BEAUTY FOR ASHES

ALBION FELLOWS BACON

BEAUTY FOR ASHES

BY

ALBION FELLOWS BACON

With Numerous Illustrations

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TO
MARGARET

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BEAUTY FOR ASHES

"BEAUTY FOR ASHES"

Isaiah 61, 3

CHAPTER I

THE SHELTERED LIFE

Whence came the ember
That touched our young souls' candles first with light,
In shadowy years too distant to remember,
Where childhood merges backwards into night?[1]
—A. F. B.

THE irony of fate and a succession of paradoxes made me a housing reformer. A timid child, shy and small, loving beautiful things, and with a passion for delicate odours, more unlikely material for one would have been hard to find. It was like cutting a suit of armour out of a piece of chiffon.

If we had stayed in the city where I was born, the probabilities are that there would not long have been any such little child, for she would have slipped away, a small pale shadow, into the larger shadows while the dawn was yet grey. So thought my mother, the widow of a Methodist minister, so she took me with my two older sisters to the country place where her own girlhood was spent. Here, near her father's house and her brother's, she built a home, and on a ridge of hills the families dwelt in a little

[1] From "Songs Ysame."

community of their own, like a highland clan upon its own peaks.

The neighbourhood had been settled by Scotch-Irish families. Among the earliest of these pioneers were my great grandfather Erskine and his sons, one of whom was a widely travelled scholar and philanthropist. As their sturdy spirit still dominated our elders, the community was a Hoosier mixture of Thrums, "Sweet Auburn" and Kildare. On the map only eight miles away from the city, on the calendar it was a whole generation back from it. In the little church quaint ancient hymns were sung. Old country tales, folk lore and ballads, proverbs, enriched by brogue or burr, found voice at every fireside where young and old gathered together at the country parties.

No streets had McCutchanville. It was scarcely a hamlet, since it had not even a store, and its post-office was "Squire Mack's" private sitting room where the mail was brought once a week. It was simply a scattered settlement having two foci, the church and the school house. Its laws were the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, and the customs of the fathers.

The good folk never talked of social service in McCutchanville, but they lived it unconsciously, just "being good neighbours." No one thought it un-

usual when a tired farmer who had worked in the field all day gave up his night's rest to watch over a friend down with typhoid. Their wives made similar sacrifices. Gentle and kindly, they cared for the sick, welcomed the new born, and " laid out " the dead. And he who was humblest and most needy received most care, with a generous inclusiveness in the use of the word " neighbour."

When we left the city I was too young to have more than a confused memory of its noise and dust and ugliness. If I had stayed there and lived I should probably have grown up to take its conditions as a matter of course. Used to crowding and cramping, like a cucumber grown in a bottle, I would never have realised the unrighteousness of a twenty-five foot lot, and would have known nothing better than the grid-ironed perspective of a " cubist " city. My keen little nose would have grown accustomed to city smells, unless it had lost its keenness as ears do in a boiler factory.

The transition to the country was like waking from a grey dream into a realm of colour and light. It was a wonderland, with Heaven among its hills and fairyland in its hollows. I walked as in a world of magic and miracle, enfolded in a glamour. All the country sounds were music, all the country silences were full of voices, for I could never shake off

the feeling that inanimate things had consciousness.

The most wonderful thing about the place was the sky. It seemed that one could almost step into it from the summit of the ridge, over which it hung in a magnificent arch extending up the long sweep of the valley. Perhaps it was because the sky came down all around so that one was always conscious of it, that I felt a Presence about me, so real and close that I sometimes reached up my hand to It.

In spring the orchards were a cloud of pink, and the fields were "star-sown" with anemones and spring beauties. Later they were covered with bluets. The shady country lanes trailed with wild roses, and the woods were sweet with fern. In winter there was as much reason for rapture, when the fields were untracked slopes of dazzling white, when the fences were piled with marvellous drifts, and frost pictures covered the window panes.

"Oh, how the sight of things that are great enlarges the eye." Standing on the hill-tops, one could look miles away, across the valley, where farm houses dotted wide fields and orchards; away to the woodlands, away to the far rim of blue hills. Through all these years I have kept that vision of those windswept, sun-crowned hills, and the feeling of those great free spaces. It is this that makes our cities choke me.

That vision of wind-swept, sun-crowned hills, and great free spaces

In such surroundings was my childhood passed. I wandered in a maze of delight, alone in the fields, or with my sister Annie and six or more boy and girl cousins, who led in every kind of adventure. Better than adventure I loved the making of tiny houses under the apple trees. They were built of bark and stone, with mossy roofs and antique chimneys. Lying flat on the grass, I could peer in through the cunning windows, and enjoy the enchanted square of sunlight on the little floor. I had never heard of town planning, but took delight in arranging quaint villages with patient grouping and, in the odd way children have, inhabited them all myself.

The time came when I had to go through the big gate at the end of the cherry lane and follow the other children along the highway to school. But wonderland was not left behind. The new environment was full of mystery. The very customs of the school were as strange as heathen rites. Arithmetic was as occult as Hindu numbers, and the parsing of the older grammar classes seemed to me some weird incantation, though the verses they parsed became a part of my very fibre.

How much more the playground taught than the school room, the playmates than the teacher! I am not sure that the equal rights of that playground, which boys and girls shared together, and the exer-

cise to the full of every girl's abilities, did not give me courage later to meet men upon a broader field. Years before the wave of feminism had swept over the country, little streams were hastening down to swell the great river, from other springs as obscure as this country school.

With a mixture of good fellowship, tolerance and chivalry, the boys admitted the girls to their ball game, when the latter so desired, each girl keeping her individual base of femininity as each possessed it. Big strong Mandy, clear-eyed and muscular, stood like a young Juno on the diamond, with bat poised in air. Striking the ball a resounding swat that sent it into the middle of the adjacent field, she cleared the round of bases in a way to win a hurrah from the boys. Prim, modest Sallie gave the ball a precise tap, and scuttled with neat little steps, like a partridge, to the first base. Pretty sister Annie, with dark eyes and cherry lips, was as much applauded when she missed as when she made a strike.

I was too little and my arms too small to wield the bat very successfully. When the other children romped and wrestled, I gathered the smaller ones about me and told them fairy tales, shrinking from the rough-and-tumble. It was with scorn, however, that I regarded my own cowardice and I set myself exercises to overcome it. The first step was to con-

quer the outward effects of it. How well I remember when a sudden hard bump brought my mouth open for the usual howl, but an equally sudden determination, "I'll not cry any more when I am hurt," closed it with a snap before the howl escaped. It was a snap that even a legislative defeat later failed to undo.

Lightning terrified me until I stood out in a storm long enough and found that neither the roars nor flashes injured me. Ghost stories made bed-time fearsome. We lay awake a long time, in the warm darkness, telling them to each other, interspersed with fairy tales. At last Annie would say, in awful tones, "I'll dar-r-e you to feel under the bed."

The summer night at once grew chill, but down on my knees I was bound to get and give a senate probe to the bogies underneath.

It was a more difficult matter to manage the fear of animals. Their attacks seemed so much more personal than those of the elements or the spooks. After one encounter with the setting hen I could never again bring myself to attempt to get her off her nest.

The worst bugbear of all was the big dog that had to be passed on the way to school. Hailing passers-by far down the road with a savage "Woof! woof!" he would tear back and forth and leap at the fence until they were out of sight. To pass the place

alone was a nightmare. To try to sneak by was as hopeless as to run, while parleying made matters worse. Finally, murmuring many prayers, I marched stiffly by, cold and dizzy with fright, my heart beating in my ears. At a safe distance I sank down, exhausted and limp, but with faith renewed and courage screwed one point higher.

Alas, a born coward must always suffer: I might conquer a host of fears, but new ones always appeared; and while I learned to hide the outward tremor, the inward agony was never overcome. There has always been a Big Dog in the way.

Looking back to see what were the forces that made me a housing reformer, I am struck by the influences in that rural community that made for "the newer citizenship." There was the "good neighbour" spirit. There was the sense of responsibility to God and man developed in boys and girls by the puritanical severity that held them accountable to the home, the church and the community. There was the spirit of patriotism which is the "common denominator" of both state and civic pride.

The community was still throbbing from the touch of the Civil War. On the walls of some of its homes the flag was draped over a blue coat or a sheathed sword. On the hillside back of the church where the "rude forefathers of the hamlet slept," were graves

of soldiers kept green by the hands of school children. From those who mourned and those who had fought beside the fallen heroes the children learned what it meant to fight for their country. Their own "rocks and rills" were in mind, as with fervour they sang "America." And when in school they recited, in deafening unison, "Strike, for your altars and your fires," each saw himself a hero in defence of his own hearth-stone, and a thrill ran down each little stiffened back, while every small arm tensed.

And this was because they had real homes, worth fighting for, not boxes or coops or traps or sties, set in rows and squeezed into blocks.

All the civic and social influences of the community centred about the schoolhouse and the church. Every kind of meeting took place at the schoolhouse. Here young and old came together for the singing school, spelling matches, school exhibitions, or "the literary," and on its platform I made my first timid bow to the public.

Sitting beside my mother on hot Sundays, I listened to the soothing voice of the old minister and gazed out of the high windows, where the cedar boughs were stirring. Even yet I can smell the cedar, hear the peaceful sound of far-off doves, feel the holy calm, and, most of all, the sense of the Presence that enfolded me and filled all the room.

Sometimes the minister touched mundane affairs and spoke of the wicked, or the poor, as of equally remote tribes. They were remote, so far as we knew, for the standing of our neighbours was never discussed. We knew that our mother spent her life in a passion of self-sacrifice, ministering to all who were in trouble. We knew that she gave to those less fortunate, but need was not poverty in our minds. And when it came to the poor, I had the same idea that I still find so many hold that the poor are a different order of beings, subhuman, as well as submerged. Gaunt, half-clad, with hands outstretched for alms, I saw them mentally.

The minister's voice startled me wide awake: "For I was ahungered, and ye gave me no meat; . . . naked, and ye clothed me not —" he read on through the stern condemnation.

Suppose I died before I encountered any poor to visit and to minister to? For years the thought hung over me like a threatening shadow.

Of those grim monsters with whom I was one day to do battle — Poverty, Vice, Disease, I had met but one — Disease. Typhoid was a yearly scourge in the country. Consumption claimed certain families, in which it was "hereditary." Yet even Disease and Death I had seen only at a distance, like grey-robed

The Church, just beyond the big gate, at the end of the Cherry Lane

monks performing certain sacred rites, as Providence had ordained.

So it was that the ideal religion of that age and the relic of this, personal righteousness rather than social service, took hold of my little soul.

"Blessed are the pure in heart" crystallised my religion. With a passion for white, it meant to me all the lovely similitudes of snow-flakes, lilies and dew. So, having been told that every evil thing I saw or heard would leave a stain upon my soul, and with the thought of the large ink spot I once made upon my little white dress, I took precautions to avoid the deadlier blot. It became a habit to shut my eyes and put my fingers in my ears, whenever evil occasion required, thinking hard all the time of a rose or an icicle.

The life of the people about us was simple, indeed. The farmers' families were hard working and frugal, but they were independent, unhurried, thoughtful, and had ample time for meditation.

It was good for us to share in this life, with daily household tasks, but we shared it without choice, for there were no servants in McCutchanville. Certain respected and highly valued neighbours came to clean and to do washings, but the humdrum round of every day was divided by the family. With our

older sister, Lura, away at college, we children did all our mother would allow, growing in grace and wisdom thereby. How much Lura's shelf of poets helped in those tasks would have surprised those ladies and gentlemen.

It made the butter "come" faster to chant in time to the churn dasher, "Oh, wherefore come-ye forth in triumph from-the north," etc. The dreary drag of washing dishes lagged less when sped by "Hence, loathed Melancholy," or, "Hail to thee, blithe spirit."

There was no fear of our not being practical, even though amidst our work Annie scribbled stories and I verses with illustrations. I was kept in place by sketches that wouldn't come right, by verses that refused to convey all I ached to say, and by struggles with the piano which there was no teacher at hand to subdue. If, now and then, I "made up" a little song or achieved a line of grace it was just enough to feed my persistence.

There was no influence so practical as our mother. There was none so inspiring. As rare as radium, and with its power to illuminate, to energise and to heal, are such personalities. No one could be in her presence long without a quickened sense of responsibility and a feeling that he must "amount to something." What that "something" was to be was vague to me,

Annie, of course, was to be a writer of stories. But my own part was dim. My father's theological library contained certain biographies that gave disquieting suggestions. ("Lives of Great Men" are like hasheesh to an imaginative child.) Yet a "career" never occurred to me, for it would have seemed as impossible as walking on the ridge pole or driving a locomotive, and as unattractive.

Sometimes a solemn church tune woke a deep chord within me. Sometimes I heard a band play crashing martial music with that marching of octaves that makes the soul leap to its feet. But mostly the voices of the future chimed faint and far away, like bells across still waters. Looking across the great sweep of the valley to the blue hills, I wondered about the world that lay beyond, where the white road led away and away. The cities — the poets who lived there — the beauty one could learn to know and to create.

A sudden determination seized me to go to an art university. Then, one day, I went out of the big gate, down the white road, out into the world, and never came back again to stay. On and on I went, till the wonderland of childhood was left behind. After a while the hills grew steeper, but there were green fields all along, on both sides. Then, all of a sudden, the road forked. On one hand, a very lonely

path led off up a hill to the city of the art university. On the other hand, a charming lane beckoned — no, it was a charming man who beckoned.

We two went on down the lane, till we came to a cottage — but this is not a romance. It is exclusively a story about the evolution of a housing reformer, and romance has no more to do with housing reform than moonlight has to do with raising potatoes. Only, it is best to plant them in the dark of the moon.

The point is that the cottage was on the road to the place where I began housing reform, though neither of us dreamed of such a thing. In fact, if I hadn't had a home of my own, I would never have known or cared so much about other homes. And if I hadn't had a husband, I wouldn't have dared try housing reform, and couldn't have carried it through.

From the country school I had gone to the city high school, where I learned nothing but books. Even going to and from school, across the town, I learned nothing of the town or the people who lived in it, for theorems and conjugations were written in the air, in front of me, so that this period has really nothing to do with the story.

After my graduation, my mother's dear and revered uncle, Judge Asa Igleheart, wanted me to be his private secretary.

In six weeks I had learned shorthand alone, and gone to my uncle to write out his letters and briefs at dictation, to handle his law books, even to report special cases in court, and to have the privilege of his companionship. No college course could have been more valuable to me. Not the least of value was learning to write business letters, to make up court records, to go without fright into public buildings, to keep my own counsel, and to avoid feminine flutterings. And, from being sometimes the only lady in a full court room, I had learned to "see men as trees walking," with perfect forgetfulness of them and of myself.

To be sure, my uncle and his sons in the office had protected me just as my mother had done. But every one had been kind, courtesy unfailing, and chivalry ever ready. I had emerged, after a few years of this schooling, with a sincere appreciation of business and professional methods, and with a glowing faith in mankind. It was these results that gave me courage, later, to take up public work.

At the close of this period sister Annie and I had gone abroad, to visit relatives. The only result of the trip, so far as this story is concerned, was that I loved my own "rocks and rills" better (after a foreign Fourth of July) and I had become more than ever anxious to study art. Which spoils the sequence

of the story only, and not of my life, because I changed my mind.

We began housekeeping in a pretty home in a pretty part of the town. I had thought I could not bear to live in a city again, but our home was near the edge of town, where the houses were far apart, and every one had his own individual air to breathe. All the houses were roomy and comfortable. All the lawns were large, with many trees and flowers. We had rows of sweet peas and beds of mignonette. There was a red-bird in our climbing rose and robins were all about. I didn't miss the country as much as I had expected, and decided that the town had many advantages, especially as every one had city water and sewerage.

Every one!

All my friends lived on pretty streets, and my shopping was done in the best business blocks, so I did not have to see much of the rest of the town. When we drove, we never went through the factory district where the working men's cottages were, but chose the boulevards, along the river or the parks, or took the country roads.

One day, driving down by the river with a maiden lady who was interested in mission classes and factory people, I stopped to let her enjoy the view.

It was a lovely scene, taking in the bend of the river, and the lower part of town, with churches, factories and houses all blended together in a softened hazy whole — just like my idea of it.

"What a beautiful world this is," I exclaimed with enthusiasm.

"Yes, it is — to some people," answered my friend, seriously.

Looking at her suddenly, I noticed the thin grey hair on her sunken temples, and the lines about her eyes. No doubt her life had been embittered by disappointment. I resolved that I was not going to be soured, and that I would exclude every ugly or blighting thing from my life. In other words, I would keep on shutting my eyes and putting my fingers in my ears, as I did when a child. Yet there was no need to do that. There were so many happy and pleasant things in the new life, what room was there for anything else? My husband, my housekeeping, flowers, music, reading, my friends, and a pleasant social round, filled up the hours. An opportunity offered to study art with a good teacher. Then followed cooking lessons, as the little maid, though a stimulating subject to sketch, was not so good as a cook. The cooking lessons were as exciting as a new game. There was æsthetic pleasure,

too, in making ruby and amber jelly, delicately browned bread, salad and charlotte russe — but enough.

When the two children came, Margaret, and then Albion, all else became secondary, as every one who ever saw them would expect. They were really so wonderful that it is difficult to keep this narrative from becoming a family chronicle. It must suffice to say that in all I ever did, thereafter, they had a part, in my arms, in my heart, or in my company.

There was one long while that I could not hold them in my arms. The house was hushed and darkened, and the servants went about with noiseless steps. For months I was very ill. Then, for nearly a year, I dragged about, white and thin as "snaw wreaths in the thaw," weary, listless, indifferent, with no special interest in anything but my family.

For hours I would sit idly, not making an effort even to read, content to rest my cheek upon a golden head. It seemed as if the wheels of life had suddenly stopped, and I had no ambition to set them running again. I never went to look down the White Road, for I had a feeling that there was a great wall across it. Nervous prostration does that. It was two years before I took any interest in people, two more before the shadow of the eclipse had wholly moved off my world. It was eight years at least

before all my energy and enthusiasm and joy of living returned.

There were some wheels that had to be kept running, for the domestic routine must go on. The problem of managing servants became a weary one in my semi-invalidism. But when one has less strength and courage, one must have more patience and philosophy. I found "Marcus Aurelius" an invaluable help in domestic problems, and nerved myself for many a descent upon the kitchen by sitting down with him for half an hour. How generously he overlooked, as well as how stoically he endured! It took a whole hour of "Marcus Aurelius" for Meena, my most valuable cook, whose temper reminded me of the big dog of my childhood. One trying treasure, Barbara, could be reduced to tameness by the strains of her favourite air, "O Tannenbaum." I tried playing it softly when a tempest raged in the kitchen. Gradually the banging grew less, then hushed, and a smiling Barbara appeared in the doorway to express her thanks. "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton" had unfailing effect upon Elsie, who had been ruffled by many storms of life.

I often wondered why all my best cooks had either chronic ailments or bad dispositions, and why all my nurses had family troubles. They made heavy drains upon my sympathy, for one could not help but be

interested in all their troubles. In return, they contributed to my education, teaching me human nature, patience, sympathy, some executive ability and much diplomacy, things necessary for a housing reformer to possess.

I found that the girls who came to me could not be managed according to any ideas of servants as a class, for they had more points of difference than of similarity. For instance, they were not all poor, or even in need of working for a living. Katy's father owned a 400-acre farm. They were not all ignorant. One nurse had taught school, and used most careful participles. Some were coarse who had had fair advantages. But Lucindy, the poorest and most ignorant, who came from a backwoods cabin — and always would say that she "squoze the lemon" and "slum the door"— had the most innate refinement of any of them. Gentle, low-voiced, sweet and considerate, she was a lady to the core. I took especial pains to train her, for these reasons.

As strength returned, it brought new interest in life. A Dante club, a Browning circle, even a psychology class, in turn became tempting. When at last the paints and brushes were brought out, it showed a complete restoration, and the whole family posed in various attitudes of joy. Society became again a pleasure, and life was full to the brim. Too

full to crowd another thing into it, I told the committee from the charities organisation who came to enlist my aid. (The poor — that old threatening shadow again! I had almost forgotten about them.)

"We are glad to give," I said, eagerly, "but I don't know anything about that kind of work, and I think it is better for those more experienced to do it."

There were plenty more excuses for my enthusiastic friends who came to interest me in civic improvement. How well I remembered (and smiled) when those same excuses were made to me later. When I was asked to take a hand in some vice problem I was too indignant to make any excuses. During all my childhood in the country I had heard of only one girl who had gone wrong. It wasn't spoken of, out loud, but I saw stern faces, and heard whispers, though I never fully understood and the mystery made the horror only greater. That horror haunted the whole subject to such a degree that I had always refused to hear or know anything about it. Even newspapers and modern fiction could not dislocate my blinders. If, after carefully choosing a book, the turning of a page disclosed an unexpected "problem" or ugly suggestion, I threw it from me in disgust, as I would a fine peach with a worm in it. As to newspapers, I read the poetry

first, skimmed the head lines, and skipped the politics, turning under the crimes and accidents.

"It's a shame the papers are so full of unpleasant stuff," I complained petulantly. "If I can't help these people and make things better, I don't want to know about them." If I happened by accident on evil, I would say, "Oh, but that's not our kind of people."

"Sheltered"— that is what I was, and what thousands of other women are who have not seen life and who do not want to see it as it really is. First, their mothers and fathers shelter them, and then their husbands shelter them, and they have no idea of the want and misery and wrong in the world that could be prevented and that they might help prevent. Once in a while there is a case like "My Little Sister," but it doesn't happen often among people we know.

And so sheltered women go on, sleep-walking, over trestles and dangerous places, sometimes with babies in their arms.

And the ones who are not sheltered —!

But if there were not other sleep walkers, there would have been less reason for writing this story.

Also, if I had not been awakened I could not be writing it. And the rest of the story is about the awakening.

CHAPTER II

THE SHADOW

MOTHERHOOD [1]

For two dear heads of bronze and amber,
  For baby eyes of blue and brown,
For two who clasp and kiss and clamber,
  And on my shoulder nestle down.

All little hearts are dearer to me,
  All little faces sweet and bright,
All childish woes and griefs undo me,
  And I would heal them all to-night.

—A. F. B.

One day our youngest child came home from school with a troubled face. "Mamma," she said, hesitatingly, "I wish you'd write a note to the teacher to change my seat, or else not to let Harry catch hold of my hand. He sits right across the aisle from me, and he's lots bigger, and he bothers me. I don't like him."

I went at once to the school and found that Harry was a boy too old for his grade, backward on account of truancy, and that he was incorrigible, having been twice to reform school for housebreaking. And he sat across from my little girl, and had been seizing

[1] From "Songs Ysame."

her hand! Harry was duly moved and reproved, but I did not feel satisfied. Looking over the room I did not see much choice of seats among the children there.

"I don't mind 'em being poor, mamma," said the child, "but I can't bear to sit close when they're not clean. It makes me sick."

In each row of seats were two or three prim little girls, immaculate as daisies, with shining curls and spotless frocks. Scattered among them sat a number of boys, whose hair still showed fresh brush marks, and whose faces, necks and ears were still pink from the morning scouring, though showing recent streaks. Walking up the aisle I saw that all their waists were clean in the back, though rumpled in front.

"Fresh this morning, anyhow," I thought, recognising the small sons of my friends.

Distributed among these well-cared-for children were boys whose shaggy hair stood on end, and who showed no signs of recent washing. Their waists were soiled and rumpled all over. There were little girls, too, with rough hair tied with faded strings of ribbon, who wore coarse, ill-fitting dresses. They were cleaner than the boys, but their complexions had a greyish hue that might come off and might not. I remembered having been told of one child who had been kept in at recess for not getting her lesson, and

then she confessed that she couldn't study because she was faint from want of food.

Looking over the room I forgot my errand, and a great wave of pity swept over me for the children who didn't have the same chance as mine and my friends' children had.

Going home, with my little girls skipping at each side of me, I surveyed the school grounds. They were covered with cinders and broken rock.

"This is what roughs up our shoes so, and skins our knees when we fall down," said one of the children.

"And see here," exclaimed the other, "what the boys throw at each other."

It was a pile of decayed vegetables, chicken heads, and other garbage at the back of a grocery opposite the school yard.

"The boys play here, and we play in the street, on the other side," the child said. "We don't like to play on the cinders, and there's no place else to play but the street. And that's how Mamie came to be run over by a cart the other day."

It was enough to make any mother distracted and indignant. The shame of it, with so much vacant land around the school building!

On the way home I stopped to take counsel with my mother and my sister Lura, whose children went

to the same school. I walked home with a new gleam in my eye and a new determination in my step.

That afternoon I had a long talk with some of the leaders of the Civic Improvement Association, whose children went to the same school. A few days later a small procession, led by J. E. Iglehart (my lawyer cousin), and composed of the Civic Improvement leaders and other young mothers besides myself, walked into the city building and up to the office of the city attorney.

If the city attorney should confirm our hope that the title of the city was clear to the old canal bed, which formed the site of the school building in question, there would be a large tract available for playground purposes, and we were there to prove that it should be used in that way. Mr. Igleheart stated our mission, and there was some discussion, in which the ladies took an animated part. I had expected to remain in the background, but, with some surprise and confusion, I found myself taking a hand in the argument.

It was like a plunge through ice into freezing water. But — the ice was broken, and I was initiated into civic work! We were given slight encouragement, and left the city building, disappointed, to plan the next step. After much further effort and agitation, in which I was not able to take part, the

matter came to a definite settlement, a goodly tract was added to the school grounds, and the whole fenced in and improved. And so our effort bore late fruit.

While the matter was pending, my children took sick with scarlet fever. The elder one caught it first, and then the younger one, and Lucindy, who had been promoted from nurse to cook, came down with it.

"Was there scarlet fever in school?"

The little patient thought there was. Some of the children had been absent. Jennie, who sat behind her, had been sick and had little red spots on her. Had any of the others? Not just the same. One of the Fourth Street children had funny looking sores, and some of the others got some afterwards, just like them. Minnie had another kind, awful looking, on her mouth, and the teacher told her she must have her own drinking-cup. Celie was out, but that was at her mother's funeral. Her mother died of consumption, and Celie said she guessed she had it, too, 'cause she coughed all the time.

I telephoned my friends that I was ready to serve on the sanitation committee of the Civic Improvement Society as soon as the flag was taken off the house. At that time having no conception of what the poorer school children's homes were like, I had only a vague

idea as to what should be done. But "sanitation" had a remedial sound, and something was wrong, and I wanted to take hold somewhere.

Before the flag was taken off, however, there were many anxious days of nursing. As I look back over the years when the children were still "catching things," it seems to me that much of the time was spent in the nursery, bending over a little white bed, bathing hot, restless little hands, and doing all those things that a mother cannot willingly resign to a nurse.

There were anxious vigils that lasted till the grey dawn, vigils when the city slept and the house was still, and Night seemed to lean in at the windows, breathless, to listen to a little fluttering heartbeat.

In such hours the values of life are fixed.

When the household came down off tiptoe and convalescence ended, there had to be a round of lessons, for the children were afraid of falling behind in their classes. To give fresh interest to their books, we made games of lessons, and lessons of games, and, though we cut them to the shortest possible time, the children never forgot what they studied in those weeks. We put the remaining hours upon those things for which the schools had no time, which, in fact, the mother can teach better than any one else — all that lies outside of the text book, all that

teaches children to live, to do, to think, to see, to hear. There were many practical things to teach, and much domestic lore, but there was also nature lore, wonder lore, spirit lore, handed down in legend, myth or ballad, from the earliest tribal life. As Ole Luk Oie set the feet of the little Hjalmar into the picture on the wall, I felt in duty bound to set the feet of my children into that realm of beauty that lay all about us. No fear of their not learning the hard, practical things. The world sees to that! But the world would not teach them to see gold in sunshine and diamonds in dew.

When the children went back to school the house was so lonely that I was glad to have some outside interest, to take up even a small part of my leisure. It gave a pleasant sense of light responsibility to be on the sanitation committee of the Civic Improvement Society and, of course, one had to take an interest in the whole city when one was publicly held responsible, even in a small way. Hitherto, when I passed an alley, I had turned my head so as not to see the disagreeable things of which the smells warned me. Now, I stopped and looked up the alley and sniffed; stopped long enough to notice the dark, slimy streams slowly trickling down the middle of the alley, the papers, tin cans, and old shoes scattered about, the garbage cans at shed doors. Sometimes I saw

little children darting to and fro, and wondered at their being in the alley. It never entered my mind that they could live there.

Another thing marked a mental change. Instead of looking for the poetry first in magazines and papers I hunted up articles on sanitation, house flies, etc., and even read bits of local politics. In fact, I not only learned who was secretary of our Board of Health, but became acquainted with him through his lively interest in our sanitation committee.

That summer I read "How the Other Half Lives." I followed it with "The Battle with the Slum" and "The Making of an American." When I finished, my mind was a saturated solution of slums. Those vivid pictures set forth by Jacob Riis left such an indelible impression that they always remain as a dark background to all the scenes of poverty I was to know later.

I remember reading, one August day, his story of a hot night in the East Side tenements, the pitiful sufferings of babies, and the way people slept out on the pavements and fire escapes.

Lifting my eyes to the cool green and gold of the nasturtium vines that darkened the room pleasantly, I looked out upon the shady lawn where the children were laughing over their soap bubbles. How glad

I was that we didn't live in a great city with crowded tenements!

One day I was passing a shabby little hotel, near Main Street, with the children. One of them glanced up, waved and called "Hi, Sadie." Looking up quickly I saw at a window a little black-haired girl, with snapping bright eyes. Beside her leaned a stout, coarse-looking woman, with large earrings and heavy bracelets.

"Who on earth is that child, and how did you come to know her?" I demanded.

"Why, she's one of the girls in my class. Isn't she pretty? And she's smart, too, even if she does use funny words. She's been begging me to come and play with her some day. May I?"

"No!" I answered, with vehemence, taking note of collarless loungers chewing and smoking about the entrance to a bar. There were negroes lounging around, too, and I remembered that my husband had said it was a "tough place," and a resort of river men of the lower class.

It was sickening to think of my little girl in such an environment, even for a moment. I wondered how many more of her schoolmates lived in similar places. I had not then any definite idea of the vice that would harbour in such a place, but there seemed to be an intangible, contaminating something, a pal-

pable Shadow overhanging, and I hurried the children away from it.

A few days later I drove down past the heart of town, near one of the railroad stations, to hunt for Aunt Lindy, an old coloured washwoman who had moved. I found her sitting in the door of a dilapidated rear dwelling that faced a dirty alley, looking so out of place, in her white turban and spotless apron, that I could but express my surprise. "Yas'm," she said, bobbing up, "I sho' do feel misplaced, but I'se fixin' to move agin jes' as soon as I kin fine a bettah house."

How often I was to hear those words again!

Through the open door I could see the neat bed and the clean bare floor. But flakes of soot were falling like black snow, clouds of dust poured in from the street, and the slime of the alley ran to her very doorstep.

"I don't see how you manage to keep everything so clean," I said.

"I wuks ma fingahs off, dat's how," she responded, and poured out her disgust for the miserable place. Six families fought over one cistern, there was no place to pour the suds but into the alley, by the doors; a cesspool reeked by her window, rats overran the place, bad neighbours fought and caroused, people were sick in all the houses, and so on. While she

talked, I gazed up the alley, where pickaninnies were hopping over garbage pails with white children of their own age. A meanly dressed white woman, with a basket, came down the alley, turned to look at us, and entered the next house. As she turned, I noticed the peculiar scar across her lowering face, and recognised a woman who had come begging to my door a few days before.

So here was where some of "the poor" lived!

Just then the door opened again, and a shabby little girl came out. She picked her way toward us over the muddy cobblestones. Her hair was a bleached tan colour, matching her skin, and she wore a faded cotton dress. In her hand she carried an earthen pitcher. She passed straight by us, across the street, and in at the back door of a saloon.

"They's awful folks," whispered Aunt Lindy, noting the look on my face.

When she brought my bundle of laundry I was amazed to see the snowy miracle she had wrought, in such a place. Yet who knows what germs may be lurking in those folds, I thought, reminded oddly of the "tears that need washing and repentance that needs repenting of."

As I left the alley there came over me that depressing feeling I had in the neighbourhood of the river hotel. I wiped the black alley mud off my

feet, as an outward sign of that indefinite contamination, but the Shadow clung to me and followed me, just as did the foul smells of the alley. At my door I again wiped my feet and shook the folds of my dress, laying the bundle outside on the veranda in the sunshine. In the same mood I washed my hands and face, still possessed of the idea that I had brought into my house some of the evil of the alley.

One who has been given sight by an operation sees gradually, as the bandages are removed. First, a glimmer of light, then dim masses and outlines, and then, little by little, vision becomes clear. The bandages were being taken off my eyes, but so slowly that, standing there in the alley, I had seen but dimly the outlines of evil. Except for the glimpse of Aunt Lindy's clean room, I had seen no interior of those alley dwellings. And except for her talk of their drinking and fighting, I had no idea of the vice that she doubtless referred to in lowered voice.

All this time I had been feeling that if I could take part in civic work it was only right that I should also do some "church work." So when a committee of ladies asked me to help with an Easter bazaar I entered into their plans heartily. For a week I painted Easter cards and made egg-shell favours. Then I helped in the bazaar and finished much exhausted and somewhat puzzled.

"I can't think of Christ as being on a committee," I confessed to my husband, "or as giving us that kind of work to do. I felt I needed a spiritual tonic, and I thought some such work would build me up, but it didn't seem to suit my case."

Then, with a sudden curiosity, I seized my Bible, and began turning over its pages to see what Christ had said about work being spiritual "meat." How much stress He laid on "serving"! And how strictly he enjoined upon us the care of the poor!

"If I am ever going to visit the poor, now is the time to begin," I said aloud.

One afternoon at a tea I met Miss Caroline Rein, secretary of our Charities Organisation.

"Oh, Miss Rein," I exclaimed, "you're just the one I want to see. I want to know where to find some poor families, so I can visit them in their homes. Won't you take me to see some of them?"

She looked at me with shining eyes for a moment.

"Why, Mrs. Bacon, is it possible? I've just been longing to find some one who wants to visit my families. You see, I want to organise a Friendly Visitors' circle. Of course, I will take you."

"And can I go to-morrow?"

She smiled at my eagerness. "Yes, to-morrow," she answered.

She was waiting for me at her office next morning.

We took a street car and rode through the business part of town into the factory district on the other side of the city.

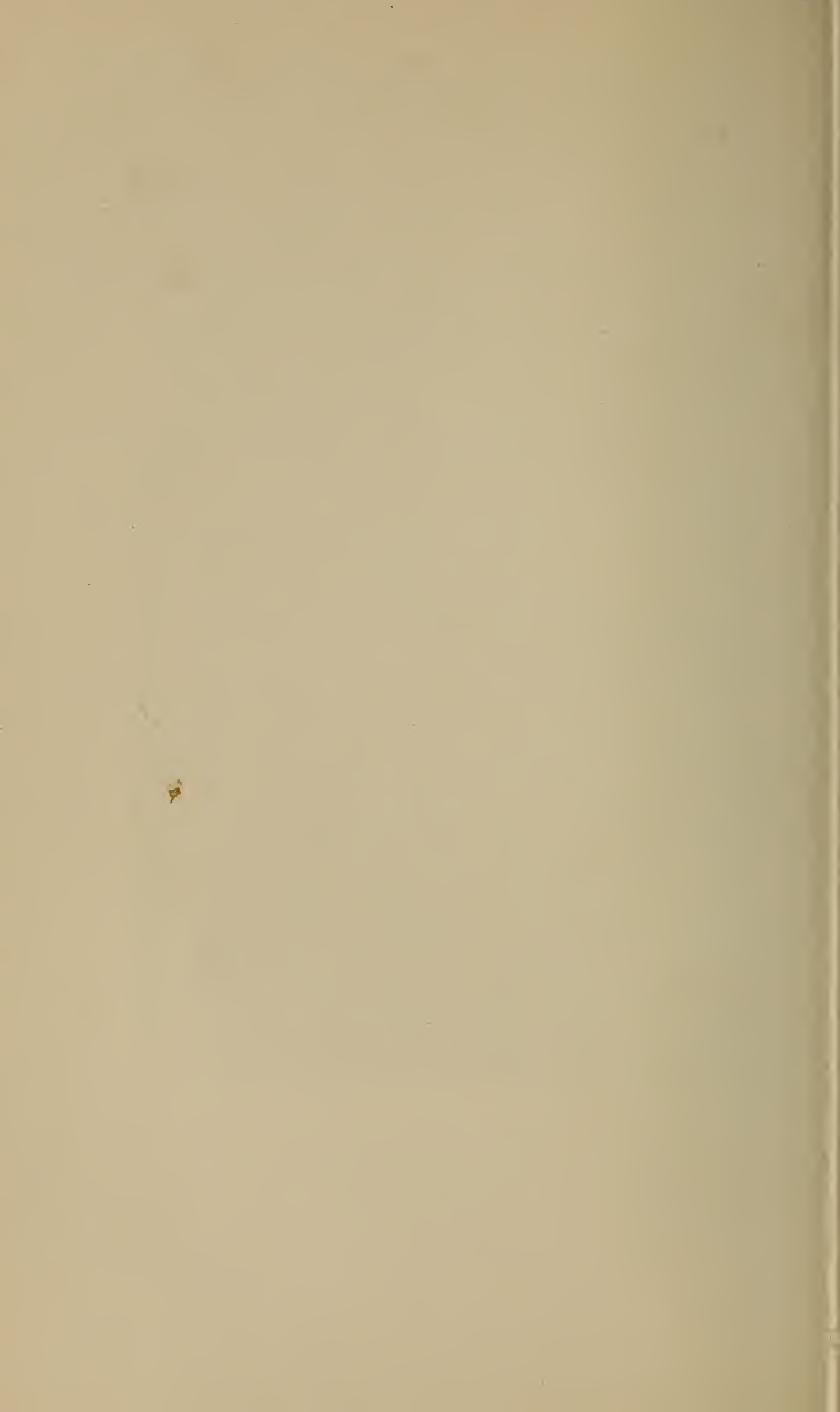
I looked at the houses with new interest. There were blocks and blocks of nondescript houses, most of them ugly, the majority of them dingy, some much worse than others, but I wouldn't have looked for "the poor" in any of them. Here and there were neat, nice looking ones, with good fences in front. Some of the unpainted houses had fences with broken or missing palings, like jagged teeth. The shabby houses looked unnecessarily shabby from the need of paint, and resembled people prematurely grey, who have seen trouble, and have lived hard, sordid lives.

"We haven't any slums in Evansville, have we?" I ventured. "Not the real sure enough ones, with those terrible conditions that Jacob Riis writes about in New York?"

"Yes," answered Miss Rein, thoughtfully, "we have very bad conditions, real slums, I think," she said slowly; "it is safe to say that we have, in a lesser degree, every bad condition that you will find in the slums of New York, except the congestion."

This was more than fifteen years ago, when it was commonly accepted that only great cities had slums.

Old St. Mary's



Yet this clear-eyed woman saw our conditions and realised their significance.

Leaving the car, we walked several blocks toward the river, crossed a network of railroad tracks, and turned in at a big gate to what seemed to be a park.

"This is Old St. Mary's," said Miss Rein, "one of the largest tenements in the city."

It had been the old marine hospital, at one time a fine building, and stood in a noble space of ground that sloped down to the river. There were great trees on the grounds, but the shrubbery had run wild, and made a jungle with the tall grass and weeds.

We approached the building in company with a dozen ragged, dirty children, who met us at the gate. On the broad flight of worn steps were ranged other children, equally dirty and ragged, mostly barefooted, even the babies. A half-dozen untidy women stood about on the old piazza, with babies in their arms or dragging at their skirts. Ragged quilts and old clothing hung to air on the railings. Old men, rough and unshaven, lounged in the sun, chewing or smoking. Frowsy heads were thrust out at windows along the piazza, as women leaned their elbows on the sills and surveyed us frankly. There was no hostility in the stare. Miss Rein was an old friend, and when she introduced me as her friend they vied in hospitality, dusted chairs and offered them. Little dirty

hands were tucked into Miss Rein's, or tugged at her dress, to draw her away to "our room." For each family had but one room! I remembered that Jacob Riis said the one-room slum was the very worst of all, and New York once boasted that it had none of them.

There were more babies in the wide, dirty hall and on the big central stairway that rose to the third floor. Half-clad boys were sliding down the banisters and girls of all sizes, hair in eyes, stood looking on. By the first inner doorway an idiot boy was sitting on the floor, helpless as a baby. He looked up with a sickening leer as we entered, holding out deformed knobs of hands.

Miss Rein took a proffered chair, and I followed her example, trying to seem not to be looking at anything, yet seeing all. Seeing! The word is too passive. Sights and smells rose and assaulted me, choked and gashed me, and the scars remain yet. They will remain until my dying day.

I had never dreamed that people lived like that *in our city.* Since then I have seen places much worse, for these rooms were large and airy, and had not the horror of darkness and dampness. But it was the first time I had taken a square look at Poverty, and its sordid misery, its bare ugliness, were overpowering.

The first impression of the rooms was of bareness and disorder, the next of a general greyness and scarred roughness of the old walls and uncovered floors. Every room had its "safe," its beds, and its cook stove, upon which was boiling coffee or cabbage, and often a kettle of wash. There were coarse dishes and coarse food upon the mean tables, but no sign of a table-cloth anywhere. Many of the beds had no sheets, only a filthy ticking; on some lay a sick child, with flies thick upon its face. Old clothing lay about in piles, or hung from large nails driven into the cracked plastering. Not one line or spot of beauty was there in all that mass of hopeless ugliness.

And the people had the same hopeless look, not a gleam of inspiration on a single face. Some were sad, more were sullen. There was a curious similarity in their expression and in their clothing that corresponded to the rooms, and made all seem under the same blighting spell. There was not the least attempt at privacy. Children swarmed in and out, men and women put their heads in at the door, heavy feet passed noisily down the corridor; boys fought on the stairway; old hags scolded, babies cried. To think of living amid all that!

A young girl with great starry eyes went downstairs with us, hushing the clamour of the children

as she went. I could but notice the grace of her slender figure that her coarse gown could not conceal.

We left her at the steps and went on down the grass-grown drive. "She is just back from the reform school," said Miss Rein simply.

Near the gate the long arm of an old scraggly rose bush caught my gown and held me fast. Bending to undo it, I noticed a delicate bud, half unfolded, but worm eaten, whose imperfect beauty reminded me of the young girl we had just left. I did not know then that the sorrows of the poor had laid hold upon my heart, as with the clutch of thorns.

We walked on in a silence full of unspoken questions that crashed and roared against my ear drums.

"We have another visit to make, if you can stand it," said Miss Rein quietly, and I nodded assent.

I had little idea of how far we walked until we stopped at a long low brick house. The building was flush with the pavement, the floor on the same level. Several open doorways offered entrance. The doors were either missing or sagging against the wall. Here the same general impressions rushed out to meet me, the mean, shabby ugliness of the place, the overwhelming number of women and children, who boiled over out of every window and door, even onto the pavement, in a most surprising way. I felt

somehow that the dinginess related people to house, as if either it shared their human deterioration, or they its physical decay — which was it?

A problem formulated in the back of my mind: "Let the people be represented by P and the house by H; would their condition be expressed by P^h or H^p?" The absurd idea stayed in my subconsciousness, and gave me a grudge against the house, as if it were a cause of the misery of the people.

There was no time to work out any problems, because we were so soon inside, looking down into a half dozen pairs of round bright eyes. I reached out my hand to steady one toddling baby going down the uneven step, and to pat another that put its little grey hand on my knee, and looked up confidingly into my face. They were grey all over, those babies, from creeping about the dirty floors, and out on the dusty pavement; faces, hands, bare feet and clothes grey, like the stray kittens that patrolled our ash bins.

Detaching ourselves from group after group, I followed Miss Rein up the shaky stairs. Out on a rickety back porch a woman was washing. One could see at a glance that she was different from the bold-faced women downstairs. There was an air of refinement about her and about her sweet-faced daughter, who was helping her.

As we stood and talked, I looked down into the back yard, littered with broken crockery, cinders and tin cans, and strewn with garbage, over which hovered swarms of flies. There were clumps of great weeds, as high as a man's head, and among them puddles of old suds. In one place a slimy stream oozed away to the alley. Dilapidated sheds stood at the rear of the yard. A sickening odour of old vaults, sour suds and decayed garbage rose to our nostrils.

"We must get some decent place to move to," the woman was saying, with tears in her eyes. "It's awful here. We've always lived in the country, and here we are right on the street, where we hear people passing by, and there are so many that go by here cursing and swearing. The men come in drunk at all hours of the night. There's no lock on the door. We push the bed against it, but we're too frightened to sleep. And then, these hot nights, that dreadful smell comes up from the yard and we have to shut the window. My God, such a place!"

