requisition on the tailor for "one pair overalls, one outside coat."

The tailor and the shoemaker occupy separate apartments adjoining each other in the attic at the end of the north wing.

The tailor treated me decently enough and gave me what the requisition called for without a word. I tried on several garments before I got an approximate fit, but when I went downstairs I was a pauper, genuine, pure and simple.

For I had donned the blue of pauperdom. The overalls were blue—and clean. The coat was gray in color, very thick, short, and clean.

As my shoes were whole I had no need for the shoemaker, but in spite of the "Positively no admittance" on his door I opened it and poked my head in. He said good-evening. I looked around, saw an ordinary cobbling establishment and a number of brogans and pegged shoes of varying sizes.

The shop was neat and as clean as it well could be. And the tailoring establishment was likewise.

Precisely at 8 o'clock the gong sounded. According to the rules this meant that all hands should retire to their rooms. I saw no infraction of this rule.

Unfortunately I was not housed in the big ward, but in one of the rooms off the second-floor corridor of the north wing.

It contained four single iron beds and might have been well ventilated had not the other inmates insisted upon having both the window and the door closed.

At the foot of each bed were hooks upon which to hang the discarded garments.

Nightcaps and gowns are not considered comme il faut at the Almshouse. They would have seemed out of place in such surroundings. None of my room-mates wore them. I could not answer for the occupants of the other rooms.

I never learned the names of my room-mates, nor did I care to. Names count for little at the Almshouse, unless the owner of the name is a freak or a character, and then the name is a fancy one.

Try as I might I could not enter heartily into the social life of my room-mates—provided they had such a thing.

They were silent, dreamy old men. They didn't quarrel, and obeyed all the rules. They were men whose shells seemed to have outlived their vital forces. As men they were failures, utter failures. Perhaps in the dim past, they had been useful in the world, but in the end they had failed. Once I tried to draw out the story of the youngest of the three, but his answers were too far from lucidity to be of value.

These three were counterparts of hundreds of other paupers in this institution.

One of them cut bread, another peeled potatoes, and the third did nothing all day but dream.

The beds they slept in, like the one allotted to me, were scrupulously clean, and the covering provided warmed their shrunken limbs amply.

During my stay at the Almshouse I never heard a word of complaint about the beds or the bedding. On the contrary the most querulous of the inmates and the biggest kickers of the lot invariably had a good word for their beds.

At 9 o'clock the gong in the main hall sounded again. It meant that all lights should be extinguished. Ten minutes later the north wing of the main building was wrapped in total darkness, save for the flickering lantern light of old Peter, the watchman.

Half an hour later I was dressed and had stolen out in stocking-feet to the courtyard.

I could never sleep in that room, I thought. The trades had ceased blowing, the moon and stars shown brightly in that elevated atmosphere, and it was not so cold.

The air was pure and sweet. With the help of a couple of gunnysacks I made a comfortable bed in the far corner of the long bench in the courtyard. On it I slept soundly until the 5 o'clock gong awakened me in the morning.

Then it was cold and I did some vigorous walking along the procession route for the next half hour, until the blood got in proper circulation.

I enjoyed that night's rest as well as any I have ever had, and a wash in cold water at the roundhouse hydrant sharpened an appetite that was already quick and strong.

But it failed me utterly when I marched into the dining-room half an hour later.

There was hash for breakfast, made of potatoes and meat and salt. There was also the invariable one-seventh of a loaf. A bowl of coffee, not strong enough to hurt any one's nerves, topped it off.

I drank most of the coffee, ate all of the bread and a little of the hash. The same food with different surroundings I could have eaten with a relish to the last morsel.

When the old fellows were all seated in front of their bowls and one-sevenths, a tall old man in shirtsleeves, with an iron gray mustache and a face that meant as much as a stone wall, went along the tables with a big platter and a tablespoon.

"Hash, hash, hash," he cried in a mechanical voice, and the plates were held up for him to fill. Those who wanted more than one plateful of hash—and many did—had only to ask for it.

The room was but dimly lighted, and those old, old faces and the old, old clothes and the bent and bowed and crooked forms, all as silent as death, made a gruesome picture that will never be forgotten. I ate hastily and hurried away from it.

My absence from bed 3, room 27, during the whole night had not been marked. The night watchman had made his rounds and peered into every room before I made my escape. My three room-mates noticed nothing. They never did heed anything short of the dinner-bell and tobacco rations.

V.

The one thing that surprised me most at first was the promptitude with which every man answered the 5 o'clock gong.

