



One of the most interesting things about the local fair—about any fair of the same character, in fact—is the crowd. From the barker who, megaphone in hand, beseeches you to view the "sight of a lifetime," which you may have the inestimably great pleasure of seeing for the small sum of two bits, "on the inside," to the wide-eyed youngster, ten cents clutched in one little fist and a bag of toffee in the other, the people to be met with inside the turnstiles are, to him who has an eye for them, quite as entertaining as the entire remainder of the show taken together.

The Camera Man and I went to the fair, looking to be entertained by the crowd; and we were not disappointed. We set out like two Simple Simons, and while we did not meet any pieman "going to the fair," we had not progressed far inside the gates before we came up with his modern prototype, the Hot Dog Man. The Hot Dog Man is distinctly an American creation. From Coney Island to San Francisco you may hear him shout and hear the sizzle of the "weinnies." But the Camera Man and I were in serious mood. We sought to be historically correct. We approached the first Hot Dog Man as Simple Simon might have been expected to approach the Pieman. He turned from his oil stove, which smelled very badly—to attend us.

"Let me taste your ware!" said I, very soberly.

The Hot Dog Man looked at me sharply and shrewdly, as if he suspected the soundness of my mentality. But it was less than the flicker of an eyelash before he apparently decided that I was of the harmless variety. Then he proved himself utterly out of touch with tradition. He had forgotten his lines shockingly, and his improvisation was alarming. Far from replying: "First show me your penny!" he at once reached into the hot pan with his dark and soiled fingers, extracted two red sausages, clapped them between the portions of a divided bun and handed them over with a "You're on, Bo!"

There was no attempt on his part to insure himself against monetary loss, and I made mental note that either was I of an apparent opulence foreign to the original Simon or else was the modern pieman of a more trusting nature than his famous forerunner.

I took the heated canine gingerly between my fingers and despite myself I could not forbear to wonder if his name had been Nero, Fido or Frisk. I had reached the conclusion that perhaps he was a little of each by the time I laid down an American "nickel" on the rough deal counter. "One dime, son, if you please!" suggested the Hot Dog Man. "A dime?" I replied, rather weakly, and fumbled in my pocket for another nickel. I got the money down and began to move away to the point where the Camera Man, who had pleaded that he never did like dogs, was waiting for me. "Why?" I protested at parting. "In the States they are always five cents!"

"Yep; quite ke-rect, Bo," returned the modern pieman; "but not fer thoroughbreds like them; them has a pedigree." And as I faded away into the crowd, I could hear his raucous voice droning:

"Supper, supper, supper is ready; right here and get a hot dog; they're on the fire. The small boy—his class by himself—was everywhere about us as we mixed in with the human stream and were rushed onward to the sea of visitors in the Fakir's Ring. Scarcely had we seen so many interesting human beings in so small an enclosure. Here was the struggle for existence illustrated in one of its most striking forms. "Is it not remarkable," observed the Camera Man, who is a bit of a philosopher, "what ends people will go to for the sake of money?" "Indeed," said I, "they will

go to any end to escape the end of their purse." Distracted by loud and alarming cries of "Loto, Loto, Loto!" and fearing that perhaps this might be some man calling for help in a foreign tongue, we dashed madly into another crowd before a smaller tent. But here we found a trio of gaudily-dressed females standing in the sunlight and staring at the crowd unseeingly with the indifference of long practice. The man who had alarmed us with his shrill cries was pointing towards them and calling through a megaphone: "Loto, Loto, the Show-Beautiful!" But, as we felt sure that nothing inside could surpass the beauty of the young ladies who graced the platform outside, we did not venture.

There were lady "barkers," too, and they barked most gracefully. One fair damsel in a trunk and bounced on a superannated theatre. She had whips, souvenir straw hats and "ticklers" for sale, and her business was good.

Across the way from her was a sister. We asked two youths who were enjoying ice-cream of the variety veldt "hockey pokey" who this lady was. They informed us that she "was some fairy running a skin game." This description interested us, and we went closer to examine this curious phenomenon. We had hardly reached the rail which surrounded a table on which were hunting knives set point downwards in the board; when the "fairy" approached us in a businesslike manner: "Oh, you kiddo, you in the light hat, right here and buy your rings. What you ring you get and you can't lose." She implored us most strenuously to buy, but we resisted her siren asides that we were "dead ones!"