In one of the rooms downstairs a boy was lying ill with tuberculosis. His burning eyes turned solemnly upon us, as we entered, and held us with their gaze. To my relief Miss Rein did not sit down, but stood a moment, talking with the old mother. How hard that miserable cot must be, I thought, noticing the thin lumpy mattress, and the emaciation of the

H^p or P^h?

boy, as he raised on his elbow to cough. An unmistakeable odour of mould filled the room.

"Aren't those floors damp?" I asked the mother.

For answer she raised a piece of old carpet, white with mould, and showed me where the floor had rotted through until the wet earth beneath was visible.

Once out on the street, I turned to Miss Rein.

"Do those people have to live that way?" I asked. "Couldn't they fix things up and make them better and more decent?"

"It's little they could do," she replied. "They can't afford paint or wall paper. They can't afford tools or lumber to repair with, and they are too unskilled to use them, if they had them. They are too poor to have the trash and ashes hauled away, and, of course, the yard was full when they moved in. Besides, these houses need more than a few simple repairs. So many families use one cistern that water is scarce, and there is no place to pour the waste water except in the yard or in the alley. But why should these people be expected to repair the house any more than other tenants, especially as it was out of repair when they took it? It's the landlord's duty to make it fit to live in."

"Then, why don't the landlords attend to these things?" I asked. "Have you told them how bad they are?"

"Yes," she answered, "but they refuse to do anything, and there's no law by which they can be forced to."

Then the whole situation was hopeless. But it seemed to me that the people who were making laws and attending to such things ought to see about that law.

I went home with bowed head and lagging feet, seeing before me all the time those awful rooms, those babies of the slums. My children were on the steps, and I gathered them both into my arms, with a deep sob. Then I held them back, to look at them. Oh, the wonder of their clear white skin, their shining hair, their soft white dresses! What if —!

I drew them close again, as if they had just escaped some dreadful doom.

At night I sang bedtime songs a long while, after the light was turned out and the fire burned low. When they were asleep I went out and tried to read, but the scenes of the day came between me and the page like a palpable shadow.

Several times in the night I got up and went to the children, to smooth their hair and their limbs, and feel of their soft garments.

CHAPTER III

THE CLUTCH OF THE THORNS

My first visit to the poor haunted me. The smell of those close rooms would come to me suddenly. At times the recollection of their scarred grey walls almost produced a momentary illusion of cracks and scars starting out upon my own walls, until I brushed my hand over my eyes and looked again. Just as the vanishing view of a stereopticon makes a composite picture with the succeeding view, so the rooms of the poor seemed to blend with mine.

And the burning eyes of the sick child danced upon the page when I tried to read. At night, lying awake, a recollection of the consumptive on his miserable bed in the damp room would bring an actual shiver of cold, and a sudden consciousness of a hard lump — that wasn't there — under my shoulders.

Then I remembered the rose bush that had reached a thorny branch out through the ragged fence, and caught my dress, detaining me when I would have passed on. And again the symbolism of it all came over me. These memories and visions of the poor — they were the clutch of the thorns.

Social workers have all felt it. It holds them to

their work, because the thorns curve backward, and one cannot pull away.

There was no question about going back to visit the poor, and no thought of duty when I went again. I was irresistibly drawn by a desire to help.

With some timidity I took my first family to visit, insisting upon Miss Rein's going with me to see that I made no mistake.

"Give me an easy family to start with," I begged, with a dread of doing an injury if they had problems I could not solve. Remembering how I had been undone by the tenements, Miss Rein gave me a higher class family, in a single house.

The family consisted of an old German grandmother, her son, who had been ill a long time, and his motherless boy of four. They lived across the town, in one of a forlorn, shabby row of houses that paint and repairs might have made homelike.

Miss Rein took me to the back door (one gets surer entrance that way), and we found a neat little old woman at her washtub. With a cordial greeting she took us at once to the front room, where her son was ill. Thin, white, hollow-eyed, unshaven, he looked ghastly enough. I should have been "stumped" for a conversational opening, but for the wonderful bedquilt with which he was covered. It was indeed a work of art, as I knew from my coun-

try experiences. My exclamation called its pleased author, and she showed me her embroidery and hand-made lace. Since then I have always reminded nervous beginners in friendly visiting to look for bed-quilts and "tidies."

The little four-year-old, with sunny curls and serious eyes, made more conversation. But, with a fear of hurting some open wound, I let Miss Rein do most of the talking.

The next visit was easy. "She needs just a friend to look after her a bit, for there is no one she can turn to in that neighbourhood," said Miss Rein. "The Charity Organisation will see that all her needs are supplied, and you must never take anything you would not take to your own friends — only books, delicacies, flowers, and such things. Alms are forbidden to Friendly Visitors. It spoils the effect of the work."

Yet it seemed very little to do, just to carry a pot of flowers, a delicate lunch, or even some toys for the child. We were good friends from the start, and they begged me to come often. It seemed to be a relief to her to tell her troubles — the damp cellar, the undrained yard, the noisy, quarrelsome neighbours, whose garbage and flies vexed her housewifely spirit.

She told me of her happier days, of her girlhood

in a little German dorf, where her father was the wealthy man of the village. Then followed her marriage, the trip to America, illness, loss. "Und now dies is alles I got left," she said, brokenly.

She talked of her church, the Evangelical. "My son can't go no more, now, und he ask me to sing der hymns, but I can't no more, mit der cough. I vish he could hear dem yet."

By a happy chance "Ein' Feste Burg" and some old German ballads had stayed with me, and I sang them as to the children, at bedtime. The sick man looked at his mother and smiled wanly. She smiled back, though a tear was on her cheek. And the child on her knee looked wonderingly at them both.

"It makes one vergessen all der troubles, nicht wahr?" she said. Then they talked of the old days, again, and she took from a wooden chest the holiday dress of her girlhood. She had never shown it to "dese vimmens." But I "vas different, and cared." "Yes, I do care," I said heartily.

When we had the first meeting of our Friendly Visitors' Circle, and each member told her experiences, I realised how complex might be the problems with which we had to deal, and how much, besides alms, a poor family might need. And this became more and more apparent as I visited other families.

It looked hard-hearted and impossible, at first, that

we should visit the needy and seem to ignore their lack of money, even though we sent alms to them through the Charities. But we found that the poor suffer for other things, much more than for money. They need guidance, protection, care, advice; in fact, money is often their least need. "And if they once fasten their eyes upon your pocket, they are so apt never to see any higher," Miss Rein said. "To give material help is so often like giving a narcotic to help ease the pain, when what is needed is a tonic or a surgical operation."

At our meetings all cases were discussed, and the fundamental principles of Friendly Visiting made clear. The old problem, how to re-establish the family in normal relations to society, was new to us. This process of re-establishing seemed to be something like the process of papering a room — the first step, scraping and disinfecting the walls, getting rid of old associations and bad habits; next, putting on the better life, matching the pattern of human groups and relations, as one matches the widths of paper. And if the paper be rotten, or the people lack sticking qualities, the job will not hold.

This matching of the pattern is the particular part. A friendly visitor can do it when no one else can. She can reconcile teachers to children, and children to teachers; can win the sympathy or soothe

the animosity of neighbours; can secure the interest of employer in bread-winner, and inspire the bread-winner with ambition to give good and faithful service.

Wherever their lives touch others, this matching must be done. And as, on the wall, the slipping of a width of paper makes the whole line of figures "hit-and-miss," from floor to ceiling, so the slipping of the human standards throws all the relationships out of harmony.

Our visitors gave encouraging reports of how such readjustment had in many instances been effected. But there was one particular in which they generally failed; that was in the case of the landlord and tenant. This was a case that needed a surgeon, and they were more properly nurses. The relationship between landlord and tenant went limping because the joint was out of socket. Nothing but resetting and a plaster cast — which means a law — could help things. Even then, there has been for years past such a lot of inflammation about the joint that it delays the cure! So many tenants hate the name of landlord, and do so many ugly things, in resentment of what they feel are their wrongs. One bad landlord makes trouble for many good ones, and the good ones feel aggrieved, and so the trouble goes on.

But we did not know then about housing laws, or

"teaching the tenant," or Octavia Hill rent collectors. All we could do was, when we could, to get the tenants to move out of the houses that made them sick.

My experience upset my notions about classes, and made clear to me the necessity of dealing with individuals.

I learned that one cannot uplift blocks of people at a time, with any kind of a derrick. Rather, we have to approach them as individuals, as Christ did, suiting our help to each one's need; leaning over the pit, reaching down and pulling out one at a time.

"You must put your arm around them, and let them lean on you, walking shoulder to shoulder, until they can walk alone," Miss Rein would say, her face glowing.

Ah, yes, one can give many valuable and beautiful things without giving money. One can give love, sympathy, hope, courage, enthusiasm, inspiration. "You can never know what your friendship has meant to me, because you have so many friends, and I have nobody else," a poor old woman said to our president. We could well believe her, for our president was a great-souled, saintly woman whose friendship was a treasure to us all.

Sometimes our work seemed all a failure, when we were trying to help build up a character out of bits

of wreckage. But not all friendly visiting is to rebuild wrecks. Much of it is to help those to regain their feet who have only slipped; much more is to give comfort and cheer to those who are too old and helpless to fight any longer. And then, there are the children, the new material, with which we can build from the beginning. There is always hope of the children.

Little by little we learned the many things that might be done to help a family. First, there was work to be found for the bread-winner. If there were defective members of the family who could not be properly cared for at home and were a drag upon the others, they were to be removed to the proper institution. Then there was the health of the family to be established.

We did not know then all the wonderful things that our Dean Emerson (of Indiana University) is teaching in his social service clinic. No one of us realised, then, for instance, how many souls are choked by adenoids, or how a spiritual downfall may result from "fallen arches," or injuries to the feet. But out of our mother-nurse experience we did our best. We untangled domestic knots, helped the poor mothers plan and contrive, taught sanitation when possible, and gave instruction about baby food and nursing in general. The depths of ignorance in this

regard were beyond belief. One girl told me seriously that her baby sister who died had been bewitched. "And she was that smart, she could eat sauerkraut and drink beer, and she was cutting eight teeth to oncet." But they knew she was bewitched, she insisted, because after she died they opened her little pillow, and found the feathers all twisted into crosses and rings and such!

Our problems, being chiefly those of American born people, were simpler than if we had been dealing with foreigners or newly arrived immigrants, such as throng the northern part of Indiana. Evansville has comparatively few kinds of foreigners. We have a large German population, but the larger part of it is American born. It is the same with our large Jewish population. Both of these peoples furnish our thriftiest citizens, and though there were always some poor Germans, the Jewish people took good care of their poor. We have a good sized negro population, also, but it is greatly to their credit that they look well after their own people, in sickness or want. We rarely had a negro applicant for charity, so it happened that we did not realise until later how uniformly miserable and unsanitary were their dwellings.

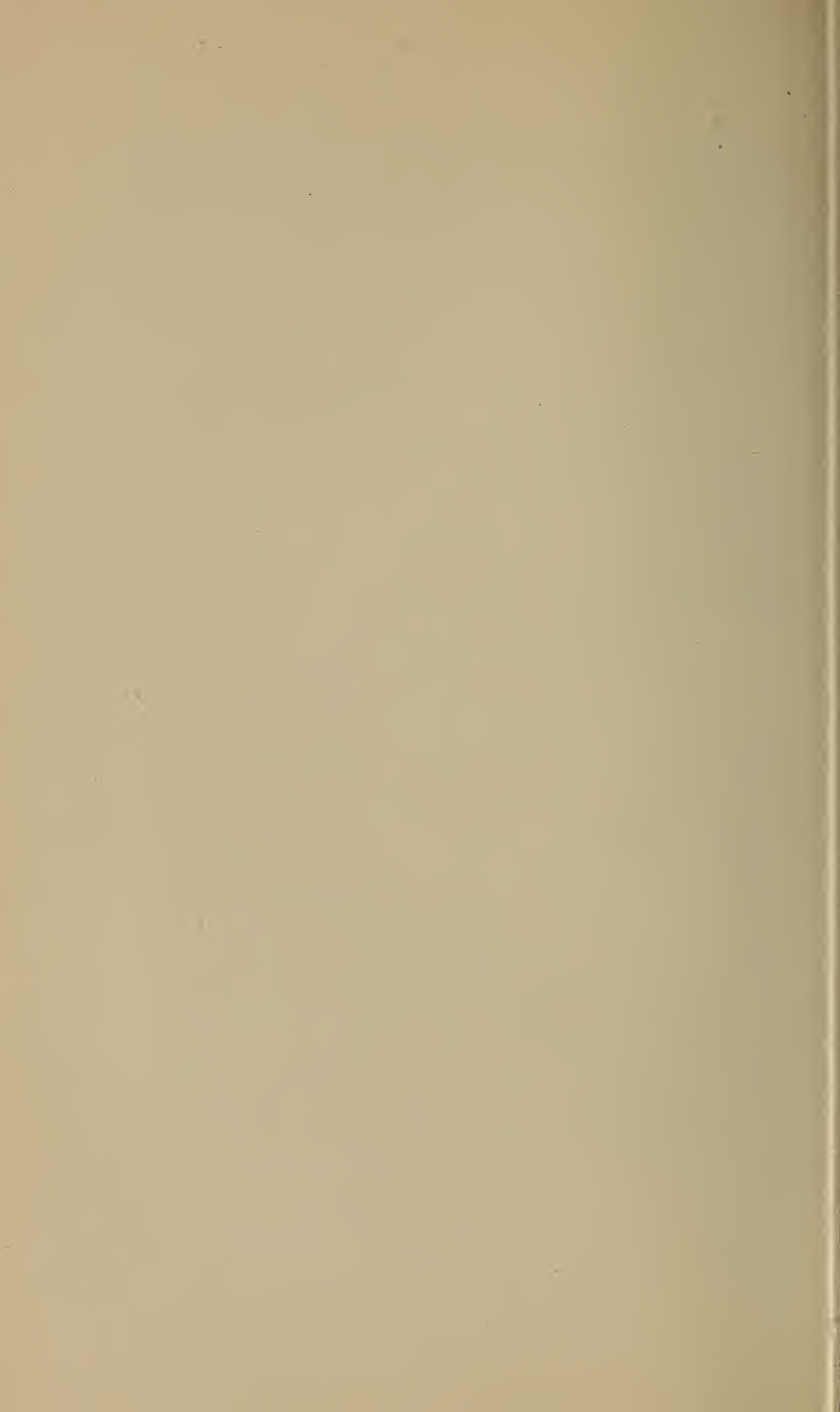
Some of the Friendly Visitors liked to take hold of big families, for we felt we were doing more. We

certainly had more "points of contact,"— my white dress showed that, when I got home from my visits. It showed the "personal touch," too. But white will "boil," and its suggestive value is too great to discard.

Two problems kept coming up in our meetings, drunken husbands and dirt. When a woman's pride made her refer to her husband as "sick," even while he was sleeping off a spree in the corner of that very room, it was not wise to deny that he was suffering from liver trouble. He probably was. And we had to respect and conserve such pride, for it was the basis of the desired re-establishment.

For similar reasons, we hesitated to speak of soap in some families, where a word would make a lather. Much less could one slip a bar of it into a bundle of magazines and leave it on the table. When one's friendship is as fragile as a "shell" tumbler, to speak of washing will almost break it. In some cases we longed for a visiting housekeeper, to utter what nearly choked us. But there were more cases where the struggle for cleanliness was pathetic — nay, it was heroic. Our visitors almost always reported a lack of water in the dwellings of the poor. City water we never found, even though the mains were in the street in front of the houses. Cisterns were their

Whose washwoman lives here?
Nine families use out of one cistern, which is close to the vault



only water supply, and often these were dry or full of trash.

It was discouraging to solicit washings for a poor woman who had no other way to earn a living, and then have her lose them because she hadn't enough water to wash them white; because, as she said, "We have to be sparin' of the water, cuz so many famblies uses outen the cistern."

I asked one of the women where she got her water, for I saw no supply. "Why, I jes' steals it, honey, wherever I kin," she said; "but folks don't like to have us take it, they has sech a hard time to git the cistern filled when it's gone."

We who had the Ohio River on tap could hardly take in the situation. Yet we found many families whose floors were scoured, their children scrubbed, and their clothing washed white, with water carried from a distance. Some carried drinking water a block, others two blocks.

In those cases where the struggle with dirt and grime had been given up as hopeless, we sometimes found opportunity, during illness of the mother, to send in temporary help, who left the house shining, and showed the children how things ought to be. Sometimes there was a motherless family with a half-grown girl struggling pathetically to keep house.

Then we could go right in ourselves, and teach cooking, sewing, cleaning, as well as conditions permitted.

We had an extreme case that took the edge off of our desire to scrub, for a long time. It was an emergency case, a large family of little children, whose mother had lost her mind and wandered off down the railroad tracks that passed the door. When we saw the place, we were not surprised that she went crazy and left. We had been fully advised of conditions, and went equipped with a large bundle of assorted clothing and bedding, disinfectants, soap, scrubbing brushes and a strong colored woman to apply them.

The father was off at work, and the little housekeeper, a girl of twelve, gave neither help nor interference. She had long since reached the place where every dish was gummed and every pan was gluey. These utensils sat about on the floor, on chairs and table, and the pitiful, grimy little tribe watched with deep interest while we opened the bundles.

First, they were invited out into the yard to a bonfire of the straw beds while the house was being fumigated. After it was scrubbed, more water was heated for the children's bath, and the negress scoured off layer after layer, to the skin! Their clothing went into the bonfire, and the bundle "rehabilitated" the family, outwardly. New mattresses

were bought, and new kitchen tins, and a hot meal set on the "restored" table. But not for us! We wanted only iced lemonade for several days.

The neighbours, who hung over the fence on both sides, with breathless interest, promised to take turns helping the little mother, until the proper arrangements could be made for the children, and we left the scene with all of them waving until we were out of sight.

Of course, this was an unusual case, but it served to give us a better understanding of the conditions which made it so hard for the poor to be clean and to make a house homelike.

In all of the homes where we taught young housekeepers, we found ourselves nonplussed, in spite of our experience, by the absence of every convenience. With a cracked stove that wouldn't draw, with a lard bucket or tomato can to cook in, with little to cook and less to season with, what could even a chef accomplish? With no kitchen sink, no water in the house, or even in the yard, and no place to throw dishwater and suds, except into the yard; with no closets, no shelves; with rough floors, still grey after continued scouring; plastering in loose patches, shedding powder all about, and defaced woodwork whose cracks held vermin and dirt, and let in dust and soot; with musty, dark rooms, that had no window, or a small

one, and could not be decently sunned or ventilated; low floors that were always damp, and cellars standing in seep water — how could even a Domestic Science professor do anything with such a situation? It was too much for us. It was hopelessly out of reach of the poor tenants who had to live in those places. Lacking our experience, our standards, our stamina, our philosophy, the habitual slum dweller let bad enough alone, and new recruits, after a struggle, followed the line of least resistance.

As to making these places homelike, it was a bitter joke. The best of them were cheerless and dismal; the worst of them were sties, where none of us would have housed a pet animal.

Once in a while we had a case, above the average, whose outcome encouraged the whole circle. A girl of a better class was given into my care, having been brought in touch with Miss Rein through the truancy of her little brother. She was an attractive girl, with a sweet face framed in soft shining hair, and a pretty modest manner. Her father was a labouring man, who made good wages, but drank sometimes, and she kept house for him and her little brother of ten. She was fifteen when I first visited her, and ambitious to be a good housekeeper, though sorely in need of lessons. The matter of her brother's trouble at school was soon settled by a visit to his teacher.

No. 1. The best of them were cheerless and dismal

Luckily, she lived near enough for me to visit often, and for her to visit me. She came timidly, at first, to get bulbs or roses from my garden rows, or recipes for gingerbread, and rarely, for books. For five years I watched her blooming into womanhood, fearful at times of threatening influences, of which we talked together plainly. It was a relief when she married a sensible working man, who took good care of her and looked after the brother.

We had some cases where alleviation seemed all there was left to give. One of my old friends lived in a shed, at the rear of a neat cottage. It would have been a good coal shed; it made a poor home. It was neither ceiled nor stripped, and the icy wind blew in, sifting the snow on to her pillow. She, poor little old lady, was weak from illness, largely due to exposure. Yet she kept the tiny room neat and spotless, and her stove shining.

It was a long tale she told, gasping for breath with asthma. She had been wealthy once, but death, misfortune, loss, even robbery, had left her nothing but her stove, her clock, her rocking chair and her featherbed. The burden of her story was the horror of poverty to one who had been well born — "dose awful people — to haf to lif mit dem." That was why she had chosen that shed, in preference to a tenement. It became harder, each visit, to tear

away from her, for she nearly died of loneliness. Her husband and children were lying out in the cemetery, she said, and she had not visited their graves for years. She talked of it so often that one day I drove her out there. She was ready for me, when I came, in her well-saved old fashioned black bonnet, and a black shawl pinned about her poor little bent shoulders.

As we drove out over the beautiful country road, to the quiet hill top, she was all a-quiver with eagerness. She went at once to her graves, and threw herself full length on the sod, in a transport of grief that alarmed me, and began babbling to her loved ones. Finally raising herself to her feet, she stretched her arms to heaven, with tears raining over her wrinkled face, pouring out a torrent of unintelligible words. Then she grew quiet, and turned and caught my hands, covering them with kisses.

" Oh, what a happiness to be here, the first time in zehn jahr. Oh, dear friend, I thank you "— there was no checking her. We sat awhile on the sward, then I led her away, and drove back to town, leaving her, with a pang, at the door of the little shed. " She can't live there this winter, or she'll die with asthma," said Miss Rein. " She's too feeble to care for herself, and we must put her in some home." So we planned, and she went to our Christian Home. It

was a fresh grief to part from her big cooking stove, which she could not carry with her. But she kept her rocking chair, her featherbed and her clock, whose ticking was a voice of other days. " Come and see me," she begged, at the home, and clung to me with caresses.

Alms! To such as she! Nothing but sympathy and love could satisfy the hunger of her lonely old heart and that's what the Friendly Visitors are for.

" How many of the poor have seen better days," we said, as our circle told their monthly experiences.

So many interesting things happened, on our visits, that we were fain to tell to our friends, of our own world, when a polite inquiry gave an opportunity. It was curious to see the different ways in which people listened. Some gave audience with tears, and offers of assistance. Some were aghast. " Why, Mrs. Bacon," said one, " I never dreamed that any one lived like that in our town. But then," she added, " I was never thrown among that kind of people."

Some listened with a blank expression, as if we were talking Chinese. We very soon knew when to stop, by a sudden feeling as of having put the right shoe on the left foot. But we needed helpers, and longed to convince our friends of the great joy in this service. Over and above the results to the " pa-

tient," the effect upon our own life was worth the effort. A broadened outlook, deepened sympathy, the wholesome effect even upon physical health that comes from forgetting one's own ailments, was of great value. But of even greater value was the effect upon the spiritual health that came from this good exercise. It was a radiant, deep-breathed feeling, a-tingle and a-glow — but how can one describe it? It's a mighty good feeling, anyhow, and was just what I was looking for when I wanted to do church work. And, in that connection, I wondered why Friendly Visiting wouldn't solve the problem of the unemployed church member. But, on second thought, I realised that not all church members, even, have tact, and I felt it would be a sin to exploit the poor to save the souls of the well-to-do. They have Moses and the Prophets, as well as the gospels. And they have bath tubs! Let them learn the way to the hearts of the rich, who are lonely and in trouble, by practising on each other.

Yet why should not every one be able to visit the poor, as neighbours, without doing more harm than good? It requires only earnestness, good sense, and politeness. If one behaves among them exactly as in the best drawing rooms, wears the same pleased look, exerts the same effort to be agreeable, and shows the same lack of curiosity, with the same de-

No. 2. Rear view of No. 1. *A pretence of privacy.*
The mud runs onto the floor when it rains

gree of polite interest — that's all there is to it. One will meet with exactly the same response.

One reason, I believe, why some really earnest people fail in their approach to the poor, is because they try so obviously to put themselves "on their plane." The poor resent that, as we would, and resent our giving them "modified milk" conversation, or seasoning our speech to their taste as with onions. If we can't see the unfitness of these things, they can, as plainly as if we tried to wear their old clothes. Our best success came when we put those we visited on *our* plane, taking it for granted that they lived, loved and aspired just as we did. And they responded, as we do, to those who waken our better selves. How we love them, who do that always! Indeed, it makes our dream of Heaven, that only our better selves shall live there.

There were some of our cases that were candidly past the ability of any of our circle to handle. These were the cases where there were unmanageable men or boys in the family, who set our work at naught, and kept the family in extremities. It became plain to me that only men visitors could do anything with those cases, and my last family settled my conviction.

Briefly, it was a sick mother and a worthless loafer of a son, who spent her pittance on cigarettes and beer. When she refused money, he grew ugly and

abusive. I found her in tears, after he had emptied the molasses jug on her carpet, in spite, because she had no money to give him. She was sure, then, that he was incorrigible, and at her request we had a policeman come to arrest him. But the sight of an officer aroused her terror and her maternal love, and she turned on us both, protesting the boy's good qualities. On the boy's promise of good behaviour, the soft-hearted policeman took his departure, smiling at my disgust. "Oh, these wimmen are all that way, I'm used to it," he said. "Any dawg of a feller can beat 'em up, and they won't appear against him in court."

I knew the gentleman who could manage the boy, and got his promise to take the case.

Then it occurred to me, Why not have a men's circle of Friendly Visitors?

Thinking over the men most prominent in church and civic work, I made out a list of sixteen, including my husband. A few weeks later the sixteen met in our library to organise, and to be initiated by Miss Rein into the duties of the order.

Among them were our own Methodist minister, the Episcopal rector, and the Jewish rabbi, several doctors and lawyers, some bankers, manufacturers, merchants, and other business men — a representative company, and some of the most substantial men in

the city. "Let's have the circle meet at our home so that the children will grow up with the idea of using the home for social service," we said, and it was so ordered.

It was interesting to find how many of these men had already been making visits to the poor, quietly slipping away at odd moments to do a good deed, without any one finding it out. They confessed somewhat shame-facedly when we questioned them. And they all took alms! "Send your alms through us," urged Miss Rein, "and go simply as a friend and neighbour." And she explained the principles of the work. A large assortment of cases were read out, and each man took his choice.

The next meeting was alive with interest. Each told in turn his experience with the family assigned him, and it made an exciting tale. There was all the difference in the world between the way the men visitors took hold of their respective cases and the way the women did. The men's beginning was characteristic. In a straight-forward, business like way, they went to work to get results, and the results were amazing. Every one had taken alms — every single man of them! One man had already moved his family to another house, and had them at least outwardly "reinstated." The lazy boys had been put to work, and the lazy girls, too, in no shilly-shally

way. They were not squeamish, as we were, about calling things by their right names.

"You ought to have seen that floor," said one gentleman, who had gone to offer work to the father of his family. "There was a big lazy girl sitting there, and I said, 'I should think you'd be ashamed to sit here while there's so much dirt around. Why don't you clean up, and make things look decent?' She picked up a broom, and dragged it across the floor, but I said, 'Here, let me show you how to sweep.' You should have seen the dirt fly."

Another of our men had undertaken a drinking, quarrelling pair, who were a terror to the neighbourhood and to the Charities as well, but who had children needing care. When our visitor made his first call the woman opened the door a crack, showing a wrathful eye, and a kettle of boiling water in her hand. She was waiting for her husband, whom she had chased to the coalshed. So the visit was made in the shed, and the man's friendship secured on the spot, in a way that won the applause of our circle.

The gentleman who had moved his family reported that he was obliged to do so, as the man had to pass twenty-seven saloons on his way from work, and he never got home with his money. He located him on the edge of town, near the factory where he worked, and all was going well.

One of our business men, a veteran of the Civil War, chose a wreck of an old soldier to look after, a lonely old chap, without friends or family. How he managed about his pension, gave him new courage, and stayed his ruin, made a touching tale.

Our saw-mill owner and his wife, who both belonged to the circle, visited their needy employés, with splendid results to both capital and labour. One of our lawyers saved a couple from divorce, and spiked together the "house divided against itself."

Our other lawyer took a hand in an instalment company fight, and saved a young couple from losing all they had already paid out, and their furniture too.

Our minister sat up most of one night to save the father of his adopted family from breaking his resolve and bolting to the nearest saloon when a thirst seized him.

And so the stories went, showing that we had need for men of every profession and business to untangle the knots with skill, and to lend a strong hand to the weak and discouraged.

At the end of our meetings, as we sat around the library fire, the talk drifted from the special cases to the problems of the day. It was inspiring to see the big strong way in which these men handled them,

with a simple directness that told the secret of their success in business.

It was great to hear them, fine, high-souled, big-hearted men; to see the chivalry that made them flare out in anger against wrongs to the women and children, or softened them to tender pity of the weak and unfortunate.

Years afterward, they stood by me in the council, in the city hall, in meetings of business organisations, and in the legislature. And every one could be depended upon.

What evenings those were! It was great to be one of such a circle. No other evenings, merely social, left such a sense of satisfaction.

After all had gone, we turned to the glowing embers, with a deeper glow in our hearts, and no need for words.

It was worth while!

Miss Metz, visiting nurse.
A woman with a happy light in her eyes

CHAPTER IV

"BEAUTY FOR ASHES"

THROUGH the worst streets of our city there passed to-day the most welcome visitor who can enter any of its homes, in time of trouble. A woman near forty, with a happy light in her clear grey eyes, a cheery smile, and fresh colour in her cheeks — it is our Visiting Nurse, Miss Lydia Metz.

I know she went to-day, for she has gone every day for fifteen years, with brief holidays. Even on Sundays, when she is not expected to work, she often goes from choice. Typhoid cases need her, babies choose Sundays as a day of advent, so that sometimes it is her busiest day.

It was about fifteen years ago that some of us "girls" who had started the first training school for nurses in our city, took upon ourselves the support of a visiting nurse, and the supervision of her work. It was only by the grace of their love for me and by virtue of membership dues that I belonged to the circle, for that was in my shadow days of illness, when their enthusiasm was beyond my comprehension. But with returning health and growing interest in life came interest in others, and it was good

to be one of that circle, all so eager and able to give intelligent help.

Once a month we still meet at one of our homes, as we have met for all of these years, to hear the nurse's report and to discuss the best care of the patients. What one has not experienced in sickness or the care of children, another has, and the wisdom of our family doctors is quoted and compared. But health is not our only consideration.

Heartsease and soul balm must go to all our patients, and better living must be made possible. Anxiously every problem is gone over, and suggestions reaped from years of housekeeping, nursing and mothering. It is a beautiful thing to see those dear fine women heap the fruits of their home life upon the table of humanity. When I see their devotion, I can but think of the many other cultured women, of equal richness of experience, whose children, older grown, are no longer a constant care, and whose help and advice would be such a boon to less fortunate mothers, if they would only give it. For there are many sick babies that one circle cannot reach, even in our own city. And the women I think of would pity and help the poor mothers, if they came begging to their door. But they let them die because they do not come.

The visits I made with the nurse, when it came my

turn to make the rounds with her, opened my eyes to many things that even friendly visiting had failed to teach me. With all I had seen, I was surprised at the amount of sickness we found among the poor. It was a revelation, also, to see pain, discomfort and disorder fly before the skilled hands of our nurse. To see, too, what disagreeable and hard things she had to deal with, and the disadvantages under which she laboured, gave convincing proof, if we needed it, that the greatest value of her work lay in the fact that it was done with a missionary spirit.

In our homes, when we employ a trained nurse, every convenience is at hand. Not only is there plenty of clean linen, unlimited ice, etc., but the windows are screened from flies, the patient can be isolated in a quiet room, and every comfort given, every whim gratified.

Miss Metz triumphed over the greatest difficulties. Often, before she could bathe a patient, she had to build a fire in the broken stove, and hunt and scour a pan in which to heat the water. Some of the patients had not had a bath for years, but she never flinched. Often she had to supply clean sheets and clothing from our loan closet. Then it was worth the trip to see her set the loafing husband to work at the wash tub. In an incredibly short time she would have the room in order, the patient refreshed

and relieved, enjoying the food she had prepared. Then on she went to the next case.

We had all sorts of patients, and almost every kind of illness and hurt to care for. In the earlier days, before we had our tuberculosis camp and clinic, tuberculosis led the list of our cases, for fully half of our patients had it in some form, not only the pulmonary affection, but tuberculosis of the skin, glands and bones. No one could visit these cases without having an insight into our high death rate from that disease. We visited a family in one old house where the father was dying with "consumption." The baby was crawling about on the floor, near the bed, and another child, a little older, climbed up and sat by the father's pillow. Flies swarmed over the patient and over the floor, and in spite of the nurse's stern admonitions he was untidy and careless. It gave one a creepy feeling to be in the room a minute, and we knew that the wife and babies were doomed to his fate, to say nothing of those whom the flies visited and dined with. But ah, the ghastly faces and hollow eyes, and ah, the sound of that dreadful cough, in room after room we visited, where the White Death throttles its myriad victims! They were bread-winners, most of them; mothers, so many of them, whose little broods would be left to the care of charity.

Where the White Death throttles its victim

Pneumonia claimed its toll in winter, and gave us many patients, when icy rains dripped through the leaky roofs, and cold winds whistled through the loose casings, and blew the rags out of the broken window panes. There was rheumatism, too; one of the worst enemies of the poor, for it cripples so many past earning power.

One old woman, coughing and hobbling, showed us her cellar, half full of seep water. "All the cellars in this row are this way," she declared, "but the landlord says he don't see no call to drain 'em."

Most of the houses we visited had no cellars, and those there were proved wet and mouldy. Many of the dwellings were built flat on the ground, somewhat after the peculiar manner of the early settlers, who settled down wearily and hard when they lit. All through this part of the country are still to be found cabins built in wet, undrained hollows, with timbers laid next to the earth. No wonder our grandmothers were twisted and bent at fifty. The floors were rotting in some of these old shells. In some they were only rotted, but holes were worn through, and a number of families put their garbage down into these holes, because complaints were made when they put it in the yard, and they had no adequate way to dispose of it. The children,

creeping about on the damp floors, had every stage of "colds," and often showed enlarged glands.

In summer we had other troubles, typhoid cases and babies sick with dysentery. In these cases the first thing I always wanted to see was the water supply, for, with all the talk about impure milk, I could not forget the rigid discipline through which our doctor had put me in regard to our own babies' drinking water. When two families that used one cistern had cases of typhoid, and both families had sick babies, suspicion rested on the cistern. One look at it was enough, generally, for we could see floating trash and sometimes a scum on top. There were no lids on any cistern I ever saw, and when they were cleaned out there were ghastly and sickening disclosures. But it wasn't only what fell into the cistern, but what seeped into it that made the water unfit to drink. Dishwater and suds, thrown on the soil about the cistern, lay and soured, until they gradually sank down and seeped through the loose cistern walls. Loathsome old vaults, standing for years, were sometimes within a few feet of the cistern.

I took a bottle of water from the cistern, at one place, where a man was ill with typhoid, to show our board of health. It was alive with darting "bugs." "I hev to strain the bugs outen our cistern water

before I kin wash with it," said a woman at another home. "Some of 'em drinks it, but I jes' caint, an' I go two squares to the schoolhouse fer drinkin' water."

No wonder there was so much sickness in our city! We had one story-and-a-half frame house, the one room downstairs containing a saloon and grocery, with three families living upstairs in three attic rooms.

There was no sewer connection and all the waste water drained under the building and then found its way into the street. It was a wonder to me then, and is still, how a good housekeeper could buy groceries in that filthy place, and in scores of others, little better, scattered over our town and other towns. In this place there was decayed grocery garbage heaped in the yard, there was a vile old shed, with its cesspool, and the swarms of flies from these buzzed back and forth over the grocery tables, and walked about on the cauliflower, berries and cakes, all uncovered in the dust.

There was a row of old one-story frames, where sixty-one people lived in twenty-eight rooms. They had one cistern, without a top, into which fell a child of three years.

In the attic of a filthy old tumbledown frame we found a man living with a crippled wife. The only

furniture they had was a table, a chair, and a mattress, with an old coat for a pillow.

We actually found a sink in one kitchen, but its waste pipe was connected with the vault in the yard, and the children were sick all the time.

We found houses built flat on the ground which sloped from the alley to the house. In some cases, when it rained, the mud washed in on the floor. One of these houses had a damp cellar and a bad cistern, and, needless to say, there were several cases of typhoid.

It was surprising to see how some of the families who lived in these houses got along. In one place four children slept in one bunk under the bed.

Four children were sick with typhoid at once in one of these tenements, and at the same time a family on the other side of the house had it. The children had to go to the hospital to get adequate care. Two of them died. Whenever I think of those four little fever-tortured bodies — what it would have meant to me had they been my children — I feel something boil within me. It was a devoted family, of the better class of our patients, and they were as heart-broken over the two they lost as any of our circle would have been. The nurse's tale of their grief haunts me yet. And those children should not have died!

Miss Lydia Metz, visiting nurse

Civic cancer spots. Full of families, side entrances. 25-foot lot entirely covered, except narrow walk

All through the summer we had typhoid cases. Some recovered, wasted and weak after a long illness, unable for many months to help earn the living, so that charity had to come to the rescue. Others died. I began to think that too many people were dying from tuberculosis and typhoid in our slums, and to wonder why something was not done to check these "preventable" diseases. So many cases of dependency were due to the death of bread-winners, or their prolonged illness from these diseases, that it really seemed as if prevention should be a matter of concern to the tax-payers and those who kept up our charities.

We had so many, many sick babies in the summer, too. A teething baby hasn't much chance, in some of those hot, stifling rooms, where the beds are ranged about the cook stove, and there is only poisoned water to drink. It was hard to see them, wasted and white, moaning in their mother's arms, or writhing on the hard bed. It brought to my mind my own anxious vigils, when I saw them burning with fever. It was more than I could bear to look at them, lying on a straw tick, tossing their little hot, grimy hands, in the same ragged dress, stiff with dirt, in which they had crawled over the rough floors.

Some of the poor ignorant mothers were afraid it would kill their babies to bathe them when they had

fever. But the nurse was firm and had her way. We sent ice and milk, medicine and little garments for the sick babies. We had a circle of young girls who provided all such things, a circle that now, as young married women, have established a babies' clinic with a nurse of their own, and provide pure milk for the sick babies and instruction for the mothers.

Those who fancy (not knowing) that the poor have blunted sensibilities and less feeling for their children than we have, should see them at those times. "It's all we have," they cry, in an abandonment of grief. And those who say (not knowing) that "the poor prefer filth," should see the pathetic gratitude of the family when the nurse calls them in to see the change she has wrought upon the dead baby. All the tear stains washed away forever, with all the horror of grime, pure as alabaster are the tiny features, silken smooth the soft curls. And, most appreciated of all, the little icy hands are clasped above a snow-white dress, with soft lace at the neck and wrists, such as in all its hard little life the baby never wore.

No one knows how much that white memory means to the family!

There is so little for the children of the slums to live for, and such certain hardship is ahead of them, that I always pity the ones who get well. The babies of the slums! Whenever I try to talk of them some-

thing rises up and chokes me. It's the thought of one of my own babies setting its little bare feet on those slimy yards, among the sharp cinders. I never see them without a shudder at the thought of all that tender flesh will have to suffer — bruises, aches and illness, hunger and cold — of the coarse, filthy clothing and wretched food. Worst of all, some of them will have oaths and blows, and there will be a bestial life about them, so they cannot grow up innocent or pure.

Sometimes in our visiting we found a good woman who had moved temporarily into the larger tenements with her sweet little children, perhaps fresh from the country. She would tell us with tears of the sights unfit for childish eyes, and the vulgar profanity that kept them all terrorised. The head of one of our institutions for unplaceable children also told me of the vicious habits she found in children from crowded homes, where men, women and children occupied one room together, and no effort was made to preserve decency.

We saw too much of the evils of crowded tenement life, when a number of families used one old house, fighting over the cistern, the wash line, and the sheds, using the common stairs, generally dark at night. In many of these houses were lodgers who came in tipsy at night, and there were young girls

groping their way up those dark stairs, too. Some of the sequels of herded families we traced to the penitentiary. Some were poured into our ears in dim stuffy bedrooms, where young girls, won by the nurse's kindness, told their pitiful story.

How many of these tales of ruin we heard! But the awful thing was when the whole family took it as a matter of course.

When we found feeble-minded girls among these cases, we threw up our hands. Where was to be the high-tide mark of misery and poverty, with our institutions already full, and no chance to segregate the half-witted girls who were the easiest prey?

It was a world of shadows that we came into, the shadows of those great monsters, Poverty, Vice, Disease. They were with us and about us, and we saw two of them, Poverty and Disease, face to face in all their gaunt bareness. We saw only the slimy trail of Vice, in its undeniable evidences and sickening results. Its shadow was always over us and about us, but Vice itself was hidden away, denied, pushed back into the dark, so that it had for me all the horror of mystery that it had in my childhood.

We had reason to look for vice in the tenements, rather than in the hovels, but the hovels had just as much disease. Many of our patients lived in single houses, that were often mere shacks. They had the

advantage of the separate yard, which gave them at least privacy. But the unsanitary conditions were just as bad as those of the tenements, in many particulars. In some districts there are rows of old cottages, each with its miserable, sour back yard, old vaults and garbage, and the odours and flies that always accompany them. In the tenements they had all of these, and, besides, the lack of privacy, the noise of many feet tramping through the bare halls, the fights and carousals, and the surging in and out of other tenants that makes sickness a nightmare. I was constantly impressed not only by the amount of preventable illness but of the great amount of misery that was entirely unnecessary and could have been so easily remedied by repairs and better sanitation.

Our patients were found in many un-looked-for places: in sheds or stables, in the heart of the business district, over saloons or warehouses, out on the edge of town. Down busy streets and up filthy alleys we went, to visit them, and one day I found Lucindy!

She had married a handsome, drunken fellow, who had gone from bad to worse, till he brought her and her two children to real poverty. She had two rooms with brick floors, on the ground of one of the worst old rattletrap tenements in the city. There she was,

sick in bed, thin and haggard, but sweet and gentle as ever. I looked about the wretched rooms, and decided that the hours I spent in training her were evidently forgotten. Yet what better could she have done in that hole!

Her children were out on the pavement at play with the children of some vicious looking tenants. They came in when she called them, with modest manners, ragged and barefoot, and yet, by their sweet ways and the jaunty air of a faded ribbon the little girl wore, I knew the mother still tried to hold to the old traditions. But oh, Lucindy, to have come to this!

Her story was tragic to me, because I knew her whole life. How many other tragedies we only glimpsed, reading one sad page when all the rest were sealed.

I came to realise why Christ had laid so much stress upon our service to the poor, seeing how little they had besides hardship and sorrow. Sometimes on the scarred wall, above the bed, we saw the picture of a saint or a Madonna, and the pitying eyes always seemed to exchange glances with us over the anguish they looked upon.

And sometimes, knowing how their need had always drawn Him, far down the dim street I could almost think I saw a radiance pass.

Little by little this work had grown upon me, and yet all I did took only a few hours each week. It was all done when the children were in school, and would not need me.

When the youngest was nine years old, she suddenly lost that distinction of age by the advent of a younger brother and sister, Hilary and Joy.

Twins!

Some people have to account for everything. "Which side of the family are they on?" friends demanded.

"Neither. They are a special dispensation, and came straight down from heaven," we answered, proud and radiant.

"I hope you'll raise them both. Twins are awfully hard to raise, and if anything happens to one, the other is apt to go too," some one said.

No wonder that for two anxious years every breath was watched and every pulse beat counted. With two nurses and two infants my hands were full, without hunting up more cares in the slums.

But when we felt that the seraphim had become naturalised citizens of this world, and were not in imminent danger of floating off into the empyrean again, if a window or door were left unguarded, a reaction came from the long tension of anxiety. I began, too, to worry about my old families, and stole

a little visit to them, now and then, glad to get away from the nurses.

One day my second daughter, Albion, then about eleven, came to me, all excitement. "Three of us girls are going to have a club, and we don't know what to have," she said, adding shyly, "We'd like to do something for the poor."

I suggested a sewing club, to make garments for the poor, but it was not to their mind. Lemonade stands, as a way of raising money for charity, were not to my mind. "A flower mission," was my last thought, "and you can raise flowers, and carry them to the sick people."

The suggestion was enthusiastically received, and as enthusiastically carried out. But when we found that our own neighbourhood was too healthy and too prosperous to furnish any "cases," that ended it. The children went a few times to the hospitals, but they were too far, and we did not like to send them alone, even though the nurses saw to them. As for the slums, that was out of the question. So it resulted in my taking the children's bouquets for them. They were so gratefully received, and so pathetically enjoyed, beyond my expectation, that it seemed a pity not to go again. Why not have a flower mission for the whole city?

