

lifted his hat, as I appeared, alone distinguished him from the ordinary tramp), face scrupulously clean. Where, I wondered afterward, had he made that careful toilet before presenting himself at a lady's door? Probably (on that bitter night) at a public hydrant with pocket-brush and comb. His eyes were shining, his cheeks were red. He did not look cold, hungry or in want. There was not the least scent of whiskey about him.

I could not take in all these details at once, as I was in the light and he rather kept in the shadow.

Now I was used to tramps—we all are. They usually came to my back door, and Carrie or myself dealt with them there. I usually fed them—we all do, pernicious though the practice may be. The only practice which could be worse is that we should be always able to turn them away. They were not always grateful. Why should they be for the bread of charity?

Once a tramp put up such a pitiful tale that I listened with tears in my eyes. And I hadn't a thing to give him. Cooked food had given out. Everything we could rake together—Carrie and I—was a postage stamp and three pennies. We gave him these, and he threw them down on the mat, swore at us in a foreign tongue and walked off. I was very mortified to have offended him, for I had really done my best, though he didn't seem to believe it.

Sometimes tramps did not like Carrie's cooking and threw the food back at her. Naturally, Carrie had come to entertain a strong disapproval of tramps and of the bad habit of feeding them.

My husband had laid down a law that we were to have no dealings with vagrants after dark. After certain hours, doors were not to be opened nor parleyings had with doubtful characters. I had two experiences which prompted me to adhere very strictly to this regulation. Also, my husband did not like tramps to come to the front door. Accordingly, all the tramps of our acquaintance—and there were many—called at the back door.