

EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN.

In the early history of telegraphing, it was discovered that it was a work peculiarly adapted to women. They were invited to enter the field. Rooms were provided for their instruction, and if they were worthy of it, employment and good pay secured. The room in the central office in which women are instructed in the art is very handsome, well furnished, airy, and cheerful. The lady superintendent, who has this department in charge, has been many years in the employ of the company, and draws the handsome salary of one thousand dollars a year. On the line of railroads, at the stations, and in small country towns, women are employed. They have a liberal salary, and can do their sewing, pursue their studies, and yet perform all the duties of the office. They make the best operators. They are more reliable than men, more trustful and accurate; their ear is quick, their fingers ready. None but first-class women are employed. Their neat and tasteful dress, and the order in which they keep their office, make their rooms very attractive. Their influence is felt all along the lines. Men are more attentive and civil in their duties where lady operators are employed.

LIX.

GEORGE LAW.

THIS gentleman was born near Cambridge, Washington County. He came to New York a penniless lad, and reached mature life before he made his mark on the city. He obtained his start financially by his contract to build the High Bridge for the Croton Aqueduct. He obtained several other contracts equally profitable, and then became a speculator in Wall Street. His connection with the ferries and railroads, especially Harlem, Eighth Avenue, and city roads, enabled him to amass a colossal fortune.

Mr. Law resides in a fashionable residence on Fifth Avenue. He is a huge man in size, ponderous as well as tall, with an immense face and head, which seems swollen, it is so huge. His features are coarse, and one, from his general expression, would judge him to be a hard man to deal with. Like most men who started poor, Mr. Law has very little sympathy with the masses. He is probably as unpopular a man as can be found in New York. He has the control of several railroads and ferries, and he runs them to suit his own pleasure. The public are nothing to him but contributors to his fortune. If he wants a ferry, and can get it in no other way, he will start an opposition line, reduce the fare,

run off the old line, then raise the fare, charge what he pleases, and give the public such accommodations as he is disposed to. He is over sixty years of age, drives a one-horse buggy, which is shabby and dilapidated. Slovenly in his dress, coarse in his manners, with a countenance stolid as if made of mahogany, he can be seen daily riding from point to point, giving personal attention to his immense business.

L.

BROWN AND BROTHERS.

This great banking-house is known all over the world for its reliability, and the honorable manner in which its business is discharged. The founder of the house is James Brown, who is still living. Like so many of our successful men, Mr. Brown was born in the north of Ireland, and came to this country when a lad, bringing nothing with him but good principles and his indomitable industry. His home, in the north of Ireland, was the centre of the linen manufacture, and Mr. Brown commenced business by importing linens. In this business his brothers were engaged. With William, the English partner of the firm, who was knighted, James acquired a handsome fortune. With this he opened the banking-house of Brown & Brothers. Mr. Brown is a man of great liberality, and a devout Presbyterian. He has built the finest private banking-house in the world, on Wall Street. It is of white marble, and cost a million of dollars. Mr. Brown is a gentleman of the Old School. He attends closely and personally to his own business. He is of medium height, about seventy years of age, stoops slightly; his hair is gray, and his manners are quiet and unostentatious. He goes to his daily business as regularly as any clerk in New York.

LI.

STREET-WALKERS.

WHO THEY ARE. — BED-HOUSES. — VISITORS. — WOMEN ON THE PAVE. — AN INCIDENT. — HOW STREET-WALKERS APPEAR.

WHO THEY ARE.

THE tramps on the sidewalk, who annoy the passer-by, and dog the footsteps of men who walk Broadway after ten o'clock, are mostly young girls, who have an ostensible trade in which they are employed during the day. Many of them are waiter girls in low restaurants, who are known as the "Pretty Waiter Girls;" or they work in hoop-skirt factories, binderies, or in some place where girls congregate together. Not all the girls in saloons and concert-rooms are bad. But few remain long in that connection who do not become so. The wages paid to waiter girls vary from five to fifteen dollars a week. To this is added the wages of infamy.