Miss Rein was delighted with the idea. The ladies of our Visiting Nurse's Circle promised to help, so I set about to organise a flower mission, of which the three little originators should be a part. It was my idea that it should be a branch of our Associated Charities, and should do nothing but take flowers, or perhaps delicacies, to the poor who were sick, or in especial trouble or sorrow.

How many nights the plans were in unfolding I do not remember. When they were all in full bloom they were presented at a flower tea, which I gave for the purpose. Our Nurse's Circle helped with the tea, and sent me a wealth of garden blooms that made the house a bower. A number of young girls took lists of names among the guests for members, and subscribed themselves as helpers. Committees were arranged, some to get flowers, some to distribute them, others to secure carriages.

It was exciting, when the flower mission opened the next Friday, to have loads of blossoms arrive. They had begun to come in the evening before, and were overflowing baskets, jars, and even tubs. The neighbours sent them from far and near, by messenger boys, by shy little girls, by colored coachmen. Florists donated huge boxes of roses and carnations, flowers were sent which had served the day before as

decorations for receptions. A friend brought the one perfect rose off of her pet bush — it was wonderful to see how they poured in.

A generous friend had offered her verandah, and for awhile that was our headquarters. Later I had the girls all meet at my home, and start from there. Under the trees, on the lawn, we spread out the flowers, and tied them into individual bunches. The twins helped, and so did Margaret and Albion, and the other little girls. It was a fragrant task, and a most delightful one. There were great pansies, tied together in clusters, roses twined with honeysuckle, sweet pease, mignonette, and all the old-fashioned garden favourites. These were laid in large pasteboard boxes, and a list of the places to be visited put in each box. Then the carriages drove up, and the girls, two by two, with laps full and hands full, and flowers heaped about their feet, drove off, laughing, like Flora's own maidens. Every one of them were society girls, and some one remarked the appropriateness of sending butterflies with the flowers. But their faithful work proved them to be bees, rather than butterflies.

Miss Metz gave us a carefully prepared list, and the girls were not expected to go to contagious cases. There were many houses, besides, to which I would not send them, taking the last load myself. The

girls had arranged to take turns, but some became so interested in certain cases that they came back every week. "Old Mrs. Todd will be disappointed if I don't come," one would say.

"Oh, Mrs. Bacon, it ain't only the flowers you send, it's them sweet girls," said one grateful old woman, who could not praise the girls enough.

It was part of my plan that a brief friendly visit was to be made when the flowers were delivered. We found that they solved the first problem of the Friendly Visitor,— how to effect an entrance — for hearts and doors flew open at sight of the blossoms. Big boys stopped fighting, and came quietly and politely to ask for a rose or a pansy. Little children crept up and gazed wistfully at them. The sick reached eager hands for them. The old "shut ins" wept for joy to clasp them in their palsied fingers. And when we laid a bunch upon the bare pine coffin, which would have had no grace of bloom or beauty if we had passed it by, it seemed to be lamp and incense both, in that place of gloom.

And so we entered into the Kingdom of All Souls, and found that the ambassador to the Court of Sorrow needs no other passport than a handful of flowers.

One thing that touched me inexpressibly was the fact that to be "Flower Lady," as we were called,

gave the poor confidence in our sympathy. "Trouble Woman" might have been our title, for not only did the family we visited follow us to the curb with the last details of their woes, but neighbours of theirs put heads out of windows, and began their own recitals. We listened and soothed as long as we could stay, emptied the boxes of the last flower, and came away with aching hearts and a new realisation of the "inadequacy of relief." Inadequate, indeed, are material helps for the needs of the heart!

It was hard to get a few people, who had spacious lawns and plenty of flowers, who, when they were ill, were overloaded with hot house plants, to see why we should need a Flower Mission in Evansville. They looked incredulous when we told them of families shut up in one room of miserable tenements, with only the pavement in front, and either a bricked space at the rear, or a slimy strip upon which the grass refused to grow. "But it would be better to take them food," they insisted. And when we told them that rarely did any one starve for want of food in our city, but many starved for friendship and beauty, we could see that we were talking Chinese again. These people never visited the poor, and had no conception of how they lived.

There was really a good deal of hard work connected with the Flower Mission. The president of

our Nurse's Circle spent many hours, in her big beautiful garden, cutting blooms for it. Our friend who sent a great tray of pansies each week, and other loving friends who gave their blossoms so gladly, found that the gathering of them was quite laborious. Then, the girls who carried them gave a half day, each time. And, as leader, it took sometimes a day and a half out of my week.

"After all, does it pay?" I asked Miss Rein, repeating the criticisms.

"Does it pay?" she repeated, with a radiant face. "Why, doesn't it always pay to make any one happy, if only for a moment? And, even after the flowers are withered and gone, there is the memory of them, and of the love and sympathy they expressed. *Of course, it pays.*"

It was confirmation of her words to find that some of our poor old paralytics, whom we visited every week, kept their flowers from one visit to another, even after they were quite dry and yellow. They came to expect our visits, and would be moved to the door to be ready to greet us. In spring we took them boughs of apple blossoms, and sprays of plum, with great bunches of violets — all the wealth of the country lanes and orchards. We knew, by the look in those dim old eyes, that the brick walls and unsightly sheds before them had vanished, and they

were wandering in memory down the old shady paths that their childish feet had pressed. Broken words told us so, and we were fain to have them tarry there.

We were always glad we had gone. Sometimes it meant so much more than we had dreamed it would.

Into a dark stuffy little back room of an old brick tenement row we carried a bunch of lilies to a woman dying of cancer. She looked up gratefully. "I can't eat, you know, and the flowers are so refreshing."

We didn't realise, until we found a mother and father, strangers, alone in the city, weeping in an attic room over their dead baby, how much a few flowers could mean. One after another every one of their children had died, they said, and this was the last, a beautiful, golden haired child. Just to know that they had a friend, that some one cared, and that their baby wouldn't have to be buried without a flower, was a comfort. They had been fearful that it might have been different — and then we came.

We could not go to our largest tenements without having an unlimited supply of posies. At Old St. Mary's the children of the forty-eight families came trooping out to meet us, and as soon as each little hand was filled they would slip away to "their room" and put the flowers into a tumbler of water. Then they would fall into line again, for another turn.

What ideals can the children have who live here?

At one big tenement, when we had given all we had, the children clamoured for more, coming after us like a pack of ravenous wolves, till the twins, watching wide-eyed, climbed onto the carriage seats in fear. I hadn't expected the tenement children to follow us out, and, though I generally took the twins, they always sat at a safe distance, outside, unless, at some clean and safe place, where there was no contagion, I took them to the door, to speak to our friends. When they were old enough to carry little baskets, I took them into the hospital wards, and I shall never forget the way the old men's eyes lighted up, to see the bright little faces. Margaret and Albion took turns going with me; sometimes they went alone, between times, to special and safe places. Our flower girls went to the cases of the district nurse, and to others that we found, to those in distress, to the shut-ins, and to the charity wards of the hospitals. Often we found a stranger, lonely and away from home, in a hospital room, and left a spray, with a word of cheer, in the name of friendship, where charity would have been out of place.

Nothing impressed me more than the response the flowers elicited. The response to alms was, in effect, more demands. The response to our confidence in the poor was their confidence in us. Our friendship won their friendship. But the simple act of taking

flowers, being an acknowledgment of their higher nature, woke into bloom their finer and sweeter qualities. Often I marvelled at the delicate expressions of appreciation, from those naturally rough and uncouth of speech. As in a mirror we saw reflected the image we set before them, and I felt sorely how little was set before the masses of our people, in comparison to what we might give them. Another thing impressed me, that, at sight of the flowers, for the first time I saw a gleam of inspiration in those dull eyes.

There was nothing, in any form of charity work, that gave me the satisfaction the Flower Mission did. From the first, the ugliness of the slums had hurt me in the same way as did the misery of the poor. In fact, the two seemed related from the time I began to visit them. It was not merely a sentimental notion, for the problem " H^p or P^h " persisted in my mind, and everything I experienced confirmed all I had read on such subjects. The power of beauty to soothe, to cheer, to keep sane, to heal, to uplift, was made clearer to me with each visit. When I saw how their eyes kindled at sight of the flowers, I felt sure that Maeterlinck was right when he said " Beauty is the unique aliment of our soul." And if that be true some of our poor have to go farther for that food than they do for water, for there are whole districts that are drearily ugly throughout.

I used to wonder how the children brought up in the scenes we visited, that sickened and oppressed me to see even once, where there was no outlook that was not degrading and blunting to the soul, could ever keep that conscience of the eye that discerns falsehood of form and colour.

It startled me to find that, when I came back to my own home, after a round of the slums, it looked so much larger and handsomer than when I left it in the morning. If half a day had that effect on my standards what would a few years do to growing minds, that had no other standards than those of the slums?

"But they don't mind it as you would, they're used to it," some of my friends said.

What a comment on the deadening effect of such an environment! But the ones who said that confessed they had never visited the poor, and they didn't realise how many in the slums had not always been used to it, and had been born to better things.

But the children who were born there? Were they to grow up "used to it"?

Some of the wealthy owners of our worst tenements, who had children of their own, admitted the value of beauty in their choice of sites for their own homes, choosing a noble outlook, beautiful architecture, harmonious colours and fine lines in their

furnishings, and excluding the ugly as carefully as the low. If beauty means so much to our children, as we agree it does, why doesn't it mean the same to the poor?

It is a wonder how one could expect any of the children of our slums to have any true ideals. How could we expect that out of those thousands of miserable "homes" should come one architect or artist, author, statesman, or even one decent citizen? How could we expect one of them, when they grow up, to vote for civic improvement, or to stand for churches or schools? How could we expect any of them to be patriots? Crowded into filthy sties, with no room for a family circle unless they sit on the beds about the cook stove, with no sanctity of home life, would "your altars and your fires" mean anything to them? Would "America"? They know only the street cobble "rocks," only the gutter "rills," and the "woods and templed hills" could have no place in imaginations which were atrophied in babyhood.

I used to long to give the children an Aladdin's lamp that would open to them a doorway into a higher world, or at least give them a shining ladder by which they might climb out of their gloomy prison. But what fairy could ever be expected to visit those sodden yards, where nothing could grow? Nothing but sooty little imps, or grotesque creatures such as

peopled the underworld court of Peer Gynt's Dovre King, would feel at home there. Even the "angel that 'tends to things" has to pin back his wings and tuck up his gown, to get through tidily.

But still it gnawed at my heart, that aching to somehow give them some food for their souls. The flowers we took were like crumbs to the starving. We took a suggestion from the mute appeal of the portulaca, that ragged flower of the poor, that bravely struggled to bloom for them, in rusty tin cans, on window ledges, thick with dust, above the crowded streets. Home gardening would be just the thing, we thought, and started out to redeem some of the waste places.

Our generous flower patrons sent express loads of bulbs and seedlings, and we had them set out in scores of surprised back yards that needed them most. A few grand successes made up for all the failures that came from the lack of supervisors we could not supply.

One little girl spent a rapturous summer in her bower, and others told of many happy hours of enjoyment in their gardens.

We tried some boxes in the windows of the crowded tenements above the traffic in the heart of town, where there were no yards, and the children were shut up in second and third story rooms.

But it seemed such a pittance, an apology for all the bounty of bloom that May, even then, was showering upon the fields. Even then, I knew, children were gathering armfuls of daisies in the meadows. Little ones were lying in the deep grass, under the apple boughs, laughing to catch the scented petals that drifted about them.

The big wistful eyes that looked out of the little grey faces so hungrily at my flowers made me feel ashamed for the race, and, putting my biggest bunches into the little hands, I went out, heart sick, again. Groping my way down the dark stairway to the ground, I passed on through the dusty heart of the town. Ahead of me, all the way, went a vision of a child whose light feet danced along the hill tops. The great free spaces of the country came back to me, the sun-kissed hills, the wind-swept valleys. Even the smell of the rain on the meadows came over me, that "breezy call of incense breathing morn" that held me spellbound in childhood.

And these children were shut away from it all!

Down deep in my heart came a knowledge that I could never rest until I could do something — something to wipe out the blot of the slums, to lift the shadow, the horror of their ugliness — to give "beauty for ashes."

CHAPTER V

THE WORKING GIRLS

"It was nearly midnight when I came home one night, recently," said Mr. Harrington, the Y. M. C. A. secretary. "The side streets were growing quiet, and I met very few people. As I came past the back of the saloon on S—— street, the one that has been so much talked about on account of the wine room over it, I noticed a cab standing at the side entrance. Just then the door opened and I saw a man coming down the stairway, with a girl over his shoulder, like a sack of flour. She was evidently dead drunk, or drugged. He put her into the cab and it drove away."

There were five of us gathered in my library to discuss a proposed step in a social emergency, but nothing that was said before or after that story remains with me, for the impression it made was so profound.

It was just as if the monster, Vice, the outlines of whose veiled form I had but dimly seen, and whose shadow always darkened the slums, had suddenly come close and turned his hideous visage full upon me. It had sickened me when first I saw the faces

of those other two, Poverty and Disease, but this one made me tremble. I had learned to accept the fact that all of them made their haunts in the slums, and to think of them as breeding there. One comes to think of the darkness of those miserable places as the cloak of Vice, and the stench of them as the foul breath of Disease. I had even grown to realise, after a number of epidemics, how Disease creeps out of the slums, steals into our own homes, and smites us at our very firesides.

But Vice! I didn't realise that it did the same thing. There wasn't any ocular demonstration of that. There was no crêpe on the door where girls were ruined or boys went to the bad. There were no funeral processions, with white coffins, to cross our path, and make us think about the victims. We couldn't trace that kind of contagion by house flies, or such emissaries of death from the filthy dens. And there wasn't anything in the nature of a death list in the papers, just a headline, now and then, to tell of what went on in the dark.

And here was Vice, in our midst! Nobody knew whose girl that was, who was put into that cab. Nobody knew what boys were in her company. I thought of the story my pretty nurse had told me, of the "mashers" lined up on the bright streets at night, and of some girl friends who had gone to

a picture show, and later to a restaurant, with two strange boys. She had come in, one night, white and excited, and told me of the son of a well known family following her home.

But I hadn't thought of such endings!

I was like some one who had slept while a house was burning, and woke to hear cries for help. To think of ever having said "I don't want to know these things!"

Now I wanted to know. Not everything — oh, horrors, no! but enough to be able to help, to do something more than to spray rose water, or rub on salve. I wanted to do something for the girls in the world around me, outside of the slums, to keep them from being drawn into those dreadful traps.

There was a big story in the newspapers, just then, about a girl who was kidnapped, at one of our depots, and escaped later, to tell a dreadful white slave experience.

One of our friends, Mr. S. N. Douglas, was then, and is still, President of the Board of Children's Guardians here. Knowing the devoted service that he and his wife had given to humanity for years, I went down to find out something about the real conditions that threatened our young people.

He told me many sad cases of ruined homes, wayward girls, and neglected children, things that his

office had given him power to probe into, with the help of the law, which I would never have discovered in my visits. Then he sent me to their probation officer. The latter told me of the young girls he had driven in off the streets, at night, only to have their mothers tell him to " 'tend to his own business." He told me of some of the lures that draw girls, and ended with a statement as to the number of girls — young girls, who stayed out on the streets, and never went home all night. " But they are the children of immoral parents, who grow up accustomed to these things; what we call the lower classes? " I faltered.

" Not all of them," he answered. " There are many, a surprising number, from the better classes."

That night, and many nights, I lay awake, listening to the steps that passed the house. Some were light and swift, some dragging and slow. Surely, none of them went astray, up in our good neighbourhood!

But I was haunted with the thought of the little white feet, some of them glimmering yet, almost, with the light of the pearly street where they had been so lately set, passing on to sink into the ooze and mire, perhaps never to come back!

One Sunday morning the police matron telephoned me, the Charities office being closed, to know if I would come down to a little cheap hotel near one of

"Cocaine Alley." A breeding-place of vice.
Negroes and whites herd together in filthy, crowded dens

our railroad stations, to see a country girl, sick and in trouble. Telephoning Miss Metz to meet me there, I went on down.

The girl was a gentle, ignorant creature, from the backwoods of Kentucky, who had come to find work in our city. She had simply taken her small funds and started off, with no friends here, no references, and no place in sight. She had blown out the gas on her first night here, and barely escaped asphyxiation. But her escape from a worse fate was more marvellous. As I entered her little stuffy room she was sitting, dressed, on the side of her bed, dazed, sick and trembling still from the effects of the gas, telling her story to a big policeman. She told of the kind gentleman whom she had picked out of a trainful of men, all strange to her, and asked him to show her to a hotel, assuring him that she had money!

She wanted to go right back home, but she was too sick to travel, and could not be left there. So I brought her to my home, until she was able to start off on the train alone. She was thoroughly homesick and frightened, but we did not let her go without telling her some plain facts.

The incident aroused me to the dangers to which ignorant country girls are exposed, and I told it to our Home Missionary Society, which had just organised.

There was a division of interest in the society between work in Evansville and outside work, such as helping the immigrants in our big cities, frontier work, etc., all of which was strongly presented in our church literature. Having a hand in the programme for that year, I determined to enlist at least a part of the interest for our own city, whose need, I knew, was so desperate, and to which no other city was sending funds, or to which no home missionary would be sent. So we took up a study of the needs and conditions of our city, from every social standpoint, including schools, asylums, jails and slums, and it was understood that whoever took part in the programme must actually go and investigate.

Besides this, we had on our programme people who knew about actual conditions, the president of our Board of Children's Guardians, their probation officer, the police matron, the Y. M. C. A. secretary, the Charities secretary, and others.

Never was more live interest in missionary meetings. Every one was packed to the doors, and visitors became members.

Thrilled and spellbound those dear good women sat, with "oh's" and "ah's" of horror. At some places they looked down and picked at their gloves, or smoothed out a black silken wrinkle. Mr. Douglas told how he had called at a home to see about

taking some children, and the mother, opening the door, dropped her baby onto the floor, because she was too drunk to hold it. He and the others told things the like of which our women had never heard in all their sweet pure lives. But they were made of good Methodist stuff, and to know their duty was to do it. Not a word of persuasion was needed to make them take up a work for girls, in our city.

The first thing we did was to open a room for temporary shelter for girls and women who might be stranded and friendless. The next was to have big cards printed and framed and hung in the cars, in all the railroad or traction lines coming into Evansville, and to have them posted in the stations far along the roads, particularly at the little country stations. These were the "Traveller's Aid" warning and direction notices, giving the address of our shelter room. They brought some interesting and helpful results.

Another work soon came to our hands. One day, at noon, I went by the Charities office to make a visit to a case with Miss Eleanor Foster, the new assistant secretary.

As she locked the door of the office she remarked, "I wish there were some pleasant place, in our city, where the working girls could spend their noon hour, where they might eat their lunch and rest and read —

some comfortable, cosy place." Then she explained that she had found some of the factory girls taking their lunches in saloon dining rooms, or eating a cold lunch at their work tables in the factories, in the midst of the muss of their work.

They did seem very bad, the incidents she told, though I had never given a thought to the subject.

"Well, let's have a place. Why not?" I asked. And as we walked along in the crisp air we discussed a plan. She told me what she knew of the girls' troubles and temptations, and we talked of how we could help them, if we could come in touch with them. The matter was presented to the next Home Missionary meeting, Miss Foster being also a member. Our ladies were all interest, and appointed us two, with our deaconess, who was deeply concerned about such things, as an investigating committee to go the rounds of the shops and factories, and see what was needed, and was most feasible. So we started out.

The big iron doors of the mills and factories opened to us, and shut us in to a new world.

We had driven past these huge buildings, and had heard the roar of machinery, but we thought only of the moving bands and the buzzing wheels, then.

Now, inside, looking down the long dusty aisles, where ranks of girls stood, with machine-like motions, we realised that human lives were woven on those

looms, or wound among those wheels. The girls seemed so much a part of their work that when one of them answered our greeting it was almost as if a cog had spoken.

It gave a new importance to fabrics, buttons, paper, etc., to see them grow by degrees under those skilful, patient hands. We had used daily all the countless products of our factories, as if they grew on trees, with never a thought of the human muscle and nerve that went into them. In the cold twilight of winter mornings we had often heard, faint and far off, a factory whistle blow for work, and we had turned over to take another nap in our soft warm beds. But even then these girls were hurrying along the foggy streets, in which the street lamps still glimmered, shivering in the chill air. And when the big doors opened, after work, and they poured out into the street again, the sun was down, and they went home in another gas-lit twilight.

Seasons changed, outside the factory, from white to green, to gold, to russet, back to white. Inside, it was only warmer or colder. Through dusty window panes the sun peered in upon their work, and made a slightly varying figure on the floor, through all the year. In spring the windows were opened, and the little shiny leaves called, "Come out — the woods are waiting."

From the street below came up the sound of auto horns. Beautiful girls, in flower-like gowns, rode by on their way to entertainments or outings.

But, like the Lady of Shalott, the girls at the looms could not leave their weaving to look down from the windows. Only in the mirror of their fancies did they see the pageant of the world go by, and the "knights come riding two by two." Or, perhaps, they saw it in the pages of a dime novel.

Something of all this was borne in upon us as we passed down the ranks, chatting with the girls. It gave us confidence in our plan to know that the owners of the mills were in full sympathy with our project, and were ready to give us financial aid. The problem was, to win the confidence of the girls, to find out their needs, and secure their co-operation.

Infinitely more tact was needed to approach the girls than had been needed for Friendly Visiting. Those we visited as "charity patients" had asked for help. These girls were as independent as we were. Not only had they not solicited our interest, but we were not sure whether they would take it. Some of the girls, in fact, did not need any help, for there were many who belonged to good families, of gentle breeding, with every safeguard thrown about them at home.

Some were daughters of respectable, thrifty work-

ing men, others of widowed mothers who needed support.

But it was the girls of inferior parentage and poor or bad home surroundings in whom we were especially interested.

As Miss Foster said, "The first class have their problems and temptations, as do all classes of girls, but they also have what the others lack — standards of conduct and resisting power. The girl who 'just grows,' like a weed — what can be expected of her in the way of blossom and fruit?"

Timing our visits at the noon hour, we found that many of the girls went home to lunch. But some of those who came across the town had brought a cold lunch, and were eating it at their work tables. The day of factory lunch and rest rooms had not yet arrived, and most of our factories were not built so as to have available space for them. Later, some of the managers of mills and laundries, etc., put them in, inspired, we felt, by the success of our plan.

We found, as we went about, the girls of the cigar factories eating at the tables where they had rolled cigars, in the tobacco-heavy air. In the laundries, they had spread their lunch on the benches, amid the sudsy steam. In one factory, the girls sat in the windows, or on the linty floor, not having chairs. After lunch, some who did piece work rushed back to

work without a breath of air, because they were anxious to make the extra money. They admitted that the "boss" had urged them to rest and exercise, but they wouldn't take the time.

Some of the girls went out, bareheaded, to walk the street, their arm-in-arm line stretching across the sidewalk. We saw others romping with the men, inside the factory entrance. A number testified that a "bunch" of their mates had gone to a nearby saloon dining room, and gave a description of the savoury lunch served there. We met others buying candy or "sodies" at a confectioner's, and saw a number munching cheese and crackers or bananas.

The girls listened to our plan, some passively, some indifferently, others with interest. Out of them all we got enough promises of patronage to make us feel secure in our venture.

Then our society called a mass meeting, and we gave the enterprise to the churches and clubs of the city, drawing the committees of our permanent organisation from them all, and making Miss Foster manager, by common consent.

We found a place in the business district, convenient to various stores and factories, and large enough for our dining room, kitchen, rest and reading room, and lavatory. It was furnished simply, with rattan chairs and couches in the reading room, soft cush-

ions, sheer white curtains and flowers in the windows, and books and magazines on the big table — a tasteful, homelike place.

A happy committee prepared the first noon meal. An anxious committee sat and waited for the girls to arrive. Would they fail us?

We all rose in a body and greeted the first girl who came in, and I know I embraced her. But we need not have been anxious. The girls poured in, and our success, on that side, was assured.

Every one had wanted Miss Foster to be manager, and she proved to be the lodestone that drew the girls to our rooms. We found, as others have found, that nothing is so valuable to a work of this kind as the personality about which it centres. Not plans, not equipment, not anything can make up for that. There was something about her laughing brown eyes and her sweet low voice that the girls, and the rest of us, found irresistible. "What makes you so different from us girls?" one of them asked, worshipfully. It was those very differences that made them look up to her, but it was her sympathy and insight that made them bring their troubles, and open up their hearts to her.

The good warm meals we furnished the girls, at an average of 11 cents (before meat and potatoes went so high) tempted many into our pleasant dining

room. Many returned at night, when we moved back tables and chairs, and had a simple gymnasium. This drew better than cooking or sewing classes. "Oh, we don't want to learn things, we just want to sing and dance and play, and have a good time," said one girl, who voiced the feelings of the others. Books failed to attract this type of girls, except the very lightest fiction. Our efforts to interest them in good books revealed many cases of arrested mental development.

But they all took to the gymnasium. They liked the romping games, and the freedom of the bloomers. We had girls of all ages in the gymnasium classes. There were little stunted things, with white weazened faces and pink lidded eyes, who didn't look as if they could possibly be factory age. We had others who were pretty and plump and young, still others, angular, bent and forty, so stiff from long bending over a machine that it was pathetic to see their exercises. But what rest these gave to tired backs, and how the colour came into pale cheeks, and the light into dull eyes, in a way it was good to see.

The girls naturally fell into congenial groups. The younger ones wanted to take up amateur theatricals (which resulted mostly in tableaux), and we humoured them, to keep them off the street.

Our most devoted committee of social workers had

had long experience in free kindergarten work and mothers' meetings. This committee organised a singing class, teaching, incidentally, many other things. They found that the girls knew only the songs of the street, but took readily to our good old classics. They were delighted with "Annie Laurie" and "Home, Sweet Home"— they were new to them!

After some of our classes we had a kind of "party" at our rooms. Then discipline was relaxed, and every one performed, girls, leaders and all, in their own specialty. To be with the younger girls was like being with a set of big children, for their every emotion found outward expression. They grew most devoted to their leaders, and delighted to show their affection in smothering embraces, by so many strong young arms at once that one was swept off the floor.

We found that our great problem was these younger girls, who were so easily taught, so readily interested. We learned how many temptations beset them, at every step, in the factory, on the street, sometimes in their own tenements. We learned how many of them had older sisters who had gone wrong, sometimes even mothers who set a dreadful example. Many of the older girls could not be won away from the streets, but the younger ones had not yet settled into any bad habits. If we could only show them

the dangers, and teach them to love better things! We gave the girls health talks, speaking to them simply and plainly. Among them we included a talk upon the care of the teeth. It happened that a handsome young dentist gave this talk, and, at the end, he gave opportunity for the girls to ask questions, if they desired.

A dead silence followed his remark. Finally, Clara, who had been eyeing the young man admiringly, blurted out, "Say, where is your office at?"

We had chosen, as the first president of our Working Girls' Association, the wife of one of our merchants, a lady of many virtues and much wisdom, and, withal, a perfect housekeeper. It took all of these, and, oh, what devotion, to make our experiment a success in its first trying years. It took the devotion of many others, too, who helped as directors or on committees. But there wasn't one of us who didn't get more out of it than we put into it, a hundred fold. What housewifely spirit does not delight to plan delicious menus at lowest cost? What motherly soul does not love to gather in those who are home-sick for a home they never possessed?

Down in the bottom of our hearts we all realised how much of our abundance had gone to waste, for lack of ways to spend it. Not money, not goods, but richness of experience, fulness of life, love lavished

Here we built two large bungalows, with screened, open sides

on a few, hoarded within our own walls. It was a relief to open the channels and let it flow out.

Our work grew and broadened. We felt the need of dormitories, for so many girls were away from home, and boarded in the "hall bedroom" we had read about. I was surprised to find these rooms just as miserable as they were pictured, for I had always supposed they belonged to fiction. How mean they were,— small, unheated, cheerless, ugly! We felt the need of dormitories more keenly, after tramping the streets to find rooms for country girls, and finding that rooms in good districts were too expensive, and cheap rooms were not only miserable but generally not respectable.

It was then that one of our leading philanthropists, Major A. C. Rosencranz, bought and presented to our association an old homestead, near Main Street. Now we had a real home, and we set about to make every room an object lesson. We rented the bedrooms to as many girls as they would accommodate, but still the demands for rooms came in. Miss Foster and I wanted to rent an adjacent dwelling for a dormitory, and provide it with a matron, letting the girls do co-operative housekeeping, or hire a cook, as their wages permitted, or take their meals at our Home. I had my eye on the entire row of houses, for the same purpose, and would have given each a

"house mother," to supervise the company in the parlour, which was so sorely needed, and to look after the girls generally. The houses could have been self-supporting, we counted. There were plenty of homeless girls to fill them. Yet we were voted "plungers," and the idea was allowed to drop, for the time. But I've never given it up.

When our good president was worn out with the work they made me take her place. The enterprise couldn't have been more on my heart, but the official position placed it more upon my shoulders. If it had not been for the faithful women who were helping, with heart and soul, and who had so much more experience than I, I shouldn't have dared. And then there was always a practical husband, and the experience of my mother and sisters to fall back upon.

It was the making of me. To have to assume responsibility and make decisions, such as none of my other work had involved, developed the ability to do it. These things strengthen one's fibre wonderfully. I've seen it often, in the case of other women, who, all untried, were put at the head of some organisation. This very day, in churches and clubs, there are shy, diffident women, who shrink from doing any but the simplest part, in sheer timidity. And yet, if circumstances called them to a place of re-

sponsibility, they would amaze themselves and their community with their growing efficiency.

The hardest duty of my new position was to give little talks to clubs and societies that we wanted to interest. But the ordeal became less severe each time. It was a pleasant duty, on the contrary, to write the newspaper articles that were necessary to win the interest of the public. The whole office force of the various newspapers took such a cordial interest in our work, from editors, reporters, even down to the office boys, and showed such a sympathy for the girls we were trying to help, that it made our task easy. The advertising they gave us was worth thousands of dollars if we had paid for the space, and they gave us editorials, good big headlines, "boxes," and even used my cartoons.

Now my duties called me into still closer intimacy with the girls, and I came to see what fine qualities many of them had. And they were all so brave and cheerful.

We had all classes, in our association, from those who performed the highest to the lowest grades of labour. Some of the stenographers, forewomen and heads of departments in stores formed an auxiliary, to help the others, and no support we received was so earnest. "We know how much a girl in business is up against," one of them said.

How much, indeed! They brought their stories to us, with all their troubles and perplexities.

Some of them had troubles at home, of the most trying kind. Maggie's mother married the girl's step-father when he was drunk. A few months later he murdered the woman. Maggie could not speak of him without a dangerous gleam in her eyes. She would have felt justified in killing him, if ever the chance came.

Sadie was only sixteen. Her mother was a bad woman, and all of her sisters had gone wrong. When she quarrelled with her father, we welcomed the chance to take her into our fold. She adored Miss Foster, clung to her, followed her to church, took her advice in every detail, and showed a horror of the way her family had gone. We kept her with us, got her a good position, and she has kept straight and true, and is turning out to be a fine, useful woman.

It took us a long time to get used to some of the girls' ideas about marriage. It was an incident to many of them, and so was divorce. They would marry for a joke — on a bet — on the impulse of the moment. "Oh, well," they would say, "if he don't treat me right, I won't stay with him." Mamie, jilted by the man she expected to marry, shrugged her shoulders. Like so many of the girls, she was

corresponding with an unknown man. "I am ready to marry you," she wrote him, and after an actual acquaintance of two weeks they were married.

My worst shock came from an elderly spinster, whom I had supposed to be a pink of propriety. She surprised us first with the news that she was about to marry, and next with the announcement that she was not.

"Why, what's happened?" we inquired.

"Oh, well, he done me dirt," she said irefully. "He promised to get a divorce, an' he never done it."

I realised, in this work, how much my experience with my own house maids had prepared me for things I should hear. Some of them had worked before in restaurants, some in cotton mills, in the bottle-cap factory, laundries, cigar factories, etc., and most of them had been employed in other homes. Their odd ideas of caste, their startling slang, their ideals and standards, quite as startling, their queer ambitions, had opened my eyes to many things.

From the country girls, many of them daughters of close-fisted German farmers, I got an idea of how barren and dull life in the country may be, under certain conditions, and could see why so many girls and boys come to town. They came to get, among other things, amusement, styles and cash, as well as independence, and they got everything they came

for. It was astonishing to see how soon some of them learned to "make their hair," and acquire the walk and manner of the city bred. They would make as many sacrifices for style as any society leader. I remember what a hard time I had to prevail upon one, Lizzie, not to have all her pretty sound white teeth extracted so that she might have a complete set of false ones, as that was the height of fashion in Hochstadt!

But think of those ignorant girls turned loose in the city, to find a factory job and a lodging place! With no place to receive callers, homesick, missing the sunny fields where they had tossed hay, missing their parents' stern discipline — how the lights of the street would lure them! How the pretty things in the shop windows would tempt them! How they would accept even a stranger's company, from sheer loneliness! Those other girls, whose "homes" were in the crowded tenements,— I knew why they preferred to meet their company on the street. Some of them were so pretty, with delicately moulded figures, which they decked in finery if they went hungry to pay for it. These girls were eager for the opportunity of the sewing and millinery classes, to learn to make the pretty things they loved. When they were dressed with their best care, no one would guess the kind of homes they came from, until they began

to talk. Then we could understand why they wanted to make a good showing, and why they shrank in shame from letting a new and "swell" acquaintance see the wretched hole they lived in. Many of them lived, with a family of seven or more, in two rooms. Some even had one room, we knew, for we learned that our worst slums furnished some of the mill and factory girls. And in these dismal, dirty sties, where a drunken father, a scolding, worn-out mother, crying babies and fighting children made unpleasantness miserable and unattractiveness forbidding, there was not room for a caller to sit, or any quiet for conversation.

With all kinds of girls, except those who had good homes, we found this was a most serious problem — where to meet their young men friends.

The girls had other problems, and clothing was one of them. We were glad when they came to us for advice about what to buy, for they wasted so much on shoddy material and extreme styles. It was hard to prevail on them to save for a rainy day, for it rained every day, in some of their lives.

The girls who had sisters or friends who walked obliquely — and there were many — gave us the most anxiety. They had so little foundation upon which to build. They were so utterly ignorant of the simple, fundamental truths of life, and had no stan-

dards, no source of inspiration. And, while we came in touch with several hundreds of girls, there were so many hundreds in the city that we had not yet reached, who needed direction and help just as badly, who had no one to turn to.

This experience with working girls furnished the connecting link in the social study that I had begun with Friendly Visiting. Putting bit with bit, it was like matching the parts of a puzzle picture. It gave us the girl on the street, in the factory, in our association rooms, in her home.

No wonder many of the girls were sallow and dull eyed; they slept in close, stuffy rooms, with from one to eight other occupants, and came and went, "between the dark and murk," to and from a shop or factory, where they were shut away from the sunshine, all day. Their food was insufficient or indigestible, very often.

No wonder they met their company on the street, and went to wine rooms, dance halls, and other low places of amusement. Poor as those were, they were more attractive than their homes.

No wonder they craved pleasure and pretty things. Their lives were colourless and dull and hard, their surroundings cheerless and ugly, at home and at the factory.

No wonder they had no ideals, no standards, no

ambitions, worth the name. It would be a wonder if they had any. Where would they get them?

Their need was so great, and it seemed so little that we could do. We furnished all the entertainment we could, concerts, "parties," and anything of a simple kind that they seemed to enjoy. And we came close to many of them. There were many simple confessions that showed us our work really did help.

Sometimes I had a little party, for our different classes of girls, at our own home, with music and games. As "working girls" our maids were welcomed to these, and took part somewhat shyly. My young daughters entered heartily into their part, as hostesses, helping serve refreshments, and making the other girls feel at home. We never enjoyed any parties so much, and it was a pure joy to turn social precedents upside down, especially as it gave such pleasure. The girls always seemed to be happy, and sang their newly acquired songs, or recited, each one being called out.

There was only one irksome task in connection with our work, and that was — raising funds.

A certain part flowed in from willing givers. Another part was ours for the asking and collecting. The rest had to be mined out, with blasting powder. We tried all kinds of publicity, besides the

newspapers. The children and I got even down on the floor and made mammoth coloured posters, that are still extant. That was a pleasure, but when it came to begging!

We came to a place where we would have broken rock in preference to asking another dollar. We feared we might earn the salute with which a well-known lady greeted an acquaintance who had oft come begging for worthy causes, but came one day, in brave attire, to make a social call.

"And what do you want now?" asked the lady.

There are many conditions which make it more blessed to give than to receive.

We knew why some of our directors threw up their job of collecting when we had ladies tell us: "I can't say I sympathise with your work. I think if you didn't make things so easy for those girls they would be in our kitchens, where they belong. No wonder we can't keep cooks."

No wonder, we thought! We were receiving much light on the servant problem.

It was useless to argue with those ladies that these girls were free American citizens, and that some of them were of as good families and as cultured as they were; that the other kind of girls, of the lower class, had grown up untrained, with the idea of being factory workers, and it was as hopeless to try to

domesticate them now as to teach charity to the selfish and narrow-minded. We simply took our lesson in this new field of sociology. This work was "awful educatin'," as the saleswoman said of the geography game.

We never had to make these explanations to the men. Like the auxiliary young women, they knew what the girls were "up against." And the way they gave was worth as much as the money, for they had the chivalry that made them see how hard it was for us to ask, and that brought a look of pity into their eyes when we told them about the girls. It was to them we turned when weary with preaching the needs of women to other women's ears.

As the cost of living went up, it seemed that donations went down. One after another our collectors resigned, and our fund was dwindling. Once more Miss Foster and I started out with the twins in the carriage. From factory to factory we went, hitching at the office door, and entering like a troubadour quartette.

But we just couldn't keep that up!

The Y. W. C. A. had long wanted an opening in our city. Here was a hole. Why was it not an opening?

No one had to explain what a Y. W. C. A. was, or why it was a good thing. Every one who had daugh-

ters could understand what a fine thing it would be for them.

And here was the foundation, ready to set the new work upon.

So we re-organised, opening up into the larger work. And, as soon as it was smoothly running, we got an extension secretary to care for our working girls. Now they have a fine gymnasium, a swimming pool, and a bigger dormitory.

Miss Foster had refused many calls to a larger field, making a sacrifice for the purpose of working out her ideas about the working girls. At last she accepted one of the calls, and we lost her.

There is one happy memory that our girls will never lose, nor shall we. That is our summer camp, and I've saved it to tell last, to take away the metallic taste of the money part.

Some of our girls never got a vacation. They couldn't afford the trip, nor the loss of time. We decided to bring the vacation to them. There was a pretty oak grove near the end of one of our trolley lines, where we made our camp. Here we built two large bungalows, with screened open sides; one for a living room, dining room and kitchen, the other for a sleeping room and lockers. We had several tents, and, as our needs grew, we planned to use old street cars, emptied of seats, for sleeping rooms.

Row of girls at the camp. Miss Foster at extreme right

For a five-cent fare the girls went to and from their work, having the evening and night at the camp, with supper and breakfast, and the whole long Sunday to stroll or to rest in hammocks.

The Public Service Company had donated strings of electric lights, all about our camp, so that we could have evening games and entertainments. What appetites the fresh air gave our girls! How soundly they slept, with the starlight sifting through the laced branches, the sound of sleepy birds and drowsy insects, and the leaves whispering "sh-sh — sleep and rest!"

The girls took a new lease on health, and a larger, firmer hold on life. We came closer to them, so as to enter into their spiritual life, in twilight walks down country lanes, or talks about the embers of our camp fire.

One striking thing about the camp life was the way it obliterated all lines of caste. We, who never thought about such things, had been surprised to find how real it was to some of the girls. For instance, in the cotton mills, the weavers would not associate with the spinners. Cigar factory girls were discriminated against by some others. Shop girls looked down on factory girls, and these, in turn, felt superior to domestic servants.

But this all faded away at the camp. Several

cooks, who were having a sure-enough vacation, walked arm in arm with the stenographers, and the young ladies who came to help entertain us.

I must confess that it was a little of a surprise to me, after I had given a Sabbath afternoon talk on "The God of the Open Air," to find that the most discriminating approval was expressed by two of these cooks.

It was really beautiful to note the good fellowship that, without familiarity or presumption, or any loss of dignity, took in the whole circle about the camp fire.

I thought this chapter was going to close with the closing of the camp, and a new régime. But, even as I write, comes word that the camp is to be opened again, next summer, for the working girls. There is a pretty story, too, of the enthusiastic devotion that they transferred to their new leader, Miss Vera Campbell, which is another proof of the power of personality. The best of the story is about her work among the laundry girls, which was so appreciated that the laundry gave her a wonderful party, in which both the management and the helpers took part, and fathers, mothers, even babies, were included.

And so our work is growing, even beyond our dreams.

CHAPTER VI

THE POOR AND THEIR POVERTY

THE WRECK [1]

We found a wreck cast up on the shore,
  Battered and bruised, and scarred and rent,
And I spoke aloud, "Here was worthless work,
  And a barque unfit to the sea was sent."

But he said, my friend, in his gentler mood,
  "Nay, none may say but the work was good,
For who can tell of the seas it sailed,
  Of the waves it braved, and the storms withstood?"

Then we spoke no more, but I mutely mused,
  And I thought, "Oh, heart and oh, life of man,
That we find wrecked, we may never know
  How brave you were when your course began!"

This chapter is not about those of whose "short and simple annals" Gray wrote. It is not of those to whose "honest poverty" Burns referred. Nor does it treat of any who can sing, "Be it ever so humble." All of these may have been poor, but they were not "The Poor." There is fresh air blowing through every one of those poems. They breathe of all that is wholesome, tender, sacred, the real riches of life.

[1] Published originally in 1888 in Mrs. Bacon's and Mrs. Johnston's collection of verse, Songs Ysame.

But one cannot write a pastoral poem about the poor. There is no song of the lark over their heads, to weave into the verse, no "lowing herds," no fireside circle, with its "peace of heart." Instead, there is the Wolf outside the door, howling to the dark. And those who hide and cower inside are the ones we call "the submerged," the Children of the Shadow. For the most part, in our country, they are the children of the city and the town.

Distance, perspective, "chiaro-oscuro," may be to blame, rather than our eyes, that we see the poor as a mass of shadow, painted in one flat grey wash, at the remote edges of our sunshine. In fact, they are generally spoken of in that way, as if that one drab word named, defined and classified all who were over the line, on the shadow side. And there is so often reproach in the word, and abhorrence in the tone with which it is spoken, that I am fain to plead for them a better acquaintance and a fairer judgment. That is why I am writing this chapter, to bring the poor nearer, as with a sort of field glass, to those who have never really known them.

It cannot be gainsaid that the majority of people in any city know nothing about the poor. I have found, by investigations in many cities and towns, that, outside of a limited circle of charitable people, and a number of ministers, doctors and policemen, no

one could give any trustworthy information about the number or condition of the poor. While there may even be large societies with many committees, whose members give much time to planning charity work (much of which must consist in raising funds) and while these members even "bestow their goods to feed the poor," so often the actual visiting of the poor is done by the secretary, and a few committee members.

The same is true of the churches, where only a limited percentage of those who give ever get inside of the homes of the poor. By those who go the tale is brought back to the meeting, and passed on, second-hand and so on; so that "the quality of mercy" *is* "strained," through a great many sieves. The smell, the dirt, the misery, are mostly filtered out through the first medium through which the tale passes, and the colourless, sterilised material which flows on cannot make any one feel badly enough to be a missionary.

It is noticeable that we can bear with great philosophy the sufferings of others, especially if we do not actually see them. But, to be truly and consistently charitable, we must believe that those who speak most harshly of the poor are like the little girl who could not be cured of biting other children until some one bit her. Up to that time she had no idea that it really hurt. It is those who have never been bitten

by the things that hurt the poor who criticise them. One of those who "stood afar off" sat by me one day, at an elegant luncheon, and divided her time between polite inquiries about my work, and impolite remarks about the poor. After worming out of me what the tenement law would give to the latter, in the way of water, plumbing, etc., she expressed herself strongly as to the waste of such things on the poor, who were "filthy," and "would put coal or vegetables in the bath tubs," who "didn't appreciate anything done for them," were "destructive to property," etc.

"But the law *doesn't* give them bath tubs," I tried to say, with no chance to enlarge on the fitness of providing them for those who were "filthy." When her tirade abated I ventured,

"May I ask whether you have gone much among the poor?" "Oh, mercy, no," she answered, in a tone of horror and disgust. "I couldn't bear to mix with that kind of creatures."

