

**ABOUT SPRING HOUSE-CLEANING**

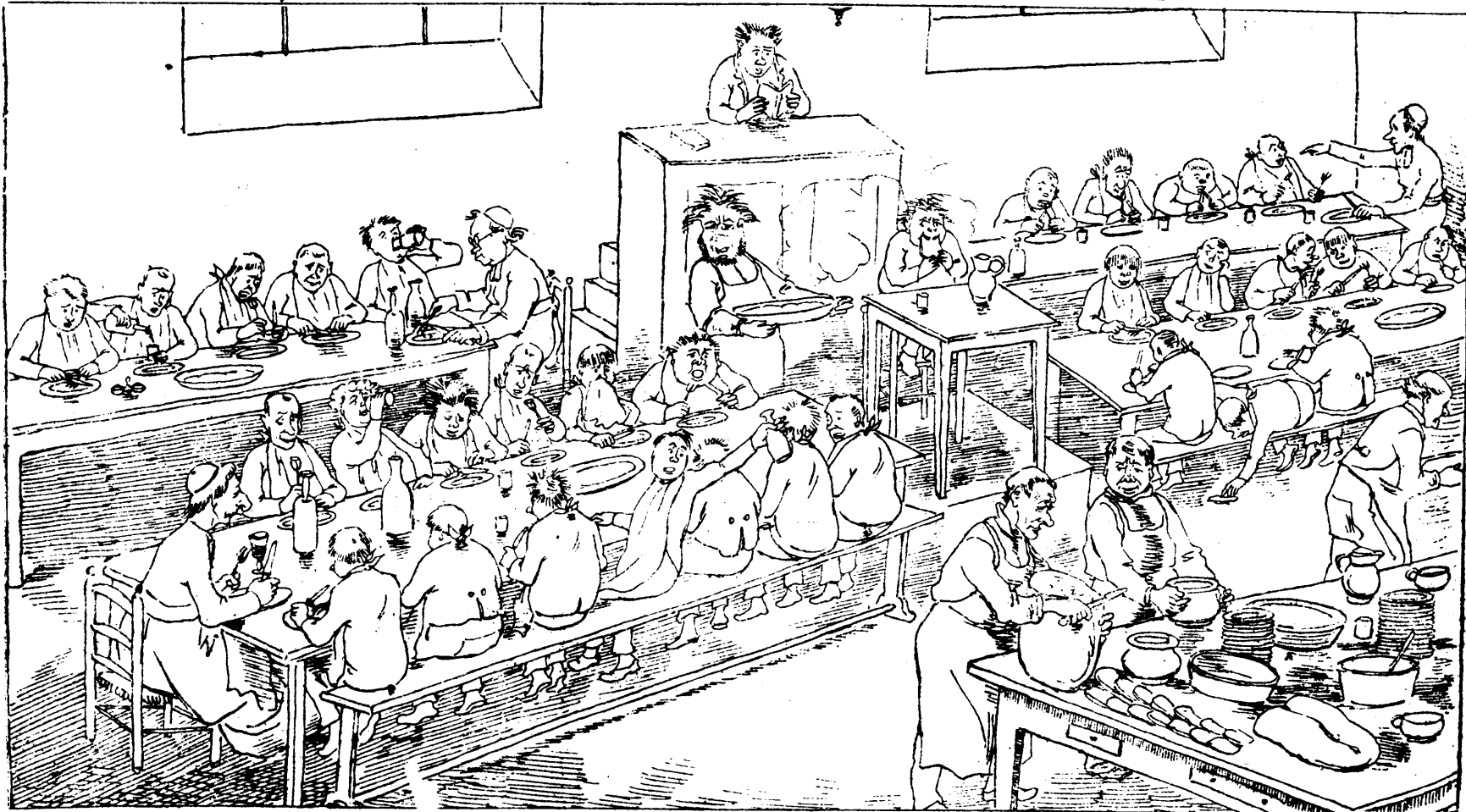
It is an epidemic which attacks all well-regulated households twice a year. The spring visitation is usually the worse of the two. It unsettles everything. It goes to the very marrow of the situation, and makes every member of the family home-sick clean down to the stocking. Like measles and chicken-pox and courting and similar derangements, there is no cure for it but to go through it, and blessed is the man who does not lose his temper on the way. For while it lasts the beefsteaks will be tough as sole leather, and the coffee the poorest substitute for slops. Dinner will be late and inedible when ready. The cook will be cross, the children will tease each other and torment the maid, the old servant will quit and leave her mistress in the lurch, the dog will upset the basket with the best china and ruin the set, the cat will deposit a litter of kittens on the satin sofa, a half dozen cousins will drop down from the country to spend a week, and a few friends will come in to take a quiet tea and have a delightful sit-down, and the mistress of