The homes of most of the street girls are in the suburbs of New York. They come in from Brooklyn, Hoboken, Jersey City, Harlem, and other places easy of access, and can be seen coming and going night and morning, and their employment is as well known as that of any trade in New York. Many of them are mere girls. Some have run away from home, and have

a place to lay their heads on condition that they divide the spoils of the night. Some are orphans, and take the street to keep themselves out of the almshouse. Some have brutal or drunken mothers, who drive their children into the street, and live in idleness and debauchery on the infamous wages of their daughters. Some get coal, rent, and food from the hands of a child who sleeps all day and is out all night, and the thing is too comfortable to admit of much scrutiny.

Most of these girls have a room in the city that they call their home, — a small, plainly-furnished sleeping apartment. This room is rented by the week, and paid for in advance. To this place company is taken, and the night spent. If robbery is committed, as it is frequently, the room is deserted the next morning, and the occupant goes, no one knows where. As the rent is always paid in advance, the landlord is no loser.

BED-HOUSES.

All over New York, in parts high and low, houses abound that bear the designation of bed-houses. A location, fashionable or disreputable, is selected according to the class of custom that has to be secured. No one knows who is at the head of such institutions. Often landlords who are known on 'change as reputable men fit up a bed-house, and hire some hag to take care of it. The location is well known. The house is dark, and all about it is quiet. If a noise was allowed, the police would step in and shut up the thing as a nuisance. One of the most notorious houses of this class has fifty rooms. Sometimes a room is engaged in advance. But usually parties come to the house, enter

the vestibule, and wait the response to the ring. A person appears in the dim light. But no feature can be seen. If there is no room vacant, the quiet, low answer is, "All full." If otherwise, the parties are admitted. A dim candle is put into the hand of a servant, and the money for the room paid at once, and the customers are escorted up stairs.

VISITORS.

No rooms are so profitable. A well-regulated bed-house is the most lucrative house in New York. Women who have tried to keep respectable boarding-houses often find "a gentleman friend" who will open such a house, or be a guarantee for the rent. Men are found who not only will furnish such houses and take their pay in instalments, but advertise so to do. Into these houses come the street-walkers, who find their victims on and near Broadway. If the girls have not the money, their companions have. Gray-headed old men can be seen wending their way late at night under the lead of a child scarcely fourteen years old. Appointments are made at saloons to meet at a named house in the night. Low theatres, low and vile restaurants, and dance cellars bring up custom. Women can be seen going in from nine to ten at night with pitchers, plates, and household articles in their hands. They go to keep an appointment previously made; and they go out from home with the articles in their hands under pretence of buying something for breakfast, leaving husband or father asleep from toil. But more than all, people come in coaches—some, private ones. The coachman has his eye-teeth cut. He knows what is

going on. But the mistress or master has made it all right with him. From the heated soirée, where wine has flowed in abundance, from the opera or concert, the parties take a ride in the locality of a bed-house, and pass an hour or so in it, before the coach goes to the stable, and the mistress or man unlocks the hall door with the pass key. From twelve to two, elegant coaches and plain hacks can be seen before the doors of these lodging houses, waiting for company—the women deeply veiled, the men so wrapped up that recognition is not common. Houses in low localities are preferred if clean; if in better localities, the coming and going of coaches would attract attention. Lodgings are cheap, and run from fifty cents to ten dollars. Parties remain all night if they choose. The doors are never closed. They stand open night and day. Knock when customers may, they will find a welcome.

WOMEN ON THE PAVE.

For a half century the streets running parallel to Broadway, on either side, from Canal to Bleecker, have been the abode of women who walk the streets. In walk, manners, dress, and appearance they resemble the women of their class, who, three thousand years ago, plied their wretched trade under the eye of Solomon. About eight o'clock they come out of their dens to the broad pavement,—up and down, down and up, leering at men, and asking for company or for help. At eleven at night, when the street is clear, and not a soul is to be seen, as a man passes a corner, all at once a flutter will be heard, and a woman fitting out from a side street, where she has been watching for her victim,

will seize a man by the arm, and cry out, "Charlie, how are you?" or, "Where are you going?" If the man stops for a talk, he will probably follow the woman, as an "ox goeth to the slaughter." On passing a man on the street, if the party looks after the woman, her keen sight detects the slight move, and she turns and follows the looker-on. Some of these walkers are splendidly educated. Some take their first lessons in degradation on the pave. Love of dress and finery, unwillingness to work, a pique at a lover, a miff at the stern family arrangement, are causes enough to send a young girl on the street.