And then I couldn't refrain, "I judged so, for I never heard any one speak of them that way, who really knew them."

"Why do you spend your time and strength for that kind of trash?" a friend asked me. "If they were deserving, or appreciate what you do, even, it wouldn't be so bad."

Citizens in the making

Even those who work among them often fail to measure them by fair standards. "You can't believe anything one of them says," complained a girl who taught a mission class. If we must make people see that it is those who are sick, and not the well, who need a physician, may we not also call in an optician?

"The poor are so miserable, and they make every one about them so miserable, isn't it a pity they can't all die off, like flies, in the winter?"

The girl who asked that, in unsmiling jest, was working then to the point of exhaustion, out of sympathy for the poor.

The protest I want to make is against the two commonest but greatest errors. One is, the unfairness of speaking of the poor, in one contemptuous breath, as if they were all of one class, and all degraded. The other is, the assumption that the poor have peculiar faults and vices which make them odious, and differentiate them from all the rest of society.

For the first, let me say that when we come close enough to the Shadow so that we can distinguish tones and values, we see that there are different types and groups, and that some are plunged much deeper than others. Then we notice individuals standing out clearly, and we are struck by the marks of their

unlikeness to the rest, as if they belonged to a higher plane. There are so many among them who have been well born, well educated, reared in comfort, often in luxury. Some have but lately fallen, and are still dazed by the shock. Having lost only fortune, and retaining still their habits of culture, they are no more of the underworld than the spirit of Dante was of the Inferno. In a study of poverty there is little more to say of them than could be said of any victim of a wreck or explosion. But in a study of the poor our first care must be to save these victims from the common scorn, and to ask for them the sympathy that is their due.

Even more pitiful are those who have come, by a slow and hard descent, from wealth to want. Decay is sadder than wreckage. "A decayed gentlewoman" is a product of pinched, painful years. We have found, in our slums, some old couples, once prosperous and happy, who had gradually lost all they had, and were now fighting, with their last feeble effort, against going to the alms-house, and had planned suicide together if the last resort failed.

In stifling garrets, in dark tenements of our cities, are hidden away many tragedies, as sad as any Dickens ever wrote, that will remain sealed until the Day of Judgment unless some friendly hand unclasps the volume. When the story ends with the death of

the aged, the end is a happy event. But if there be a sequel through succeeding generations, it may grow more and more tragic. The outcome of the story will depend largely upon where the scene is laid. In other words, the matter of environment will be an enormous factor in the rise or decline of the family.

All the way down, through lessening degrees of original culture and wealth, to the very lowest strata, we find people who have been thrown under by a sudden turn of the wheel of fortune. Many of them can be helped onto their feet once more. Many are so broken in health or in spirit that they will never rise again.

One can tell, by a certain air, or frost in the air, those who have "seen better days." Often there will be some heirloom left, some picture, or a piece of furniture that tells the tale. The next generation may still retain the furniture, and a trace of the culture, like the worn gilding on a tarnished mirror, but if the children stay in the slums they will be of a different type.

A woman of the second generation of slum dwellers, and of common-place origin, came once to iron for me. There was a thrifty strain in her, from some antecedent, that made a puzzling mixture with her "poor-folksy" air. Thinking to encourage her, I praised her ironing.

"Yes," she said, airily, "I think I do arn pretty well, considerin' I haint arned fer so long. We used to hev a' arn, but now it's gone."

"How do you manage?" I asked, quite puzzled.

"W'y, we jes' fold th' clo'es, an' put 'em in th' trunk. But I *do* think they look better arned," she added.

The next generation will probably wear their clothes both unwashed and unironed.

One of the points I want to emphasise is that several generations of slum environment will produce a slum heredity, and the children will have that to contend with, as well as the slum environment. In our slums are girls who never saw a room properly cleaned, or ate a meal properly cooked, and neither did their mothers or their grandmothers. There was "nothing to do with," of course. They had no proper utensils or materials. There may have been wealth, even nobility, away back in that family, but it "buttered no parsnips," and provided no soap. The use of the right forks comes only by using forks. No matter how many Greek professors grace one's ancestry, or how many clergymen bless it, the descendant will lisp in Billingsgate, if he hears nothing else.

The daily lesson of slum life, visualised, reiterated, of low standards, vile living, obscenity, profanity,

impurity, is bound to be dwarfing and debasing to the children who are in the midst of it. Even in the second generation these influences are blackening and corroding enough to destroy the faint impression of "where mother used to live," and "what father used to do." By the third generation, even that background is lacking.

I cannot enlarge upon the deterioration of families, through successive generations of slum life, without considering the effect of the sub-normal environment upon the normal family, in the case of our working classes. And this makes me boil over again.

The outrage of our American cities is the way we bid for home-seekers, when we have no homes to offer them, after we lure them to come. Our factories scour the country for workers, bring them in, and turn them loose, to find shelter wherever they can. Our business organisations offer bonuses for new factories, bidding for those which bring in the largest number of families. "Another factory! 100 families! More prosperity!" they announce, in big headlines.

And the families? As lightly as a chemist pours drugs from one vial into another, these human beings are transferred from one environment to another. The fact that a city has not already enough decent houses for all its population, and that its poor are

living in sties, causes no one any concern. When the workmen come with their families, many of them have to crowd into filthy, unsanitary tenements with the poor, and subject their children to the companionship of the vicious and degraded. The fact that the working man could afford more rent, and would gladly pay more for a better house, makes no difference. His family must have shelter. He shelters them where he can.

"The workmen have all found homes," we are told.

"Homes"? Where?

One of the saddest sights of the slums is to see the thrifty wife of the working man, with her rosy brood of children, used to country air and sunshine, used to space, privacy, good surroundings, cleanliness, quiet, shut up amid the noise and dirt and confusion, in the gloom of the slum. That is an unusual family that can maintain the sanctity of its home life in the tenements of a bad neighbourhood, where there is no privacy, that can hold the children under strict discipline, if they are too large to shut inside the rooms, and must go to school or to work. If the father be not drawn to the saloon, and the boys and girls to the street, they must be both Spartan and Puritan. The brave fight may be made if the father and mother are spared, to hold control, and provide the bread. But how many working men in our

cities, the records show, fall a prey to tuberculosis, typhoid, pneumonia, and other "house diseases"! How many mothers are beckoned from their little families by the same ghastly finger! Any one who will search the records will find that a startling number of dependent families become so on account of death or prolonged illness of the bread-winner.

And the children?

The ranks of the dependent and delinquent are recruited — in what percentage we ought to know, but any percentage is too large — from the families of the working-men that are brought into our cities and dumped into our dilapidated old death-traps.

And so I say that the responsibility is upon those who import working-men to see that there are decent homes for them when they come, and not to set snares to destroy them and their children.

When we come to consider the lowest strata of the poor, we find defectives, degenerates and their brothers, those who feed our institutions over which the State has care, and who are in turn recruited by the classes just above, as well as by their own offspring. It is these who give to all the poor the stigma of being "filthy," "shiftless," and all the other odious epithets. Here, "at the bottom," we find we are dealing with quantities less variable. We often say

that riches and poverty are only comparative. In its lowest deeps poverty is almost absolute.

"He that is down need fear no fall," except to fall into a pit. Sickness, injury, accident, are the pits the poor dread, and well they may, as our Nurse's Circle found. Now I am reminded that the poor have their own pleasures and enjoyments, and I know that many funny stories are written about certain types. But these are the child-like, irresponsible ones, with natures of cork, who have never grown up, and never will. They can lock the Wolf in the closet, with the Skeleton, for the day, any time, and, following the hurdy-gurdy whither it whines, set off for a merry vagabondage. It is true, there are always humorous things coming up in the discussion of charity cases, odd mistakes and droll conversations. But, thinking them over, with their setting, one finds that they are much like the relief scenes in "Macbeth."

Whatever any one may say of the lowest types of the poor, I hold that all of the faults ascribed to them are due to their being either undeveloped or defective, and the worse the fault the more defectiveness it shows. This is my one plea for those who cannot employ their own advocate, and who need one most. The bold and bad can make their own defence. The sharp and shrewd may find their own

Heredity and environment both doing their worst.
Mother and two children tuberculous. One child feeble-minded

excuses. But for these, who are always absent when they are maligned, let this plea prevail.

It hurts me to hear the tone in which the poor are condemned as "shiftless," or "having a pauper spirit," just as it would if a crowd mocked at a child for its weakness, or laughed at a lame man because he could not run, or a blind man because he stumbled.

The poor *are* lame, maimed, halt, blind, in a way. They may not be defective enough to admit them to an asylum, but they are too defective, mentally and physically, to keep up in the race. They cannot see as we do, and have inhibitions that hold them back even from the good they see.

"Lazy"! Some of them are "born tired," and enter into life without their share of vigour or vitality. Some of their mothers were overworked and under-nourished, perhaps scrofulous. Some of them, themselves, are over-worked and under-fed, or have lost their efficiency through illness or exposure. And they breathe poisonous air, sleeping in unventilated quarters, six or twelve in a room. They drink sewage-poisoned water, that makes people lethargic and dull.

As to the poor — many, not all of them — being "filthy," we must admit the fact, but we insist on the reason. As to their "preferring to be filthy," I

have said enough in other chapters of the heroic efforts some of them make to be clean. I wonder, as I see them carrying water so far, and up and down stairs, how they have the heart to do it. I wonder how many of us would try as hard to be clean. One marvels at the persistence of the conception of purity in our slums, and marvels, too, that the seven plagues have not swept the poor, and us along with them, off the earth.

It is so easy to account for the faults of the poor. It is their virtues that are unaccountable. We find many cases of heroism, in their struggle against desperate odds. The generosity of the poor is proverbial, and seems to be in inverse proportion to their possessions. It is a common thing to find a family giving up one of their rooms to another family. We knew of a family in two rooms giving one to a woman who was dying with tuberculosis. It is not unusual for one or more waifs to be taken into a home, even though the meagre supply of food and clothing is already insufficient.

A most remarkable case was that of a woman who adopted the deformed idiot boy I spoke of seeing on my first round of the slums. He died some months ago, and we heard then the strange story of his life. His mother died when he was a little child and he was adopted by a friend of hers who was no rela-

tion, or, at least, only the half aunt of his step father. The boy grew to be a terrible burden, being large and heavy, and unable to walk, or to do anything for himself, and had to be cared for and wheeled about like a baby, even in his teens. Yet the woman clung to him, and gave him the most devoted care, refusing to go to her family, with marvellous self-denial. By the time he died she was a physical wreck, completely worn out.

As I write these things there comes over me again that feeling that always overwhelms me when I look out upon an audience of well-dressed, well-fed, well-housed people, and note the sheen of silk and the glisten of jewels. How can we put the story of Poverty's Children into the vocabulary of these Children of the Sunshine? How can we explain to those who have to diet, as a penalty for high living, or who have to take tonics to create an appetite, what real hunger means? So with the fears and anxieties, and all the rest of the troubles of the poor.

The same words do not mean the same thing to them and to us. "Safety"— that is a thing we rarely think of, except when we travel. In our homes we tuck our children into soft white beds, bolt doors and windows, and, with a comfortable thought, in the background, of Providence, our good man, and the police, sleep with no thought of fear.

I know of mothers who have to lock their little children into their tenement rooms when they go to work for the day. Others have told me that they have to hurry home, after washing, for fear their little girls will get home first, from school, in terror lest they fall into the hands of one of the low drunken lodgers in the place. There are mothers who tremble when an ambulance or a patrol wagon rumbles by, and who hide their little ones under the ragged coverlet when the noise of heavy feet on the stair tells that a carousal is over or a fight is on. And if the daughter steals in later, off the street, they are thankful that she comes in at all.

"But the lowest types, not having our sensibilities, cannot suffer so keenly," people say.

If they have not our refined anguish, neither have they our higher consolations. Superstition shadows the poor with countless fears, as we find at every turn. Some writers dwell strongly on the paralysing terror of want, the fear that the Wolf will actually end them. Do they fear it so, those half brothers of Romulus, who have known only that same shaggy foster mother? Or do they think of her as Hood's seamstress thought of Death—"I hardly fear his terrible shape, it seems so like my own." The higher types do show this fear, with an equal dread of the almshouse. The thought of a pauper burial preys

Poverty's children

upon them, too. Some of them will take us to a little battered trunk, and show us, folded away, the clean sheets, the coarse shroud, and the small sum of money, saved, though they starve, so they "can be put away right."

The matter of "sensibilities" is made so much of that one would be led to believe, almost, that the question of the shabbiness of the poor is a question of poor taste, and not of a poor purse. "Pore folks has pore ways," of necessity. But the discussion of the ragged children over the dress in the shop window was significant. "If it's pretty, it costs, and if it costs, we caint git it."

Our Flower Mission girls had many tales to tell of the craving of the poor for beauty, for finer things, often for higher things. One of them made a conquest of a group of girls in a tenement neighbourhood. Their admiration reached the point of wanting to copy her dress, her hat, and her coiffure, and she actually took down her beautiful hair to show them how she arranged it.

Girls who live in the dismal slum and work in the dingy factory, going to and fro past the brilliant shops, seem to have a special hunger for the bright pretty things they cannot afford. Some feed their souls on beads, cheap lace and pathetic millinery, as inadequately as they do their bodies on "sodies" or

popcorn balls. Many of them acquire remarkable taste, and develop a desire to be "stylish," trying to keep as close as possible to the heels of fashion, which, with their limited means, often makes them as grotesque as our actual shadows.

A girl who was shivering, coatless, in a freezing wind, thankfully received a good and comfortable wrap. She put it on joyfully, then looked it up and down with an expression of uncertainty. "Is it in style?" she asked anxiously.

The instalment store man knows full well of the craving of the slum dwellers for brightness and beauty. He sends shiny things and rugs of glowing colours to their doors, and they cannot resist them, any more than they could resist holding out cold hands to a fire. Having no idea of value or economy, they take these articles, at enormous prices, perhaps to lose both the coveted treasure and their money, when they fail to make payments. But we can't blame them. If I had to live in one of those gruesome holes I would go without bread for a red rug.

While I am answering for the poor, let me speak of the "pauper spirit." It is the spirit that the skilful worker tries to supplant by pride and independence, but unless there has once been a spark, it is hard to start a flame. And why should one have pride, when he has nothing to be proud of?

"My grandfather was a squire," a poor woman said proudly, and at the word all her ragged children held their heads a little higher. We knew that they might go bare, but they would never beg. But those who have had no grandfather, or, sadder still, no father, should not have so much expected of them.

The pauper spirit, when exhibited by shrewd people, of a higher type, is quite a different spirit from that of the born pauper.

"I can't think of asking charity," said a woman who had been "working" many of our generous citizens, "so I came to ask your help. You have influence and affluence, and I need your aid." Those were her exact words.

Another appeal, by letter, from a distant town, expressed confidence in my generous and noble heart (as per some newspaper account) and, explaining the needs of the young lady of the house, asked for a set of parlour furniture. Every one in public life receives such appeals from unknown people.

With those who are really helpless, weak and ignorant, the pauper spirit seems to be a touching confidence in a higher power. "If the people that 'tends to things could see the awful place I live in, they'd surely do something about it," said one old woman who came to ask for help with her rent.

"The pauper spirit"—what is it, in such as these, but the spirit in which the child cries for food, the spirit in which we make most of our prayers, those that are not communion or thanksgiving, but simply appeals for material blessings?

We all agree that if any trait belongs exclusively to the poor it should be this one. Yet we find it in all walks of life. What traits can be found, then, that mark only the poor?

If we try by elimination to discover their peculiar faults and vices, we find none that are not shared by some members of the wealthy and middle class. Going over the catalogue of their reproaches, we cannot find any that can even be applied to all the poor. "Lazy, shiftless, improvident, spendthrift, intemperate, lacking in honour, in honesty," these do not differentiate the poor, even those to whom these epithets apply; they only show their fellowship with the weak and low of other classes.

After all, nothing seems completely to differentiate the poor but poverty. We find no adjectives to fit them, as a whole, only those of which Want is the mother. "Miserable" covers many; "shabby," most, and I am sadly aware that, in a large majority of minds, "disagreeable" includes them all.

Shadows, they are, indeed; not remote, as we may think of them, but here, at our side, at our back,

flitting across our path, weaving about us the dark web of their own misfortunes.

But because we are ignorant about the poor, we need not assume that they know as little about us.

It is surprising, sometimes, what close track they keep of us. In one of our largest tenements I found one day an old retainer of my mother's, who used to wash my tiny frocks, and had been a valued servant in the days of her strength. We had lost sight of her, and it was a shock to find her there. She was as delighted to see me as if I were kin, and asked about each member of the connection, commenting upon their recent doings with so much accuracy that I was amazed. "How do you keep track of them all?" I asked, knowing she never saw them. "Oh, we take a newspaper here, and read about all of you," she answered. I found that all the tenants contributed to the subscription for one paper, which was passed about from hand to hand until it was worn out. It gave me a new sensation, that of turning the field glass the other way.

How do we look to them?

It is a good thing to cross over the line and take a look at ourselves, and at our belongings, from their viewpoint. How rich, how blest we feel, when we come back to our own homes! I always breathed a sigh of gratitude, when I got home, that I didn't

have to wash for a large family, and have a drunken husband who beat me.

I have always brought two other thoughts home from those visits. One is, "How much alike we all are!" The other is, "What would I do if I had to live in that dreadful place, and could do no better for my children?" And that is the only fair way to consider the question. What *would* we do, if any of us had such a fate? If *we* had to be crowded and stifled in dark rooms, to breathe foul air and choking odours, to fight filth, to endure noise, to drink polluted water, to be seized upon by disease?

Ah, if that were *our* baby that sickened and wasted and moaned and died! Would we join with those of thc sullen brow who are "destructive," because, as they tell us, wrathfully, they'd "like to git even with the landlord"? Or would we be one of the larger number who give up the struggle, hopelessly, overcome by that deadliest of all inhibitions of the poor, "What's the use"? We hear that often in the tenements. "What's the use to be careful of dropping ashes and garbage on the stairs, or throwing suds on the walk, when the other tenants do it?" "What's the use to scrub, when the grime won't come out, and the soot keeps pouring in?" "What's the use to take keer of a house when the landlord won't fix the locks or steps or roof?"

"If it were *our* baby——"

New-comers to a tenement must be of strong fibre if they resist such pressure. In this connection one recalls the most frequent objection made to housing reform, that the poor would misuse and wouldn't "appreciate" conveniences if they had them. A chorus of those whose model tenements are now blessing the poor will contradict this statement. In any place and to any extent that it might be true, it is a startling comment upon our civilisation and the severest condemnation of us who have not taught them what is proper and decent.

I trust that those friends of the poor who object to the use of the word "slum," because "it is such a reproach to the poor, who can't help living there," will be satisfied with these statements. The slum is not a reproach to the poor, but to the landlords, to the public, to us. Let us call things by their right names, and place the blame where it belongs, and it will hasten the day of the deliverance of the poor.

It has been my dearest hope to win for the poor a closer view and a kinder opinion, yet I fear these recitals will not tempt any one to go and see for themselves how they actually live.

"I went once, and I'll never go again, because it made me so blue," said one dainty lady.

"And it's way across the town, in such a dis-

agreeable part, among the railroad tracks and mean streets, where it's bad to take an auto," others say.

"My business never calls me into those districts where one would find slums," men tell us.

It is a restful delusion, but slums are not all across the town. There may be some families living in squalor in the alley back of one's office. Men may pass the respectable fronts of these places every day, and they may even be on a rear street, near their own homes.

"I'm afraid of bringing home contagion to my children," says the devoted mother.

"There is no need to worry about bringing home contagion," we say, "for the children will bring it home to you. They will acquire other things, too, from the children of the slums whom they meet on the street and in the public schools, other things that they will not come to you with, for you would not allow them to repeat the words and tales they hear."

We may as well face the fact that so long as we and our children are at large in a community, we shall be in danger from all the evils that are also at large in that community, even those that emanate from the lowest and vilest sources. We might shut our children up in our homes, but even there they are not safe, for they must breathe the common supply of air, and the air, breath, gases and vapours of

the whole community have been pooled. And, though we may be able to exclude from our homes the moth, the house-fly, the agent and the burglar, we cannot exclude germs. They ride in on the trails of our gowns, they are tracked in on our shoes. They come in food and drink, in washes, in clothing, in wares. They come by messengers and carriers and servants, as do the influences of evil.

So, if we expect to remain in a community and not share its evils, we must isolate our entire household, provide disinfected air for them to breathe, and allow them to eat, drink and wear only boiled things. We must not allow them to look out of the window, at bill boards, etc., nor listen to the songs of the street, and we must take out the 'phone. But we need not go to the slums if we do not wish. They will come to us, and, wreaking upon us the Revenge of Neglected Things, they will avenge the poor.

Yet it is not vengeance the poor are wanting. They want only help, and they do not dream how much we could give them, besides alms. They stand afar off, and look at us, beseeching, too timid to knock at our forbidding portals. But the White Death, who has been their bedfellow, is not abashed by any grandeur, or stopped by any bar. He comes straight from the filthy hovel to our homes, and peers in upon us through the windows, while we feast and

laugh. He pushes open the door, and strides in, and, sitting down at our very fireside, looks into the faces of our best beloved, so that they cry out and die!

The revenge of the slums falls not only upon the individual, but upon the city, in all its interests and activities.

It falls upon the city in losses of lives and money, taxes paid for pauperism, for crime, for the cost of disease.

It falls upon the civic organisations that ignore the slums, by the blight of their very ugliness and meanness, which frightens renters and buyers from the neighbourhood, and injures all adjacent property.

It falls upon them, too, by breeding a class of citizens that are a dead weight to civic progress.

It falls upon the business interests by killing or weakening valuable working men, whose loss is felt in traffic, trade and manufacture.

It falls upon the churches by raising up those who defeat and defy them, by lowering the moral tone of the whole community, and increasing the resistance to the powers of good. These are the ways in which we are scourged by the slums, and until we learn our lesson we must continue to suffer, as well as the poor.

"The Poor"! There passes before me a proces-

A wretched interior, crowded with many families

Behind the bill-board

sion of those whom I have seen in the alms-houses, the reformatories, the tenements, the hovels of our country. With downcast, hopeless faces, with faltering steps, with groping hands, they file past. Some are ragged, filthy, scarred, diseased. Some are pallid, starved, pitiful. Side by side, step by step with them, march those who are of different blood and birth. One holds out beggar hands, one covers his face in bitter humiliation. Grey as a procession of shadows, grey as a drift of ashes, and with ashes upon their heads — that symbol of burnt out life and hope — they move across my vision, and are lost in the darkness.

"We must cease to cherish such as these or we shall have a race of weaklings and degenerates," we are warned.

Yet the divine plan, as given to us, is that the poor shall be delivered. And He who healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the lepers, and even raised the dead, gave the poor into our care with the assurance, "Greater things than these shall ye do."

Greater than these!

Shall they be in the way of prevention?

CHAPTER VII

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

COURAGE

The world is for the brave at heart,
  And Time waits on their will.
The days draw nigh thy high desire,
  Be thou but patient still.

And every tide shall bear thee on,
  And every wind shall fill
Thy sail, to help thee to thy goal,
  Have thou but courage still.

— A. F. B.

"If it hadn't been for my light, Irish heart, I'd have been dead long ago," a woman of many sorrows once said to my mother. The same might have been said about my mother herself. It is well that she passed on to her children this happy Celtic strain, along with her feeling for the unfortunate, or the latter might have sunk us with the submerged.

Year after year the demands upon me grew heavier, as church work, charity work and civic work made irresistible appeals. "It's a case of frenzied philanthropy!" I told my sister, describing the whirlpool rapids into which I had been drawn. Following the Nurse's Circle, the Friendly Visitors, the

Flower Mission and the Working Girls' Association, had come the Civic Improvement Association, the Monday Night Club, and, growing out of that, the Anti-Tuberculosis Society.

Truly, I had come far along the White Road that led from the Big Gate! And yet I never got more than an hour's journey away from my home, for the road wound around and past it. I could stand on my threshold and look down the rocky ravines, upon those who were beaten and robbed and left to die. I looked out — the scene called me. I looked in — the warmth and brightness gave me courage to go.

Whenever it was possible, I summoned the clubs and circles to our home, so that the family might have part in them. And so, though my work took me out into every avenue of public activity, these all centred in my home.

What an outlook I had now from my own threshold! What an outlook any woman has, in these days, who is willing to see! And how, in perspective, things assumed their right proportions! A thousand little worries fell away from me. The great, simple, vital facts of life rose above the trifles. Things that would last and wear and help, things of first value, took first rank. Looking out over the social wreckage, I realised the sanctity of the home and the rights of childhood more than ever before.

It was not only by going among different classes of people that my view had been broadened. There had come much enlightenment from those men and women with whom I worked. From each one I learned some vital fact or some bit of valuable method. It all went into my equipment, which I was daily learning to value more highly.

The same eager group formed the centre of all our circles, and if I were to tell the story of my own experiences, my story would tell theirs, too. In fact, it might pass for the story of any one of those hundreds of men and women all over our country who are trying to help lift the burdens of humanity.

I have watched the development of many social workers, and it seems to me that they go through all the stages of an eruptive disease. First, the knowledge of evil gets into the system, like an infection. Then there is the chill of horror, followed by the fever of indignation. One is deathly sick at heart, and, at a certain stage, breaks out into numerous activities. At last the light cases get well, and are thereafter immune. But the serious cases have a long fever, and never again have quite the same resisting power.

There is a time when one feels overwhelmed by personal responsibility. At this time many overdo and break down. Further along, one is oppressed by

the feeling that all he can do is only a drop in the bucket, and that "reform is a matter of a lifetime." At this stage many despair and give up. Those who can go steadily on with the work when they are sick of it, can keep up courage when enthusiasm burns low, and inspire others when they are worn out themselves,— these are they whose work will count.

When the pressure of the world's need begins to be heavy upon us, we are apt to feel aggrieved at the slow and perverse generation that refuses to care or to help. We are like Kipling's Horse that was bowed with the burden of cleaning up the muss of creation, and appealed to the Camel for help, with the plea:

> "The world is so new, and all,
> And there is so much to do, and all."

To which the Camel, lazily stretched in the shade, replied, "Humph!"

The group of men and women who had tried again and again to plant a permanent civic improvement organisation in our city appealed once more to the public. But the public said "Humph!" to our plans for a city beautiful.

When we opened playgrounds and a swimming pool, the Camel was glad to send its children to splash and to play. That didn't satisfy us then, but

now we can see that some of the little camels are growing up to help in civic improvement.

We had planned such great things for the city, and we asked it to come to our meetings and listen to our lectures.

The city! We might as well have expected the courthouse to get up off its foundations and amble down to hear us. But the papers took up our work, with that keen intuition by which the press divines those things that are for the public good, and they magnified our efforts an hundredfold.

It was the Fourth of July when we opened the school playgrounds. Different members of our board of directors were assigned to do the opening, and one school ground was given to me, to open as I pleased. The twins helped me, beating the drum, carrying a flag, and helping form the children in procession. I wouldn't have had them miss it, for it was a chance to take part in civic work such as seldom offers. And unless the children see us doing things for our city and state, of what avail are our patriotic precepts? And how can we expect them to be public-spirited and to do a citizen's part unless we show them how?

The children of that neighbourhood were out in force, and we had some rousing games, a good play together, and then a very short and very plain talk

about good citizenship. I was particular to have the accompaniment of the drum, with its stirring roll, to some of our patriotic songs. A brass band would have suited me better.

If we could have had pink lemonade and gingerbread, followed by sky rockets, I should have felt still better satisfied. Anything was not to be despised that would leave a pleasant memory of the occasion, for, by psychological laws, in after years any one of these factors should call up all the others, in turn, and end with a general patriotic thrill.

The opening of the swimming pool was planned for similar results, and it was my joy to help arrange its spectacular effects. At the given signal a "wireless" touch sent off a charge of dynamite, away down the river, with a most satisfying boom. Then, with hundreds of boys and girls looking on, and Mayor Nolan at the post of honour, impressive words were spoken, and red, white and blue flowers strewn upon the water of the great pool. Crash! went the band, with the "Red, White and Blue," and a great chorus of little voices took up the song. It was a stirring scene.

There was something more solemn in the ceremony with which we opened our anti-tuberculosis camp. Boehne Camp, we named it, for the generous donor. The nurses took part, in a symbolic "opening," as a

poem was read. Then came "the sprinkling of the lintels," in imitation of the ancient Hebrew ceremony, with an invocation that the Angel of Death might pass over the place. This was done by Rabbi Merrit, one of the earnest promoters, and we brought a crystal chalice of sparkling water from the pure spring at the camp, into which he dipped a bunch of herbs for the sprinkling. Then the Episcopal minister, Dr. Cross, who had helped from the beginning, read a ritual service, and laid a blessing upon the place, and the camp was given to all sects and all people.

Any civic worker will realise that these ceremonies crowned the hard work of a number of years. During these years Miss Rein had gone to another field. Marcus C. Fagg (now in charge of child-saving in Florida) had taken her place. One of the first fruits of his energetic régime was a Monday Night Club, made up of about twenty-five representative men and women, from different civic and philanthropic circles in the city, and including some of our city officials. For quite a while this met at our home.

Here was a new school for me, and I mention it because of the help its training gave me for broader work. It was the best possible experience to be chairman of the lecture course committee, having, at times, to fill every post from advance agent to prop-

No. 1, front of tenement row; dark, damp and unsanitary
No. 2, rear of same, No playground but street, alleys, ashbins and sheds

erty man. It generally fell to my lot to make the business arrangements with the speakers, attend to the church announcements, furnish newspaper articles, distribute circulars, place the posters, and secure halls and janitors. Sometimes meeting a train, often entertainment of the speaker, and on occasions his introduction, devolved upon me.

What sympathy it gives me now for those who must arrange with, meet, and find audiences for *me!* With what alacrity I say, "Oh, don't worry about how large an audience you'll have. It's hard to interest people in these subjects."

The opportunity this position gave me to know the fine men and women we brought to lecture was well worth the work. Among them were some of the leaders of our state charities' conference into which I had been drawn for several years, that yearly school of philanthropy whose inspiration I acknowledge with gratitude.

There was Ernest P. Bicknell, who has since been called to larger and larger service, and whose great heart is now bearing the brunt of world disaster.

There was Amos W. Butler, father of that remarkable system of laws for the defective, delinquent and dependent, to which the nation points.

Dr. J. N. Hurty, far-famed, with his sharp, fearless lance, always on the frontier line of reform.

There was Alexander Johnson, that walking school of philanthropy, beloved in many states, who in one lecture took us to the mountain top of his vision, and set us down five years ahead of where we were before.

There were these, and other men of whom the state is proud. We had men and women, too, from other states to lecture to us. But better than the lecture was the quiet talk with them, afterward, about all those things I was burning to know.

We had a housing committee in our Monday Night Club, for the homes of the poor had been on my mind since I first saw them, and year by year had grown the conviction that public interest must be aroused and, somehow, better conditions secured. Mr. Fagg was quite as positive as Miss Rein had been that the condition of our poor could never be permanently improved until their surroundings were bettered. Every effort I made to help them convinced me of this. Some years afterward I was called to a town to help start a housing movement, and was told that both the charities secretary and the district nurse were threatening to give up and leave unless the housing conditions of the poor could be improved, feeling that their work was hopeless and their strength wasted, without that.

And we were finding out then that our eager efforts to alleviate the wretchedness of the poor ended in —

alleviation. The stream of misery flowed on, unchecked, and seemed to be growing larger. We had been doing almost nothing to prevent the evils whose ravages cost so much to repair. From every quarter there was borne in upon me the definite conviction that I could do more for child welfare and for civic welfare, more to fight tuberculosis and typhoid, more to prevent vice and to promote social purity, by bettering the *homes* of our city than by all the varied lines of effort that had engrossed me. I began to notice how the threads of the social problems, the civic problems and even the business problems of a city are all tangled up with the housing problem, and to realise that *housing reform is fundamental.*

From that time on I began to concentrate my energies upon this one thing, which has become my life work.

The idea was forming in my mind that nothing but a housing law would ever enable us to get relief from the conditions that caused our poor so much misery. But I had not thought far enough to see by what process or by what people it would be obtained. It certainly did not occur to me that I should have a hand in it. "The people that 'tends to things" would do it, some time, I supposed.

One morning, picking up the *Courier*, I saw that a building ordinance was about to be presented to the

council. It occurred to me that this was the time and the opportunity to get some tenement regulations, by having them included in this ordinance. A sudden impulse came to me to go myself at once to Mayor Boehne and ask his help in getting the necessary provisions into the ordinance.

If ever there was a good mayor, it was John T. Boehne. A man of broad policies and strong integrity, who had made a record by his determined law enforcement, it required no courage to approach him. Within an hour I was sitting in his office telling him the story of our poor and their great need of protection by law.

"Can't we have a few sections in that ordinance that will regulate tenements?" I asked, in conclusion.

"Yes," he said kindly. "You go home and prepare the proper sections, modelled after those of other cities, and I will see that they are introduced as a part of the ordinance."

Home I hurried, with a singing heart. Off flew a letter to New York, one to Chicago, and others to smaller places. Back came bulky packages that I opened with eagerness, and sat down in the midst of my housework to examine.

How big those tenement laws were — a whole book! I turned the pages curiously, and read at random: "In all non-fireproof tenement houses hereafter

erected, fore and aft stud partitions which rest directly over each other shall run through the wooden floor beams, etc."

"Well, of all things," I exclaimed in dismay, and called the family to hear more:

"No tenement house hereafter erected shall occupy more than ninety per centum of a corner lot, etc."

It was a distinct disappointment to me. Was that the kind of thing that tenement laws required? I wanted to give the poor some comforts, some conveniences. I glanced through the book, and didn't see a word about anything that would make the wretched old houses look any better or more homelike. True, there was something about "repairs," but there was nothing about paint or paper, and shacks could be patched up and yet be just as forbidding and desolate as before.

But a careful reading of the parts applying to old houses was more encouraging. After all, I found that tenement laws require light and air, fire protection, water, drainage, sewerage, repairs, prevention of dampness, prevention of overcrowding and all those unsanitary conditions that caused us so much trouble in our tenements.

My spirits rose as I read, for I could see the dark rooms and the sour yards, the old vaults and cisterns

disappearing, and with them, tuberculosis and typhoid. If that law had been prepared by some one who lived in our city it could not have hit our slums more squarely.

Now, as to the new buildings — what pages and pages about space, "percentage of lots," "courts," and "air-shafts!" We never heard of these latter things in Indiana, where we had "yards" all around our houses.

Just about as odd and uncalled for, I doubt not, does such a law look to a member of the legislature when he sees it for the first time, if he reads it only once, or half skims it over.

It was well that in the same hour that I realised the things a law could not do in regulating the conditions of the poor, I realised that those things a law could do were the most vital of all. I could see, now, that the things I had been aching for, many of them, were the things that city planners give, and the "garden city" people. I should have been one of these.

But the more I studied, the more plainly I could see that the law was just what Evansville needed, to cure our old slums, and to prevent new ones from forming. City planning would have saved some of our troubles, and much ugliness, and, even now, could save the new parts of our city. But it would not

cut windows in dark rooms, or drain wet cellars, or make landlords connect water mains with old houses.

"You cannot easily engraft beauty upon rottenness," and housing reform was needed to cut out all the rottenness, before a City Beautiful could be achieved. And, after all, I could see that it was fundamental to all the better and higher things, not only health but comfort, nay, even decency. Light and air and water — that meant cleanliness and health, and the graces later, with grass and flowers. Safety, privacy, the isolation of families,— that meant safeguarding the home and the children.

Then, it was to be done. The task lay before me of extracting, out of the material sent me, the regulations that should fit Evansville.

"Not too long," and "make it simple," our housing committee said. But, a simple housing law!

Those who have helped prepare housing codes for our different States will have a vision of what it meant to prepare a limited number of sections for a city of 70,000. Of course, one soon finds out that, in such laws, every other consideration pales and dwindles beside that of space requirements. One finds, too, that these laws are prepared as accurately and carefully as a doctor's prescription, so that the change of one dimension in a "court" alters everything else.

Yet there had to be many changes. I sat, for hours, with a puckered brow and fixed eye, pencil and paper in hand, trying to see all the things that would happen to a room, a yard, a hall, a "court," by given variations on the prescribed dimensions. All the time my reverence grew for the man, whoever he might be, who had been able to write the first tenement law, and to know what and how much of everything ought to be required.

After I had done my best, in cutting, trimming, and adding, I called in our housing committee, and they puckered their brows over the same sections, and over other questions that had bothered me:

"Would this law give the poor the relief we sought?"

"Was it fair to the property owner?"

"Were we making stringent enough regulations?"

"If we made them more stringent, could we pass the ordinance?"

"If we passed it, would it stand?"

Finally it was completed. J. E. Igleheart, one of our committee, gave it the proper legal form, and I took it to the mayor.

It was a comprehensive little bill, though more than the "few sections" I was to prepare, and less than the larger cities had. It went into the building ordinance, which was already a document of enor-

Day shifts and night shifts used the same beds

mous bulk. In due time, the council took up the matter, and as promptly put the whole thing back into a safe pigeon-hole, where it lay, gathering dust and anathemas, for many months. Later, the men of our committee took a copy of our tenement regulations to the council meeting, one night, and quietly put it through, as a separate ordinance. But that was long afterward, when we had almost given up hope of its ever going through, and had taken up a campaign for a state tenement law.

While the bulky roll of the ordinance was reposing in the pigeon-hole, the State Conference of Charities met at Evansville. I had chosen, "The Homes of the Poor," for the paper I was asked to prepare, and told all I knew about our slums. That evening we gave a reception in our home to the out-of-town guests, and I met many who afterwards helped me, some of them prominent politicians. During the days of the conference I took every opportunity to discuss the need of a state housing law with leading members of the conference. Every one of the charities secretaries believed in its necessity and told me of conditions in their cities, like those in Evansville. Some of the others thought the time was not yet ripe. Miss Rein, and C. S. Grout, of Indianapolis, two of the most experienced secretaries in the state, strongly insisted upon the necessity of a state law.

I felt that if we could prove the need for such a law, the leaders of the conference would take it up and put it through. I appealed to some of them and was much disappointed that they did not promise at once to do it, but parried my requests with an indulgent smile. One session of the legislature taught me why they smiled. But, surely, if we could furnish proof that the other cities of our state had slums, and could show their devastating effects, some organisation, civic or philanthropic, would attend to procuring the law. I determined to get all the necessary information, and the advice of housing experts, then to compile different housing laws, and find some organisation that would secure the passage of a state law. Somehow, I never doubted that it could and would be done.

The National Charities' Conference met that year at Richmond, Va. It seemed providential to me that, as the programme showed, they were to have a round table on housing. I attended solely for that meeting, and to talk with the housing experts who would be there.

I can never forget the feeling of infinitesimal smallness that overwhelmed me when I asked my first timid question, at that round table. Dr. Walter Lindley, who presided, lifted my question, with great kindness, out of the vast silence. Then E. T. Hartman,

of the Massachusetts Civic League, answered it in an illuminating speech. Later he gave me an hour of patient answers to eager questions, which I set down in a note book.

How little I knew, and how much I had to ask! I went away with a new light on legislative methods, and with a list of books and pamphlets on housing to read, also much other information that made me feel rich indeed.

At this conference I again met Mr. Grout, and he advised me of the investigation his organisation was making into the housing conditions of Indianapolis.

"The Commercial Club are taking part in the investigation, and are looking about for a suitable housing ordinance," he said. "I advise you to get in touch with them and interest them in the movement for a state law."

Home once more, I rushed off letters hither and yon, for laws and books and pamphlets.

First, I wrote to Jacob Riis. Then and later he sent me letters of such cheer and encouragement that I have kept them to inspire future generations. Our family has always understood that if the house should take fire they must save the twins first, and then those letters.

Mr. Riis gave me some sound advice, and then referred me to Lawrence Veiller, as "the one who knew

all about housing laws." It was long afterward that I learned that Mr. Veiller was the author of the New York tenement law of 1901 and knew of his yearly battle at Albany, where he has fought through legislature after legislature the steps that were necessary to perfect the New York law. Some day our country will appreciate that this long war has been for the homes of the nation, as was the Battle with the Slum, fought so nobly by Mr. Riis.

The National Housing Association was not yet formed, but Lawrence Veiller answered most generously my appeals for information. Absorbing as much as I was able — for housing intelligence comes gradually — and following along as well as I could, at long distance, I set about the drafting of a state tenement law, which should be "not too long," and yet contain all the vital elements of the other laws in our country.

If only Mr. Veiller's model housing law, or even his model tenement law had been written then, what work and worry it would have saved!

Finally, with some changes, I settled on the parts we had taken for our Evansville ordinance, Mr. Igleheart went over it, and saw it was "air tight and water tight," and the draft was ready to submit to all the tests that practical business men would apply to it. It got them!

One other detail, not to be neglected, was the examining of the Indiana statutes, to see that we had not already some law on the subject.

I determined to satisfy myself on this subject, so as to be sure that no obscure enactment would be overlooked. So, repairing to the law library at the courthouse, I scrutinised every page of index and hunted down, with finger on line, every word that might conceal a multiple dwelling in its content, and assured myself that Indiana would have nothing to say if her tenements were built fifty stories high, without a single window in one of them.

It came to me with something of a shock that the poor in our state had no legal right to light and air; in fact, no tenant had, only those persons who owned enough ground to insure light and air to their dwellings.

The next step was to get sufficient proof of the need for the law, in a form that we could present.

With no organisation, and no funds, a scientific survey of the towns and cities of the state was, of course, out of the question. But I knew Evansville by heart. Indianapolis was making its own survey, and we must simply get the best information we could in regard to the other cities. The best I could do was to send a questionnaire to all the charities secretaries in the state, asking certain facts about the

housing conditions in their towns, for minute descriptions of a number of their tenements, and photographs of their slum quarters. The charities secretaries entered heartily into the campaign. They appreciated, more than any one else, what bad housing meant to the poor, and gave then, as they are still giving, the best support that housing reform has.

Their reports showed that all the larger cities, most of the towns, and many of the villages contained slums. There were whole slum villages, where miners lived, or quarrymen, in "company houses." There were little settlements and suburbs of shanties and shacks, where the poorest lived. The worst one was a shack settlement for rag pickers, built on the dumps, where the people ate garbage, and degradation was extreme.

In certain parts of the state the immigrant problem made desperate complications. Mill workers, coming in hordes, lived in herds. Day shifts and night shifts used the same beds. "Hunyaks" were crowded together, twelve to twenty in two rooms, kennelled like beasts, in dark, filthy rooms, stifling with foul air, without water or any of the decencies, — and paying three prices for sub-let rooms, that was the worst shame of it.

Some towns had a startling number of dark rooms. The Indianapolis survey showed 1,100 within a radius

The common scandal of all our States

of a mile. But little towns that were building handsome flats and were even called "model cities," had dark rooms in these flats.

With few exceptions, the towns of the state gave their poor no water, drainage or sewer connections. All housed the poor in their worst old shacks, hovels, tenements, warehouses, stables or sheds. There was the same tale of unsanitary conditions everywhere, wet, mouldy cellars, damp floors and the rest.

But why should I go into more detail? These conditions are the common scandal of all our states, and if any one who reads this chapter will start in a straight line from his city building, in any direction, go a few blocks, and turn up the first stairway leading from the street, in any solid row of buildings, he is pretty apt to find some surprises in the way of living conditions. Or, let him go down some of the alleys in the business blocks, and further out, about the ragged edges of the town. Our photographs could be passed around in any company, in any city, and very few who would see them could say that they were not taken from some of their own back streets.

We had plenty of proof that the time was "ripe for a tenement law," but we had to have something to show to the legislature in proof of Evansville's condition. Nothing is so conclusive as photographs, and I ransacked the city to find the worst houses.

Dr. M. A. Farr, our Methodist minister, a member of our housing committee and one of the friendly visitors, was an expert photographer, and he, too, knew these places by heart. He got some "speaking likenesses"— strong language they would have spoken, if they could. Then I took my whole collection, from all the cities, mounted them on large cards, and put sketches and suggestive titles, in ink, on the margin. Over one old death trap I put a great skeleton, with arm outstretched above it, and the words "Death keeps watch over this house." Five black coffin shapes were drawn in a row beneath a house that had a record of five deaths from tuberculosis in a short time. I drew a black devil peeping out from a saloon that had families living over it. It made a very striking set of posters.

No reports were available from the little towns, and one August morning I started off on a traction line, going to the end and stopping off at every place on the way back.