To a casual observer it seems very hard to call these men out of their warm beds at that unearthly hour and fully an hour before daylight.

But the men themselves do not mind it. They are early risers. Many of them were up and out half an hour before the rising gong sounded.

With only an occasional exception the inhabitants of the Almshouse have always been early risers, and it would now be unnatural for them to remain in bed longer.

Moreover, their early rising does not rob them of needed sleep. Some of them go to bed as early as 4 o'clock in the afternoon, or immediately after supper; many at 5 o'clock, and many more at 6 o'clock; all of them by 9 o'clock.

After breakfast I joined the procession till the sun rose over Twin Peaks. This is a glorious sight. The main building of the Almshouse sits in a narrow valley, surrounded by hills on all sides. To the east are the Twin Peaks, and to the west are hills equally as high which shut out the ocean. To the north and south the hills are comparatively low, perhaps not more than a hundred feet in altitude.

A sunrise in this valley is a sight worth traveling miles to behold. A few of the old men watched the sun creeping up, but none of them praised it or spoke of it, not even the newcomers.

By 9 o'clock Nurse Tillson, who was accused of cruelties, came over from his domain at the New House and entered the superintendent's office.

A moment or so later I was in the corridors of the New House questioning the inmates as eagerly as I dared without exciting suspicion as to how they liked their head nurse.

In the New House are the sick and crippled and infirm, who are not hopeless enough to be sent to Last Chance.

"Tillson's pretty tough?" I suggested to a comparatively young man whose only disability lay in a pair of crooked legs which necessitated the use of crutches.

"I don't find him so," was the reply.

"How long have you been here?"

"Six years."

"Tillson isn't liked much, is he?"

"Liked well enough, I guess, by the fellows who behave themselves. I never had any trouble with him."

"Does he knock the men down or beat them?" I asked, since these were the accusations against him.

"I don't believe he does. I never saw him do it."

Quite a different tale was told me by an old man who was sunning himself on the back steps, but it lacked lucidity and continuity.

"Tillson has a bad reputation and he has knocked two men down, I have been told."

"Who were they?"

"Wan of them was Luce, I guess, and the other fellow I don't know. I don't know the whole thing, only what I hear."

More sifting elicited nothing further from this man.

In the sick wards I interviewed a dozen or more of the patients at haphazard, or as their faces showed more intelligence than the others.

Here everybody was for Tillson and nobody against him. It seemed pretty clear that the sick patients had no complaint to make of their head nurse.

One very intelligent old man who has seen far better days—in fact, was once a bank cashier in this city—told me that so far as he could see Tillson was a good nurse and a conscientious and kind manager.

"I am treated very well," he said; "as well as any one could expect in such an institution as this, and I do not think those who obey the rules have any complaint to make."

Upon the whole I found comparatively little feeling against Tillson in the New House, and his strongest opponents in the men who come in contact with him the least.

Thursday morning, right after breakfast, several different coteries gathered in different parts of the courtyard of the main building, and discussed Tillson vigorously and without gloves.

One man branded him as an informer, and others declaimed loudly that no self-respecting man would associate with him.

These loud-mouthed men and ringleaders of these little riots and insurrections are invariably the repeaters.

Now a repeater, in Almshouse parlance, is one who comes and goes. They stay in the poorhouse a while, then go out into the world, then come back again.

These are usually the men who drink heavily and are seldom sober, except when beyond the reach of strong drink.

There is another troublesome class at the Almshouse that one who stays there a little while cannot fail to become acquainted with. This is the kind that has an everlastingly unquenchable thirst for alcohol.

When Dr. Bunker was there, the inmates told me, these men got liquor frequently. Under the administration of Dr. E. L. Parramore whisky is given only as a medicine.

As a consequence the powers that be at the Almshouse are heartily disliked and roundly abused by this class of inmates, and their number is not inconsiderable.

Wednesday morning the Board of Health and the Mayor made their investigation. The rest of the day and all day Thursday, until I left the institution, there was a great deal of unfavorable talk in the main courtyard against the authorities of the Almshouse, and open rebellion was threatened, but not executed.

One of the men complained to me that Superintendent Weaver, Mrs. Weaver, the doctor and the families of both had better food to eat than the inmates.

He denounced this as an injustice and seemed to think that the executive powers of the Almshouse ought to live and eat like the inmates.

And to cinch his argument he made use of this bit of queer logic:

"Why," said he, "they think they are better than we are, but if we were not here they would not have their fat jobs. It's our presence here that keeps them in office, and they ought to remember that."