The afternoon was beginning to wane as afterwards, especially pleasant and interesting afternoons, have a most precarious habit of doing, when we were suddenly caught in the vortex of a human whirlpool and borne whither



THE BARKER AND HIS LURE



FEEDING THE MONKEY



THE DASHIN' YOUNG HORSEMAN



THE HOKEY-POKEY BOYS



BRONCHO BUSTING



WHAT YOU RING YOU GET



WAITING FOR A LIVE ONE

about to ride some bucking bronchos. We arrived just in time, for a tall cowboy was leading a horse into the enclosure. The Camera Man, scenting game, cleared the fence and stood ready to "shoot." Behind me, as I watched the preliminaries carried on by two big hustlers, who looked as though they had grown up on frijoles and jerked beef, were a couple of ladies. "My word! that animal doesn't look frisky, does he?" "No; somehow he doesn't. I rather expected something a bit thick, judging by the articles I've read. Perhaps we shall see something directly."

Within five minutes the dashing young rider in the bewhiskered pants had been frapped, fricasseed and served on a platter in a heap of sand by the finest exhibition of fancy peg-legged weaving and straight fore-and-aft bucking seen in Victoria in many a day. Not satisfied with this, the broncho took to the trail and proceeded to evince his ability to buck the centre-fire saddle from his back. In the course of his travels he almost ran the Camera Man down. He was finally caught and led away, and when the dust settled, a female voice behind me gasped:

"My word!"

The Ragged School

By W. T. Cranfield ("Denis")

During a short stay in Victoria visiting at the house of a friend, a lot of Canadian children, as compared with many little ones in the States, were borne in upon me with considerable force. We were discussing over the work of the Ragged School, the waifs and strays of London, and a girl of eight or nine asked me to take of these gutter-children. Neither other junior member of the party, born, had ever seen a ragged, shoeless child. We are so familiar with London and other large English cities that we could hardly realize that I was not of a job.

Then the questions arose: How many there are so many poor children, and How does the Ragged School help them? As the same queries will arise in other minds when an appeal on behalf of Sir John Kirk's Christmas Fresh Air Funds, I will endeavor to answer them, though owing to the scope of the work and the limits of space, my reply will be few.

The causes of destitution in England, roughly, three classes: economic and moral. Foremost among economic is the increasing employment of boys, called "cul de sac" or "blind alleys," i.e., occupations which return good wages until they reach a certain age, when, being too big and demanding money, they are discharged in favor of cheaper labor. The young ones then obtain odd jobs of various kinds, uncertain duration, sandwiched between periods of idleness, during which they are demoralized and unfitted for continuing work. Ultimately they drop into the ranks of the unemployed, and ere long become playable.

In London, upwards of fifty per cent of boys leaving elementary schools are other of these blind-alley callings. About eight or ten per cent enter the most promising field of clerical life, or "office boys." Of the rest, one-third trades in which employment is more or less continuous. Once thrown out of work, aside by illness or an accident, they are in imminent peril of drifting to destitution.

Other economic causes there are the "too-old-at-forty" principle, the principle which married workers move from to place at the demands of the labor market, the replacement of hand labor by machinery, overpopulation, but of these I can speak. The gravest cause is that which is indicated.

Of social causes, early marriage, frequent concomitant, a large family, holds first place. These unions, cemented character is formed, before the responsibilities of married life are even understood, and, above all, before the acquired a reasonable prospect of pecuniary employment, open to the young couple gulf into which the slightest hitch or misfortune is almost bound to precipitate them. The effect of such unions on the children is alone enough to bow down a capable heart. The weak or defect spring of immaturity, ill-nourished in womb, unwisely and inadequately fed in childhood, and reared under conditions which disease and vice are more freely than health or virtue, what wonder the children of rash improvidence grow up morbid, feeble-minded, and industrially incompetent?

All investigators into the moral causes of poverty agree in assigning a prominent place to the drinking habit. Many put it first. Perhaps more than any other cause, it is also a consequence of every case in which drinking habit becomes an inroad on the family exchequer. He matched with another in which the state of the exchequer leads to the formation of drinking habits. The whooping cough of drinking life are monotonous, depressing, and finds an easy victim in those who are grappling with despair.

There is yet another failing of the poor responsible for much of their suffering. Some sociological students and missionaries place it even before drinking. I refer to general improvidence, manifesting itself in failure to save, during times of comparative prosperity, against the certain return of unemployment; in sheer waste on food and things that do not represent the best expenditure of the money concerned; and in the use of money, as in gambling and costly of pleasure-seeking.

The recent establishment of Labor changes, and of increasing attention now given by legislators to social questions, the hope that in the not distant future those subject to want through purely economic and industrial causes will be distinguished.

As to the moral causes, these lie, after the very heart of the matter; and it is just that the utility, nay, the priceless value, of institutions as the Ragged School Union bears. In the long run it is character counts. But by character I mean, not mere sturdiness from recognized vice, and certainly coherence to any particular creed or religious society, but virtue and honesty of purpose, severity, thrift, and common sense. As the lack of these, far more than specific personal misconduct, that is responsible for the great mass of destitution due to moral causes.