It was an odd experience. Some towns had only one street, along the railroad, but there was hardly one in which patient search would not find one or more typical slum dwellings, at the end of the row of houses, or hidden back in the brush. Sometimes it was a cluster of hovels, sometimes a tenement, off by itself, "a ragged beggar, sunning," swarming with

people, and with conditions that would make a New York tenement blush.

These various lines of work had occupied most of the summer. At the same time I read everything I could get on housing. Then I went back to Jacob Riis' books, to get the spirit of his prophecy. "Fifty years ago, the slums of New York resembled those of our larger western cities to-day," he tells us, with the warning, "Head off the slums!"

There came to me a vision of my State, as though it were spread out before me, with its rapidly growing cities and pretty little towns. In fifty years those black slum spots we had found would have spread beyond all control. The land would grow in value, speculators would be crowding houses in on side and back yards, spoiling the beauty of the streets, and shutting out the sunlight and air for all time. Once built up, space is rarely retrieved.

And in the larger cities — my heart sank at the thought! In fifty years *we* would have horrors of congestion, of decay. The cancer spots of slums would have eaten out the hearts of our cities, and their poison would have run through all their arteries.

It is only six years since then, but in that brief time I have seen some of the things I feared come to pass in our unregulated towns. In the two for which we obtained our first tenement law, the enormous

increase in tenement building, and our experience with a few land owners, shows what would have happened if no limit had been set to crowding.

With every book I read, with every report and photograph that came in from our towns, the vision became more vivid. It lay spread out before me — my State, dotted with growing towns, set in such a vastness of field and forest that crowding seemed criminal!

At night I lay sleepless, the darkness thronged with faces I had seen in our tenements, multiplied, repeated, "even as a broken mirror" multiplies. There were burning eyes of the consumptives, hopeless faces of the mothers, and white, moaning babies. And these were no images of fancy! I had known them by name, here in our own city. And all the other cities and towns had their poor! What would they have in fifty years?

What was the immolation of one life, to all that misery? One could have dashed it down cheerfully to save all that, as men do, fighting for their country.

There sounded a bugle call, to take up arms for my State, and every power of my being leaped to the summons. The call of one's country, the call of humanity — they are both the call of God. Henceforth, wherever that voice led, I would go.

There need be no frenzy, no cant, about a special

A typical tenement of the older towns.
Crowded, unsanitary, filthy, with no provision for comfort, convenience, or even decency

"mission." The air is ringing with calls. If only a few hear, the few must answer.

"Do you think that no one else could have done that work but you?" remonstrated a friend. "Some one else would have done it if you had waited."

"Some one might have done it, but no one had, and no one was offering to do it, and I couldn't wait," I answered. Sometimes I marvel at the way it all came about, that steadily and without one moment of hesitation, every step was taken that was necessary to prepare the way for a tenement law. The strangest thing about it was that the way seemed mapped out and decisions made for me, and that, almost without volition, I seemed to be not led, but moved, by a great Hand. Under a fearful tension of work and responsibility, night and day, for months, I have never known a time when thought was so clear and so unflagging.

Even the decision to do all that was necessary to secure a state law seemed less a decision than a growing knowledge that I was to do it. I did not know what this would involve, but I knew it meant the encountering of great obstacles, a stupendous amount of work, and active opposition. But it never once entered my mind that I should have to go to the legislature. My part, I supposed, was to lay the foundation and prepare the way.

Realising that housing reform was a new thought in our state, and that the responsibility of the landlord was an unpopular as well as an unfamiliar doctrine; realising, too, from my years of charity work, how few people knew the actual misery of the poor, I set about a campaign of education. My one overpowering desire was that every one in the state should know, feel and care, should see the wrongs and understand the remedy. "PUBLICITY" was now my one care. What can we accomplish without it in such work?

The press of the state responded nobly, and with that prophetic ken I have remarked before. Others sometimes miss the spirit of housing reform, but I have never seen an editorial in our state that failed to rise to it. The presidential campaign of 1908 was on, and the papers were congested with politics, but all the grist I could grind out was given space and good, strong comment.

The endless part of my task was the personal letters that simply had to be written. Of course, nothing could take their place. I wrote hundreds, and if I had known more people to write to, I should have written more. Business men's clubs — first of all the Commercial Club of Indianapolis, women's clubs, civic organisations, all had to have careful letters. Prominent men and women had to have individual appeals,

suited to each. It was an endless task, for circular letters would not avail. How I thanked my uncle for his training, and how I appreciated my typewriter, that gave my epistles more hope of missing the waste-basket!

Click, click, click, click, click, went the typewriter, from June till January, all day from morning till twilight, with stops only for household cares or for the children. They played about me or sat as close as possible while I wrote, with little arms about my waist, and I could work better with them near. Stopping now and then to tie a shoe, find a string, or get a lunch, gave breathing places, and rest for tired eyes.

I am asked, "Why could not a secretary have saved some of that work?" In a city of our size? A mother and housekeeper doing so much public work that she had to employ a secretary! That would have been a scandal, indeed, almost as bad as to have an office!

After my morning tasks were done, the meat and groceries ordered, the meals planned and the day arranged, my grind of letters began, and went on till noon; after lunch and a brief rest, writing again, till sunset; after the children were in bed, more work on articles, sometimes till midnight.

Sitting at my desk by the window I thought of the

factory girls, and the children shut into close tenement rooms, while summer called and the trees beckoned. Oh, for a day in the fields and woods! But if I stopped, even for a day, my work would lag. Answers to my letters, with many questions, were pouring in, and a mountain of correspondence was daily growing higher. And it was no worse for me than for those others, shut in from the sunshine. If this work could only win it for them!

Dog-days came, and the thermometer boiled up near the top, but the pile of letters grew steadily. With all our airy rooms, and spacious lawns, verandas, baths, ice, electric fans, we were sweltering. What must it be in those stifling thermos jugs of rooms, with the foul odours intensified by the heat?

The leaves on the bough by the window turned sere and dropped away.

The birds deserted the bough, and finally snow came and covered it.

But still I sat by the window and wrote. Each month the strain grew more intense, for the legislature was to meet in January.

One by one I had given up all forms of recreation. Reading had been cut down to housing literature. Society was abandoned, and even my best friends complained of my neglect. Outings had long since been given up, and finally, all outdoor exercise, ex-

cept a little walk just before dark. Just in time to see the sun go down on our beautiful river I would throw on my wraps, and hurry down to the avenue from which the pageant of the sunset could be witnessed.

Travellers tell us that the sunsets on our river are unrivalled. Always different, they were always wonderful — the crescent of the city, the long loop of the river, with willows above and hills below, the Kentucky shore on the other side, a strip of woodland and broad sandy beach. Shoals in the river, and a little breakwater, made lines of silver on the glowing mirror of its depths, or flashing ripples. And then, the colour! Sometimes a blue haze wrapped the farther shore, sometimes a silver veil trailed over it and it rose from the misty water, dim as a point of Dreamland. At such times the city, below the wharf, was a blur of soft colours, growing fainter toward the hills.

When the red sunsets of winter came, the town turned aside to see them. It was life-giving to stand and drink in the pure air blown over miles of river and cornfields, and watch the delicate flush recede from the zenith, gathering slowly into an ever-deepening glow about the sinking sun. Then the river was tinged with "dragon's blood," the children said, watching with me until the glory died away from sky

and water, changing from crimson to ashes of roses, darkening and dimming until the purple shadows folded in river and shore. Lights flashed out along the river from the boats and the town, but still we waited for the one star that came out and trembled over the water with a message of hope and courage, and beauty yet to be set above all the city's blackness.

That one glowing hour was an antidote for the grey reeking sordidness I had been writing of all day.

In October the State Charities' Conference met at South Bend. I was on the programme for a paper on "The Housing Problem of Indiana," so thither I took my draft of the tenement bill.

Travelling almost the entire length of our state, I was impressed with the vastness of domain, with the contrast between the prodigality of our uncultivated lands and the miserly pinching and squeezing of our city spaces. We rode for hours through woods and fields, and whizzed through towns that seemed only a smoky blur on the landscape.

Space — space, that was the one great, vital need of our cities and towns, the need to save it before land became more valuable than people!

Riding past villages, through little towns, along miners' settlements, I had disheartening glimpses down into the cindery strips of back yards along the tracks. There was time to note the blackened sheds,

the dingy rows of houses, jostling each other almost on to the track; time to note the dirty children, who climbed up the ash piles and heaps of rubbish to wave to us.

As town after town was passed, a feeling of gloom settled over me, and the hopelessness of redeeming all these waste places seized upon me. But once in the conference, in the midst of good friends, the outlook brightened. There were plenty to offer encouragement and cheer. Francis H. McLean was there, and went over the bill with me, making some valuable suggestions. He took my paper, after it was delivered, and published it in *Charities* (now *The Survey*) just in time to help in our campaign.

A committee was appointed to go over the bill, and then the conference voted its approval.

There was a brilliant reception at the close, and new friends were made, who are now old and dear.

"I have an invitation for you," said Mr. Grout, as the evening closed. "The educational committee of the Commercial Club invites you to meet them at luncheon, as you return home, to discuss your housing bill. Your friend, Miss Foster, is included in the invitation."

Good news! It sounded hopeful.

The next day Miss Foster and I arrived in Indianapolis, and appeared in due time at the Commercial

Club. We were taken to the directors' room, where luncheon was served, and there we found about a dozen all ready to greet us, others of the committee arriving later. There were lawyers, bankers, editors, doctors, all prominent men.

So much depended on the outcome of that meeting, and I was so entirely in the dark as to how the committee felt disposed toward the bill, that I was rigid with a tension that came near lock-jaw. I remembered, afterwards, the well-appointed table to which we sat down, and the fact that many tempting dishes were served, but I could not recall anything that came after the soup.

My letter to the club, Mr. Grout had told me, had won by being practical and business-like. Fearful of spoiling that impression by some unguarded word, I held on to myself as one riding a broncho down a steep mountain path. I remember checking myself in a description of the conditions of the poor, for fear I should verge on sentiment.

If anything makes it difficult to maintain a lofty dignity it is to sit in chairs built for great men, conscious that you can't reach the floor. I've always noticed how much more easily impressive are large people, with the stately step of avoirdupois, the judicial aspect of massive cheek and chin, the big voice that goes with physical strength, the force of ponderosity!

Relief scenes,
The Ohio, "Beautiful River," Riverside Avenue, View near Evansville

But so kind were my hosts that I forgot these things.

The luncheon and our session lasted three hours. After the last course the bill was laid upon the table. I trembled to see sundry crosses and question marks on the margin. One by one, each doubtful point was discussed, and I was called upon to explain just why it should be so and not otherwise. It was like being on the witness stand, with a dozen cross-examiners — keen, though so kindly. Surely my good angel stood beside me and told me what to answer, for at the end I had the satisfaction of seeing every question mark erased.

The committee expressed its satisfaction with the bill, but they asked if I would go over it, word for word, with a sub-committee, before they gave formal approval. Would I stay for such a meeting? Would I!

That night Miss Foster and I sat down again at the long mahogany table with Professor Dunn, Dr. Hurty, secretary of our State Board of Health, Mr. Grout, and Mr. Linton A. Cox. Mr. Cox was a lawyer and real estate owner and one of the most active members of the club, also a hold-over member of our Senate.

I realised that his interest in the bill was very important, but none of us dreamed how much it was

to mean, in years to come, to the housing movement in Indiana.

For three hours, again, we went over the bill, considering every word, every comma. At the close of our conference I was told that the full approval of the committee would be given to the bill.

"Then, gentlemen," I said, with unconcealed delight, "if you approve of this bill, and it is what you have been looking for, let it be the Commercial Club bill, and let me leave it in your hands to be put through the legislature. You are here on the grounds, I am not. You know exactly how to do it — I have no idea of such things. Leave me entirely out of it. All I want is to have the bill passed."

The committee conferred a moment. "The bill would not have the same chance of passing," they said, "if introduced as a Commercial Club bill, as if presented by some individual who is known to be working for the cause of humanity. We will do all we can to push it, and we will stand back of you and do whatever you want done, but you will have to be the leader. Besides, it is only fair that you should have the honour, when you have done all this work. You will have to come to the legislature."

What fell? Something seemed to give way in the foundations, and the big Commercial Club building was going round and round! All such things as

drowning men see swirled past me. I saw myself, with horror, a married woman with a "career." I saw my family, whom I had never left except for a few days, suffering for my care; the twins going out in the rain without rubbers; my daughters needing me; the cook forgetting to order breakfast-food; my husband, with a southern man's ideas of such things, his indulgence already strained. I saw my friends, disgusted at such publicity. I saw enemies, frowns, — brickbats! . . .

The walls were still going around. I looked up and saw all those expectant eyes upon me, and took a deep breath.

"Oh, I couldn't," I said. "I never dreamed of coming myself. Why, I never even saw a legislature, and I haven't an idea of what to do. Besides, it isn't a woman's work, and you are here right on the ground. And I don't want any honour, if only the bill is passed." "We'll stand back of you, we'll plan everything and make all the arrangements. But it is absolutely necessary that some one must be here who has studied housing laws and housing conditions, and you will have to be present at the committee hearing," they said.

"Let me think a minute," I pleaded.

And now the babies of the tenements went past me, with their little grey pinched faces and out-

stretched hands. I thought of the absurdity of going thus far and then dropping everything, when these men were ready to take up the work. And the words came to me: "He that putteth his hand to the plough and turneth back —"

I would never turn back!

With the desperate deliberation of a suicide who jumps into the icy water, I took the leap.

"Very well, gentlemen," I said calmly, "if you say it is necessary for me to come, I'll come."

There were some final details of arrangement, and I took my departure. "When the bill has been introduced, and a committee hearing is set, we will send for you," they said.

I went out carrying a heavy burden. For a moment I had laid off my armour and dropped my load. I had hardly realised its weight until I was eased of it, and, as I buckled it on again, it seemed more than I could bear.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST CAMPAIGN

The Family sat and listened to my story of the Charities' Conference and the Commercial Club luncheon. They heard the climax without flinching: I was to go to the Legislature.

"But how can I manage about leaving you?" I asked, looking from one to the other.

"Go!" said the Family. "We'll manage all right."

"I will keep house and see to the children," said my womanly eldest daughter, Margaret, who was just out of school.

"I will come right up and stay," said my mother, who had dropped in for a little visit.

Then there was nothing to worry about.

My mother took the most intense interest in my housing work. How glad she was to contribute to it in this way.

Listening for the knell of the telephone, to summon me to the committee hearing at Indianapolis, I set about my preparations for absence, I knew not how prolonged. Photographs, reports and clothes were packed and ready. Then there were the family

supplies and wardrobe to look after, to see that nothing lacked. The last thing was to tack a type-written card on the wall of the nursery, lest some of my many directions should be forgotten:

> "The children's heavy underwear is on the second shelf in the linen room.
>
> "Be sure to keep them home from school if it storms.
>
> "In case of sore throat, use ——, etc."

At last the dread summons came. I tore myself away from the Family. My husband put me on the train, with many last services and injunctions, and set the bag that held the precious bill on the seat beside me. All the way up to Indianapolis I thought of how Daniel felt on his way to the lions' den. It was not facing the committee that I dreaded, but the public ordeal, and the fear of doing the wrong thing, that would wreck the whole business. Every time I thought of that it gave me that "gone" faint feeling, which seems like heart failure, but is really, I've been told, only a trick of the pneumo-

gastric nerve. It was the same sensation that the Big Dog always gave me in childhood.

As the train whirled me nearer to the legislature, the step I was taking seemed more serious, though I had realised from the beginning what it would involve. There was no glamour of misconception over it. I knew there would be opposition, a "fight to the finish." And this fight would be to win — not all those things I wanted for the poor, not comforts, not conveniences, only bare decencies; not those things that would make life worth living, but only a few of those things that would make it less terrible. It would be taking only the first step on a long, weary road. It would be laying only the foundation for the tall, shining castle of my dreams, that fortress of the people's rights, that would hardly be finished, with dome and spire, in my life-time, perhaps not in another generation.

All we could expect to win was a tenement law; not a law regulating all houses, though I felt keenly how much that was needed, as so many of our poor lived in shacks and hovels. But no other state had yet gone so far, and we could not expect to take such a stride, on our first attempt.

I felt how remote was the ultimate ideal of housing reform, which would regulate *all buildings*, insuring

them to be safe and sanitary, and not a menace in any way to public health and morals. Yet, supposing even that we could attain that ideal, at one bound, in a perfect law, and that it would be perfectly enforced, there were still all those essentials of environment, for the betterment of the poor, that the law could not give them, that only philanthropy or an awakened civic spirit could provide. Not only matters of convenience and comfort (at least the lack of discomfort), but of beauty and outlook, that mean so much to the moral development of a people, would still be lacking. But — the law had to come first; to come, and then to be enforced, as I am often reminded.

I cherished no fond delusion that the moment the Governor would sign the bill (if it passed) it would automatically take effect; that crystal water would burst at once from thousands of faucets, in all our cities; that sunlight would break into dark rooms, that slimy yards would grow a firm, velvety sod, and Death and Destruction would slink away, leaving rosy children playing among the flowers, around all of our tenements. No indeed! But even though only the first step were to be taken, it was so vital, so necessary, that it was worth one whole life-time of toil and struggle just to take that first, biggest, hardest step.

Although I had friends in Indianapolis, I thought best not to let them know that I was coming, surmising that my business would be all-engrossing. So I went at once, on arrival, to the Claypool, that being near the state house.

It had been arranged that Senator Ezra Mattingly and Representative Homer McGinnis should introduce the bill simultaneously in their respective houses, and this had been done. These two gentlemen, with Senator Linton A. Cox, Dr. J. N. Hurty, Mr. C. S. Grout, and others interested in the bill, came over to the hotel after dinner, that we might have a brief consultation before the committee hearing.

The state house loomed big and grey against the night. The lights at the gloomy entrance seemed to intensify the darkness. Inside, the great empty corridors, dimly lighted, seemed like caverns of night, and echoed dismally to our steps.

We emerged like bats into a brilliantly lighted committee room, that was quite well filled. I was grateful to find a number of ladies present. Afterwards I found that Senator Cox's wife was one of them, and Dr. J. D. Foor's wife was another. From that moment until this those two splendid women have stood by me.

Dr. Foor was the chairman of the Health Committee in the House. He was there, with his commit-

tee, and so was the Senate committee on Health, for this was to be a joint hearing. The members of both were gathered informally about, but I could not tell them from citizens of Indianapolis, a number of whom were present, among them members of the Commercial Club whom I had met.

Every one was grave, as if awaiting a public execution. The opening speech, by one of our men, sounded to me like the hammering of the carpenter who was preparing the scaffold.

Now I was called. The side of the great table which I had to pass seemed miles long, and the silence was so deep that the dropping of a whole paper of pins would not have touched bottom.

To address a legislative committee, I found, was very different from speaking before a missionary society, a charity organisation, or a civic club, who are eager to listen and anxious to be convinced. Many of these men were fagged, their minds overcrowded with details of numerous bills. Some were haggard and sleepy from a late caucus of the night before.

I had thought to speak with some of the fire that burned within me, but my sentences seemed to me as if just taken out of an ice box. My well considered reason and rhetoric sounded, I felt, as meaningless as the rattling of a fusillade of dried peas.

The silence grew oppressive. The tired men shifted in their hard chairs. Two, under the brilliant light, closed their eyes. One man came in at the door, two went out, with a slight confusion in the room. Were they bored? The idea was insupportable, so I fired a few more dried peas and sat down, without being half through. A few others gave short, vigorous talks, and the hearing was at an end. Every one woke up, and, to my surprise, the meeting ended in enthusiasm, and we were given the assurance that both committees would report favourably on the bill.

"You have won the first round," one of the men said, with congratulations.

Oh, the relief of common talk, after that strain! How good every friendly face looked, and they all seemed to be friends.

Between us we had presented the case so clearly as to give the committee the whole situation, and nothing more was needed. Almost all of them were doctors, who had been fighting the very conditions that the bill was planned to remedy. From that time on they were the most enthusiastic supporters of the bill, and my kindest friends.

The next day the Health Committee of the House asked me to attend a separate hearing, to make certain points plain. Dr. Hurty was there, and Mrs. Foor sat by me. But with what good cheer and

high spirits I went. Daniel was at the king's table, now!

There were matters of policy to decide which made it necessary for me to remain at the capitol. It was important, too, for me to meet as many of the members as possible, I was told.

My first glimpse of a legislature gave me the impression that Professor William James says the world gives to a baby. It seemed a "blooming, buzzing confusion." What were those men all shouting about? And who were all these people who were trying to get in and out? But presently the seething subsided, and I caught a clue, and listened with interest.

After the session my new friends gathered around me, and brought up files and battalions of members, for introduction. In a short time I had met almost every one, and found that, from the presiding officers down to the chubbiest cherub of a page, all were kindness and interest. Members assured me of a welcome to the floor, and offered the use of their desks, at any time. Doorkeepers and sergeants were as hospitable as real hosts. The custodian of the state house saw, himself, to the stringing of my poster exhibit of city slums on wires along the corridor.

The main business, now, was to make friends for

our bill, and all that was necessary, I felt, was that every man in the legislature should know the facts about the homes of the poor, and the remedial powers of the bill. But here were two big rooms full — one hundred and fifty men! It would take a long time to tell them each the story, and go over that long bill.

Our men — and their number was growing — decided that it would be a good stroke to have me speak to the whole legislature, if possible. The plan was arranged late one night, at the Claypool, when Senator and Mrs. Cox and some of the others were there to dinner.

The next day the consent of both houses was secured, and the Senate adjourned to sit in the House and listen to my argument. At that time I was too anxiously engrossed in planning for our cause to think of what a great personal honour was given me, though only once before had such a privilege been granted any woman. All I thought of was the opportunity to present the cause to so many at once, and the need of white hot, driving sentences.

The House filled up with my audience, and I sat in the rear with my friends, waiting for a long-drawn-out debate to come to an end. Then the gavel sounded; a few men conferred, near the front, and I heard Speaker Honan say, "Will the good-looking

member from Morgan please escort the lady to the desk?"

That meant Mr. McGinnis and myself. Up the aisle we passed, and the Speaker gave me a cordial introduction.

Standing a moment, to await silence, I looked up and down over the room. What a huge place! Our state house must have been built for giants. How far it seemed across the Speaker's great desk! How remote were the lofty galleries! Oh, just for once, to be a man, with a big brass voice! But my friends, standing back by the door, could hear me, and they nodded encouragement. On the front seats were some kind human eyes that never wavered. They cared about the poor, I could see.

It was all over, in a little while. I knew now how Vesuvius felt after an eruption, only that Vesuvius would just as soon do it again.

Things looked well for the bill now, Senator Cox said. The enthusiasm of our men was spreading to the others. It would be several days before it would have a second reading in either house, and in the meantime we would all be working.

"I believe I'll just stay up here a few days and help push it through," I said innocently, and Senator Cox explained, with a twinkle in his eye, that it would take weeks, not days.

Now let me say that if I had not found out what vague ideas people in general have about legislative processes I might not be so willing to admit my own ignorance. But I have found that the majority of people are hazy on such matters.

I was a truly humble pupil, and acted only as directed, learning to venture, little by little, but with extreme caution. It was a point of pride with me to avoid all the little things that cause the reproachful remark, "That's just like a woman," and to take all the fates of war, at least outwardly, in the calm impersonal way men do. To no one would I admit fear, or doubt of our ultimate victory, even in the darkest hours, for I realised the value of a confident bearing. Besides — could one engage to take a hand in this tremendous game and fail of being sportsmanlike? It was my care to avoid sentimentality, and to stick to the practical issues, in a practical way, having ready all the business arguments in favour of the law.

I wouldn't have let one of those men know that I had ever written a verse!

My entire days were spent at the state house, strengthening our fortifications in every way possible. When the members were free, I explained the points of the bill to them, if they wished, showed them my photos of the slums, and told them plain facts about

the poor. When they were busy, I talked with their wives. They were as horrified as I wanted them to be over the conditions I described. Many of them came from little towns or rural districts. How I thanked my years in the country, for there was not an experience in these women's lives into which I could not enter. We were good friends at sight, and they were ready to help me, by explaining the situation to their husbands, and even to the latter's seat mate or neighbour across the aisle.

At all times I had to be ready to meet all questions, not only of members but outsiders, and what questions, what arguments, of the latter, had to be answered! But no matter what ignorance, stupidity, avarice, or hard-hearted indifference confronted me, I was determined that nothing should tempt me into antagonism or belligerency, for what I could not win I did not want.

The exhausting strain of these all-day sieges, amid bad air, and tobacco smoke, and the confusion of a crowded room, may be imagined. I was glad by evening to plod back to the hotel, and, after a lonely dinner, to steal away to rest. The members and their wives who stopped at the Claypool invited me to join their card and theatre parties, but I could not spare the hours that would give me strength for the next day's ordeal.

Having been always accorded respectful attention at the state house, I took it for granted that every one understood my footing. But one day a senator surprised me by asking, "Who pays your expenses?"

"Why, my husband!" I answered, taken aback and indignant.

"Well, but what organisation sent you here? Isn't some club paying your expenses?"

It was hard to make him understand that I was not a paid lobbyist, but, when convinced, nothing gave him a higher appreciation of my work. I saw then why a disinterested individual had an influence that a club could not wield.

The fact became established that I had come to the legislature as the Ambassador of the Poor, and in no personal capacity, and I met people on this plane, even at first acquaintance. It began to have a strange reaction, this eliminating of personalities, and made me feel like a "Voice in the Wilderness." Even had I wished, I could not detach myself from my work for one moment, for the first sentence, after every introduction, was, "This is the lady who is interested, etc." I was content to have it so, and had neither breath nor strength for other conversation, after the day's work was over.

One evening, as I sat apart for a few moments on the balcony, where the guests gathered after dinner,

a member of the House, whom I had met most casually, a modest lawyer from a small town, came up and joined me. He began at once to make kindly inquiries about our bill, drawing out the story of its origin. He seemed much aroused by the stories I told him of the slums of our various cities. In return, he told of his own experiences with the poor of his town, and then took up some of the problems of poverty. Step by step, forgetting that I was a stranger, he went on to talk of the higher life, and finally, with glowing face and kindling eyes that seemed not to see me, but to be fixed upon the future, he poured out his aspirations for larger and better things.

The next morning I met him in the state house, and he said, "Mrs. Bacon, I sat up till two o'clock last night, to work for your bill."

This was only one of the many instances in which the high appeal met with a high response. Sometimes a simple story, or a photograph, would bring a look of pity and a word of compassion, or a burst of sudden anger against those who wronged the helpless. Often, in a few quiet sentences, would come a glimpse of the inner life, the "better self," as if a shutter had suddenly opened and a light flashed out. These were the men whose enthusiasm kept our cause alive, the ones upon whom we could depend.

It is a wonderful thing to look back upon, that, in all my experience with that legislature, composed of men from every walk of life, farmers, mechanics, lawyers, teachers, ward politicians, men of varied culture and limitations, there was never one occasion where I was not given to feel that womanhood was upon a pedestal. Sometimes I wonder if ever a woman had such royal treatment, in any assembly. It is no wonder that I came out of my legislative experiences with a greater faith and pride in the chivalry of our Indiana men, not only for their attitude towards me, but, in so many instances, towards the weak, the poor and the helpless. Even after opposition developed to our bill, its enemies were no less courteous to me, personally. Indeed, they were as polite as French executioners. Some of them took pains to explain that they were friendly to me, even though they could not support my bill. It was "*too* ideal," they said!

"I'm sorry to see you wearing yourself out. You are getting thin and pale," one of them said, kindly. "Why don't you go home and rest?"

"I will if you will come over on our side, and see the bill through," I laughed.

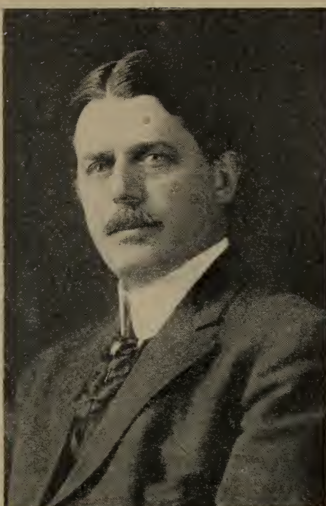
"I'll declare, if that frail little woman can come up here and fight for such a cause, it looks like we big strong men ought to help her," said one man, who

wavered unhappily between his pledges and his principles.

I had to be fair to all of our opponents, and remember that housing reform was a strange new thought to all of them. I preferred to believe, as long as I could, that even the worst landlords did not realise the wrongs they were committing, for attention had never been called to these things, and custom fitted poor folks into old houses, blaming them for the filth they could not prevent. And so long as public sentiment tolerated, nay, was complacently satisfied with filth, vice, degradation and disease, what better could we expect of the landlords? So I said nothing about the men, only showing what enormous rentals were collected from the old death traps, and the sufferings of the poor who lived in them.

I have spoken of our "enemies," or, more rightly, our opponents. How much more is there to be said of my friends! In fact, if I should set down their names, their graces and their kindnesses, as gratitude dictates, "the scroll could not contain the whole," and the story would have to end untimely.

There were a few who stood by me both in and out of working hours. Foremost of these, and most constant, were the Coxes and the Foors. They often came over to the hotel, and sometimes beguiled me



DEFENDERS OF THE HOMES OF INDIANA

Mrs. Linton A. Cox

Senator Linton A. Cox,
Prest. Indiana House Assn.

Dr. J. D. Foor

Mrs. J. D. Foor

out of it. Mrs. Cox was in the Senate some time every day, if possible. She often sat in Senator Cox's seat. Few men there could have filled it as well as she. Although a most devoted wife and mother, her broad and active mind took in the range of club, school, church, social and civic affairs, and even politics. What a stay she was, with her unfailing sympathy and cheer! Senator Cox was a very busy lawyer and real estate owner, prominent in the Commercial Club, and interested in the larger development of the city. He was also a philosopher, better fitted to cope with our present day legislation than my old teacher, Marcus Aurelius, though their spirits were akin. In all the years of our housing movement I have never seen him ruffled or discouraged, or unable to find some good to believe of every one. He it was who arranged meetings, dissolved difficulties, removed barriers, planned steps, and brought the impossible to pass. Even those whose measures he fought, loved and respected him, and his word was like a gold certificate.

The Foors gave invaluable help. It was a great thing to have Dr. Foor's championship. A man of few but forceful words, he was a power in the House. Men followed his lead because they had faith both in his judgment and his integrity. I can see him now

as he strode to the front of the House, and, with a word, produced results and set wheels in motion that had refused to turn.

Mrs. Foor was a constant comfort, partly because of her own interest in our cause, and partly because that increased her husband's. She had taken a clerkship to be with him, as they had no family. Being also a newspaper correspondent, she had the freedom of the floor, and she knew every one there. Quiet, womanly, modest, she was held in a respect that gave her distinct influence.

Her experience had taught her all the little ins and outs of legislative matters that I didn't want to bother the men by asking about. She was always ready to accompany me to one of the rooms or offices where our business took us, and her watchful care more than once saved our bill from disaster. When I went home, she took my place, and went without rest or meals, if necessary, when emergencies arose. As the men had other bills to look after, and were kept busy in their seats most of the session, they gave me instructions as to the different processes our bill had to go through, so that I might keep close watch of it. Every inch of the way, from clerk to clerk, to the engrossing room and back again, I watched its going and coming, its ingress and egress, lest strong and jealous hands should harm it. In all of

this, and in the reading of the proof, Mrs. Foor was untiring.

Other friendly faces lighted the gloom of the assembly rooms, and redeemed the arid wastes of hotel life. I can see now the sweet, bright face of Mrs. Will Wood, of whom even a glimpse or greeting would "gie strength anew to me." Senator Wood was the dean of our Senate, an authority whom we all consulted, and an orator whose eloquence was always ready for our cause.

If I should fail to record my gratitude to Mr. Joe Cravens, so many years majority leader of the House, my story ought to plant its feet squarely in the road and refuse to proceed. That big, breezy, cheery "Don't you worry" of his (and he was too busy for more than that) did more to keep my heart up than he ever knew. Mr. Eschbach, the minority leader, calm, cool and quiet, was another tower of strength. With two such men believing in our cause, and its vital importance to public welfare, the others must at least listen to our arguments.

Sometimes friends came up from Evansville, on business. How good the home folks looked, especially the ones that I knew stood for civic improvement, and all I was fighting for. Some of them undertook missions and errands for me, and one of our most active workers, Mr. Will French, stayed over

to help at the state house, and we went in to call on Governor Marshall together. After our kind reception, I felt new courage.

In the state house my headquarters were in the office of Mr. Amos W. Butler, secretary of the State Board of Charities. There I was " at home," and could hang my coat upon its own hook, and likewise hang up my confidence upon the whole office force. To Mr. Butler I went for tutelage and advice on special matters. When things went wrong I took haven there, and when luck came our way I stopped to tell them all the good news. The office of the State Board of Health was another refuge. No other board in the country has taken such a part in housing reform. But it wasn't only Dr. Hurty's direct help, in our battles, that I valued. To know that Dr. Hurty, Dr. Wishard, and the whole board were giving our cause their moral support, that they felt about dirt and disease, water and sewerage, space, light and air, just as I did, and that they were willing to share the responsibility of the reform, with absolute fearlessness, was a comfort to me beyond words.

There was one friend who was the angel of my darkest hours. In the hotel was living at the time a lovely gracious widow, with two grown sons. Once over the threshold of her apartments I breathed

peace, and forgot my battles. While she brewed tea she kept a gentle raillery on the bubble. For headaches and heart aches there were soft pillows and soft words, hot water bottles and warm encouragement. May all space and eternal sunshine be hers — the blessing of a housing reformer!

I was feeling pretty much at home, and had hardly seen a hint of trouble, when our bill came up for its second reading in the House. By this time I was used to hearing the debates, but — how different debates sound when they are about our own bill! And it was trying not to be able to say one word, myself, to those arguments whose answers I knew so well. From all over the House came discussion and dissension. I was aghast to see that some of those pleasant gentlemen with whom I had talked were hurrying little pink slips up to the desk, and amendments were hurtling like cannon balls. It was terrifying! And here, beside me, uprose one old gentleman, whom I was sure I had converted from some errors of thought. He stretched out his hand, and showed me an amendment he was about to offer, that would have cut down the application of our bill to just a few cities.

Half rising, I laid my hand on his sleeve. "Oh, Mr. S——, don't do that! *Please* don't do that!" I implored. And he sat down. Afterwards the ludicrous side of my appeal struck me. What an

argument! But he knew the arguments that were choking me, and it was these that stayed his hand.

I began to think that the cannon balls would never stop flying, when our men brought the battle to a close by a skilful manœuvre, and the amendments were all referred to the Health committee. When the committee convened to pass upon them, I was asked to sit with them. Dr. Foor, the chairman, sat at the head of the long table, in the committee room, with members ranged down both sides, and I sat at the foot. Then it was that I saw the good of my long summer of study. It facilitated matters greatly to know what would be the effect of each amendment, as the progressive steps of housing legislation in other states had shown.

In their enthusiasm the men would have gone farther than I dared. So, yielding some points, and standing our ground on others, we were able to keep the bill from being materially injured in its vital points.

Now came a lull, and I went home, to await another call.

How good it was to be at home, to find all well and safe; to sit quietly with the family around the fire, away from the noise and tobacco smoke. It was good to find that all the cataclysms of the legislature had not made one crack in the earth's crust,

in our yard. I wanted to lave in domesticity; to scrub the children, to dust and make beds, to cook a little, as a way of shaking off the nightmare of the legislature.

Some of our friends came up to express their interest.

"But didn't you feel odd up there, among all those men?" one asked.

"Not any more than you do in a bank or a church or a theatre or a hotel or a street car, or on the street, where men are coming and going," I answered. Then I described how the wives of some of the members were always present; how often they would bring the children over from their hotels to meet the father, about time for adjournment. I told how I had seen a father, with a small baby in his arms, standing at the rear of the House, while the mother occupied his seat, give the child back to the mother and stride forward to make a motion. Besides, the high school classes came to listen, and clubs often attended.

My friend was still incredulous. "But I would feel so conspicuous," she insisted.

"If you were trying to save a child who was in a burning building, you wouldn't think about the firemen or the by-standers, and they wouldn't notice you," I answered.

When I went back to the capitol I found that

enemies had been busy. Letters had been pouring in, and a horde of landlords had come in my absence, and camped on the grounds. They had raised a great outcry about their "rights," and had been stirring up opposition and sowing doubts. Some of my new-made friends came to me with anxious questions about various passages of the bill, and I had to go over all my arguments again and again, and show what other states had done in the way of tenement laws. Some of our enemies were frank and open in their opposition, and fought face to face. Others came and sowed their tares and slunk away, not dreaming that we had their names. The most vicious lobby of all stayed with us, and was at my heels like a black shadow, wherever I turned. We knew its manifold work by signs of a familiar "hidden hand," at every step, until we felt that we were fighting the Powers of Darkness. We had no weapons to match with men who, as evidence showed, employed thugs in their home towns to carry out their evil purposes by force.

One by one (watching the course of legislation) I learned all the ways in which a bill may be killed, by strangling, mangling, delays, "jokers," interpolations, even by theft, as several stories went. "Sadder and wiser" was I, indeed. Each new evidence of

cunning and craft made me more alert and determined.

One day the bill disappeared. An important step had been delayed, while we waited, with impatience, for some of the red tape to unwind, that we supposed was holding things back. Our insistent demands started a search, and clerks ransacked tables, desks and pigeonholes.

"It's gone! We can't find it!" they declared. I brought Mr. Cox, and he set others to searching. In that anxious half hour I realised the lengths to which I would have gone if foul play or outrage had overtaken us. I thought of all the powers of right and justice that could be ranged on our side, and a new and sudden strength came to me. If necessary, we would lay siege to the whole administration. Just as I was making up my mind whether I should go to the Governor first, the clerk stooped down and looked into the big safe. We held our breath. "It's not there," he said, in a tone of finality.

"Let me see," I said, stooping also. "Yes, *there* it is — that big one, there. Take it out."

Sure enough, it was ours, safe and sound. We had been hurt only by delay. But the incident made us more watchful.

Now the members of the legislature who owned

property were becoming aroused. Some of our strongest and most dangerous opposition came from men, in both houses, who owned tenements, or whose brothers, cousins or clients owned them, as we discovered later. One member wanted to build stores on twenty-foot lots, and put tenements above them. Another fought the law for two sessions, under the impression that it would apply to his single houses, not reading the bill carefully enough to get the definition of "tenement."

One man wanted to change the whole law, so that his wife could cover an entire lot with apartments, except for insufficient air shafts, that would leave dim and poorly ventilated inside rooms. He followed me from House to Senate, through the corridors and back again, arguing for amendments to fit the plan which he held in his hand.

"Go and talk to the men about it," I said, worn out, finally.

"No, I want to talk to you, because the men will do whatever you say," he insisted.

"Indeed they will not," I said; "but we can't entertain a thought of any such amendments." Still he hung on.

"Then tell me what to do with that land that will pay as much on the investment, and I'll be satisfied."

Even though I expected the opposition of selfish

interests, I was surprised to see the unabashed way in which money, "vested rights," were weighed against human life, health, safety and happiness; to see how individual interest was urged against public good. It was sickening and shocking to see a man fight against the interests of all the people in the state, and seek to fasten upon the thousands of poor in our cities, and upon their children, preventable miseries, all for the sake of the paltry rental of a few wretched dark rooms, or the cost of a little plumbing. Many of them did not even plead the common cause of landlords. It was, "*My* house." "It will cost *me*."

There were no other arguments to offer against the bill. No one came forward to say that society would be better off if our dwellings were unregulated and unsanitary. No one could show that it was against the interests of the State to protect the poor. True, there was a faint murmur of "paternalism," though we already had on our statute books laws requiring light and air in factories and stores, sanitation in mines, etc. "Paternalism"! Yet this legislature was soon to vote appropriations to provide for the paternal care of the State over hundreds of its unfortunate citizens. And every one seemed willing that the State should be a step-father to the orphans of the working men who died of tuberculosis and

typhoid in our old death traps, leaving their children wards of the State. Why should not the State prevent the deaths and cost? But most people do not get wildly excited over public cost, I found. Parties do, but ours was a non-partisan bill.

The strongest opposition came from little towns, that were not willing to yield even so much space on their building lots as New York City gives! It seemed that the landlords and builders, of a certain type, all over the state were all awake, and were uniting their forces against us. But the friends of the poor — where were they? Sound asleep, for all they knew of our fight, having bestowed their alms and said their prayers, and carefully shut their windows on the slum side. Oh, to rattle all those windows, and shake those beds, and summon the sleepers to help us!

It gives me a pride in our men to remember that almost all our active fighting was done by supporters inside the assembly. We had no lobbies, as our enemies had. Our men had to do their own rallying. True, members of the Commercial Club came and went, and Mr. Grout was with us, and others of the Charities organisation. Our friends in the state house stood by, staunchly. Some of the wide-awake ministers of the city stopped in to give help and cheer. A

few influential women of the city came with Mrs. Cox, Mrs. T. C. Day the foremost and most enthusiastic. But these were a scattering few, and none of them could stay right on the spot, as the landlords did.

If our bill could have gone to a final vote the first week of the session, we would have had a sweeping victory, for enthusiasm was white hot. But it took much stoking to keep up the necessary warmth of feeling, with all the cold water our enemies were pouring on. Any day, we could have polled a majority of members, by counting those who were sorry for the poor, and were willing to see their wrongs righted. But to get a majority who had no doubts that the bill would do all it was planned to do, and still be fair to the landlords, was another thing. It began to be a question with our doubting and wavering friends, whose arguments should prevail, ours or our enemies. We brought men whose judgment and integrity were beyond doubt, to pit their arguments for humanity and public welfare against those of narrow self-interest. I was ready, in my desperation, to have summoned Jove himself, from Mount Olympus, if we could have reached him.

At this point Hon. W. J. Bryan came to Indianapolis, and it was arranged that he should address

the legislature. Great was the enthusiasm, and an honour guard was sent to escort him to the state house.

Waiting in the empty rooms, with Edward Meeman, a young newspaper man from Evansville, I mused unhappily upon the thunders that this mighty man should hurl, that we could no more borrow than those of Jove. And yet, why not? His subject was to include many themes of social welfare. Why not housing reform?

"Come with me — quick!" I said to Mr. Meeman. "I'm going to ask Mr. Bryan to say a word for housing reform. Hurry — we have just time to get to the Governor's rooms before they get back!"

Through the long empty corridors we sped, and down the marble stairway, not waiting for the elevator. A guard was pacing up and down in front of the Governor's outer room, which was empty.

"When Mr. Bryan arrives," I said to him, "I want you to see that I have a chance to speak to him, just one moment, before any one else does, without interruption. It's very important. Please, won't you?"

The guard promised, and we took our stand just inside the open door, exactly where a receiving party would have stood. Governor Marshall's broad policy and his strong stand upon all matters of the poor,

and of public health and morals, was well known. Here, I felt, under the protection of the Father of his State, at the fountain source of Justice, I was in sanctuary, and my cause would be heard.

Down the corridors came the sound of voices, and the tramp of many feet, steadily drawing nearer. I had the feeling of standing on a railroad track, in front of an approaching train, as if I *must* step aside. But I stood fast. And now they were at the door. Mr. Bryan himself stepped across the threshold, and I greeted him, as a rather timid hostess might have done. "I must speak to you one minute," I said earnestly. Instantly, with smiling courtesy, he stepped aside and gave me audience. In three or four sentences I presented the situation, and asked him if he could not include housing reform in the topics of his speech.

"If it comes within the line of my subject, I will," he said heartily and kindly, and I slipped away, having been hardly noticed.

Among the great throng of listeners who heard Mr. Bryan in the assembly room, no one was more attentive than I, waiting to hear some word upon our subject. One great theme of public welfare after another was taken up. Suddenly a little page whispered to his mother, "Listen, Mamma, Mr. Bryan is speaking for Mrs. Bacon's bill." Neither bill nor

name had been mentioned, so it is obvious how clear he made his meaning. I was indeed profoundly grateful for those eloquent and forceful words, for I knew how much they meant to our cause.

And now the days dragged on, while we fought for every inch of ground upon which we stood. I began to get tired and discouraged and homesick. Once, when a Senate reading of our bill was due, I had been waiting all day to hear it called. The Coxes were kept at home by illness, and all of my friends were busy or preoccupied. A great mass of bills clogged the machinery of the Senate. Long windy debates took up the time, and, while they were proceeding, I would steal out into the corridors, too nervous to sit still and listen. Every time the clerk picked up another bill, and would call out "Senate bill number ——" a cannon ball seemed to have struck me over the heart. But he never got to "No. 51."

