

stone in the parish churchyard, and you might have thought they was anybody, said Public Opinion; which showed that Dave and his sister were orphans. Both had recollections of their father, but the funeral he indulged in three years since had elbowed other memories out of court. Of their mother they only knew by hearsay as Dave was only three years old when his sister committed patriolde, quite unconsciously, and you could hear her all the way up the Court. Pardon the story's way of introducing attestations to some fact of interest or importance in the language in which its compiler has received it.

They were good children to do with, said their Aunt M'riar, so long as you kep' an eye. And a good job they were, because who was to do her work if she was every minute prancing round after a couple of young monkeys? This was a strained way of indicating the case; but there can be no doubt of its substantial truth. So Aunt M'riar felt at rest so long as Dave was content to set up atop of the dustbin-lid and shout till he was hoarse; all the while using a shovel, that was public property, as a gong.

Perhaps Dave took his sister Dolly into his confidence about the nature of the trust he conceived himself to hold in connection with this dustbin. To others of the inhabitants he was reticent, merely referring to an emolument he was entitled to. "The man on the lid," he said, "has a farden." He said this with such conviction that few had the heart to deny the justice of the claim outright, resorting to subterfuges to evade a cash settlement. One had left his change on the piano; another was looking forward to an early liquidation of small liabilities on the return of his ship to port; another would see about it next time Sunday come of a Friday, and so on. But only his Uncle Moses ever gave him an actual farthing, and Dave deposited it in a cat on the mantelshelf, who was hollow by nature, and provided by art with a slot in the dorsal vertebrae. It could be shook out if you wanted it, and Dave occasionally took it out of deposit in connection with a course of experiments he was interested in. He wished to determine how far he could spit it out.

This inquiry was a resource against ennui on rainy days and foggy days and days that were going to clear up later. All these sorts were devised by the malignity of Providence for the confusion of small boys yearning to be on active service, redistributing property, obstructing traffic, or calling attention to personal peculiarities of harmless passers-by. But it was not so inexhaustible but that cases occurred when those children got that unsettled and masterful there was no abiding their racket;