

It is a disturbing, squalid, sordid, rollicking, hugger-mugger, jolly, and miserable place. One is often reminded there, under the church-steeple and factory chimneys, of a phrase of Cunninghame Graham's fisherman about "free, fornicatin', pious folk."

A fine endeavour is made on Saturdays to give a penny concert to the people, those for whom the Kinnaird Hall placards announce the occasional advent of great performers in vain. It is typical of the town that the penny is put in a "plate," a "plate" atop of a little column set in the drill-hall doorway, just such a "plate" as stands in the vestibules of the churches and chapels where the collection is taken at the door on entering instead of during a lull in the midst of the service, by means of little velvet bags, with handles at the top, like loving cups, that are passed along the pews. Beside the offertory "plate" in the church vestibule stands the deacon; at the penny concert, in the drill-hall, beside the "plate," stands a policeman. He looks a little uncomfortable, as if self-conscious, as if he felt that the chief of police was making him appear absurd; but I have known only two visitors to the concert who saw the comical likeness. "Like a deacon in a helmet," said one of these, and his face was wreathed in smiles.

People do worry after all, you will observe, about the place, and how to make life worth living there. They worry over a hundred and one things that seem party to the squalor, from the lack of music to the half-time system in the factories. But those who are worried over appear to be inured and not interested. The women work at the looms in the great gaunt factories and mills; the men go a-whaling and are gone by the year; or they are seamen on the jute ships; or they have got, as they say, "blank well fed up with the place" and have fled to a Colony. The girls make chocolate, also far-famed marmalade (from I know not how many hundreds of tons of oranges brought there annually), and outnumber the men by eight to one,

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