the house will be sure to have one of her sick headaches or break down from overdoing. It always happens, too, that when the east wind blows a perfect hurricane through the house, and every room in it is a regular Growlery, Mr. Smith is sure to invite Mr. Jones to come to lunch, or take it into his head to have the rheumatism or some other company. Then the upturn discovers so many uncomfortable facts! The parlor curtains are faded, and must be replaced with new ones. Three chairs are rickety, and the rosewood sofa can't possibly be mended, and the stair carpet is threadbare, two bedsteads are broken, the gas-pipes are out of order, the water leaks through the ceiling, and the last domestic carried off a whole chestful of her mistress's clothes. Everything was serene and lovely on Sunday night, but on Tuesday morning there is bedlam, and five hundred dollars to pay into the bargain. But the epidemic is inevitable. Sanitary laws don't reach it. And perhaps, after all, it is not so bad as the thing it removes. The civilized senses look on dirt as the devil, and half the contrivances of modern life are devised for its

removal. It has a remarkable ability to stick. It is subtle as sin and finds its way into the smallest crevices of our habitations. It uses all our modern conveniences for its own ends, takes special delight in the furnace, makes its bed in the velvet carpet and damask chairs, and claims every costliest and choicest thing as its special property. Whoever has these elegant furnishings must pay the price. We cannot engraft the simplicity of the old time on the complex order of the new. Whoever has carpets must shake them, and curtains will fade and gilt will wear off and China will break. There may be too much fussing and fretting about the matter, but the matter itself is wholesome. Now and then a housewife has cleanliness on the brain, and wears out her gloves with scouring, and scrubs all the paint off her doors, and keeps the furniture of her parlor standing in such mathematical order that each article looks like a sentinel and almost seems to ache from standing in one posture so long. But these women are so exceptional that they are studied as curiosities and their houses are inspected as a sort of cross between a museum and a sepul-

chre. Use has got the better of looks. The average American home to-day is a place to live in and make the heart glad, and not a place to look at and clean every six months and be miserable in all the rest of the year.

The other day a Jerseyman was observed standing in Wall Street gazing very earnestly at one of those hairless Chinese canines which are so much admired by dog connoisseurs. Near Jersey was a rampant crowd of brokers. Jersey looked at them and then at the "dorg." "I say, mister," said he, speaking to a gorgeously robed Bull, whose hands were filled with stock lists—"I say, does that dorg belong to you?" Bull nodded distantly. "Yaas? well, I thort so." "What made you think that 'dorg' belonged to me?" "Well, I wasn't so edasotly sure he belonged to you, but I was certain the dorg has had dealin's with you or some of your friends." "Why so?" says Bull, getting excited. "Cause he's so close shaved; there ain't a hair on 'im." Broker walked away, whistling the Rogue's March.



**P EASANT RECOLLECTIONS OF FRENCH BOARDING-SCHOOL LIFE.**

Some of the happiest moments of my life have been passed in a French boarding-school dining-room. There, under the eye of the schoolmaster, dressed in his greasy robes, the unwashed scholars, with unkempt hair, fill themselves with tasteless food served up by filthy servants. A bad boy placed in a pillory at the table of "disgrace," eats his allowance of dry bread, while another bad boy seated in a kind of pulpit is reading in a nasal twang the "Lives of the Saints," or some other book of that class. It was a jolly life, I tell you.



**"A REAL EASTER AMUSEMENT."**

"MASTER IS VERY SORRY, MA'AM, BUT HE'S GOT SUCH A DREAFFUL TOOTHACHE HE CAN'T SEE ANY PATIENTS TO-DAY!"



**THE TALKERS IN THE STALLS.**

First Patron of the Drama. SEEN A-TRING BEFORE, A-? Second Ditto. YA-AS-'BOUT FORTY TIMES A-... First Ditto. SO HAVE I-A-... Second Ditto. BY JOVE! WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT! First ditto. DASHED IF I KNOW!-A-NEVER LISTENED.