

TOUGH LONDON TENANTS.

HOW LANDLORDS MANAGE TO GET RENTS FROM THEM.

Collectors Who must Understand How to Gather in the Money—A Specimen of One—The Perils that Envelop Him in the Course of His Occupation.

LONDON, June 26, 1893.—My companion was as interesting a character as one can easily find in London. He had in earlier days been a police inspector, and bore something of a record of vigorous experience in the East End regions, from certain missing fingers, somewhat less provision of nose and ears than originally allotted, with various and vagarious gerrymanders of his face, neck and scalp which unpleasantly hinted of riot, ambulance surgeons and curious capillary and cuticle transplantings in the general hospital. A period of ethical and physical repose as beadle, which followed the efforts of some Billingsgate "mobbers" to convert him into a mangle with which to playfully "smooth out" some of his fellow inspectors, which retired him from the force with portions of his organisms intact and a small pension, gave him something of a benign look. This was curiously blended with a wise judicial air, for having for a time, as truant-school "visitor," inspector or detective, engaged in chasing truant scholars up and down gutter-spouts, into and out of cesspools and sewers and up chimney-flues and beneath their mothers' petticoats, to finally land them behind the walls of the "Ragged" school prison.

Mr. Evans, whom I always addressed for his service record as "Mr. Inspector," and who always returned for the same a fine official salute which displayed the two remaining fingers of his right hand to the best advantage, was now in the charities and the rents. He was employed during certain days of each week by one of those London charity organizations which support as many officers and committees as wards, to unexpectedly drop in upon its few dependents at their homes, and observe if the tea and tracts bestowed effecting upright living; and it was from his reports, from which he wisely eliminated the separation of his own members, that data were secured for those touching annual reports of beneficence which draw tears from honest British eyes and shillings from plethoric British pockets.

All other days at Mr. Evans' disposal were occupied in the collection of rents. I should not like to repeat his observations regarding this vocation, or the people with whom it brought him into business relations. On the one hand were some of the worst, and to me the most pitiable, of London's lowly; on the other, were two maiden sisters, over seventy years of age, immensely wealthy and far uglier and greedier than they were rich. Among their properties were scattering small houses and tenements beyond the Bethnal Green region, to the north of Mile End road; some of these in the most congested of London districts, and others straggling along desolate half-country roads. Endless dining and darning were necessary to secure any manner of returns upon these. It was always a problem with my friend which was the worst end of a day—his rounds among the vigorous-lunged brawlers in his endeavors to collect rent, or his meeting with the ancient dames when he turned in his petty daily returns. They received him in high dudgeon and chintz wrappers and with cudgels like a policeman's billy; their shrill invective being emphasized by crashing the cudgels upon a huge oaken strong box standing between them, as though it were the heads of their recalcitrant tenants or Mr. Evans' own picturesque cranium which he confided to me, he always kept as conveniently near the open door as consistent with his obligations as a man and a collector.

He also often related that these interviews always terminated in a mild protest on his part "as 'ow 'eaven itself couldn't make Britons true out o' 'scampers," whereupon the old ladies went right away into "convulsions," yelling "Hoot!—hoot!" at him, and set to beating the chest with greater vigor than ever; during which martial thundering he always quietly withdrew; and it was my study of this word "scampers" which enabled me to discover that there are supposed to be more than 100,000 in London so known to landlords. All of this brought me to Mr. Evans' door at an early hour of a recent morning, for the purpose of accompanying him on a day's rounds for the collection of rents.

Mr. Evans, in his ancient, bell-crowned hat, high collar, broad stock, short topcoat, long waistcoat, baggy black trousers, and huge, thick-soled shoes, looked every inch a man of affairs. An ink-bottle was slung to one of the big buttons of his shiny waistcoat; a well-worn pocket-book filled with blank receipts, arrears records and quit-notices was under one arm, and a very heavy walking-stick, giving its owner something of an official air, was held handily under the other. He seemed glad and relieved at the prospect of company.

The first places on the collector's list were found in a noisome court in which the sunlight never came. On our approach there was a lively scattering in every direction of that portion of the half-naked population with whom we had business, who either totally disappeared or barred their doors against our entrance. Such unpromising negotiations as were possible were of necessity held through keyholes or broken panes of glass. As was the collector's custom here, he shortly announced in a loud

tone of voice that, as he had nothing else on hand that day, he would sit down and wait. We did sit upon a filthy firm which had just been vacated. Certain indications of restlessness were soon plainly audible from within. This seemed to communicate itself to those neighbors on the outside who, themselves being accustomed to similar experiences from other sources, through the natural alliance of misery, began a series of maneuvers for our discomfort. A basin full of dirty water suddenly rained down upon us, and the old court rang with coarse laughter. Strapping barbedot girls, in a sort of horse-play, began hustling us as if by accident, making handy use of their elbows and fists while avoiding pretended tumbings upon us; and this became so threatening that the collector's stout stick was called into effective use. Then some rotten garbage fell softly upon us; and this was followed by a well-directed discharge of cinders and ashes. Coals could not be spared, or our situation would have proven exceedingly restive.