One could scarcely reply to such cogent reasoning. LUKE NORTH.

The Official Inquiry.

Last night was the time appointed by the Board of Health to investigate charges of misconduct preferred against some of the Almshouse officials, but as Mayor Ellert was not present, and as it was essential to have him there, the investigation was postponed indefinitely.

ZINK'S BAD BREAK.

He Tried Hard to Win but He Was the Loser.

Otto Zink was the chef at the Concordia Club and the reason that he no longer occupies that position is because he had a falling out with A. H. Lau, the steward, and in an attempt to have that individual discharged was himself discharged.

Zink had made up his mind that the steward, who was obnoxious to him, should go. To bring this about he drew up a petition directed to the board of directors, in which was set forth that Lau should be discharged and that if the request was not complied with all the servants would strike. This was presented to all the employes for their signature. Some, including the Chinese, refused to sign, but it is said were persuaded to do so when Zink presented a revolver and made use of language that could not be misunderstood.

The petition was presented to the board and after it had been read the directors concluded to tell Zink and all who signed the document that their services were no longer required and to inform them that as Lau was satisfactory to members of the club he would be retained.

This was carried into effect, except as to the Chinese, who were allowed to remain as it appeared that they had signed nolens volens.

The steward is now working with another crew in the kitchen and the dining-room.

Their Fifth Anniversary.

The Mission-street branch of the Young Men's Christian Association celebrated its fifth anniversary last night by a literary and musical entertainment. The cozy hall and rooms leading into it were well filled long before the exercises commenced. An address by Rev. Dr. Hayes C. French convinced those present of the good work performed by the Mission-street branch of the association during the past year. The entertainers did justice to the programme, and they were repeatedly encored, so that it was rather late when the audience took its leave.

Miss P. Noble rendered "The Trumpeter's Polka" on the cornet; "The Bend of the River" was sung by B. E. Franklin; Miss Gladys M. Gode sang "A Persian Love Song"; Harry Hilliard delivered an address on association work in colleges. This was followed by "The Grand Old Ocean," vocal solo, by Charles W. Seely, and address on "Our Own Work," by Dr. Hayes C. French, and a vocal solo by Miss P. Noble.

PERSONAL NOTES.

C. M. Wooster of San Jose is at the Baldwin.

W. H. Wallace of Yokohama is in the city.

William Napier of Pleasanton is at the Grand.

W. O. Randolph of Los Angeles is at the Grand.

George J. Koenig of San Jose is at the Baldwin.

C. W. Bonynge, a wealthy Londoner, is one of the guests at the Grand.

Johan Paulson of Portland, Or., has been spending a few days at the Palace.

Lieutenant T. S. Phelps Jr. of the navy registered at the Palace yesterday.

J. F. Vareme and E. Knaff, railroad engineers of Yokohama, are at the Palace.

Dr. and Mrs. Truesdale are guests at the Palace, registered from Rock Island, Ill.

George E. Faw, Gonzales, is one of the new names upon the register at the Occidental.

John S. Robbins of Arizona arrived in the city yesterday, and has taken rooms at the Palace.

A Time-Worn Thief.

Proprietors of boarding-houses on the water front have been trying for several weeks to catch a thief who has been plying his trade in the rooms of their lodgers. The thief stole everything of value in sight. A sharp lookout has been kept for him and he was caught last night by Officer James McGrath just as he was leaving the Finland House with a bundle of clothes which he had stolen. The officer called upon him to stop, but the thief—a man named Williams, 65 years old—took to his heels. He was finally overtaken. A lot of pawn-tickets were found in his possession.

BIRTHS—MARRIAGES—DEATHS.

[Birth, marriage and death notices sent by mail will not be inserted. They must be handed in at either of the publication offices and be indorsed with the name and residence of persons authorized to have the same published.]

BORN.

SHAYER—February 23, 1893, to the wife of William H. Shayer, a daughter.

BENDER—February 22, 1893, to the wife of N. W. Bender, a son.

WELLER—February 19, 1893, to the wife of Herbert Bird Weller, a son.

SICHEL—In this city, February 22, 1893, to the wife of Abe Sichel, a son.

WINTER—In Cloverdale, February 21, 1893, to the wife of John D. Winter, a son.

NEUMAN—In Sacramento, February 20, 1893, to the wife of William F. Neuman of San Francisco, a son.

MARRIED.