When it was too late in the afternoon for another bill to be brought up, I went wearily back to the hotel. Even the sight of the little pages made me homesick. Appreciating the effect of physical conditions on psychological states, I ordered a substantial dinner — but I couldn't swallow it. There seemed to be lumps in everything, even the consommé. Dr. Simison, a member of the Health committee in the

House, and one of our most valued supporters, came out from dinner and found me sitting limp and dismal on the balcony. "What's the trouble?" he asked kindly.

"I want to go home, and *stay*,— but I won't," I said, and stopped and set my teeth, for fear of choking.

He had some new ideas and some good vigorous plans to suggest, and offered to start them going. That, of course, was more cheering than sympathy, and set me up at once with new hope.

That was the nearest I ever came to bolting.

The next day was spent in the same anxious waiting, until the suspense became unbearable. Finally, I called a page and sent a card up to the Lieutenant-governor. It read "Dear Governor Hall: *Please* make Senate bill No. 51 a special order for to-morrow. I've been waiting so long, and I must go home to my children."

He might have told me to run along home, then, and 'tend to my children, that the others could look after the bills. But he didn't. He was too kind hearted.

Our bill was made a special order for the next day.

A brief visit home found the family thriving and prospering, and sent me back with renewed courage, to cheer our fagged and weary leaders.

As the end of the session drew near, delays were more dangerous, and the danger of losing our bill was more serious.

It would be too long a story to tell of the successive stages of the fight, and the agony of suspense at the many critical moments, when loss or injury threatened. Though I would not admit it, fear corroded my heart. I tried to argue myself out of an unreasonable solicitude about the bill. None of the men seemed to feel about their measures as if they were matters of life and death, however in earnest they were. And it was the Lord's work, for His poor. He would take care of it. But suppose I failed in *my* part, and hindered the cause? The lash that had driven me to leave my home still hung suspended over me now. I knew that the loss of the cause would be something deadlier than failure, more desperate than defeat. A sense of responsibility added largely to this feeling. The measure was called "Mrs. Bacon's bill" by every one, even by the press, and actually scheduled that way a few times on the legislative bulletin boards, though, of course, it should have borne the names of "Mattingly" and "McGinnis," from the men who introduced it.

And, even though doctors and lawyers, architects and real estate men, as well as the members of the

legislature themselves, had mended and amended, carved and whittled it, I knew that I would be held accountable by reformers for all it failed to do, and by landlords and builders for all that restricted them.

All these months, while I had seen before me the cities of the state spread out, as on a map, with all their black spots, I had seen the poor in those spots. Now, rising up out of all those places, and hanging over the poor, I saw the owners of the slums. It was like a storm cloud, made up of angry faces. There was the anger, resentment, greed, to confront, as well as the poverty, illness, and misery of the poor, whom I was there to represent. But I knew I could face the anger, if we won, better than the misery, if we failed.

The situation was growing critical. We seemed to be losing ground, and our men were grave and troubled. Then came days when I could not eat or read or sleep, when every breath was a prayer.

Once I heard Dr. Farr speak of "the loneliness of leadership." Now I knew what that meant.

I was alone, in a desert place. The sky bent down over me like a great transparent bowl, shutting out everything else. I stood in the centre of a vast bare space, bounded by the circular rim of that bowl. All

around the edge of the great circle were my friends, reaching out their hands to me, smiling and trying to help me, but they could come no nearer. The loneliness would have been insupportable, only for this: inside the circle, all the space about me, under the bowl of the sky, was filled with the Presence!

No matter where I went, that circle seemed to be about me, visible to the inner eye, and to hold every one away. The men I talked to, in the assembly, were all outside of it, and it seemed to me they must be as conscious of it as I was.

At last the decisive hour came, with the third reading of the bill, in both houses. By a coincidence they came at the same time. An excited messenger from the House found me in the corridor and hurried me in, just in time to hear the debate beginning. It was hardly under headway when a still more excited sergeant came post haste from the Senate, saying I was wanted at once, as the fight was on.

The battle was going bravely in the House, so I followed the messenger across the corridor to the other skirmish line. We had a hasty conference, and, to my consternation, I was directed to sit in a chair in front of all the desks, to be on hand when amendments came up.

Our men had made a last poll of the Senate, and

now went up and down the aisles, rallying adherents to our standard. One of our men was absent, from sickness, and Senator Durre, from home, took his place, and was doing the work of four men, in his strong, whole-souled way, that was inspiriting to see.

There came an ominous lull, and then the storm broke. Of all the contests I had witnessed, this was the most severe. The whole Senate was on its feet, and the men would draw into a great knot, to be driven back to their seats repeatedly by the thundering of the gavel.

There came word that the bill had passed in the House. But here came an amendment from a Terre Haute member, which would cut the bill off just above his city, and leave only our largest two. An uproar — the amendment carried.

Then began the final roll call. The men drew close together in the front of the room, as the voting began. Now we lacked seven votes. Absent members were rounded up. Two votes lacking — another canvass.

Then two came over to our side — we had won!

I came to myself to find that I was pacing the aisle, inside the railing, with hands tightly clenched, unaware of having gone upon the floor. It was an hour and a half past the noon closing hour, but no one had thought of the time. Now I realised that

exhaustion and strain had reached their limit, and felt somewhat dizzily happy.

Quietly, after congratulations, the men and women melted away out of the Senate chamber. The heroes of the day, in House and Senate, who had saved it only by superhuman efforts, turned to other business, as if they had done nothing especial. I tried to tell them something of what I felt, but — words! For such service! And it was done for their State, too. It seemed to me that they should have had a salute of cannon; at least there should have been martial music, and a roll of drums.

It is for such deeds that men used to be given bay wreaths and knighthood. But theirs are the bays, and they are knights who need no accolade.

There were a few final things to be done. Then came the audience with Governor Marshall, and his gracious promise to sign the bill. There were some last little meetings and social gatherings with our friends, and then farewells. Every one was so cordial and so glad for me. One of the senators, who had been most helpful, said, "Mrs. Bacon, I'm a hold-over member, and I hope we will see you back next session."

"Oh, thank you," I said, "but I'm through now, and I never expect to come again."

"I think you'll be here again," he said, smiling. But I was sure in my heart that it would not be necessary.

With a light and care-free heart I gathered up my belongings, packing among them, for souvenirs, some worn and marked copies of our bill.

And now, HOME!

CHAPTER IX

DEFEAT

On a western bound train two men sat discussing a building project, in tones calculated to drown the roar of the train. Those on near-by seats soon discovered, from the localities they mentioned, that they were from Indiana.

"No, we've given it up," said one man. "We can't build the way we wanted to, because a crazy little woman, down in the southern part of the state, has gone and played the mischief by getting a tenement law that upsets everything."

It was the lady in front of them who told me about it.

The smoke of battle had hardly cleared away, after the legislature, before an Indianapolis paper came out with an article, under big black head lines,

"MRS. BACON'S LAW STOPS FLAT BUILDING"

The article took my breath for the moment, just as I had begun to breathe again. I knew the law

wouldn't stop flat building. Of course we had expected the same fuss and worry that a tenement law has always created, in other states, until builders get used to them, and begin to see their value.

The next news from Indianapolis was that a suit had been brought to test the constitutionality of the law. The test was made in the case of a very handsome flat, that failed to conform to the law in some slight particular. Of course, the enemies of the law selected a case that would make it seem the most absurd, so as to render it unpopular. But we expected that, too. We knew that the main point upon which the public had to be educated was not the necessity of improving the wretched conditions of the poor, but the reasons why the better class of flats and apartment houses had to be included. They had to realise that the dark room and bad plumbing are as deadly in a fashionable flat as in a squalid tenement row, and that fire is no respector of mansions. They had to realise, too, that Rich Man's Row in time often becomes Poverty Flats, as the tide of fashion ebbs. But they hadn't learned it yet.

While I was wondering who was to defend the suit, besides the City of Indianapolis, I received a brief letter from Senator Cox, simply stating that he had joined in the defence, as if it were a matter

of course. It was characteristic of him to do it in that way. From that time on he has carried a big part of the burden of the housing movement in Indiana, with all its work and responsibilities.

The case dragged for some time, but the outcome may be speedily and joyfully stated — our side won.

Now the matter settled down to the enforcement of the law in the two cities to which its application had been limited by the amendment of its enemies. In Indianapolis it was enforced by the building inspector, but, as Evansville had not even created such an office, it devolved upon the Board of Health. Our board, though fully in sympathy, found in a very short time that both their funds and forces were inadequate for this purpose. Of course, in a city of 70,000, there was work enough to keep a force of inspectors busy, and I felt sure that we would get one. But it was no simple matter to create the office.

I visited each councilman in turn, and received enough assurances to make me feel confident of getting our inspector — some day. "When the building ordinance passes we can get an inspector, but we can't get one without the ordinance," they all told me.

That same old dusty ordinance! Still in the pigeon hole!

So we were to wait, then, "till Birnam Wood do come to Dunsinane"?

Not so!

At the next council meeting, Mr. Joseph Igleheart, president of the Civic Improvement Society, appeared with me, and joined in a request for a building inspector.

We were given the kind and cordial reception which I have invariably received from councils, which makes me wonder why women are afraid to go to such meetings. Women deal with the same men in the grocery, the bank or the coal office, and come out ahead. Why, then, should they feel timid about meeting them in session? If they will only not, *not* be belligerent and antagonistic, but simply pleasant, persistent, and always watchful, they will generally win. Of course, they must make reasonable demands, must be well backed, and must see in advance that popular opinion is created on their side, by proper publicity. They should not bother with petitions, but see that enough substantial men visit each member first, and put the case strongly. The rest is easy.

"I only want to know what the people want," one of the councilmen said.

It made our visits much pleasanter that our Mayor stood strongly for law enforcement, that one of the

councilmen had belonged to my circle of men's Friendly Visitors, and that the City Attorney had also been one. They knew how true was the story we told the council of our need for the means to enforce the new tenement law. Other members of the Civic Improvement Society came to help us, but after a few meetings Mr. Igleheart and I kept on alone. We found that the council was sticking on that big ordinance. "But can't we have a simple, short, plain ordinance, that simply creates the office of building inspector?" we asked.

"You go and prepare such an ordinance, and we will consider it," we were told.

We hastened to comply, and brought back a neat little measure, at the next meeting. It was not passed at once, so we went on until I left town for the summer, and then Mr. Igleheart kept on, alone, until it was passed. Shortly after, the Mayor appointed S. A. Brentano as our first building inspector, and he set about a faithful enforcement of the law.

I realised keenly, while engaged in this effort, how much easier it is to do civic work with home as a centre and a base.

How good it was to be at home again, to resume my accustomed Identity, to which I felt almost a stranger; to be again a Person, no longer merely a

disembodied, homeless Plea! I was avid of all those usual, homely things that all people do, so eager to get back into the same "rut" again that I welcomed even the commonest tasks.

It was so good to get out doors, after confinement in the hotel and the state house, to feel the fresh air and the sun, to run about the lawn and find where the hyacinths and jonquils were coming up, in their same old places. Good, even, to clean house and preserve strawberries. When May came, and I could sit in diaphanous gown and light slippers, on the lawn, by the great wingelia bush, that was a fountain of rosy sprays, at last I could shake off that hateful feeling of a coat of mail. One must have the "doublet and hose in one's disposition" to endure it long. Never had feminine frills seemed so satisfying to me. I found a pleasure even in teas, feeling much as Robinson Crusoe did, I imagine, on his return to civilisation.

Then came June, with a bevy of girls, in a house party for our own daughters, both home from school. June, and the world was young with the young life that filled the house with music and light and laughter. There was the flash of shimmering gowns, and the glow of bright young faces. The mornings sparkled and the evenings dreamed, and the world was sweet with roses.

Midsummer came. We went away from the blazing streets to the fresh coolness of the lakes, for a long rest.

I cannot remember what happened in the fall, except that I spoke once, to the State Federation of Women's Clubs.

The rest of the fall, and much of the whole year that followed, has been blotted out of my memory by the sudden shock of a great bereavement that overwhelmed our home.

I do not know how to go on with the story, from this place, for it seems as if it ought to stop here, as our life stopped, for so many long months. Again and again I have come to this place, faltered and hesitated, and laid down my pen. It is a time that can neither be dwelt upon nor passed over. There is much of it, too, that belongs to this story. But — no, I cannot bring myself to write more than to say that it was the sudden death of our eldest daughter, Margaret.

. . . .

The winter was long and hard and dreary. The world was old, now. It was old and grey. There was constant illness in our family, that kept me close, with anxious nursing. But the winter wore away, and the spring dragged through. I began to feel a craving for work, employment, something to force

my mind to new channels. Though still too weak from the shock to do much, I went back to the Working Girls' Association, of which I was yet president, and began, also, to visit the poor.

"Surely you will lay aside all your outside work, now," some of my friends said. "You owe it to yourself and your family, and all other obligations are cancelled at such times."

But the outside interest helped the whole family, I said. And if it were intended that we should be isolated, and set aside a part of our lives to be dedicated to grief, we would be given desert islands where we might be alone. But, so long as our lives touched others, it seemed to me that each point of contact was a responsibility. And so the family felt.

I mention these things because this is a story of work, and I wish that every one upon whom sorrow has fallen could realise the healing power of some unselfish interest that is exacting enough to force absorbing attention. Well for those who have such interests before sorrow comes, for they are difficult to acquire afterwards. The man of business, the woman who makes a living, are forced to meet the world, and find relief in work. But women of the idle class, who alone are shut up by corroding conventionalities, have no escape from themselves, even though they travel.

If work, in itself, is helpful, how much more so is that spending of one's energies in a way that will help others. But, most of all, is there a tonic and balm in the personal giving of aid and comfort to those who have lost more than we have, under repeated afflictions.

One of the few things I remember, that year, is a visit from Jacob Riis. I had been planning for two years that our state should have the privilege of hearing him, and now others had gone into the plan, and he was to be with us, early in the winter. His tour began in the northern part of the state, and wherever he went the people met him with enthusiasm, and still hold his memory in reverence.

He was to visit our city last. "But perhaps I'd better not come now," he wrote. It would have been a grief to miss him, and so our friends attended to the details of his lecture, and he was here, in our home, for a brief bright space that our family can never forget. "Here," we say, "is where he sat, on this side of the fire, when he set our children on his knee, and told them stories of his boyhood in Denmark, and legends of their heroes." We knew there were none of them braver than he, and that the little decoration of knighthood he wore, given by the hand of the Danish king, symbolised also what

was heartily accorded him by the loyal love of the American people.

But we knew more — we were "receiving a prophet," and his presence was a benediction.

. . . .

Along later in the year, I do not remember the month, there came a challenge to all my powers.

Certain men, in Indianapolis and Evansville, were beginning to find out that the restrictions of our tenement law hampered them, and a number of them prepared a bill, purporting to correct the "mistakes" of our law, which, instead, would have taken the virtues out of it.

There was no Indiana Housing Association, then, but Mr. Cox did the work of president, boards and committees, just the same, always knew just what was needed to be done, and he said "not to be uneasy."

Of course, we were bound to see that if any bill were introduced it should really be an improvement upon the old law, by making it broader and stronger. This meant that the authors of the proposed bill should have demonstrated to them just what the effect of every change would be. There was no one in the United States who could do that with such authority and conclusiveness as could Mr. Lawrence

Veiller. As secretary of the National Housing Association he heard our call, and came out twice to help us, all the way from New York, spending many days in slavish labour for which Indiana owes him her profound appreciation.

While he was at Indianapolis we made a tour of the slums of that city. We took with us a number of prominent citizens, and plenty of reporters, and I had the satisfaction of having the greatest housing expert in this country, and one of the foremost in the world, verify my statements as to just how bad those slums were. But noses and eyes gave conclusive verification, and some of the bulwarks of our present housing movement are those who went that day.

All this time Mr. Cox had been quietly busy, and the Civic Commission of the Commercial Club had been made aware of our impending danger.

With magnificent response they decreed a banquet, in Mr. Veiller's honour, and mine, at which should be gathered representative men, among them the friends of housing reform (who had grown to a goodly company), including in the invitation the framers of the proposed dangerous bill, so that we might cement our purposes with patés and coffee, and friendly discussion.

The banquet was an entire success, in all the ways

we desired. Sitting, with Mr. Veiller, between President Miller and Dr. Wynne, the chairman of the commission, at the head of the tables, I looked down the long double line of men with a feeling of gratitude for our strong support and the distinguished honour. The strength of our support was more apparent in the speeches that followed.

The next day we got down to business at a luncheon of some of the Commercial Club men, including Mr. Cox, Mr. Grout and Mr. Winterrowd, then building inspector of the city, who is one of our main props and pillars. Architects and builders were present at our extended session, when we mowed, reaped, shocked, threshed, ground, sifted, baked, masticated and digested every grain of the proposed bill, Mr. Veiller presiding. Then he gathered up the views of the company, and took them back to New York, to reduce the chaos to order. He alone can tell of the time and toil it involved, and only those who have taken a hand in such work can appreciate the tale of it.

Our story begins again with his second trip to Indianapolis, when he sat once more in the Claypool, with Mr. Cox and me, and took us over all of his processes, till the words danced on the page, and all ran together. Then Mr. Cox called in the others who were interested in any changes that might be

made, and we sat again for morning, afternoon and night sessions, until everybody understood everything, and all were agreed.

There I sat, in discussion with those men, architects, builders, real estate men, lawyers, doctors, bankers, charity workers, and with us was the great housing expert who had spent years of his life writing, enforcing, and testing out tenement laws. Yet angry landlords ring up my 'phone, and demand to know why *I* decreed such and such regulations, echoing the woman who exclaimed vehemently, " Vat does she mean by sich foolishness? She'd better make another law, yet."

It was great to see the masterful way in which Mr. Veiller met all questions, drawing swift diagrams to show what would happen if given dimensions were changed to certain others, etc. Finally, no one could ask any more questions, and we all shook hands and promised to work together for the bill we had agreed upon, and Mr. Veiller returned to New York.

One of the things that makes this meeting memorable is that here we became acquainted with Mr. Wilson B. Parker, of Indianapolis, who represented the State Association of Architects in this matter. He has ever since been a valuable supporter of housing reform, and has been of aid in many trying hours.

Now, of course, I would have to go back to the

legislature! There was nothing else to do, much as I dreaded a second term, with a fear that it would give me the savour of a professional lobbyist, or a "crank." But here was the opportunity to try again for a state-wide law, and that was what I had started out to win, and could never be satisfied without. Moreover, the architects who were joining in the bill expected me to go back, to remedy the shortcomings of the law of 1909 which had been caused by hasty amendments that injured several sections.

Before the legislature opened I went up again to Indianapolis to help Mr. Cox to rally our forces, and see that all was ready, taking along my poster exhibit. I stayed over to see the installation of the new Speaker of the House, Mr. Albert J. Venneman, from our city. He had been one of our men's Friendly Visitors, and I knew, better than the others did, what justice every cause would have, and rejoiced for his interest in the poor — those thousands of constituents in our state whom our legislators so often forget that they represent.

Many of our old friends were back in the legislature, and my reception was so cordial that it took away my dread of returning. Mr. McGinnis was there, with his beautiful wife, and he agreed to look after our bill again in the House. Dr. Foor was there, stronger and more interested than ever, and

he was again chairman of the Health Committee, to which our bill, without doubt, would go. Mrs. Foor would be again on the floor, in the same capacities as before. There was never more faithful friend than she proved herself to be in the weeks that followed.

Senator Cox's term had expired, but he was there every moment he could spare, and, though Mrs. Cox had less occasion to come, she was present, to cheer me on, when possible. I never saw them together without a whimsical wish that I could have just such a wife, to supplement my husband's help, with all those things that only women can do.

We all met at the Claypool, where many friends of the last session were at home. Two other friends, Mr. and Mrs. William L. Taylor, had apartments at the hotel. He is so well known, beyond our state, that it would be out of place to describe him. It was his record as Attorney General of Indiana, a short time before, that gave me the greatest pride in quoting his opinions on housing reform. As for her, and all that her friendship has meant to me, it needs some other words than prose to tell.

At the hotel we gathered all our forces together, made our plans and our war maps, and prepared for the struggle before us.

I was impatient to have our bill introduced before

a rush of bills began, but some of the parties to it began to haggle over little points, and we were delayed until well into the session. As a result, I received word from Dr. Foor that our friends feared it was too late to get the bill through, and thought best not to report it out of the committee, and run the risk of having it defeated!

Counting over our friends and forces, I felt confident that we could win, and took the next train to Indianapolis. Calling our old and new adherents together, Mr. Cox and I arranged for a committee hearing. There was Mr. Parker, who spoke strongly for the State Association of Architects, Dr. C. S. Woods, representing the local Board of Health, and Mr. Grout, representing the charities, with many others. But we might have spared our array of forces. "There's no need to present any arguments," said one of the committee. "We have gone over the bill and understand it, and are in favour of it. All I want to know is, whether Mrs. Bacon is satisfied with the bill — if it will do what she wants for the poor."

That was certainly a great mark of confidence, but a still greater one was to follow.

The bill was reported out at once, and, to save the time wasted in delays, the leaders of the House (both majority and minority) finding a strong ma-

jority for the bill, put it through its second and third readings, under suspension of the rules. It was all over in five minutes, before I hardly realised what they were doing, and fairly took my breath. The papers said it was a "monument" to my efforts. I didn't know, then, what the monument would be used for, or what inscription would be written on it by the Senate. And the Senate was yet to try out.

Now we found Senator Cox's knowledge of the men and of legislative methods invaluable. Moreover, his clean strong record gave him great influence with men of all parties.

We had chosen Senator Edgar Durre, from Evansville, to take charge of the bill in the Senate. Although his party was now in the minority, and our strongest enemies were on the majority side, we felt that Senator Durre, with his brilliant ability, was a match for any dozen ordinary men. Besides, he understood the subject better than the others, from his previous experience.

There was little appearance of opposition at first, but the bill showed an ominous tendency to stick in the mill, between the two houses. Finally Mrs. Foor and I read a perfect proof, and my own hands put it into the hands of the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presence of the clerk. Promptly and smoothly it went through two readings, and then stuck fast.

I had been warned, on our entrance to the Senate, that we would not be allowed to pass a state-wide law, but every poll showed a good majority in our favour. The men from my own district were "solid" for the bill, and helped strongly. Our friends in the House came in and helped, and Senator Durre threw all his strength and energy into the fight. Mr. Cox took almost the same part that he would have taken, if still a member. Besides this, I interviewed every one of the men myself. We kept constant note of friends or foes or "doubtfuls" on our legislative directories, comparing notes as we made progress. And from day to day they showed a majority in our favour.

But we did not dream to what lengths the opposition would go. Stronger and more determined, the same vicious lobby was there again. It was made up of many elements, and exhibited a welding of powerful interests, both inside and out of the legislature. There were in it men who made trips from their home towns to fight the bill, with various weapons. Some sent their lawyers or agents. There were wealthy men in the lobby who owned rows and blocks of rotting tenements. Some of them were prominent in the church, and respected in society, in their own towns, and the people there were surprised later to learn of their tenements and their opposition. There

were others whose infamies were as reeking as their hovels, whose names are odorous, not only in their own city, but through all the border, for intrigues and frauds and deeds of violence. "The Powers of Darkness" I have called this element, but the powers were all allied. The brilliant brain, the giant strength, and the cunning hand, all worked together in the dark to carry out purely selfish ends, with no thought of the interest of the state. And here were the friends of the State arrayed more strongly than ever, the State Board of Health, the State Board of Charities and Corrections, the local charities of the whole state, the press of the state, calling with one voice for the law, the State Association of Architects standing for its need and fairness, and many leaders of public thought besides. And the only arguments urged against the bill were those of the expense and inconvenience it caused the landlord or the builder! Yet we were asking only for the decencies, and the necessities of safety and sanitation.

As in 1909, some of the members of the legislature openly avowed their tenements. Others denied having any, and we wondered at their opposition. But when I visited their home towns, later, I had the court house records examined, to see what property they, or their relatives owned, and even stumbled accidentally into some of their tenements, the worst

in the town, when I went out with the charity workers of the place.

It must not be supposed that I encountered these men, personally, in any unpleasant way. True, there was one Shadow ever at my heels, as before, but I was always accorded courtesy and respect. I was thankful for the ethics of the legislature, that prevented personalities, and was careful to be as fair and considerate. Naturally, my name was never mentioned, and "the author of the bill" meant Senator Durre. Once, however, with significant glance and emphasis, one of the opposition declared that "It was not fair that one will should dominate that legislature." In a flash Senator Durre leaped to his feet. "My will is *not* dominating this legislature," he declared.

Sitting at the side of the Senate was like perching on the rim of a great seething cauldron, wherein boiled and bubbled a mixture of all the matters of party interest, selfish and unselfish interest, and the interests of friends or clients. More varied elements mingled their fumes than might have been blended in a witch's brew — all the human passions, noble and ignoble, prejudices, emotions, plans, schemes.

Orators dashed in herbs and pepper a-plenty, cool advisors carefully measured in the salt, lobbyists

kept the fire burning furiously under the cauldron. But a few strong, skilful hands held the big ladle and stirred the pot.

It looked hopeless to ever get anything out of that stew!

Just to sit and look on afforded a wonderful opportunity for the study of political methods, to say nothing of sociology and psychology. But, with the old spirit that would "rather be cheated to the last than lose the blessed hope of truth," I was loath to learn. My childish habit of putting my fingers in my ears and shutting my eyes would have prevailed, only that it was my duty to be vigilant and ever alert. One had only to sit still and have the picture reel unroll before him. As one person after another dropped into the seat beside me, bit by bit was added to the lesson of the day. I learned what customs and traditions had to be accepted in politics, as we accept all other things to which we are born, our grandparents, and the climate, for instance. And I was impressed that Human Nature is just one simple cell, the same in slums, in *salons,* in assemblies.

The lobby would have been surprised to know how much of their doings came to us, unsought. What was promised in saloons, what was plotted in cafés, or even in private apartments, came straight to us, from a myriad sources. The walls had both ears

and eyes, and more "little birds" chirped information than ever broke woodland silence. But it all served only to make us aware how powerful were our enemies, and to warn us of the lengths to which they were willing to go.

The history of various members was brought to us, and threw much light upon their votes and speeches. Sometimes — and it was sad to see — a man of many fine traits and impulses disappointed those who expected better things of him, on account of being "tied up," or bound by outside obligations, so that, like Launcelot, "Faith in dishonour kept him falsely true." Seeing "the doubtful balance of rights and wrongs," the perplexities, the strain, the pressure from many sides, one learns a broader charity for those who falter, and puts a higher estimate upon those who never swerve.

It was a disappointment to us that the labour unions were too absorbed in a child labour bill to give any attention to the housing bill. I had secured, through a friend, a resolution from the National Alliance of Labour, endorsing Housing Reform, and hoped that the working men would realise that this law was meant to improve their own living conditions. But they did not seem to grasp the idea, then, very generally, and many of them do not now.

It is worthy of record here that twice during that session I was given the very unusual privilege of opening the Senate with prayer. This, in itself, is enough to show that the evidences of confidence of the last session were again renewed.

There is no need to dwell upon the details of that session. Trip after trip I made home, and back again, waiting for the bill to come to its third reading. It was a severe winter. Snow storms delayed the trains, and I was sick half the time from exposure in icy sleepers and from going to and from the state house, in sleet or rain. But even when I got up out of bed to go, in response to telegrams, the family only cheered me on, and helped me to start. They knew how much it meant. I remember my mother's disgust at the "stupid" men who couldn't see the need of a state-wide law. Even the maid was glad to contribute her important part, and the children cheerfully volunteered, "We'll pray for the bill every night." There was one, too, who was ready to pray, pay and fight. Why shouldn't a woman dare, with such backing?

If we could only have fought! But we worked, watched and waited, waited in an unending nightmare of difficulties and delays. The end of the session was at hand, and our bill had not yet been

Those who need the bill most cannot come

allowed to come to its third reading. Four times it had been made a special order, and four times the rules had been set aside, and the order broken, on the plea of party measures still unattended to. And still a poll showed a good majority in favour of the bill.

"I'm tired of this guerilla warfare, this being struck in the back by some one hiding in the dark," thundered Senator Durre. "I dare you to come out and fight in the open, and let the bill go to a vote now."

The last day came, and our friends in the Senate rallied for a last charge. Senator Durre fasted that day. He made me think of a lion who was being made ready for human flesh, as he paced the aisles, with his jaw squarely set, and red lightning in his eye.

The panic rush of the last business swept over the Senate all day. At the end of the day we got a hearing. "Every cause and every interest has had its hearing in this Senate," declared Senator Tilden, "but the cause of the poor has been pushed off until the last hour."

"It is asked why there are not more here insisting upon this bill," said Senator Halleck. "Those who need the bill most cannot come. They are sick

and weak, poor and ignorant, and they do not know how to protect themselves, and cannot afford to come."

Senator Carleton, our other home senator, pleaded eloquently for the children in our cities. There seemed at last to be hope of getting a vote — but time came for adjournment, and we had to wait till the evening session!

It was the last night, now, and the lion was loose, and swept the whole jungle before him. Those who heard Senator Durre's ringing, stinging speech still remember it. Men said that not in years had such oratory been heard in that legislature.

Can I ever forget that scene! The Senate chamber was packed with those who were anxious about the final fate of different measures. My friends pressed to the rail. I saw Mrs. Cox and the children, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, and many others, for the Architects' Association had adjourned its session to come over and help us. The House finished its business and adjourned, and many of the men came in to help in our fight. Everything was confusion. Men were tired and excited, and the rules were relaxed. The opposing lobby boldly walked the Senate floor, and our men called me inside the rail, upon the floor, also, with Mr. Cox and the others.

After Senator Durre's speech there was a sharp skirmish of discussion, and the bill went to a vote. How anxiously we counted over our men! Two of them were sick, and absent. A few, thinking the fight was hopeless, had gone. There were some members who had dodged every vote on our bill, and they had slipped out into the corridor. One man refused to vote at all, because, he said, he had never seen a tenement, and wouldn't know one if he saw it, and he wasn't going to vote about something that he knew nothing about.

The voting went on. Mr. Cox, with his brows bent, was keeping tally. I couldn't! Thud, thud — like clods on my coffin fell every "no." But "ay, ay,"— I knew, by the light on the faces of those around me, that we had won. Mr. Cox showed me the tally — 26 to 16. (There were 50 members, and we had to have 26.) There was applause and cheers, that the gavel could not quiet. Before it died away we had sent a message to the engrossing room to have the bill ready for the Governor's signature before midnight.

"But why don't they announce the vote?" we asked each other.

My friends, the senators, who had worked and helped, and all the others, crowded around with con-

gratulations. "It seems too good to be true," I said. "I am afraid to accept congratulations until the vote is announced."

The opposing lobby had gathered in a knot, by the desk. We waited an hour, amidst the confusion of the last night, while members were packing up their belongings to leave. Finally, there was an uproar. A man had been found, by searching the cloak rooms, who was willing to change his vote. The majority was changed to 25, with 17 opposing, and the bill was lost. Lost!

In our dismay we tried vainly to get another vote for our side. Then we asked to see the roll, for some one had told us there had been another change, in our favour.

It was gone!

There was a murmur of anger and disapproval from the audience. Hands beckoned from the rear. Suggestions were called to us, in excited voices.

Too late! No appeal would have been heard, while the opposition had such power. The vote had been promptly announced, and the Senate adjourned.

Now there was a different scene. With words and looks of sympathy, my friends crowded about. Among them were the representatives of all the papers, that had given such strong support. "It shan't happen again. We won't let it," they said.

There was nothing to do but to be game, nothing to say but "thank you," and "good-bye." The Coxes took me back to the hotel, with a sympathy that spared me words. It was my first defeat, and I had not dreamed how bitter it could taste. But when dear Mrs. Cox put her motherly arms about me, in a close embrace, I felt a sudden release from the grip of a hurt too deep for tears.

It was one o'clock when I crept into bed, faint and numb and chilled. But I could not sleep, for every time I shut my eyes I saw those faces I had watched so long and so anxiously. I can see them now, some with a determined scowl, two with a leering smile of triumph, one face aflame, and the others — I saw them, for weeks, in the dark. I could see the packed room; and over and over again a shuddering seized me, at the thought of the public ordeal. Had Lady Godiva felt that way? I thought. For the first time I wondered if any one were called upon to make that extreme sacrifice of one's inmost self.

At last, weariness overcame me, and I slept a few hours. Early in the grey of the morning I left the capital, in a drizzling rain, having snatched a bite of breakfast at the station lunch counter.

Seated on the train I opened the morning paper, and actually laughed to see the tragic account of our fight. "Senator triumphs over frail little woman,"

were the headlines. There was a detailed account of the whole thing, giving the vote of the senators, and a dramatic story of the disappearance of the roll. But there had *not* been any "glisten of tears" in my eyes, and I want that understood!

I smiled again, as I thought of the ultimate effect of this defeat upon the housing movement throughout the state. Sympathy was strong for us, as the paper showed, and I felt that this defeat would give just the touch of sympathy and interest the cause needed.

Our women's clubs, too, I felt sure, would resent it as the press had done. And the State Board of Health would go on with the work, I had good reason to believe. After all, too, we still had our law of 1909, for our two largest cities. Already my "light Irish heart" was coming to the top. Ah-h! "Under the bludgeonings of chance, My head is bloody but unbowed," I repeated to myself with relish, and a grim smile.

But something better than stoicism had been in my mind, all the while. It was the thought of the "chariots and horsemen of fire" on all the heights round about me. I was as sure of them as ever.

Before the train pulled out of Indianapolis I had formulated another plan of campaign for 1913, that I felt sure must win.

The miles clicked away. The cab rushed me from the station. The family was in the door — four little arms were around my neck, and the last of that deepest hurt was gone.

There isn't much that one's friends can say, after a defeat. "But it will come, in the Lord's own time, when He is ready," some said.

"No, His time is when *we* are ready," I told them, perhaps a little impatiently.

Just as I had surmised, the press of the state took up the cause. None were more gallant than our own home papers, and I say it with a deep feeling of gratitude.

Interviewers came from magazines, too, scenting a "story"; though, as we had been defeated, I felt there was nothing to tell. They wanted to know, too, about the campaign of 1909, but that was all over and done with. I was interested in the articles that followed, for they all helped the cause along tremendously, but they always seemed to me like accounts of some other woman, and I read them with an odd, impersonal feeling, half wondering what she was like. But the stories agreed on two particulars. She was "frail" and "persistent."

And now another force came forward with support — an army with banners, the State Federation of Women's Clubs, and at the head of it, Grace Julian

Clarke. We call her that in Indiana, with pride and loving emphasis. Daughter of George Julian, the statesman, scholar and orator, she belongs on the pedestal which our State accords her. Herself a lecturer and writer, if she were a book it would be a classic.

All this divinity met me several times in the gloomy corridors of the state house, and poured ichor into my heart, on the days when Saturn warred against the Mars and Jupiter and the two blazing suns of my horoscope. Now she came with more than ichor. The whole Federation was to know about our defeat, the leaders had decided, and to resent it properly. It was planned that I should speak before them, at district conventions and other meetings, throughout the state.

So then, there was another line to add to the inscription upon the "monument to my efforts" in the House. The Senate had written upon it:

"*Here lies the Tenement Bill, slain* 1911."

Under this the women of the Federation were to write,

"*Awaiting the resurrection.*"

CHAPTER X

THE HOMES OF INDIANA

It was June when I went to Lake Winona, to speak to the Women's Clubs, at a summer session, and there the Federation opened its arms to me and took me in. The instant I set foot inside their circle I sensed something unusual in the atmosphere. It was the "federation spirit," a reality and not a name, the spirit of unselfish love and interest in each other, and it radiated and kindled all about me. I could never tell them all their cordial welcome meant to me, but I felt like one who had been struggling up a steep mountain path, battling with a heavy snow storm, and who came, cold and weary, to a place where there was warmth, food, shelter and friends. True, I had warm friends and strong helpers, here and there, over the state, but our forces were scattered, some too far to help. Here was a united body, perfectly organised. "Federation"— there is strength in the very name.

I had never had time to be a club woman, and this first close view of them was a revelation. Where were the club women I had read about, whose programmes skipped from Applique to Xingu? Here

were practical women, telling what their clubs had done that year in the way of study and civic work. Here were mingled farmers' wives, women of wealth, women who worked for a living, college women, and women who had come into the clubs for the very purpose of getting educational advantages they had been denied. Each one could teach the others out of her own experience, and their range was deep and wide.

I was much impressed by the conduct of the sessions. Here I saw a dignified body, ruled with a parliamentary precision which any legislature might envy.

It impressed me forcibly that the thought of the session pervaded the whole day. At meal time little earnest groups gathered to discuss special problems, and, passing the tables, one heard "factory inspection," "municipal committee," etc. Not one word of small talk or chatter did I hear.

Sitting near the front, at the first session, I turned to a quiet little woman beside me, asking, "Tell me who all these women are, and what they have done." She began with pride to tell of all those who were prominent in the National Federation. There was Grace Julian Clarke, the president of the Indiana Federation. The lady presiding, Mrs. Edwin Knapp, was one of the leading spirits of our federation. There was Mrs. Melville Johnston, chairman of the

Art Committee of the National Federation; Mrs. Kinsey, one of our pioneer club women.

But who was this, just come to the platform? A bright, eager little woman, whose voice rang clear and strong, and whose presence radiated energy? Every one roused. It seemed as if suddenly more windows had been let into the room, and a fresh western breeze were blowing through.

"That is Mrs. Olaf Guldlin," I was told. At that time she was chairman of the Home Economics Committee of the National Federation, and was known all over the United States for the important work she had done in putting Home Economics into schools as well as clubs.

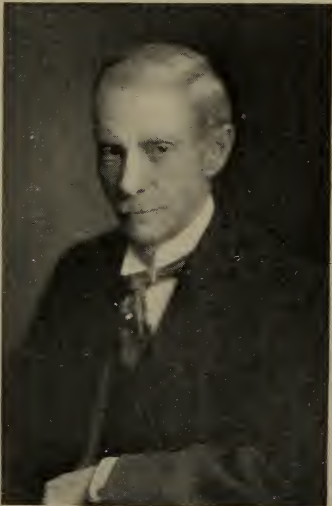
After her came Miss Vida Newsom, with an account of the playground work she was doing; and then Mrs. W. J. Rickey, with a scholarly talk on eugenics.

As one by one the different clubs contributed their part to the discussion, it seemed to me as if chord after chord had been struck upon a great harp, whose golden strings were all attuned. It was a clear, high strain, of noble harmonies.

And then I spoke, and twanged a harsh, deep chord, that gave a new note they had never heard before. Although the Federation had studied social and industrial conditions, as allied to child labour and the work of women, and had gone conscientiously

into these movements, they had not yet turned their gaze upon the hovels and tenements where so many of these working women and children live. I told them "A Tale of the Tenements," a true and simple story of life in the slums of our Indiana towns, and made it just as bare and sordid and miserable as I found it, in plain speech, for there was no need for eloquence. They could see, those clear-eyed women, that not education, not culture, not music or art, not even home economics, could ever penetrate to those darkened places, where cleanliness was difficult, and sanitation was impossible, where decency was often barred, and life was too frequently bestial. They grasped at once the lesson in "race solidarity," the danger to their own children in the schools, the neutralising of the best endeavours of their clubs, in civic work, by the demoralising influence of those classes to whom their culture could never "filter down." They had gone to great lengths and ample breadths of endeavour; now they were ready to go to the depths, in a massive effort for humanity.

I had noticed that the home and the child were the two great themes about which most of their thought centred. The contrast of their homes and their children with the unsanctified "homes" of the slums and the children of the poor was more than



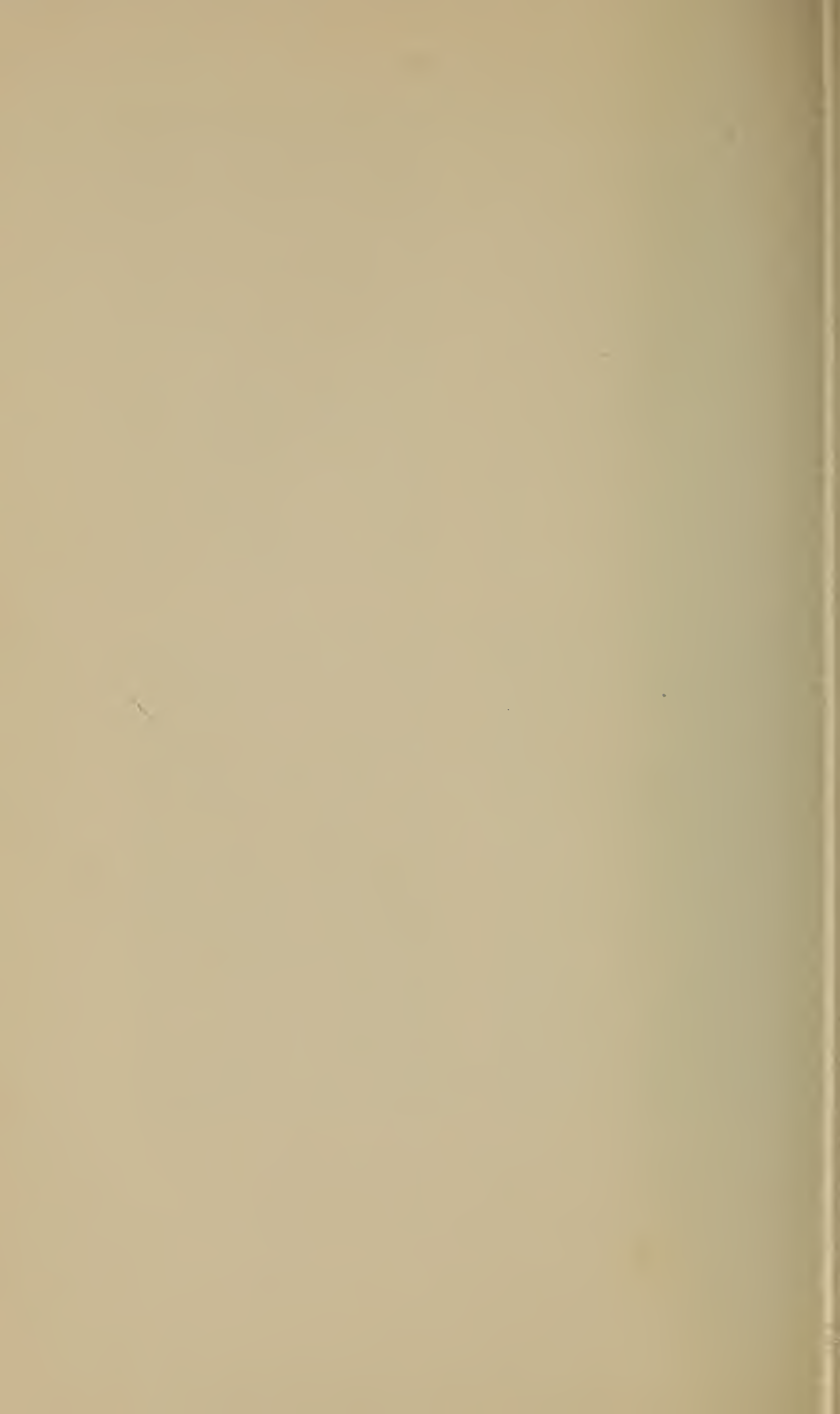
DEFENDERS OF THE HOMES OF INDIANA

Grace Julian Clarke

Senator Charles B. Clarke

Dr. J. N. Hurty,
Secy. Indiana State Board of Health

Senator Edward Durre



their mother hearts could bear, and they sat hushed for a moment, when I closed.

I remember then with what quiet dignity Mrs. Knapp arose, and with one skilful touch swept the golden harp so that it seemed as if one great chord — now with its lowest note vibrating — shook the room, as the women rose and pledged support to the housing movement.

I wish I might linger on those radiant June days, full of colour and beauty, when a circlet of friendships was formed that holds my life now in its clasp. But another experience was waiting for me, among those hills, that demands its place in this story.

The State Bar Association was in session there at the same time, and my good friends in that association had planned that I should address their convention on the subject of the housing law. Of course, nothing could be more opportune, and I was glad, for I felt it would mean much to the cause. But to think of making an extemporaneous address to such a body, and on *law!*

It gave me confidence to be escorted to the platform and introduced by my dear friend, Judge Timothy E. Howard, who is one of our ex-judges of the Supreme Court, and revered throughout the state. But I must confess that, as I stood upon the platform, and looked down into the grave and expectant

faces of our supreme judges, ex-attorney generals, and others of our brilliant and distinguished members of the state bar, for a moment my breath deserted me, and only the presence of my friend, and his belief in my ability, gave me courage to proceed.

It was a brief and simple talk, but however it lacked it was earnest. I hope it sounded better than it read from the uncorrected notes of the reporter.

