

Happy Jack must have perceived the kindness, for he answered quietly, if proudly,

"Yes, I wuz; Jimmie-boy wuz de squarest kid I ever noo, 'n he wouldn't go wid every geeser." It was truth; the poor boy had been fond of Jimmie and proud of his friendship, which had done him good in more way than one.

"Why wouldn't you let him adopt you?" she questioned.

Jack stared. "I'm nothing ter him; 'n I like ter pay cash down."

"You're right," she said, growing more and more interested. "But you'll be sorry to leave the hospital?"

"Naw; I couldn't expect ter stay." It was a weak, undecided tone.

"Where do you board when you're working?" she queried, standing up.

"Rossin House, 'course," was the quick, sarcastic answer, instantly repented of. "No, lady, I roosts wherever I kin."

"Poor boy," sighed Mrs. Mackay; and bent over him, as she promised, "I'll see you again before you go out. Good-bye."

He sat up for a few moments, after she went, looking around him; then, shivering involuntarily, he turned his weak gaze from the windows, and slipped down into the warm nest, that—worse luck—he must soon resign. Happy Jack had, by nature, as much back-bone as the average boy, and his experiences had abnormally developed the original germ in his composition. But he felt blue and broken-up this evening. Mrs. Mackay had disappointed him in some inexplicable way; for he was not so proud as he had been, having felt the pinch of pain and cold and hunger. The contrast was keen between the warm, pleasant ward

and gray, frozen, storm-swept Bond street. Small wonder that he hid his face, and was, presently, weeping—quietly, that none might hear, but bitterly. "Its awful," he sobbed, "ter hev nobody nor nothing, 'n ter hev ter stay outside."

Deluges of the saltiest tears in Time's cauldron have fallen from the eyes of people who were, in one way or another, Outside; and a few more or less, matter little. No; but abstract sympathy is useless, and cuts many deeper far than concrete scorn; so that people, boldly stamped with the trademark of the Interior, should be careful how they speak to "the other gang."

For fifteen minutes, the voiceless sobbing had gone on; then a nurse gently drew the covering from the boy's head.

"Are you tired, Jack? Here is Mrs. Mackay's little brother to see you."

The lad behind her whispered, "turn up the lights, please. I want to see him."

The lights were turned up; but Happy Jack was shamefacedly drying his eyes and clearing his throat, so that the visitor was beginning politely, "Nannie met me and sent me here —," before the other boy looked at him. Then he said, briefly and expressively, "Gewhilicker!" At the word, Jimmie-boy—for it was Jimmie-boy—dropped his oranges; and for an ecstatic minute the little cot was a veritable fairyland of strangling hugs and energetic ejaculations of delight and happiness unalloyed.

"And you didn't know Nannie," Jimmie jerked out; and we as like as two peas—and she didn't know you—after all she heard!"

Jack extricated himself and lay back, panting.

Jimmie beamed on him.