Then the women of the court began edging up to us with crowned commiserations for our prisoners. They lauded their integrity; deplored their misfortunes; and decried the sad spectacle of such fine folk being "worried for a beggarly bit of rent." Mr. Evans remaining unmoved, they suddenly became hysterical with abuse; shrieked unprintable maledictions and anathemas until, in a frenzy of sorrowful indignity, they bared their scraggy breasts and besought us to strike them down, as they were sure we were brutes enough to do; supplementing this by entreating us to murder their "hinfant hoffsprings afore their heyes," the said skinny mites of misery being held out to us for that beneficent operation.

The imperturbable Mr. Evans, in an "aside" to quiet my own rising trepidation, whispered, "the cows 'as no 'arm in 'em; and quietly taking a metal whistle from his waistcoat pocket gave it a significant movement to his lips, following this with the soothing remark: "Ladies, Hi 'ates to summon the polis!" whereupon every one of the mob scampered away to her respective habitation. Final negotiations in this cesspool of filth and degradation resulted in serving two notices to quit, a week's full payment from one tenant, solemn promises and tears from others, and a sixpence, ha'penny from a blind female beggar who swore, to strengthen her excuses, that she had lost her dog, the latter making a farewell vicious assault upon Mr. Evans' heels in proof of her misfortune and probity.

It was now nearly noon and we were gradually reaching the more open districts, though it seemed characteristic of all tenements entered that the same huddling and crowding of humans, the same want and squalor, the same filth and ignorance, the same sodden indifference to the least of life's decencies and the same universal addiction to the curse of drink, existed as are true in the worst sections of Cheapside, Shoreditch, Whitechapel and the Minories. Attempts at decoration and cleanliness, where in exceptional cases cheap prints adorned the walls and the tiny living rooms were fairly habitable from even occasional application of soap and water, though the meanest necessities of life were wanting, were rare; because frowned down by the vicious majority who seem merely to live to drink, and drink to live. We found one place that had been completely wrecked because the offending family had dared put a bit of cheap muslin over the window. "This a settin' theerself hup o'er their neighbors' 'ad to be made a hexample on!" The daily tragedies of lives with better aspirations, yet forced by want to this inconceivably deadening and hopeless association was a thousand times revealed to me this day.

In one abode where we called for rent, four naked children lay huddled in a corner of the bare room under a handful of rag, because the last clothing from their bodies had been pawned for drink. The father came home often enough and remained long enough to beat the mother and snatch some utensil, scrap of clothing or bit of furniture and run away with it for drink. "Wat's a body to do with such bout-laws?" groaned the collector. This place "asn't paid the missuses a penny'orth of rent in a twelvemonth!" At a rag fair near I got for less than a shilling, garments enough to cover their nakedness; for another shilling, left them more food than they had devoured in a fortnight; and on lines of friendship compelled Mr. Evans then and there, while denominating me various species of "hasses," to receipt a month's advance rent for the filthy coop, against that much chance for a family's life in the world's metropolis. As the mother came running home from cleaning ton, cast-off boots in a near mouldy booth she shrieked over her good fortune as though the coffers of the bank of England had been poured in her lap; and the neighborhood was set awail by the mite of charity as though a fire or a murder was in progress.

A few Gipsy families were encountered. Every one paid promptly. Groups of costers, huddled in genial communistic fashion, invariably badgered Mr. Evans with promises of jolly beatings, but finally paid, leaving him for the time seatless and whole. At various places the badinage was fearful; and at no place did we fail to receive sarcastic inquiries as to whether we were "howdashes" enough to regard them as "dooks," "lud mayvairs" and the like, coupled with still wittier requests for the loan of anything from a "thripenny but" to a "bob" or a "quid." In one house we encountered a child actually dying in its bed from consumption. Its mother, who sold vegetables, had placed an unfilled prescription from the parish doctor in its listless hand, as excuse against the collector's call. I left something else there, but the child was too far gone to even smile its thanks. And so, on and on through a day's, to me a year's, indescribable scenes of life hopelessness and despair, until the very last place on the collector's day's list was reached.

"No trouble 'ere!" said Mr. Evans gaily, as a skinny hand reached through the broken pane of a basement window with the amount due and was withdrawn the instant the receipt was placed with in it. I thought differently; descended the stairs and pushed into the foul basement room.