BRAUN—VETTER—In this city, February 20, 1893, by the Rev. Dr. Dille, John J. Braun and Regina Vetter, both of San Francisco.

HENKEL—HILL—In this city, February 22, 1893, by the Rev. Dr. Dille, Henry Henkel of San Francisco and Mamie Hill of Oakland.

KNODERER—DEWEY—In this city, February 22, 1893, by the Rev. W. C. Pond, Ernest F. Knoderer and Ida M. Dewey, both of San Francisco.

STEWART—WILLIS—In this city, February 22, 1893, by the Rev. J. W. Henry, Lewis H. Stewart and Effie M. Willis, both of Healdsburg.

JACOBS—BARNUM—In this city, February 22, 1893, by the Rev. Dr. Stebbins, Albert Jacobs of San Francisco and Ada B. Barnum of Alameda.

HANBLOOM—WAKEFIELD—In this city, February 14, 1893, by the Rev. N. F. Ravlin, Robert Hanbloom and Ella Wakefield.

KAFKA—JOHNSON—In San Rafael, August 1, 1889, Simon Kafka and Ida Johnson.

DIED.

Brooke, Charles Sr.	Johnson, Eva Maria
Byrnes, Cornelius	Jensen, Mary
Badarous, Camille J.	Koepf, Anna
Courtney, Mrs. M.	McGrath, Johanna
Carrere, Emele	McPhun, Robert B.
Ferrea, John	Morse, Frank Kyle
Greeley, John	Madigan, William
Hay, Henry H.	Moreno, Manuel
Ingertila, Harry	O'Connell, Timothy
Jaquith, Delia	Smith, Mrs. Eliza
Sweeney, Catherine C.	

JOHNSON—In this city, February 22, 1893, Eva Maria, beloved daughter of Alfred and Carolina Johnson, aged 6 months and 18 days.

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral THIS DAY (Friday), at 2 o'clock P. M., from the residence of the parents, 40 Thirteenth street, between Howard and Mission. **

JENSEN—In this city, February 22, 1893, Mary, beloved wife of Jens S. Jensen, daughter of Mrs. Ralph Petersen, and sister of Patrick, Peter, Edward, William and Harry Dempsey, a native of Glenns Falls, N. Y., aged 25 years 9 months and 27 days.

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral THIS DAY (Friday), at 2 o'clock P. M., from St. Mary's Hospital. Interment Mount Calvary Cemetery. **

MADIGAN—In this city, February 22, 1893, William, beloved husband of Catherine Madigan, father of Mrs. Edward McDevitt, Mrs. E. T. Murphy, Edward J. Madigan and Mrs. J. H. O'Sullivan, and brother of Thomas Madigan, a native of the town of Gort, County Galway, Ireland, aged 71 years 7 months and 3 days.

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral THIS DAY (Friday), at 8:30 o'clock A. M., from the residence of his son-in-law, J. H. O'Sullivan, 613 Valencia street, thence to Mission Dolores Church, where a solemn requiem mass will be celebrated for the repose of his soul, commencing at 9 o'clock A. M. Interment Holy Cross Cemetery. Please omit flowers. **

BYRNES—In this city, February 22, 1893, Cornelius, beloved husband of Mary Byrnes, and brother of Mrs. J. J. Kelly, a native of San Francisco, aged 22 years 11 months and 3 days.

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral THIS DAY (Friday), at 2 o'clock P. M., from the undertaking parlors of McGinn Bros., 31 Eddy street. Interment Mount Calvary Cemetery. *

FERREA—In this city, John Ferrea, a native of Genoa, Italy, aged 41 years 6 months and 26 days.

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral TO-MORROW (Saturday), at 1:30 o'clock P. M., from Liguri Hall, Mission road, Five-mile House; grand mass at St. Paolo's Church, corner of Twenty-ninth and Church streets. Interment Holy Cross Cemetery. **

JAQUITH—In this city, February 23, 1893, Delia, Jaquith, beloved mother of Frederick G., Albert H., Agnes J. and Joseph A. Jaquith and Mrs. W. T. Lingard, a native of County Galway, Ireland, aged 54 years 1 month and 24 days. [Boston (Mass.) papers please copy.]