Those experiences at Winona were the first of a long series of lecture tours. During the summer and early fall I spoke to quite a number of federated clubs. With characteristic energy and thoroughness the leaders of the Federation opened the way for me to bring the matter of housing reform to all the women of the state, and plans were made, also, for special lectures, along the line of my travel, in churches, to charity circles, etc.

Whenever it was possible, in the cities I visited, we took a party through the alleys and up over the business blocks, where we found many surprising revelations.

Traversing the length and breadth of the state, in every direction, going from my own home and the homes of my new friends out among the homes of the poor in Indiana, I saw so much of the contrast that

it was burned in upon my heart and brain. "The Homes of Indiana" came to have a very different meaning to me from what it had in other years, very different from the meaning it seems to have to most people.

"The Homes of Indiana"— at the words a vision rises of the old homestead, with its fireside circle, and all the haunts of childhood. To some, it is a mansion with stately pillars, to some a cottage with low eaves against whose panes brush whispering apple boughs. Or it may have been a rambling farm house, with "the orchard, the meadow," the great lilacs by the gate. All of these rise to my mind, in a glowing picture, with a throb of pride, whenever those magic words are spoken. But after it comes a pang of shame, for always now I see the dark border of the picture — those other "Homes of Indiana" that are not worthy the name — the hovels and dens and tenements!

I remember the trip that burned these words upon my mind, with all their breadth of meaning. Travelling to Chicago, and thence out across the state, I passed through our picturesque wooded hill country, on through rich rolling farm lands, to the level prairies of the north, thence across wastes of sand, along miles of marshes, stopping here and there at various towns.

There is a fascination about the dissolving views from the car window, for the human element of the landscape gives it a mysterious interest. Those country lanes that turn in at a big gate, and wind back to the clustering elms — one wonders where they lead; or, catching sight of dormer windows among the trees, wonders about those who live within. Many a grey old sloping roof tree and great chimney I passed, showing through the orchard vistas, with big red barns and full granaries near by. Many a quiet village I went through, with neat white cottages on shady streets, and wide lawns bright with flowers. I was fain to rest my eyes with them, after the sordid sights I had looked upon.

Here and there, on my journey, were proudly pointed out to me the places where our great men were born. One looks instinctively to see what associations had their share in nurturing their nobility, especially as our heroes love to dwell upon their early scenes, and the lessons of living truth instilled at a sainted mother's knee. It came over me with new force that every one of our statesmen, our orators and authors, had the springs of his greatness in one of these Homes of Indiana!

Sometimes, across the hills, we saw the outlines of the county almshouses. That fleeting view gave no more adequate conception of them or their inmates

than is given by the fleeting thought that is all so many people take of them. I thought of our ninety-two counties, with their almshouses, and of all the outcast life that has found shelter within their walls! An overwhelming realisation pressed upon me of *the homes from which those inmates came!* And how many from those homes had gone to other asylums, for defectives or insane, how many almost as defective or wretched remained within those homes! It was a stupendous thought, of those thousands upon thousands of our state's unfortunates, and needed only one more picture to make it complete — the reform schools and prisons, with their sad quota. And now I came in sight of the grey walls and towers of the penitentiary, at Michigan City.

I spent the night within the prison grounds, in the home of the deputy warden, Dr. Milligan, where I learned much that I needed to know. We went through the prison, next day, and I could but wonder about the men, from different walks of life, and some, of course, who began their career in other states. But here were all these convicts who were the product of our own state! We talked about early environment, and how it showed in them. "Almost every case of criminal assault committed to this prison can be traced to the herding together of families," I was told.

Here was the last dark scene. I wondered how many of those men who looked, with a set and hopeless gaze through the iron bars, upon a blighted future, could look also upon a blackened past, and trace back their path, step by step, from that prison door to one of the "Homes of Indiana," such a home as I had too often seen, where as children they had learned all that was low and base and evil!

This was the story I told to the clubs and circles in the towns I visited, trying to give each local problem its individual attention. It happened that some of the club members lived in those quaint old sleepy towns in our state that are as beautiful as bits of Arcady. There the grass grows in the streets, and the town clock shows no flight of time. There generations have lived in the same old homesteads, and died in the same old bedsteads. It seemed almost cruel to wound those gentle hearts with the story I had to bring, but they wanted to know of life in the world outside, like ladies of old to whom the travel-stained troubadours sang, in castle towers. And they had to know, so that their representative should be instructed how to vote properly, at the next legislature.

There were other lovely old towns, where the stirring pulse of new life was quickening, and where the citizens proudly showed new houses going up, as signs

The fringe of miserable dwellings where the colony of poor was steadily increasing

of growth. I had to call their attention to the fringe of miserable dwellings, where the colony of poor was steadily increasing, and point out the old homesteads that had gone to wreck, with Jacob Riis's warning, "Head off the slums!" It is hard to make people believe in danger, until calamity is too near to avert. But I wanted to cry out when I saw how speculators were invading the quiet streets, slicing off the lovely lawns, hacking down the noble old trees, putting ugly, cheap-looking flats uncomfortably close to some of the dignified old mansions, that seemed to be holding up their grey eyebrows in mute protest.

The owners needed the price, and took it, but they abandoned their lawns and sat inside, and went oftener to the suburbs, where, of course, they will eventually move, for privacy, light and air. Then, as happens in all of our cities, the old house, left to unloving hands, will become less and less desirable, go from shabbiness to decay, and finally be the rookery for many low and noisy families. Then there will be frowsy women in the doors, dirty babies on the steps and the pavement. The lawn will be trampled, the great hall door will stand open, the bare floors echo to rough feet, the lofty walls, the marble hearths, will be blackened, defiled. Those rooms, made sacred by every ceremony, will be the scene of

unholy life, and drunken, boisterous mirth or strife. There is no sadder sight than the old home, gone to such ruin.

Passing on to the younger, rapidly growing towns of the north was like coming to a different country. Here was the hustle and push of frontier life. Here one was confronted with the problems — harder because unrecognised — of the growing city and the unannexed suburb. In some of the towns the loyalty of the "boosters" went to extremes, and they would admit nothing short of perfection within their city limits. They viewed with complacency the lawless mongrel populace, living in "tar paper" shacks, tents, or other makeshift dwellings that crowded about them on all sides, even to the doorsteps of the town. Their filth and degradation was not *their* responsibility. "You won't find anything like that in Newville *proper*," they declared with pride. "This town is under the strictest regulations."

"But," we suggested, "unless you make a walled city of Newville proper, and guard its gates, Newville *Improper* will swarm into your nice, well regulated town, with rags and tatters and pollution. All your ideal regulations will not keep them from doing outside the things you don't allow within. All that you can do is to extend your limits and take them in, as a father takes in the son who has married a

barmaid, and disgraced the family; for they are kin, in spite of you. But whether you annex them and regulate them, or not, they are there; the flies from their filth visit your table, or your grocer and butcher; the people of the suburbs throng your streets, and brush against you in the stores and cars. Their dirty dollars circulate in Newville. Their people move into Newville, and become your citizens. A pestilence in their borders would sweep your town. A fire in their tenements would scorch your houses. And, even now, you are entertaining part of these people in your jail."

But they maintained at least the *feeling* of isolation. "Insulation," perhaps, is a better term.

Coming out from Chicago, along our lake front, any Hoosier who loves his State has many unhappy thoughts — if he thinks. That part of Indiana which needs our tenement law worst is in Chicago. Or, it might be said that that part of Chicago that needs their tenement law most is in Indiana. It is also the part that resents any tenement law most vigorously. It is not resented by the Slavs, Poles, Hungarians, and the rest of the twenty-seven nationalities who are snarled all together there with their cows, horses, dogs, pigs, goats, geese, chickens and children, but the men who own the unsanitary coops and barracks they live in. "The tenement

law is framed to ruin business," they say, vowing vengeance upon it. Some day the children who live there will rise up and curse those men and the black business that has ruined *them.*

All through that section we find many such property owners. Happily for the future of those towns, the club women are among the most alert in our state, and feel the heavy weight of civic responsibility, the dangers of the elements that crowd into the frontier, as well as being awake to the possibilities of the growing towns. I did not find anywhere more public spirited women, or any who realised more keenly what both the school and the home mean to society.

After having been called rudely and vehemently to terms by the enemies of the tenement law, in that section, I was deeply appreciative of the assurances of help of some of their most substantial business men. One of these, in Gary, said, "I wish the tenement law were ten times stronger — so strong that it would be impossible to ever build another tenement."

All the way out, through East Chicago, and the crowded section along the railroads, I thought of what the English and German laws would do with such districts, by means of expropriating and making over generally. I longed to be, for a moment, a benignant cyclone, to gently lift all those houses

off of their bases, and set them carefully down upon a green field, far enough apart. But it would be necessary to blow the owners, and all those responsible for those conditions, considerably farther, or they would be right back, and have things as bad as ever, in a short time.

Few things are more depressing than riding out through the back yards of Chicago, into Indiana. How endless seems the line of wooden porches, with wooden stairways zig-zagging between the stories, festooned with dismal washings and dirty bedding, garnished with all the dingy domestic overflow, from pails to perambulators!

Thinking of the deadening effect of the outlook in the worst places, I remembered how Byron sang of those mountains above Marathon, Marathon that "looks on the sea":

> "Musing there an hour alone,
> I dreamed that Greece might still be free."

Could he ever have had such dreams of Freedom if, instead, he had been looking out over this hopeless sea, or shut up with a whole family in one of these tenement rooms, gazing down an airshaft?

Speeding along, I noticed the narrow slits of space between the houses, and gave a gasp when we came to an open space at the edge of the city. There

were a few empty fields, then others, just as raw, that had rows of houses marching across them, houses jammed as closely together as any in the heart of the city! More fields, more blocks — I found I was holding my breath between spaces. At last we had passed out into Indiana, and the settlements came so fast that they seemed to merge. Some day they will all run together, in one great sore — one monster city. There is not one that has anything typical of Indiana about it; they are all alien. In fact, I do not know of anything else in Indiana like these towns, a certain element of which clamours to fasten their very worst building standards upon the rest of our Indiana cities. The buildings are unlike any of our types, most of them being of the ugly, square-jawed, crop-eared, bull dog type, built to save space, that one finds in the great cities.

Everywhere are the great black throats of the steel mills, with their heavy smoke. All along the great sweep of the lake front is the crude clutter and muss of new building, the trash and litter of traffic, rails, iron, lumber, coal, cinders,— the ugliness by which the hand of man defaces the countenance of Nature. Everywhere one sees the enormous enterprise, the giant industries, to describe which many writers have sacked the dictionary for words big enough. And they *are* enormous — stupendous —

bigger, in their ultimate effects, their far reaching grip upon human fates, than even the minds that planned them dreamed, or they would have planned more generously!

Those men who summoned the first workmen to that district were like the man who let the genie out of the bottle, and could not conjure him in again. The stream of immigrants began to flow, in answer to the first demand, it has kept on flowing, ever since, just as water continues to run from a siphon, once the stream is started. Another stream began to pour in,— speculators! There is no need to explain why honest enterprise is always shadowed by adventurers. "Wherever the carcass is," there will the vultures be. It is a pity for the immigrants that the vultures overtook them even on the way to their destination. It is a pity for the cities that two such strong torrents are sweeping in upon them, and washing out the lines of the Plan; one stream, those who are weak, helpless, ignorant of civic welfare; the other stream, avaricious, strong, regardless of civic welfare.

The instincts of the Housing Reformer centred my interest on these two classes. I saw how speculation had forced up property values, and what an unusual percentage lots were expected to yield, so that the grains of sand were grudged for gold, and

the 25-foot lots were forced to carry tenements housing enormous numbers. "The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in," here. We found speculators building flimsy flats two squares from the main street, and crowding them full of foreigners, from cellar to garret; building rear tenements in behind, and charging high rents everywhere. We found newcomers in the tar-paper shacks, better off in many ways than the established workmen, who lived in the barracks, and had two rooms, in one of which the father, mother and little ones slept, in the other of which slept men boarders, also the older boys and girls. We saw negroes and foreigners in the same house, for the latter do not understand our instinct of segregation. In all of these towns we have the complex problem of the alien, living in a strange environment, mixed with native poor and negroes. The results of this promiscuity were dwelt upon by the probation officer of Lake County, Miss Edna Hatfield, who had special college training for her work. She speaks of the "homing" instinct of these foreigners, and the sacrifices they make to own a home. One of these, the taking in of boarders for whom their wives cook and wash, too often undoes the home, as Miss Hatfield showed, and is a great menace to morality. Some of the children hardly knew who were their own fathers.

Except within certain limits, the water supply is not adequate, and very often it is an out-door hydrant, that freezes in winter. The sand is trusted to do sewer service, and the semi-public outhouses are a menace both to health and morals. The unplastered houses are cold in winter, so cold that Miss Hatfield declared a bath was a serious thing for the children, in severe weather, so it is not surprising if filth adds its victims to the infant mortality list.

The high rents, the overcrowding, the misery and squalor of the foreigners, was told by Miss Hatfield, in many pathetic stories of children that had come to her notice in the police court. She told many more tales of the sturdy immigrant traits, whose conservation would mean so much to our American citizenship, and made a strong plea that the immigrants should be provided with cheap, good homes, homes that they could buy and pay for.

With the 65 per cent. foreign population in Lake County, we may well consider the menace of unsafeguarded health and morals, in crowded homes. The immigrants' side of it appeals to us strongly. How dreary the crude new surroundings must seem to them, homesick for their own people, their bit of garden, the old-country verdure! How they must miss the picturesque village life, the festivals, the folk dances!

"We have no land, only sand," one of the citizens told us. Every teaspoonful of earth has to be brought from the swamps, at $4.00 a load, we were told. Only sand burrs grow about the shacks, not one blade of green.

"Only sand"! There is plenty of that. Yet it is staked off, in 25-foot lots, all the way out, across Indiana, for an indefinite distance. There are no such physical or moral problems, anywhere else in Indiana. Nowhere else such inpouring streams of humanity, such crowding, such imminent land congestion. They are baffling, overpowering!

I stood on the shore of the great lake, upon whose sands the human breakers beat as ceaselessly as do its surges. A few years ago there was only the waste of waters here, calling to the wastes of sand. "The waste places" had a new meaning now. What were these dreary dunes, compared to the wasted hearts of our cities, the older ones blackened by decay, ruined by abandonment; the newer ones, wasted by the neglect of opportunities to do splendid things, the choice of doing little and sordid things? And what was the civil engineering done here, compared with the human engineering needed?

Wonderful things have been done in this section, in reclaiming marshes, making roads, bridges, buildings — those things that the strong hand of man is

The unannexed suburb.
Filth, disease, vice, degradation unspeakable exist here, beyond reach of the city's laws

trained to do. There are many other things to be done, that Indiana calls upon the men who first claimed these wastes to come back and finish.

But — we can drain the marshes and level the dunes. Can we ever drain these marshes of misery, and level the barriers to the race?

It was with a heavy heart that I turned away, to go on towards the cities of a different day. And the story that I had to tell the clubs was hard to put into one lecture, for it was like condensing all of Salt Lake into one tabloid. It choked me, and sometimes it did them.

In October the Federation convened at its annual session, and I had a chance to see it in its full glory. If I had needed any proof that the club women of the romancers was either a myth, or long ago extinct, I would have had it in the reports that showed what each club had done through the year. I sat and listened with deep interest as the thirteen districts gave their statements, and these are some of the things they reported:

A "Swat the fly" campaign.

Red Cross stamp sales.

Social centres established.

Rest rooms opened for working girls.

School gardens.

Fight for pure water supply.

Clean up days.

Special course of Home Economics lectures.

Establishment of parent-teachers' clubs.

Home gardens.

One district reported a civic department which had a municipal committee whose duty it was to formulate and push the passage of needed ordinances. The committee had been looking after public sanitation, the beautifying of the river bank, and the care of the city garbage.

After these reports came others, telling of the progress of child labour work, which had engrossed the Federation that year. Then a committee on forestry and waterways reported.

These stories about the impractical club women must have been started years ago, in the first callow beginnings of women's clubs, I thought, and said as much to a neighbour. She was an Indianapolis woman, and for answer she handed me a register of the Indianapolis Woman's Club beginning with 1875. Glancing through it with curious interest I found that the first topic on its first programme was: "In order to be good housekeepers, is it necessary to devote one's entire time to the work?" Its second programme took up "Woman's relation to man." By '76 they were studying the banking system, and had a lecture from Mary Livermore on "Superfluous

Women." Their programmes went on, taking up history, philosophy, literature, religion and architecture, till '79 brought them to the consideration of "Legislation on Public Order and Municipal Government," also "The Kindergarten Theory." "Free Trade," and "The Charities of To-day" followed. In 1889 "Service" came into the club thought, with Bishop Faber's words, "The great fact is, that life is a service; the only question is, whom will we serve?"

In '92 "Outdoor Relief" and "The Children of our State," were considered.

I closed the book with deep thoughts on those women of an earlier day. And now my neighbour, seeing the impression made upon me by this review, pressed upon me a fat volume of the history of the General Federation. It was overwhelming. It is a big thought, even, of the 16,000 women in our Indiana Federation. But to think of one million club women, doing, thinking, working out all the things their programmes designate! It is stupendous. I looked again, with new interest, at our leaders on the platform, who were prominent in this giant organisation, and wondered about all the grist its great wheels were turning to grind; and then my thoughts came back to our own organisation.

Listening to the various reports, I had been impressed by the fact that our Federation was a glori-

fied "machine," second in efficiency to none in the state. Taking our thirteen political districts, each district had its corresponding women's organisation, its chairman and committees, all working with the precision of clockwork, and animated, not by partisanship, not by any selfish motives, but by love of humanity and a deep desire for the welfare of the whole state. And it was composed of women who represent not only the intelligence and culture but the social forces of each community. I wondered if they were fully aware of their power, even after I had been told of the movements they had been promoting.

Any one who strayed into that convention hall would have had to listen attentively to discover whether it was a child labour meeting, a conservation conference, or a congress of mothers. In fact, it was the vital forces of all these interests, federated. It seemed therefore perfectly fitting to me, and to them, that, after I had told them the story of the defeat of the tenement law that year, I should propose as their slogan, "The Homes of Indiana," and that they should accept it, and pledge the whole Federation to Housing Reform. I asked it of them, "Because whatever is a menace to the poorest home is a menace to our own; for the sake of all who live in mansions, cottages, farm houses, tenements, or

hovels; that all the Homes of Indiana may be safeguarded."

Not only did the Federation take up Housing Reform, as a whole body, but it created a housing committee, and made me its chairman. It became my part, thereafter, to explain the need and nature of housing reform to the clubs of the state. And so, up and down, from the Ohio to the great lake I went, and back and forth across our state, telling the story of "The Homes of Indiana." I tried to show them how impossible real home life is in thousands of Indiana "homes"; to show the relation of the house to the home, of the home to the child. They needed no urging, these women of the Federation, to make them take up the cause of those other women, who had no voice, who were too weak and ignorant to plead for themselves, or to know how to better their conditions.

Before I started off on a tour, I went again to the homes of the poor, to burn within my mind a more vivid image of their wretchedness, to get the figures of their enormous rentals, and to rouse afresh the anger that blazed within me, that I might kindle it in others. On many of my trips I had the company of the president of the Federation, as her duties called her to most of the meetings. First this was Mrs. Clarke, and later, Mrs. Felix T. McWhirter,

the wife of an Indianapolis banker, and one of the noblest Christian women in our state. Both entered heartily into my work, and gave it emphasis before the Federation, in every possible way.

In such company I soon saw what it meant to be president of our Federation, and enjoyed their honours with them. I must say that the care taken of us has spoiled me for the ordinary lecture field, with its uncertainties. In the larger cities a limousine was waiting for us at the station, and the club woman who had the most palatial home took the part of our hostess. There were beautiful club luncheons and dinners, the mere memory of which will refresh any famishing desert that life may hold for me. At the smaller towns we were met by an auto, or, in some places, a sleek country horse and carriage, that conveyed us to the softest bed, the most bountiful fare, and the warmest hearts that could be found.

And so from club to club we went, from home to home.

Only those who are within the charmed circle can know what this means; the rapid change from one to the other, with the instantaneous electrical connection which puts us in the vital current, so that we are at one with all their plans and experiences. It was a transfusion of life, to receive the sympathy, to

feel the energy, of these women. And we were more than guests of honour — we were guests of love.

It was most interesting to study the different groups of women, and to see what their club life meant to them. It meant occupation and new interests to the women of leisure. It meant rest and refreshing to the busy women. The most noticeable result of all was in the spirit of the women — a spirit of optimism and achievement, of ever renewed and vigorous purpose, which I believe does more to counteract age and illness than any force of the times, except religion. But the greatest thing was not the spirit, nor the work. "It is the women themselves, after all," as Mrs. Clarke says.

It was inspiring to see how instantly they took up the thought I brought them. I am sure that if their homes and their children had not been the centre of their thoughts they would not have been so quickly aroused by the story of the homes and the children of the poor. And if they had been organised only for the purpose of self improvement they would not have felt their responsibility so keenly. It was a sad business, though, to go about the state, thrusting thorns into tender hearts. "No one can look at me without thinking of slums," I told them, "and I almost feel as if my name is Bill, from the constant references to it."

I envied the lecturers who could talk all the time about pretty things, and hated the reek and ruin of the slums, more than ever. But the truth had to be told. And here was such an opportunity. I might never see this audience again. They *must* know and care.

If only one could have a cast iron body and a vulcanised larynx! I heard with amazement the feats of endurance of my club sisters, who toured our state and other states with vigour unabated. I had come to the place where the range of five or six cities laid me low, at the seventh I was asleep on my feet, and at the eighth I was speechless from exhaustion.

There is something weird about the effect of turning over to one's subconscious mind the responsibility for a speech, and hearing one's own voice (sounding strangely far-off) go on and on, saying things that both entertain and surprise one. And, at the close, to have a friend say, "That's the best speech you ever made," gives food for thought. When I had to pinch my arms to keep alert, and had a strong desire to lay my head on the pulpit cushion (when I spoke in churches) I knew the danger line was near.

In one city, where I stopped at a hotel, after meetings, discussions, conferences, luncheons, callers, and reporters, I went to the hotel desk to give my key to the clerk. His amazed smile made me aware that

I had given him my watch, which was in my other hand.

At the end of one tour an invitation was brought to me from the Chamber of Commerce of South Bend, to come over next day and speak. I arrived on the interurban, in the midst of a blinding snow storm, just a few minutes before the time of the meeting. Miss Rein, who had charge of the Charities there, met me and went with me to the Oliver. Waiting in the parlours with her for the committee of men who were to receive me, I remember trying in vain to write a few notes for my talk, and controlling an almost overwhelming desire to stretch out upon the green velvet davenport for a little nap. But I roused to speak to the committee, and later the snow in my face set my blood a-tingle. A good audience of civic and charity workers awaited me, as well as many of the Chamber of Commerce. And there was my friend, Judge Howard, the president, ready to help and encourage. That meeting was worth the whole trip, for, as a result, the board of directors of the Chamber pledged themselves to the state-wide housing movement.

It seemed to me as if, with the 16,000 women of the Federation added to all the forces we had already enlisted, we must sweep everything before us at the next legislature. But I could never forget my ex-

periences of that last winter. Always, in the midst of the most brilliant occasions, Browning's lines would come to me: "It was roses, roses, all the way," and I thought how "The Patriot" had travelled that same road, a year later, in the executioner's cart.

And the Legislature was coming nearer and nearer!

I looked across the year, that stretched like the great circle of a race track before me, to January, 1913, and dreaded it.

CHAPTER XI

VICTORY

Across the State of Indiana we went, in October, to beautiful Fort Wayne. Through woods that were aflame with scarlet and crimson we passed, through orchards hung with rubies. The russet fields on either side were heaped with gold, where piles of pumpkins lay. And there, among them, stood the shocks of corn, like folded palms upraised, praising the God of Plenty. All day we rode in a trail of glory that lifted from my heart, for a time, the shadow of the cities where little children live. It was for the purpose of laying that shadow upon other hearts that I was going to Fort Wayne, to make a final appeal for help to the State Federation of Women's Clubs, before the legislature met.

The city was on a holiday to meet the brilliant gathering of women who came from all corners of the state. Every form of intellectual and social entertainment was provided, and all prepared to make the most of every happy moment. But who could dance with a ball and chain fastened to one's ankle? The responsibility of that last chance of appeal fastened me down in just that fashion.

At other times, in free moments, I would have found all their talk on music, literature and art most interesting, but now it fell upon me like a shower of rose leaves. Even the great movements of the clubs, to which I had always given earnest thought, failed to hold me. "But these things will keep; they don't require legislation, and you can always do them," I pleaded. "The legislature meets in a few months, and if we fail to pass the tenement law we may never get it."

Dear Mrs. McWhirter! I shall always love her for the way she understood. "This is our one big fight for this year," she declared, and threw all her strength and influence into it, arranging that "The Homes of Indiana" should have a place on all programmes where she appeared. All the leaders of the Federation were most generous in regard to this movement. A number of them even wanted to pass resolutions condemning, by name, the men who were responsible for our defeat in 1911. "But wait, and let us see what happens," I said. "I believe some of them will change their minds, and see how badly housing reform is needed, and will be convinced that the bill is fair."

October was the end of the Federation year, and chairmen of committees were laying down their tasks,

for others to take up. But my work lapped on around the year. I would still be on that race-course in March. No rest till then. This was only a breathing space. I drew some big deep breaths in the home of the Guldlins, who entertained me, for their views were as broad as their grounds. People who live in a park, and give gardens and playgrounds to their city, can be expected to put a high estimate on sunlight and air, space, outlook and beauty. But not all of these, having such things, are willing to turn back to the consideration of slums, with their filth and ugliness. These good friends were, and, to crown all, Mrs. Guldlin, who was a national authority on Home Economics, agreed with me that Housing Reform is a vital and fundamental part thereof. With characteristic energy she took up the housing work of her city, and joined in the state-wide movement.

This visit gave a coveted opportunity to call upon the dear old mother of one of our legislators. She was a noble lady, widely known for her good works, and I was delighted to find that she regarded the needs of the poor just as I did, and promised to do all she could for the tenement bill.

Looking back over the months previous to this meeting, it is wonderful to see how sentiment had grown for the housing movement, through the in-

terest of the Federation women. Such was the character of these women that their endorsement made housing reform not only popular but fashionable, all over Indiana. In Mishawaka, Indianapolis, and some other cities, the Woman's Club numbered several hundred; in many towns they numbered fifty or seventy-five; some towns had a dozen or more clubs; and these were all political factors of decided importance. Not only were the members' husbands men of prominence, but the women themselves were influential in their communities.

One shrinks from making use of one's friendships, or from making political capital of honours graciously bestowed; but, inasmuch as they were given for the purpose of helping our cause, it is only fair to acknowledge how well they served.

During this time another organisation had been formed, that took in the men who wanted to help with the housing movement, as well as women. It was the Indiana Housing Association, the first state association for that work in the country. Mr. Alexander Johnson came over from his country place in Angola to preside at the organising, and we put him at the head of our advisory committee. Mr. Cox, of course, was elected president, and I was made secretary, thereby giving us official responsibility for the work we had been doing hitherto. Just to look

at the printed list of our officers and committees gives me courage. Among them are Hon. William L. Taylor, Judge Howard, Dr. Hurty and Mr. Amos Butler.

And there is Dr. U. G. Weatherly, of our Indiana University, who took a class of students over to Indianapolis, and directed a housing survey of three districts of the city — in which class it is safe to say there will be no future slum landlords. We have, too, some of our leading club women, some architects, and one of the largest real estate men in Indiana.

We had all our charities secretaries in the association at the start. As poverty doctors they were indispensable, for they knew more of the actual needs of the poor than any one else. Some of them were located in towns where the poor were regarded much as a colony of lepers would be. The public gave the secretary their money, at the end of a long pole, and it was understood that the secretary was paid to do all the visiting of the dirty, smelly places, and to save the town the heartaches that the sight of misery gives. No wonder some of the secretaries have such big, sad eyes!

But how brave they are! One of them, Miss Rhoda Welding, has been a constant wonder to me, for she has braved even thugs and gunmen, and never hesitates to call out, in her talks, the names of

the landlords who own the most disreputable old traps.

As we had no funds, to help in our housing campaign, we could only get surveys, etc., by voluntary service, and this the secretaries gave most gladly.

Counting up the elements of our strength, I returned to the State Board of Health. Since our defeat in 1911 they had used every opportunity to further housing reform. The subject was introduced into health institutes, and I was asked to speak at a number, over the state. Dr. Hurty also asked me to address the health officers of the state, in convention, and they passed a resolution asking the legislature to enact a tenement law. After speaking to the State Association of Trained Nurses, who had prepared a similar resolution, I felt that every power for health was aligned with us.

Finally, at a full session of the State Board of Health, I was given a most cordial hearing, and they offered to help in every way possible.

The most valuable result was a bulletin showing the relation of tuberculosis to bad housing, which they had printed and laid on the desk of every member of the legislature.

One strong and decisive move, that enlisted the churches of the state, was the plan for a "Housing Sunday" all over Indiana. We arranged the details

through the charities organisations, sending, through them, letters to every minister in their towns, asking that one meeting of a certain Sunday be given to the consideration of the conditions of the poor in their city. Each one received a brief statement of our housing problem, also a sermonette, to use if desired, which began "You whom the Lord hath blessed."

I saw newspaper reports of some of the sermons, and they were the sort that should stir men's souls. It was surprising what texts were found, ranging from the question of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" on through all the books of the Bible. A striking text was taken from Deuteronomy: "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." I should like to know what penalties Moses would have prescribed for those who bring "blood upon their house" by omitting fire escapes.

From time to time a number of pulpits of the state had been opened to me. I had spoken in Jewish temples, and churches of every denomination. Most distinctly I remember giving a "sermon" in Indianapolis, at the time of the charities conference, when, as was customary, the conference speakers filled the pulpits of the city. It was published

afterwards in the *Survey*. "Follow me," was the text, and I tried to show how, if we follow Christ all the way, we must go among the homes of the wretched and needy, as He did. As simply and plainly as possible I told the story of the poor in Indiana, and made an appeal for help, in the name of Christ.

There were many of my friends in the church that day, besides those who belonged to the congregation. Among them was one who sat near enough for me to notice his close interest in the story. Long afterwards he said to me, "I made up my mind, sitting there in church, that I would run for the legislature, for the purpose of carrying on the housing fight."

It was Senator Charles B. Clarke. He was elected to the legislature of 1913, and made the tenement bill his chief charge, working for it with untiring energy.

He was one of the strongest Democrats in the Senate, and that party had an overwhelming majority. His political strength was a most valuable asset, but it was the spirit with which he went into the fight that made his leadership invincible. Senator Clarke is a man of splendid physique and indomitable courage. My last fear of the "Big Dog" vanished when I looked at his broad shoulders and towering height. The test of his efficiency, however,

was in the finer matters of difficult diplomacy, and the use of a keen wit. The latter was ready for all occasions, as we found at our social gatherings in his home. I remember one dinner party, there, at which we were comparing our Irish ancestry — he comes from the Clarigs of County Kerry. One of the guests, of different blood, listened with passive interest. " Well, I always defend the Irish," she said. " They don't need it," flashed Senator Clarke.

It was along in the session that I found how much of a sacrifice he made in entering the legislature. It was not only that a heavy and exacting law practice had to be laid aside, but certain interests were entirely forfeited.

In the same spirit the Coxes had kept from me the fact that the tenement law of 1909 directly affected some of their property. I mention these instances to show what pure and exalted motives actuate some men in our assemblies, despite the sneers that are often flung at legislatures.

The autumn passed, and the winter closed about me like an Iron Tower, bringing the day of doom steadily nearer. Instead of my experiences lessening my anxiety, they increased it, for I knew so much better with what I had to contend. Moreover, I was growing sensitive about the " spot light." My first campaign had been, as before said, like going into a

burning house to rescue a child. But to go into a second fire to rescue the same child, I had felt, in 1911, was more spectacular than was pleasant. And now to go a third time into the flames, to save that identical child, was just too much like a vaudeville "stunt." It was almost more than I could bear. At the thought of that last public ordeal, that horrible night of my defeat, I felt in my heart that I would rather walk over coals of fire than to go through that again — if that would do the work. But it wouldn't. There was nothing to do but to shut my ears, my eyes, and my very soul to all the things that hurt, to set my teeth and go back again.

But before going back I was determined to lay siege to every good Power that could be expected to stand for the welfare of the State, in opposition to selfish interest. Beginning with the Governor and the Lieutenant-governor, I went on down the list, sending a personal letter, with data of the housing conditions in Indiana. To each member of the legislature went the same data, with literature showing how health and morals were endangered by bad housing, and a letter that made a direct appeal.

This time we had the help of prominent men all over the state, who were in our Housing Association. We had men of all parties, and women of all beliefs. It was a kind of sublimated politics, made

up of the best and strongest elements, all mingled in one. Sometimes I was a bit anxious, as, for instance, when two good friends, of different parties, tried for the same office. But no one could tempt me to partisanship. I had only one answer to those who said: "Wait until the Progressives are in power, and we'll pass a tenement law"; "wait until the Socialists are in power and we'll pass a tenement law"; "wait until the Suffragists are in power and we'll pass a tenement law."

It was, "I can't wait, and we will get our law first."

There was only one of the political leaders whom I had never met, but when both Republicans and Democrats asked, "Haven't you seen Mr. Taggart yet?" I realised how important a man he was.

"You'd better drop everything and see him," said my husband, and arranged for me to have a brief interview.

It was brief indeed, lasting only ten minutes, and they were interrupted by many people on many errands. But I found that Mr. Taggart didn't need any arguments, or any explanations, for he knew the whole history of the tenement law, the law itself, section by section, the reasons for each, the conditions of the poor, and everything that I was prepared to tell him. I think I must have sat with

my mouth and eyes both open, as he took up my own story and went on with it. I was dumbfounded, for I had never before met any one, not an expert, who understood the whole subject, without any explanation. He spoke, with definite knowledge and with kindling anger, of some tenement conditions he had seen. I hardly knew where to begin again, when he stopped. "And so we are asking for this law —" I said. "Who are 'we'?" he demanded, with a searching look. I was glad to have the names of the officers and committees of the Indiana Housing Association to lay before him. "And the Federation of Women's Clubs, and the charity organisations —"

"But you are the 'Mother of the Tenement law,' are you not?" he asked.

"Yes," I admitted, feeling very small, and unreasonably shy. Then I plucked up my courage. "I'm not asking you to put this bill through, but only to help us to get a fair fight," I said. "And I'm not appealing to you as a politician but as a man, for the sake of your State, and of the poor, and the working people — and the children."

"I can't say what we will be able to do," he said, very cordially and kindly, "but I will help you all I can; and that is something I very seldom say," he added.

I went away with a light heart, in absolute confi-

dence in his word, a confidence that he honoured under the severest stress of opposition. And I never asked any one else to approach him.

We had taken it for granted, and it seemed the only fair thing, that we should adhere to the bill of 1911, to which we had agreed after so much discussion, much as we should have liked to introduce Mr. Veiller's Model Law, as it stood. But one morning I was surprised to receive a letter from one whom we counted a supporter of the cause, in which he stated some views of his own, and of one of the architects, that fairly took me off my feet. The letter urged objections to the bill, and pointed out vital changes that, if they had been made, would have left a bill not worth fighting for.

There was no reason for me to be alarmed, but fear outruns reason. Just as an apparition will make one's hair rise who does not believe in ghosts, even the shadow of a danger that I should have known was imaginary gave me an actual chill and a veritable fever, with a feeling about the limbs as of having run a long distance. For half a day I was sick in bed. Then I crept down stairs, and called up Mr. Cox by long distance, and told him all about it. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "There's no danger." And such was my faith in his judgment, as well as in his ability, that I ceased to fear. Then

the reaction set in, and the ebbing tide of strength and courage swept back in a flood that left me at the fighting point. It is a good thing for timid people to get a scare, once in a while. It always left me stimulated and more determined than ever. In this case we found that there was only some misunderstanding, and reached a friendly agreement without trouble.

The days passed, and that day came when I had to go once more to the legislature.

"Mother hates to leave you again, but you understand how it is," I said to the children.

"Yes, we understand, and we want you to get that bill through," they replied. "You get it passed, and when I grow up I'll see it's enforced," said my little son. "Yes, and so will I," echoed his sister, valiantly.

Now, once again the surging crowds, the thronged corridors of the state house. Once more, "Pibroch of Dhonil Dhu, knell for the onset!"

Mr. Cox advised that we begin in the Senate this time, so there we had our bill introduced, and, to our great relief, it sped smoothly and merrily on its course. No one could have been more courteous than our Lieutenant-governor O'Neill. No one could have made things pleasanter than Senator Curtis,

the majority leader. Hitherto we had had to use our entire forces to drum, drum, poll, poll; but, thanks to Senator Clarke's thorough work, it was not now necessary. On "ringing grooves" the bill went spinning along, and all the jangling of opposing forces only lent excitement and zest. Not only were old friends back in the Senate, but quite a number, who had strongly opposed us before, now seemed to realise that the time was ripe for housing reform. Many elements conspired to aid us, and many voices mingled in the harmonious chorus of friendly interest.

Another chorus, like an angelus echo, a far-off chorus of women's voices, sounded through the pauses of our battle hymn.

It was the State Federation of Women's Clubs!

One of the members said that session: "The men elected us, and as soon as we get here the women tell us how to vote."

It has been called "A woman's session," as it really was, in a way.

There were more bills for women than had ever been known; bills for a Teachers' Pension, a Mothers' Pension, for suffrage, for shorter hours for women workers, and numberless others. Women were there lobbying, too, by the dozen.

"Some of the men didn't seem to want to be both-

ered," a lady lobbyist told me. I did notice that some of them had an unwonted hunted look, which was quite different from "that absent, far away look" I have heard spoken of on the faces of legislators. I felt that with so many women wanting so many things I must be very, very circumspect, and took orders from Senator Clarke before speaking to the men. Besides, if they had expressed an intention of voting for the tenement bill, that was enough.

I was surprised, afterwards, to find that several of the men were rather hurt because we had not asked them to do something for us. "I spoke for your bill, even though none of you asked me to," one said. And then I had to explain that, as he had stood for housing reform in 1909 and 1911, we didn't want to seem to doubt his loyalty.

It must not be imagined that all the slum landlords had had a change of heart, and were willing with one accord to take their teeth out of the poor. Until the millennium comes, we need not expect selfishness and greed to disappear, and, until they do, the weak will have to be protected by law against the strong. There will be need for housing laws until the Holy City, pure and clean, descends to earth, and one cannot imagine that there will be

any landlords in it — in that capacity, let me hasten to add.

True it was that we saw familiar cloven hoof prints, all about the legislative halls, and I was sure a few times that I had come face to face with the Evil One in person.

One morning, on reaching the Senate early, I found that some hand had laid on every desk a typewritten sheet in regard to our bill. It announced that the "So-called Mrs. Bacon's housing bill" was in reality a bill of the building and plumbing trusts, and that they paid me $5.00 a day for my services as lobbyist! Certain sections of the bill were held up to ridicule, one especially being designated as "The Plumbers' Delight."

We couldn't help but laugh over the absurd statements, but Mrs. Foor and I quickly gathered them all up, before the senators came in.

This was the last I ever heard of being called a paid lobbyist, until some months ago, when one of the opposition made the statement in the presence of a friend. "But who on earth would pay Mrs. Bacon's expenses?" the friend objected. The answer was some Indianapolis company that I had never heard of.

There was really quite a fight at the last reading

of our bill in the Senate, enough to rally all our friends to the defence, and call out all our artillery of oratory. After Senator Clarke spoke, champions arose all over the room, and, at the last, Senator Woods finished with a brilliant climax. Then, in a few minutes, we were all congratulating ourselves over a rousing victory — there, on that same old ghost-haunted battle ground of other days!

And now, avoiding as best we could the trail of the hoof prints, we took hold of the red tape clue and began to thread the mazes that led to the other House.

With a change of scene in this drama, new characters are introduced.

The Senate had been full of familiar faces, but how many strange ones I saw in the House! My heart sank as I wondered how many personal interviews I ought to give. By what algebraic formula, I thought, could we ever determine the "unknown quantities" among those one hundred men. A Democratic landslide had given their party an overwhelming plurality, and swept into the legislature a certain number of new men, whose course it would be difficult to predict. Knowing who were the dominant men, in certain districts, we could make a strong guess at the affiliations of many of the men, and knew from experience which would be helpful

and which hurtful. Studying the legislative directory, I was always glad to see the word "farmer," after some of the names, for it gave promise of open-mindedness and independence. "Editor" was also encouraging, and so was anything that promised connection with the labour unions, for these men realised, by this time, that we were working for their own homes, and stood by us manfully.

The overbalance of power made the House a very unwieldy body, over which few could have presided as did Mr. Homer Cook, the Speaker, and the fact that it was divided into factions gave great uncertainty as to the results of legislation.

To my great relief, Mr. Joe Cravens and Mr. Eschbach were still there, and ready to rally our old adherents. But Mr. McGinnis was absent, and Dr. Foor, and though both lent their aid we missed them on the floor. As before the First District (ours) was "solid," and our men from home stood by most gallantly. One of these, "Jim" Ensle, had married an old-time friend of mine, whom I had known from her babyhood. He was a commanding figure in debate, and one of the most popular leaders.

We were most lucky in having our bill in charge of Mr. Robert Hughes from Indianapolis. Although one of the younger members, his career in the House

added lustre to the line of statesmen from whom he comes. Through some of the most trying legislative ordeals that I have ever known Mr. Hughes never lost his poise, his serenity or his courtly manner, and the thought of them will always shine through my recollection of those clouded times.

It was when our bill stuck in the House committee that we began to scent danger ahead. Now, as before, news poured in to us from every side of the doings of the opposition. As one instance, an hour after a prominent citizen shook hands with me, and wished me success, we were reliably informed that he went to his representative and told him not to vote for the tenement law, that it was "no good."

Wherever we turned, we saw these constituents from "home." As we passed by their members' desks, we saw their heads bent together over the tenement bill, with glowering faces, and heard the words, "*my* house," "*my* lots." But we never heard these landowners mention public welfare, health or safety. There was nothing to do but to wait until the constituents left, and then to find the men whose word was the antidote to this poison of personal interest. I remember bringing half the prominent men in the state house to steady one wavering member, who was distracted between duty and friendship. It is only fair to add that duty prevailed.

One fine old fellow, who had stood by us from 1909, came to me one day, in distress over a wealthy friend who owned "valuable flats," and who was in high displeasure over his adherence to our cause. "Are those flats as valuable as a child?" I asked him, but he was too worried to take in my meaning. "Won't you talk to him?" he pleaded. I complied most heartily, and when the flat owner, who was really a young man of fine possibilities, was convinced that he was already well within the law, I was nearly as glad as my kind old friend.

No matter if enemies with bayonets had covered all the grounds about the state house, I was determined not to show any fear.

"There's a great big bunch of real estate men here, all up in the air over this bill," excitedly announced a big representative, whose allegiance we held by a thread.

"Oh, they won't do any damage," I answered airily.

"But they're all just as mad as can be. They're going to make trouble for you," he insisted.

"Now you just wait and see," I answered. "They won't give us a bit of trouble. It will all blow over."

But at our last committee hearing there they were, with grave and darkling looks. They were a good, substantial type of men, too, well known and re-

spected business men. And we saw that they had three typewritten pages of objections to our bill, and they had come there for the purpose of seeing the bill changed to meet those objections.

The committee sat in silence, with a judicial air, waiting for every one to assemble for the hearing. At one side, Mr. Cox was introducing me to some of the real estate men. "I wish we might have had an opportunity to talk over these objections with you, before this hearing," I could not refrain from saying to one of them. "Very likely there are points that we could agree upon, and it would save so much time and trouble."

I was much distressed, knowing the fatal possibilities of the occasion. To my great relief, the men agreed to give us a hearing, in the office of Mr. Winterrowd, the building inspector, at the City Hall. Mr. Cox could not go, and I set out for the City Hall at the appointed time with some uneasiness, though it was reassuring to know that Mr. Winterrowd was a host in himself.

When I reached the office I found the men sitting or standing about the long table — twelve, twenty or more, if I did not see double. But so many arms were waving, and so many voices were raised in excited discussion that it was hard to tell how many there were.

The noise sank to a buzz as I slipped into the chair reserved for me, beside Mr. Winterrowd. It was something more than rapid walking that made my heart beat fast, and my breath short, but I glanced up with a smile, and was surprised to find that all the scowls had vanished, and the smile had spread around the entire table.

"Now, let's see what's the trouble," I began, and Mr. Winterrowd and I went through the entire list of objections with them, explaining the whys and wherefores, to the end. Of course, these restrictions were all new, and it was only natural that they should be concerned about their effect. Once again, my study of the history of housing laws in other states came to my aid. "I guess she knows about as much about these things as we do," said one of the elder men, and I felt much flattered.