AN INCIDENT.

A gentleman in this city employs in his factory a large number of females. He is quite careful to get respectable girls. He demands a written testimonial before he will admit any one. Among those at work for him were two sisters. They were models of propriety and order. They were neat in their dress. Early and punctual they were at work. They mingled but little in society; were quite reserved in their conversations; said but little, and kept constantly at work. Their quiet and industrious manners, silent and resolute conduct, living seemingly for each other, and always acting as if some great secret weighed them down, or bound them together; called out the sympathy of their employer. But they resisted all sympathy, refused to make him their confidant, and asked only to be left alone. They came and went regularly as the sun. One night this gentleman was walking alone on Broadway quite late. As he passed Houston Street a young girl accosted him. The tones of her voice seemed

familiar. He drew her to the gas light. The moment he did so the girl gave a scream, darted down the street, and was out of sight in a moment. She was one of the model sisters in his factory. The next morning the girls were not in their usual place, and he saw them no more. All that he could hear of them was, that long before they came to his factory they were on the street. Each night while in his employ they followed street-walking as a vocation. All they ever said about themselves was said to one who, in the factory, had somewhat won upon their confidence. They refused to join in some pastime proposed, and gave as a reason, that they had no money to spend on themselves; they were saving, they said, all the money they could get to take up the mortgage upon their father's farm, as he was old and feeble. Filial love could do no more than this!

The Eighth and Fifteenth wards are crowded with tenement-houses. Suites of rooms, at a low rent, suitable for cheap house-keeping, can be had. And here the same class of street-walkers are found when at home.

HOW STREET-WALKERS APPEAR.

Girls new to the business are flush in health, well-dressed, and attractive. They visit theatres, ride in cars, go in omnibuses, hang round the hotel doors, and solicit company with their eyes and manner, rather than by their speech. This class throng the watering-places. They travel up and down the North River. Two or three of them take a state-room, and move round among the passengers soliciting company. This custom became, the past summer, a great nuisance.

Lady passengers were annoyed, both in their state-rooms and out, with the conduct and vile talk in the rooms near them. Some, unwilling to be so annoyed, left their rooms and remained in the saloons all night. Broadway is not a more noted place for women of this class than are the boats on the North River.

From this grade the class descends to mere ragged, bloated, drunken dregs, who offend all decency as they ply their trade. The second season reveals the destructive power of this mode of life. Pale, young women, thin and wan; women who know early what it is to want fuel and food; women scantily clad, who shiver as they tell their tale and ask relief; women who know that life is brief, and the future without hope — such persons compose the great mass of street-walkers. A short life they lead, and if their tale is true, it is not a merry one.

The court-room of the Tombs on Sunday morning, at six o'clock, is a suggestive place. Children from twelve to sixteen; women from sixteen to sixty; women on their first debauch, in all their finery, and tinsel, and pride, with the flush of beauty on their cheeks, with which they hope to win in the path they have chosen, and from whose faces the blush has not yet passed away forever; and persons in their last debauch, without anything that marks the woman left to them, — these indicate the life and the doom of New York street-walkers.

LII.

HOUSES, OF ASSIGNATION.

THE number of these places of resort in the city cannot be known. The public houses are many, and are well known. But in all parts of the city, houses, private and public, are kept for company, and most of them in the midst of the fashionable and élite of the city.

Most of these places are known by advertisements, which are well understood. A house in upper New York, in a fine location, is selected. It is plainly furnished, or quite gaudily, as the style of the house may permit. It is no uncommon thing for a downtown merchant to take a house, furnish it, hire a house-keeper, use as many rooms as he may wish, and then allow the woman to let out the rooms to regular boarders, or nightly, to parties who may come for an evening, or who may previously have engaged a room. Parties hire a room by the week or month, pay in advance, and come and go when they please. "A widow lady, with more rooms than she can use;" "rooms to let to quiet persons;" "apartments to let where people are not inquisitive;" "rooms to let, with board for the lady only," are of this class.

To a stranger in the city, a search for board is quite