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral TO-MORROW (Saturday), at 8:30 o'clock A. M., from her late residence, 525 Turk street, thence to St. Mary's Cathedral, where a solemn requiem mass will be celebrated for the repose of her soul, commencing at 9 o'clock A. M. Interment St. Mary's Cemetery, Oakland, by the 11:15 o'clock A. M. creek boat. **

O'CONNELL—In this city, February 23, 1893, Timothy O'Connell, beloved father of Thomas and Nellie O'Connell and Mrs. Jane Lee, a native of County Cork, Ireland, aged 70 years. [Australian papers please copy.]

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral TO-MORROW (Saturday), at 8:30 o'clock A. M., from his late residence, 10 Welch street, thence to St. Rose's Church, where a solemn requiem mass will be celebrated for the repose of his soul, commencing at 9 o'clock A. M. Interment Mount Calvary Cemetery. **

McGRATH—An anniversary requiem high mass will be celebrated for the repose of the soul of the late Johanna McGrath at St. Paul's Church TO-MORROW (Saturday), commencing at 9 o'clock A. M. Friends are respectfully invited to attend. *

GREELEY—In this city, February 23, 1893, John, beloved husband of Nora Greeley, and father of Mary, Dora, John, Nellie, Thomas and Willie Greeley, and brother of Mrs. James Kennedy, and brother-in-law of Martin Jordan and Lawrence Rodgerson, a native of the parish of Caltrough, County Galway, Ireland, aged 47 years and 4 months. [New York papers please copy.]

☞Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral SUNDAY, February 26, at 9 o'clock A. M., from his late residence, 551 Howard street, thence to St. Brendan's Church, where a solemn requiem high mass will be celebrated for the repose of his soul, commencing at 9:30 o'clock A. M. Interment Mount Calvary Cemetery. ***

SWEENEY—In this city, February 23, 1893, Catherine C. Sweeney, beloved mother of Mary E., Katie F. and Michael J. Sweeney, a native of Kilmichael, County Cork, Ireland, aged 58 years.

☞Notice of funeral hereafter. *

BROOKE—In Oakland, February 23, 1893, Charles Brooke Sr., a native of London, England, aged 65 years and 23 days. [Los Angeles, Kansas City and Detroit papers please copy.]

☞Notice of funeral hereafter. 1

HAY—Died suddenly in his rooms on Broadway, New York City of heart failure, February 16, 1893, Henry Hamilton Hay (stage name Harry Cotton), aged 45 years. [Nevada City (Cal.) papers please copy.] 4

McPHUN—In this city, February 22, 1893, Robert B., beloved husband of Sybilla McPhun, a native of Valparaiso, Chile, aged 44 years and 8 months.

COURTNEY—In this city February 23, 1893, Mrs. M. Courtney, a native of California, aged 22 years.

BADAROUS—In this city, February 22, 1893, Camille J. Badarous, a native of California, aged 1 year 11 months and 22 days.

CARRERE—In this city, February 22, 1893, Emele Carrere, a native of Germany, aged 39 years.

KOEPF—In this city, February 21, 1893, Anna Koepf, aged 2 years 9 months and 11 days.

MORENO—In this city, February 19, 1893, Manuel Moreno, aged 1 year and 5 months.

SMITH—In this city, February 22, 1893, Mrs. Eliza Smith, a native of Ireland, aged 82 years.

MORSE—In San Mateo, February 22, 1893, Frank Kyle Morse, a native of Missouri, aged 16 years 2 months and 22 days.

INGERTILA—In Stockton, February 23, 1893, Barry Ingertila (better known as Harry Mattson), a native of Finland, aged 39 years.

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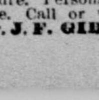
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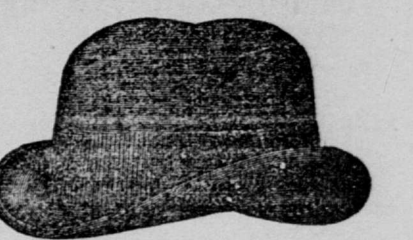
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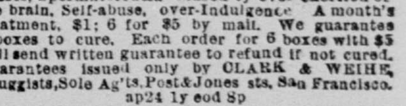

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1892—Taxes—1892
NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS—SECOND INSTALLMENT of Real Estate Taxes now due and payable.
Notice is hereby given that the remaining one-half of taxes on all real property is now due and payable, and will be delinquent on the 24th day of April, A. D. 1893, at 6 o'clock P. M., and unless paid prior thereto 5 per cent will be added.
Tuesday, April 18, 1893, last day for receiving Checks.
JAMES N. BLOCK.
Tax Collector of the City and County of San Francisco.
Dated San Francisco, Tuesday, January 10, 1893.
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