We found that most of the objections were the result of misinterpretation, or misunderstanding of the effect of certain provisions. I must say that I have never met a more reasonable set of men. All they asked was to be convinced that the provisions were fair, and they were as quick to see what was unfair to the tenant, or detrimental to the community, as we could wish. At the last, there were only three points upon which they insisted, and these we yielded cheerfully. Then we all shook hands,

and parted in the best of humour, and they never came near the state house again. The House committee accepted our agreement, and the three points were duly changed, as the men wished.

And so the cloud vanished. But landlords kept boiling up, all about us, and I couldn't shake off the feeling that every hard-faced man who stood around the doors of the House was a slum owner.

There were thirteen men on the committee that had our bill. It was hard for them to all get together to sit on all of their bills, of which they had an enormous number to consider. And until they all sat on our bill, and went over every word of it (it had ninety-eight sections) they wouldn't report it out, they declared.

"Of *course* not," we answered.

But they kept on not all getting together on it, and a few of them began to be touchy about being asked about it, and it would have been very funny, after while, if it hadn't been so serious, and the danger of offending any of them so appalling. An X-ray picture of our situation would have disclosed some obstructions that never showed in our faces or our speech, and our diplomatic relations became almost Oriental in their formality.

Finally, the committee announced that they were ready to take the bill in hand, and go over every

word, for they had decided that certain changes must be made in it. I think I must have given a little groan, and murmured something about the "technical parts" of the bill having been carefully prepared by experts. "We aren't going to hurt your bill, we are just going to make it better and stronger," one of the committee reassured me, in the kindest manner.

"Did you ever sit by during an operation on one of your own children?" I asked him. And there was always a little bit of that in my thought of the bill. After having nursed and doctored and lived with and sat up at nights with a creature like that, for so long, it does seem, in a way, human.

It was a long operation, this time, for our bill stuck for seventeen days, and we had to sit by and wait for it to come out of the committee's hands. "There's plenty of time," they would say, but I knew the danger of delay. And of course I couldn't say that I wanted to go home and see the children, because the committee was not asking me to stay.

And so we waited, all those seventeen days, hoping that each day would end our anxiety. If we women could have had some knitting to do, we might have made mittens for the blue fingers of many of the poor, while we waited. Mr. Cox came and went, working, reassuring, giving much time from his

heavy cares. Senator Clarke was at hand, and on call, but it was Mr. Hughes upon whom the burden rested here. We never left the field. Many times I was tempted to go out and get a moving van full of the miserable looking tenants of the worst slums of the city, and bring them in to sit in the front seats, on the principle of the jury trials. I could have found plenty of consumptives, and if they had coughed it would have been very impressive. But that was too deadly to risk.

It would make a thrilling tale if I could tell all we saw and heard, as we sat there, with so many coming and going. It is really too bad not to give more of the "atmosphere" of the story, but if I gave any of the real atmosphere my readers would get up and go out, for a gasp of air. The House was called "the smoke house" because of the blue tobacco clouds that never lifted. Our clothing, even our hair, reeked of it, as if we had all been smoking. But that wasn't as bad as the reek of the slums.

While we are waiting, let me go back and tell who "we" were, and how I was situated.

This session, my friends would not hear to my going to a hotel. So many beautiful homes were opened to me that I went in an orbit from one to another, and never finished the round. Beginning with the T. C. Day's, there was the Wm. L. Taylor's,

the Senator Clarke's, the V. H. Lockwood's, and the Coxes, and I got no farther. Every one of them were "Islands of Providence," with good cheer, loving care, and strong counsel, that gave

> "Strength for the daily task,
> Courage to face the road."

Looking back over the lonely heart-sick days of my first two sessions, I realised how much it meant to be in these homes.

The last of my orbit brought me to the Lockwoods', where was gathered a little house party whose interests centred in the legislature. Mrs. Lockwood herself had been one of the generals in the Child Labour fight of the previous session, and was still watching over the law they had won. She was made one of the State Commission appointed to investigate the conditions of working women.

Mrs. W. E. Miller, of South Bend, now on the same commission, was there, working for a bill for shorter hours for women.

Mrs. S. E. Stimson, of Terre Haute, attended the session in the capacity of a member of the school board, interested in the vocational education bill. In the capacity of a Florence Crittenden board member, she was watching several other bills, of interest to girls. In the capacity of chairman of the legisla-

tive committee of our Federation, she was helping with the tenement bill. If she had had as many bills as she had "capacities," she would have needed to be much larger and stronger, and would have been a subject for "incorporation," as some one says. But her greatest capacity was for friendship, and she stood by me, through all our trying vigils, with a brain like a man's, and the devotion and patience of a St. Griselda.

Mrs. Foor was there, too. She was looking after a number of health measures, but was doing most for the tenement bill.

We all sat together, sometimes with local members of our Federation housing committee, in one corner of the House, every day. That is, we sat when we were not reconnoitring or doing active work. We lunched together, down town, and, at the close of the winter days, straggled into the cheery Lockwood home, weary, draggled, and often homesick. There Mrs. Lockwood mothered us — she has a genius for being a mother — and around the dinner table we discussed our day, while Mr. Lockwood, a lawyer and civic worker, advised, condoled, applauded, or laughed us out of our discouragement. Then together we planned what moves to make next day. And next day we went back, with hope renewed — and waited. In whatever way we could, we strength-

ened our position, but all we could do was much like the efforts of the Blind Men who went Bat Fowling.

It was about this time that I called my faithful housing committee together, with Mrs. McWhirter, Mrs. Clarke, and other federation leaders, and we arranged to send word to every corner of the state, that the time had come for their help. How the letters and telegrams came pouring back, in response, to the members of the legislature; not only from the club women, but from prominent men whom they had seen, in different communities.

It happened that when our committee meeting was called, Miss Hatfield, the probation officer of Lake County, was in the city, and I brought her to tell our ladies the story she had related to me, of the miserable unsanitary homes of the immigrants in Gary, East Chicago, Indiana Harbor, and the other industrial cities on the Lake.

Her story made our women gasp, as it had me, though I had visited some of the scenes she mentioned. "Will you go with us, and tell that story to Governor Ralston?" I asked her. She consented, and we telephoned at once to make the appointment, and, going over to the state house, were given instant audience.

We had met Mrs. Ralston, socially, in her own home, and at clubs and dinners, and knew what em-

phasis she put upon the home life of the people. We had been received before by the Governor, as I think every one engaged in welfare work had been, that winter. There was that in his manner that inspired confidence, and gave an assurance of strength, that one felt even more than his unusual dignity.

The Governor listened with close attention to Miss Hatfield's story, and I saw him start as she related some of the shocking incidents of the wretchedness, the overcrowding and promiscuity of the immigrant homes.

He had a few searching questions to ask both of us, in regard to the application of the tenement bill to the housing conditions she had described, and then, with a few pleasant words, we withdrew.

That night, at a banquet given by Hon. Charles W. Fairbanks, Governor Ralston spoke of our visit, and expressed his deep desire for a better safeguarding of the boys and girls in the homes of Indiana. The effect of his speech, which was in all of the papers, was all we could have asked.

We were counting, now, our men, our arms and our ammunition, as in a state of siege. How we rejoiced when Mr. Spencer Ball, the president of the Terre Haute Commercial Club, came over, day after day, to fight with us. He was worth a whole

army of privates, and could counteract car loads of paid lobbyists, of the type we had to fight.

At this time the help of the Indianapolis press was of more vital importance than ever before, as every issue contained legislative news. I realised how many friends I had in various newspaper offices, as members of the staff, or reporters, of the *News*, the *Star*, the *Sentinel* and the *Sun* — representing all politics, — met me in the state house. Strong editorials came out at critical moments. The *News* gave me a chair in their state house office, and a hook on which to hang up my wraps. More than this, a charming, golden haired feature writer, with a pen of true steel, often sat or strolled with me, upon my rounds.

The only thing that was not quite so pleasant was the snap shots of various press artists. My husband sent me one that he had clipped from a paper, and wrote "You didn't look like this when you left home. If you look like that now, for goodness' sake, come home at once."

It must not be supposed that any bright little social bubbles on the surface of that deep sea made us forget the great jawed monsters beneath, or the bones of shipwrecked mariners that lay bleaching on legislative reefs. We were out on rafts, done up in life

preservers, and we knew it. But we had to look up, because we didn't dare look down.

It was well that I didn't know just how much danger we really were in, till afterwards. Several times Mr. Taggart had sent word, "Tell Mrs. Bacon not to worry," but I didn't know, until the worst was over, how anxious our men had been over some unexpected developments, that had given the opposition a fresh hold, how hard Mr. Taggart had worked for our bill, and how much personal attention he had given it.

At last the committee finished their work upon our bill, and it was reported out, passed its second reading smoothly, and went on to the last.

There is probably nothing else in life like the sensation of having a bill one has worked hard for come up in a legislative body for a decisive vote.

When one has cared enough to stick to it, night and day, for five years, one cares too much to await its fate with calmness. There ought to be a little curtained booth, or a conning tower, where the sponsor could watch the contest, unobserved, for this long, slow public execution, with every one watching one's face and feeling one's pulse, is awful.

There was a crowd in the House when its calendar showed that our bill was to have its last reading.

There was a goodly showing of club women, and a little knot of reporters gathered about me as the debate began. I had to move, though, for in the very last agonies a lady came and wanted me to listen to something about her house being ruined, if the bill went through. Her description showed me at once that she was mistaken, but I couldn't convince her. "Oh, no, no! It won't be! It can't be! You don't understand! Go ask your architect. I *can't* talk now! Look, they are going to vote," I begged of her, and finally fled.

I found Mr. Cox on the other side of the room, and presently Senator Clarke and Mr. Hughes joined us, and there our friends hunted me out. And it was not a public execution, after all. A splendid avalanche of "ays" snowed under the single "no," deeper than an Alpine gorge. And oh, then, we wished we could have piled honours upon our staunch lieutenants, as high as a corresponding Alpine peak. No wonder the women applauded, as some of the men, who gave their reasons for voting, added, "and because the women wanted it."

The women, the homes of Indiana, were honoured that day by the men of our legislature. And we had won a law for the one hundred cities of our state.

It is a foundation broad enough for the tallest structure of Housing Reform that, in years to come, public sentiment is sure to build upon it.

Suddenly, in the midst of our rejoicing, I realised that the nerve tension of the last few hours had relaxed, leaving every muscle aching, and a deadly weakness. Laughing, our quartette of women took me upstairs, into a darkened empty office room, and, in lieu of a couch, laid me to rest on a long polished table, on a pile of soft wraps. Afterwards, we went to the Lockwoods', and had a lovely jubilee dinner that was planned and ordered, flowers and all, by the eleven-year-old daughter of the house.

The last scene of this act was the Dennison Hotel, and the time was the night after our victory, when a party of my friends assembled for congratulations and good-byes, among them a number of the state officials and their wives.

As I looked about me, in the warmth and glow, I recalled how I had slipped away, early, in the rain, the last time. How many friends I had now, to bid good-bye! How many more than at the close of those other two sessions! How many friends — and I loved them all, and loved the beautiful city, with its stately homes, and its great monument, from which broad avenues radiate, star-like. Part of me lives

there still, and draws me back, claiming citizenship in our state's capital.

One thing that gave me the most pleasure, that night, was to bring together so many strong men, of all politics and all factions, and to see them cordially jubilating together over a victory that they had all worked in harmony to win.

There were flowers and felicitations, pleasant words, and some sad ones, and the curtain fell.

The epilogue comes in the next chapter, in front of the curtain, which, I hope, has been rung down to rise no more.

CHAPTER XII

LOOKING FORWARD

There are great things to do while the careless ones sleep,
There are heights to be won, there are ramparts to keep;
And the call that we heed is not Fortune nor Power,
But the need of a hero — the cry of the Hour!
We have dreamed of a time when the world should be bright
With the dawning of Peace and the triumph of Right.
But our slumber is shaken; the dreamer must waken;
He must rouse him to battle, and gird him to fight!
(From "Battle Song." A. F. B.)

"And what are you going to do next? Suffrage?" asked a friend.

"No, housing reform. Housing till I die. I have made only a good beginning," was my answer.

There is so much to be done! Contemplating the vastness of the field, and the smallness of the force that is at work, I am reminded of the hypothetical "seven maids with seven mops," attacking the ocean to "try to sweep it clear." Almost as hopeless seems our task. In our state how many mops are needed! And beyond our borders — dismaying thought! If, in all the cities, every house that is past repairing could be pulled down or burned up, how great would be the crash, how heaven-high the

conflagration. It would be a veritable crack of Doom and glare of the Judgment. But this is only a pleasant little picture, to cheer housing reformers, while we wait, for, "at this poor dying rate," as the old hymn says, our country is not to be cleaned with a crash.

In my own state, and particularly in my own city, I can hear the actual sound of the rotting timbers falling. Our strong city administration is carrying on the work of housing reform most vigorously, and, by means of our state law and various ordinances, is either making over or tearing down everything bad in the way of buildings, as fast as possible. "This city *must* be cleaned up," Mayor Bosse's edict has gone forth, and all the departments are entering into the work. "I couldn't sleep for several nights, after my first round of our tenements, thinking of the little children I had seen in some of those dreadful places," said Mr. Edward Kerth, our building inspector. Needless to say, he will do thorough work.

And now our organisations of business men have just passed strong resolutions pledging their support to the movement, and have created a joint housing committee. Their plan includes the building of good houses for working men, as well as the wiping out of our slums.

It is a most hopeful sign that our architects are taking hold with right good will, and that their State Association is pledged to Housing Reform. Not only will this make the enforcement of the law much easier, but the value of their interest, and their recognition of responsibility for public welfare, can hardly be estimated. It is to them that we look for the development of better, more durable, more convenient and more comfortable houses, that shall be within the reach of the hitherto neglected classes. It is to them that we must look, in the absence of civic experts, for the redemption of our cities from their unnecessary ugliness.

In my own city I have seen not only the action but the reaction of housing reform. Many people labour under a delusion that I am an official with a salary. "I thought you ought to know about the family back of me," comes buzzing over the telephone, every few days, with a description of one more case of overcrowding or unsanitation.

"I am glad you are interested," I say (and right glad I am), "and the building inspector will appreciate your help. Won't you call him up please — No. 462?"

Fewer plaints come to me now from angry landlords and weeping women, as the tenement law is better understood. But even the tenants who suffer

"Cheese Hill," Evansville.
Notorious for vice, crime, murder. Torn down by city administration, 1914

most grumble, occasionally, when we try to pull them out of an old house before it falls over them, especially when they are misled about the law, by shrewd landlords.

I have a soiled and misspelled letter, in a pencil scrawl, whose message shows the sharpness of another wit than that which directed the hand. It appeals to me to stop the demolition of a notorious old tenement, whose ribs were bare of boards, and whose condition beggars description. "We thought you were our friend," the letter says. "We don't know where to go, and, if you can't stop the workmen, will you shelter us yourself?"

The inspector assured me that they found better places, and indeed, none could be worse. One of the families, I found, was Lucindy's! Her husband had died, and she was trying to keep her little ones together. We were glad to see her rescued once more, and installed in a better neighbourhood.

A wonderful result has come from the educational campaign of the last six years, in the awakening of public sentiment. Where the law compels one decent building, sentiment builds or repairs a score, and whatever is done by sentiment always goes far beyond the demands of the law. More than cutting windows into some hundreds of old houses, or saving the yard spaces behind as many new ones, is it to cut windows

into the minds of the people and to give them broader standards.

Some of the sins that used to be committed in ignorance in Indiana will never be repeated. Builders are voluntarily making better plans, in many instances; some, through an awakened sense of propriety, others in anticipation of future restrictions.

One of the most significant results has been the building of an entire mining village, upon model plans, giving the miners sanitation, conveniences, and many comforts, providing spring water, and giving each house its garden — things hitherto unheard of. "We used to build a miner's shack for $100," said the owner. "These cost over $1000, but they pay a good per cent."

All of the above sounds so smooth and pleasant that it might lead some readers to believe that no law is needed. Alas, those who make the law necessary are deaf to sentiment, which has a gentle voice but no "teeth." Only the law, which has both a bite and a bark, can make them hear.

"You will go on and carry your work into other states, won't you?" I am asked. And a magazine answers for me, "She will never rest until every state has a law as good as her own."

"A weary lot is thine," methought, reading that

comment. Happily, the National Housing Association, to which I belong, goes far afield, and is organised to answer the appeals for help and expert advice that are coming in, from all sides. Still, there grows a pile of letters upon my desk, asking for lectures, for help in starting housing campaigns, etc., and it is not in the heart of a housing reformer to refuse. But whether it be a chamber of commerce, a civic association or a woman's federation that gives the invitation, I hear always, above it, the faint, far-off call of little voices, and see the beckoning of little shadowy hands.

And so it happens that I see more and more of the misery of the cities.

"If you could stay over another day we would show you the beauties of our city," almost every one says, when, after a tour of the slums, divers meetings and conferences, I am being borne to the train. Once in a while I do visit the good residence sections and parks, and always get a glimpse of them, coming and going from the slums. We have dashed across the business streets, lunched in great fine buildings, and, if there is one, I have seen the state house. It is always a matter of interest to me, as well as curiosity. I like to figure out how long it would take to get from the Senate chamber to the House of Representatives. Some of them are too far apart,

but I like the ones that have no place for the audience, except the gallery, and the ones that are well ventilated. As to the marble stairs, and all that, the shortest way up takes me.

It is not missing the beauty spots of a city that I mind. If I am imported for the purpose of issuing Jeremiads, and making miserable as many as possible, I must be glad if I succeed, and be content to leave the "pleasures and palaces" to other guests, who come on gayer missions. The part I do mind, though, is having to be remembered, like a wasp, for its sting. But there are always happenings that warm my heart,— and new friends.

One of the greatest encouragements, in this journeying, has been meeting others interested in the same work, who have been through similar struggles, and often are farther along the road, and know how everything will work out. I can never forget our first National Housing Conference. I felt as a two-eyed person might who had lived in the Land of One-Eyed People, for a long time, and then came back to the two-eyed country. It was a relief to be with a whole association of people who saw as I did, without having to explain, argue or apologise. In fact, every one of them would have dared to ask for more than I had, and they thought we hadn't asked half enough for Indiana. It was most encouraging.

I remember one lovely luncheon, during the conference, at which we discussed Ashes, Garbage, Alleys, and such things, for several hours, continuing the discussion at an after meeting, until dinner time, and then carrying it on till midnight. And still earnest groups gathered in the corridors, and lingered on the steps. Every kind of civic expert was there, and it was a joy to find out just how to do the things that one was puzzling over alone.

It is far, indeed, that the White Road has led me — through the village, to the city, across the state, and out into other states. And it has been "up hill all the way." But with every turn of the road there is a broader view. There are surprises, too, at every turn, such beautiful surprises, and so many of them, that I have come to expect something unexpected around every corner. Some of them are good times. Some are unlooked for help. The best and the most wonderful of them are the friendships. And I was looking only for thorns and flinty places — and brickbats, as I remember!

True, there is weary climbing and hard fighting still in store, but there are the little resting places, where one can stop and take a full breath, and look out over the view.

It is a glorious thing to be standing at the gap of

Opportunity, to be in the sweep of great movements, in the current of all good purposes, in the company of lofty souls. It is great to feel that one is living, even now and here, the eternal life, and to rest in the poise of a perfect trust in the Divine Will. Only so can one wait with patience and serenity for the issues of life. Only so can one bear to look down into the Shadow, and hear the wail of the helpless and suffering, and feel their burden, as one's own.

Looking back over these years, and the struggle to which they have been devoted, I am thankful that they have given me more, and not less, faith in both God and man. I am glad that I can see the most hopeful phase of the forces that hindered. I am grateful for all the forces that helped — the personalities, rather, for every force was represented by some strong man or woman, and it is they whom I remember. Of all the forces arrayed against Housing Reform, selfishness, ignorance and indifference were the ones that hindered most. I really believe that ignorance is the prime cause, for most of those who are indifferent would arouse to action if they could know. And a majority of those who fought us, through selfish interest, would cease to oppose, I believe, if they could see how much misery their selfishness costs. But they will never know, fully, unless we could put into the penalties of our tenement

law that the owners of slum property should be incarcerated a term in their own tenements. I remember how, in my first campaign, I tried to excuse the landlords, because housing reform was a new thought, and they, perhaps, did not know better. But now, for six years, Housing Reform has been taught from one end of the state to the other. It has been preached by pulpit and press. The chambers of commerce have endorsed it, the boards of health have insisted upon it. The charities organisations have begged for it, the women's clubs have demanded it. Pictures have been published, and thrown upon screens, describing the dangers and horrors of slums, and if people don't know yet that "it is no better to kill a man with a house than it is to kill him in the street with an axe," it is time they did. Still, we have been amazed, even this year, to find who are the men and women who own the most of the worst houses. Wealthy, many of them, for slums are paying property. Respected, because the community does not know the source of their revenue. Many are prominent in society, but their friends live, too, in the best part of town, and never pass by their property. Some of them are church members! Some even build churches with their revenues!

There can be no doubt that these persons know the value of sanitation, also of light and air and

space, for they live on choice corners, or other good sites, and their homes have every sanitary device.

I know one town where two men own practically all the wretched dwellings of the poor. "One of them buys up old box cars, and makes them over into shanties," we were told. This man is disliked and not even respected. The town realises that his deeds are an abomination, a wrong to the poor and a menace to the community, but they do not realise it keenly enough. Not one citizen has thought to lift a finger to interfere with him.

In other cities one is surprised to find the easy-going forbearance of the large body of high-class real estate men, towards the few sharks who own slum property, even though their own property is injured and their fire hazard increased by the latter, in their vicinity, and even though the slum owner has a large and undue advantage over them, in many ways.

It is pleasant to turn from the forces that hindered Housing Reform to those that helped. I wish I might have a chapter on "The Men Who Helped," and express the gratitude that is due to every man who has unselfishly done his part towards this much of bringing in the Kingdom, whether he be politician or preacher.

Those three campaigns in the legislature were a wonderful experience, and if I have come out of them

with a deeper faith in humanity it is a high tribute to the men of Indiana.

In those three campaigns, standing, as I have, on the outside of parties and politics, I have seen some things that strangely puzzled me, but, as no one has given me a more satisfactory interpretation than my own, I shall hold to my own conclusions until the Wise Men agree.

When I first went into public life I made up my mind to make the most, and the best, of conditions as they existed, of men as I met them, and of politics as the majority allow them to be. In fact, one cannot do otherwise, for obviously one cannot work with conditions as they are not. Yet I have seen many earnest but ineffective people fail to secure by legislation the splendid ends they had worked zealously to achieve, because they insisted on the impossible, and would have none but their own methods. It is just as if we should take our corn to a miller, and demand that he should reset his burrs and change his whole method of milling. If there be only one mill, we must take our grist or leave it.

Having no hand in the management of political affairs, I may leave to the various parties the care of reaping the thorns in each other's fields. It has been my pleasant task to gather only the grapes, and I am fain to accept the divine guarantee that they

were grown upon grape vines. It is only fair to say that I have encountered far more figs than thistles, and fewer thistles than what seems to be a sort of cacti that, I firmly believe, could be Burbankised for human good. Would they might be, and that we might include, in the Conservation of Vital Resources, those great powers, possibilities for good, that are so wasted by constant warring, in the struggle for supremacy!

"Dearie, don't you believe, for one minute, that those politicians would have worked for a tenement law if they hadn't thought it was a good thing for their party?" a friend said.

"Why, of course," I said to her, "I wouldn't have gone to three legislatures and asked for anything that sensible business men wouldn't think was a good thing. One's faith in men doesn't depend upon their doing foolish things because we ask them to. And, of course, no good politician will ever 'turn down' the Homes of Indiana. But nobody could ever make me believe that was all there was of it." And then I tried to tell her of the splendid hearty way they had given their service, and the noble qualities that had so often shown themselves.

In order that this story shall not fail of its purpose, let me say, first, that it has been my intention to show that if any one so timid, and so physically

unfortified for hard marching and fighting, could stand the strain and meet with some success, surely no one else should fear to try.

It has been far from my thought to hold up public work as the most valuable service. Rather, I have tried to make it plain that no one but a genuine Daruma, who is weighted so as not to be upset-able, should go into the range of the cannon-balls. In the words with which "Mrs. Blythe" comforted "Mary Ware," whose sole idea of public service was the former's kind of "torch bearing": "A torch is a torch, no matter where you put it, and sometimes the lights streaming from cheerful home windows make better guides for the benighted traveller than the street lamp, whose sole purpose is to give itself to the public."

Most strongly have I desired to show how much can be done by women's organisations, by simply demanding right legislation, and to show their equally important part of helping to enforce legislation, after they get it. I should like to show the very valuable work that has been done by clubs in raising funds to employ civic experts, but the suggestion must suffice.

Too much cannot be said, however, of the service into which even the most modest and timid may enter, by joining in the work of the federated clubs,

or civic organisations, to carry on the great educational campaigns for moulding public sentiment, that must precede and follow every legislative success. This assertion is made by the majority of speakers on reform platforms. What is not said, however, or is touched too little and too lightly, is that the fundamental necessity of all this work is the securing of data, the knowing of actual conditions that call for reform.

"Go and see for yourself," is my parting plea to every audience, no matter of whom composed. "*Know your city*" is a motto that I wish might be sounded daily, by a megaphone, in the ears of every one who presumes to have any part in the control of chambers of commerce or civic associations, school boards, social service circles, churches, women's clubs, etc. They should be made to see that if they are to give intelligent service they must know their city as the politician knows it, as the police know it, as the drain man and the man who reads gas metres know it — because the outside and the pretty places we already know well. They should know their city, who try to manage its affairs, as a merchant knows his business, in all its details; as a doctor knows his patient, with all his weaknesses. Know it by means of surveys and sanitary maps, that X-ray every defect, and by "civic institutes," that

exhibit its greatnesses and meannesses, its overlapping or undermanning of departments; its schools, factories, trade, traffic, institutions — all the "works," from the city hall to the saloon, from the choice residence district to the slum quarter. How else shall we understand the causes that are piling up social wreckage, faster than our schools can educate or our churches evangelise? How else can we ever know with certainty the city's resources of wealth, which pours in, in large streams, and runs out in many leaks? How else shall we be able to help our city's morals, of which one half are in darkness? How else reckon with the city's political forces, of which the stronger part, the root, is underground, like the horse-radish? And how shall we control the public health, safety, and welfare unless we can keep our finger on the pulse of the private health and safety and welfare, as they exist in the individual home?

And so we come back to the Home, as this story started. All roads lead back to it; and the squad that goes out to hunt up the evils that prey upon society, whether they follow the lead of the charity worker, the district nurse, the mission worker, the health official, the probation officer, the detective, or the anti-tuberculosis specialist, will take a circuit and all round up and meet together in the place where

the housing reformer has gone straight to the core of all the trouble — the homes that society forgets, neglects, abandons!

The paths of these workers were traced in red on a city chart at the Housing Conference in Cincinnati. There is a red and black story that goes with the chart, too, about the places where the lines converge.

In my last paragraph I did not say anything about the trails of the civic improvers or city beautifiers converging with those who track the fly, the germ and the imp, because in so many cities they go on a careful detour and avoid these places. And yet these hideous, offending, bad residence districts, where visitors are never taken, and nobody likes to go, cry most loudly for help, with all their ugly mouths and discordant voices, smiting the passerby in the eye and nose. And what assault they must make upon those who live amidst them! It is these parts of the town that need beautifying, more than any other, and I have often wondered why, in so many cities, the civic clubs begin and end with their beautifying upon the lawns and gardens and parks, instead of the houses. The reason must be that it is easier.

Perhaps it is on the same principle that many business organisations devote themselves only to trade and traffic, ignoring other business of the city, calling for home-seekers, but neglecting the attrac-

tiveness of the city that would lure them, overlooking the interests of real estate, providing for the growth of "business," but not for the growth of population.

It is all probably caused by a misconception of what a city is, and what it is for, and a failure to recognise that a city is mostly made up of homes, outnumbering all other buildings. That the streets are there to lead to the homes, and the stores are there to supply the homes. That for the homes all mills grind or weave, all wheels turn, all traffic exists, and all the business of the city goes on. That the parks are there to supply the lacks or augment the delights of the homes, but can never take the place of space or beauty about them. That, when the mills are empty and still, and the streets deserted and dark, when the parks and gardens have only a solitary sentinel, the human life that quickened them in the day time has all withdrawn into the homes. Thither at night the toiler comes. Thence at dawn the toiler fares; but his treasure remains there, the little ones, the mothers, the old people who must stay. And where they are is the Heart of the City.

In our state we have settled upon a simple translation of the term "housing reform," into "the betterment of the homes." This takes away the cold, forbidding aspect of the subject, and insures a larger

audience when we lecture. The public smelled fresh mortar and new pine whenever the other term was mentioned, and had in mind an arraignment of carpenters and masons. But the real meaning of "housing reform" comes out when we put the "home" into it. The "house" lives, the lights twinkle in the windows, the smoke comes out of its chimneys, and the public can smell the supper and hear the children play. That is, they can, until we make them smell the yards and hear the children cry.

"The Homes of Indiana" has proven a magic watchword for housing reform in our state. Already two other states have caught up the battlecry, and we hear "The Homes of Kentucky," and "The Homes of New Jersey." Would that the cry might ring on till we hear "*The Homes of the Nation!*"

Now, we have many prescriptions for housing reform, from many schools of medicine. Belonging to the Allopathic school, I must hold to legislation as the best cure, though I am ready to welcome most heartily everything that can show by results that it will help our sick cities. Not all civic doctors will consult, however, and housing legislation is attacked by others than "skin builders" and slum landlords. The comedy of the situation lies in the fact that half who attack housing laws complain that they do not go far enough, and the other half charge that they

go too far. If we could pit the two parties against each other, it would save our breath.

To the first we must give the answer of Solon when asked whether he had provided the best of laws for the Athenians,—"The best they were capable of receiving."

To the others, who complain of the law's exactions, we can best answer by pointing to our better class of real estate men, who take an honest pride in doing the right and proper thing, and who give so much more to their tenants than any housing law demands (for much less percentage of returns) that they feel insulted when asked if they give water and sewerage connections, repairs, etc.

Looking back at the years of toil, and what they have brought, I feel no triumph, but a deep shame that it has been necessary to fight so hard and so long for air! For sunlight! For water! For space! It is a stifling thought. One would think we had decreed marble baths and gold door knobs to hear men say, with a sudden tenderness for the needy, "But if we have to build houses *like that*, what will the poor people do? They can't pay the rent."

It is cheering to hear a defender of the law proclaim that in one of our new towns, which has 25-foot lots, tenements can be built according to the law and still yield a revenue of 22 per cent. net.

As education advances, housing laws will be extended, but their extension will be mainly to other classes of buildings, and to higher standards of decency and safety. And yet I could die happy were it possible to leave, by means of housing laws, no more than the Irishman's legacy: "I bequeath to every man the free air of heaven."

Simple wish! Preposterous supposition!

Could our forefathers ever have believed, when first they trod the lonely shores of this country, and looked out over its vast unpeopled wastes, that we should be fighting to-day for the very air we breathe? No more than that we should cease to have the breath of Freedom. Nor do we dream how much harder the fight will be in the day when monstrous cities shall cover our plains, the cities where, we are told, the greater part of our population is to live.

Judging by the rate of growth of our cities to-day, we wonder how far ahead that growth will keep of the advance of civilisation, and how many cities will first have to sin and then to be reformed, ere we learn to plan and to restrict before we build.

For the present, our cities have been growing much faster than they have been improving. We are speeding on to greatness, while we are crawling out of barbarism — that barbarism that submits to filth,

and lack of sanitation, and preventable vice and disease.

Any one, with an untrained eye, can look about and name the elementary problems of sanitation that we have failed to solve, or at least to handle. It needs no civic expert to do that, but it would need a prophet to tell us when we shall achieve them. Light and ventilation — when the space that insures them is held dearer than life, and when even our little towns have dark rooms! Cleanliness — how many really clean cities have we? If they have clean streets, how about their alleys? If they have water and sewer mains, how many lots have access to them? Garbage and ashes and trash — the worry of the wealthy, the terror of the poor — how many cities deal adequately with them to-day? In most of them every kind of waste is stored at the back doors, for a day, a week or a lifetime. And until these simple essentials are mastered, how can we hope for the higher things?

Perhaps even now in their cradles are the legislators who shall enact the laws that shall bring some of these fundamental reforms. It is best to begin on them in their cradles, and then follow them up in the kindergarten, the school and the college. It saves the frantic letter sent just before election.

Some day we shall appreciate safety and sanitation

enough to pay for them; and all the experts, of whom we have many noted ones, cannot give these things to us before that time. Some time we shall appreciate space in our cities, as we appreciate all desirable things when they begin to disappear. Later, Beauty will be called in, and set in the place of honour, among "practical" people; no more crowded out, no more apologised for, no more even kept for "solitary festival."

I am glad that those years are past in which I dared not publish a verse, and spent my time in hunting up dollar-and-cents arguments (and there are many) to show that bad housing is bad business, and that slums do not pay. And this was because of having to fight men who assumed that it was not "practical" to give decency and sanitation to every one.

It is only necessary, now, to refer sceptics to the more than forty commercial organisations that have taken up housing reform by housing laws. It is enough to point to the practical men who have actually built model houses to rent, that are durable and well built, comfortable, homelike, private, and that have veritable cupboards and sinks, and actual bathtubs. They are on pleasant streets, with a good view, have trees, grass and flowers, rent for less than

Visions made realities by practical men.
Sunlight, light and air, space, outlook, beauty, sanitation, convenience, comfort, durability—*cheap*

some of our most miserable and squalid slums, and pay a fair profit.

Leaving the sceptics gazing at this pleasant sight, it is a relief to slip away to a quiet place where the vista opens upon a view that rests my soul — a view of things whose practical nature no one will ask me, at least, to defend — Planned Towns! Garden Cities!

Ever above the quivering heat of noon in the desert they have hung like a dim, fair mirage. Does any one ever look upon them more wistfully than a housing reformer? We draw near to them, as the children of the tenements come and press their faces against the tall palings of the forbidden garden, standing without in the dust, peering in at the ranks of lilies, the winding walks, and the fountain-splashed bowers. And we have a place inside, too, for even as in the Garden of Buddha there had to be the constant removal of blight and decay, and the jealous guard upon destructive forces, the constant weeding and pruning, there will always be this need, in all places where men live.

I had hoped that we might have, before this, the simple initial enactment permitting town planning in our state. It must come soon, or we shall pay dearly for the lack of it.

Some day — a later day, perhaps, we shall have the Garden Village. It is my dream to help plant one in Indiana, when the heaviest part of our task is accomplished, and there to end my days.

At this time, in the absence of the Town Plan, the most we can do is to spend our time in warning our young towns, and in holding a mirror before the fading charms of our aging cities, imploring them to call in a beauty doctor before it is too late. We can show them the blemishes that can be removed, and the contours that can be — reduced.

Where we can get people to listen, let us plead for generous space allowances, especially in our new city enlargements. The sanitarian and the artist, also the unhampered architect, will all agree to this. So much depends upon space, outlook most of all. The curse of the narrow lot is like the curse of the narrow mind. It fastens upon us the restricted view, the selfish attitude. It invites congestion. It encourages mean buildings. It hampers a town as inevitably as foot-binding hampers the Chinese child.

Even the "crazy-quilt" city can give much in the way of beauty to dignify the characters of its people, that will bless them from their windows — if they have windows. It can give the improved streets and alleys, the parks and gardens, upon which even the mean dwelling may lift its eyes and take cheer. So

far as monuments, fountains or public buildings may be in sight, in vista or in sky line, nobility may be brought into the daily lives of the people. To those who have outlook may all view be given. But to those who are set back, overtopped and shut in, the character of the premises becomes all important, and leaves the problem between the tenant, the landlord and the neighbours.

Now, with the object lessons of our model tenements, it is needless to suggest what can be done for the poor, when we are building new houses. In the matter of old houses, all we need to do is to imagine ourselves trying to make a home in any one of them; to notice what stifles and depresses us; to see how we would manage, without closets; to decide what we would do with the floors, how we would conceal the walls, that are past mending or papering; how to make the best of the possibilities, or rather, the impossibilities.

We will find ourselves coming out somewhat behind those enchanting story-book descriptions of poverty, that deal with the "poor-but-honest," and "patched-but-clean" people. The "scoured deal table," the "shining tins," the "geranium in the window," the "prints on the wall," always sound so delectable. As children, we could never quite decide whether we would rather be fabulously wealthy, and sit on dia-

mond chairs, or be poor this way, but strongly inclined to the latter. I know that settlement workers, often, with great taste, a little money, and infinite labour, perform miracles of paint and paper upon certain old houses, and make them look as good as the story-book kind. Would we had more of such people, to plant more oases in our arid brick wastes!

But all the old houses cannot be transformed that way, not even by the "municipal scrubbers," welcome as they are. And the reason is that there are some old houses that were flimsy and mean, even in their newness, that now, in their decay, are beyond reform. To try to beautify them with paint, etc., is much like gilding a skull. The premises are even worse, with loathsome cellars, yards soaked through with grease and sewage poison, and hard with cinders. All that could redeem such a spot would be to burn the house, blast out the foundations, fumigate the hole, cart away the composite horrors of the soil, and fill in with fresh, sinless country earth — though we would pity the earth-worms in their new environment. A new house might be built thereon, and upon the new earth might one produce loveliness and garden truck — if there be not tall, gloomy walls, on all sides, to shut out the sunlight. This is a formula for the owner, not the tenant. What the tenant can do, with little means and less taste, is pitiful enough.

I have seen tenants expending work on old houses — work as hopeless as efforts to educate an imbecile — that would have made a decent dwelling most attractive. Yet I can testify that the house looked worse than before, because the extra scrubbing wore off more of the old paint.

I have said enough, in other chapters, of the efforts of many of the poor to make things more home-like, and of their reaching out for brightness and beauty. It seems to be, as Maeterlinck says, "A groping about the walls of life," to find some chink where the light streams in.

There must be something in this universal craving for Beauty that testifies to our universal need of it. It must be meant to lead us back to the Garden, by the unerring perceptions of the delicate antennae of the soul. We feel that craving as a deep thirst, the longing for the woods and fields, the open shore, the stretches of cloudland. Confinement is irksome and work is hateful, at times, not for itself, but because it shuts us in, away from the green, the blue-and-gold, the Something that draws us. And when we leave the town and go to the country places, how we feel the restfulness of their beauty sweeping in upon us, in a great tide!

How much the beauty of physical environment can contribute to moral beauty, or be reflected by it, we

do not yet know. I am convinced that we have not yet begun to estimate its value, in our environment, as we shall in years to come. We think of it as desirable, but in no way essential, and until it is exalted to a place of more dignity we shall not have it in our national life. With all our rugged strength, we shall be like the unfinished temple, "wanting still the glory of the spire."

How shall we, then, come to a higher estimate of beauty? Only by taking it to be "that divine thing the ancients ever esteemed it to be," as Emerson reminds us.

The great value of beauty is that it reveals God — His love, His thought, His truth. His love, because of the pleasure it gives, and because of its power to keep us sane and well. It reveals His truth because those laws that govern it, in colour, in perspective, etc., are as unfailing as those of gravitation. The laws that govern it in music, in motion, in rhythm, are as exact as those of chemistry. In their harmonious workings we have beauty; in disregard of them, discord, ugliness. So we might say that the essence of beauty is obedience to divine law, and ugliness is anarchy. And so we can realise why beauty is creative and ugliness is destructive; why beauty rests, inspires and soothes, and ugliness disturbs, depresses and jars.

The restorative and healing power of beauty seems to be well established. We can well understand why the sick or deranged have, as a part of their treatment, the view of green pastures and still waters; why cheerful flowers are brought about them, and soothing music played for them.

The reformatory value of beauty may not be so well established, though some day the purgation of Beauty will supplant the purgatory of pain. Thinking of the rebuke that purity gives to the impure, greatness to meanness, truth to falsity, the power of "good for evil," we can but wonder why beauty should not be used more for both formative and reformatory purposes. In fact, we acknowledge its value in our careful selection of those things that must be before the eyes of our own children.

When society comes to value *one child* more truly, we shall have, for every community, a country homestead where that child can go, who needs special encouragement. It will not be a penal place, nor even a place of reform, but it will be held out, rather, as a dear delight and a reward. But when society values the child enough, and realises what the child means to the State, and what the home means to the child, it will provide even better, for then the child will have, in its own home, all that a home should give, in its vital essentials. There will be safety. There

will be the chance to be well, to be pure; room to grow and breathe in; the sacred privacy of the home circle — all those things that are the birthright of every child. And there will be, in some way, beauty, to which the soul of the child naturally turns, as does a plant to the light.

Yet why should we need to plead for Beauty, when we have the words of its evangels, the "ever living poets," to whom has been given a share of that Spirit that is to "preach good tidings"? They have taught us that there is some power in beauty "to bind up the broken hearted," and "to comfort all who mourn." How often we invoke the very beauty of their words to do this, and set them to music or to flowers. How often, too, they release us from care, by "the opening of the prison" whose portals yield to their gentle touch. They have shown us beauty that we missed. They have yet to "open the blind eyes," that, in the midst of loveliness, gaze unseeing.

All of this swept over me on that day, not long ago, when I went back to the ridge where my childhood was passed.

Standing on the top of the ridge, I looked across the sweep of the valley to the far ranges of the blue hills that lay beyond. In a meadow the sheep were grazing. Faint and far off came the country sounds,

strained to a clear sweetness through that pure atmosphere. It was the Sabbath, and in the little church they were singing hymns. In the churchyard, under the dark cedars, I could see the flags upon the soldiers' graves. "My country"— it had never meant so much to me! A sudden rush of feeling seemed to claim comradeship with those who had fought on other battle fields.

How profound was the Sabbath peace! How sweet was the air! The old spell of the view came over me. There ran the road to the valley, then climbed the hills, to the sky. As a child it had beckoned and lured me, with dreams of the cities that lay beyond. But now — I had seen the cities! I had thought of them, with a child's imagining, as one sees temples and spires in a sunset glory, and hears their far-off chimes. I had wondered about their poets, their artists — the beauty that must be there.

And now, having seen them, the glamour was gone. Instead, there was the Shadow enfolding them, the Shadow that all of our effort has never been able to lift. And there, in the Shadow, are the poor, the toiling. Instead of the chiming of bells I could hear, far away, a great chorus of those whose groaning and crying mingled with the roar of the mills and the din of the streets.

Like the shadow of clouds passing over the fields came another thought — the thought of the great cities that some day may be there, a blot on their greenness. But it passed. The fields lay untroubled, the great cup of the valley was brimming with sunshine, the sky swept down over the valley and closed in about me.

The Presence was there! It filled all the vast spaces, near and far. I reached out my hand, as in childhood, to its tangible sureness. It will still be there, I felt, when we, having done our small part, are gone. When the cities are built, underneath the foundations will be the Divine Plan.

Even now the Plan seems nearer fulfillment. Men are coming to see the fuller meaning of life. The levels of living are set at a higher plane. The units of measure are larger, the standards of value are fairer — for ourselves, for all men, as we learn that we have natures and needs alike.

In wonderful ways the great teachers are leading the people, marshalling the forces that shall finally lift them out of the Shadow. There are the small forces, such as the gentle ministry that gives one's self to the needy. There are the mighty ones, the great movements to fight disease, to promote purity, to protect the labourer, to save the child. There are

the countless methods of education. There is the pleasant drawing, as by the light touch of a child, along the paths of the playground, to health and strength. To them has been added, in later years, the various methods of redeeming the home.

Too much of these forces has been needed to clear away the wreckage among the ruins. But now we can look across the "waste cities" that shall be rebuilt, the "desolations" that shall be raised up, to that joyful day of the prophecy when all of this social effort is to have its flowering in the beauty of the higher life, for all humanity.

The "beauty" that the prophet proclaimed should be given for "ashes," is to be, the translators tell us, as the garland crown of the bridegroom that shall replace the symbol of mourning, the ashes upon the head.

The ashes — all that chokes the spark of life, all that is a part or a reminder of hopeless despair — are to be put aside.

The low and bestial life, all that is grovelling, is ashes.

Disease, vice, dissipation, are ashes.

Strife, discord, lawlessness, are ashes.

Toil, without rest or recreation, is ashes.

These are to be cast away, and instead we shall

have the redeemed life, the reinstated family, the restored home.

It is to be the crowning of life with its radiant graces, its supreme, shining joy!

THE END

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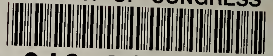
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