"Don't, don't sir!" a voice pitifully pleaded. "They're not always that way, sir!"

purple, and insensible, from drink. The speaker was a dwarf girl with hump back and huge head; skinny, white, horrible. She kept this homeless home together by working day and night at chopping up old barrels and boxes for "kindlers," getting beatings instead of food; even keeping the beasts of parents in drink; and with such bravery, sacrifice, patience and terror, as we of better fortune can never know, living the hell-life dauntless and true. Bruises and lashings showed on her head, neck and arms as she looked up scared and pleading. I was two half crowns worse, or better off for this pitiful sight. She clutched them tightly in her hands; then cuddled them against her breast as a mother might a newborn child that had been lost; then she fell upon her hatchet and kindlers in a strange looking heap; and, as I rejoined Mr. Evans—who was still varying his species of obnoxious "hasses," in view of my "soft" conduct—and we turned towards the awakening city lights, I heard this brave little dwarf setting forth upon a, to her, before unknown journey within the human region of grateful sobs and tears.

EDGAR L. WAREMAN.

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

(Continued from Eighth Page.)

WINDSOR, N. S.

(Progress is for sale in Windsor at Knowles' Bookstore and by F. W. Dakin.)

JUNE 27.—The closing ceremonies of King's college began on Wednesday evening with the convocation in Convocation Hall. A large number of visitors were present. On Thursday morning the procession consisting of about 70 college dignitaries, clergymen, students and chorists formed at the college about ten o'clock and marched to the parish church where the convocation service was held. The sermon was preached by Rev. V. E. Harris, of Amherst. At 2 p. m. the convocation was held. The first lady student was enrolled this year and the boys must look to their laurels if they do not want to be entirely outstripped by one of the weaker sex. This fair under graduate made all round averages in the vicinity of 90 and 100. How is that for a representative of the sex who are said to be frightened to death of a mouse and are not supposed to know what the differential calculus is?

The closing exercises were over quite a number of those present repaired to the house of Dr. Willet, the president, and partook of afternoon tea. The ball in the evening was as brilliant and successful affair as usual. A great number of handsome dresses were worn, I will try and describe a few. Among so great a number all so pretty it is difficult to remember many. The masculine mind has never been famous for remembering what ladies' dresses are like, but I will do my best. All looked so well that it is hard to decide who was the belle.

Mrs. F. W. Ryan looked very pretty in white silk. Mrs. Norman Dimock wore a very handsome London made dress of white silk, with an empire overdress of chiffon clouded with gold.

Mrs. J. A. Russell, black lace, lovely roses.

Mrs. A. Drysdale, terra cotta silk and velvet.

Mrs. Burgess, black silk and lace.

Miss Burgess, pale blue silk.

Miss Payzant, (Halifax) pretty dress of pink.

Miss Locke, cream cashmere.

Miss George Wilson, cream cashmere, red roses.

Miss Tucker, (Yarmouth) heliotrope cashmere trimmed with purple velvet.

Miss Giffins, (Kentville) white silk.

The Misses Sherwood, (Grand Pre) pale blue cashmere, trimmed with pale blue satin ribbons.

Miss Gilska, cream and yellow cashmere.

Miss Morris, white cashmere and lace.

Miss Kate Smith, white silk.

Miss Cooke, (Moncton) cream and heliotrope challie.

Miss E. Nichols, (Halifax) cream cashmere.

Miss Seely, (St. John) pale blue cashmere.

Miss Ethel Davies, (Charlottetown) cream cashmere, red ribbons.

Miss Allison, heliotrope cashmere and velvet.

Miss Leckie, (Londonderry) pale blue gauze with darker blue plush sleeves.

Miss Kerr, black and cream bengaline.

Miss Hind, white cashmere.

Miss King, crimson silk and net.

Miss King, black lace over pale blue.

Miss Smith, (Ireland) handsome dress of shot silk.

Miss Hamming, (N. B.) pale blue silk with pink silk sleeves.

Miss M. Curry, cream cashmere with yellow trimmings.

Miss Fio. Forsyth, white silk and lace.

Miss Wilson, cream cashmere and lace.

Miss Woodworth, very pretty dress of cream crepe.

Miss McCallum, yellow flowered challie, yellow ribbons.

Miss Gellie, pink cashmere.

Miss Geldert, cream silk.

Miss Falkner, green silk and pink ribbons.

Miss Walcott, red and white silk.

Miss Carr, black silk and jet.

Miss Bessance, cream cashmere.

Miss Kirby, (Halifax) black silk.

Miss Abbot, (Halifax) pale blue silk.

Miss Haley, pretty white silk.

Mrs. Moody entertained a large number of the strangers visiting Windsor at afternoon tea on Friday of last week.

The festivities ended with a large driving party on the same afternoon, the picnic ground chosen was "Meander" Brooklyn, and a general opinion seemed to be that a more delightful spot could not have been found.

Among the visitors in town last week I noticed His Lordship the Bishop, Mrs. and Miss Burgess, Wolf, Mr. and Mrs. Murphy and the Misses Keeto, Halifax; Mrs. and Miss Payzant and Miss Kirby; Miss Twining, Halifax; Mrs. and Miss Brennan, Halifax; Miss Smith, Miss Whitman, Mr. and Miss Jenkinson, Walton; Mrs. and Miss Christie, St. John; Mrs. and the Misses Abbot, Miss Giffins, Messrs. J. A. Lovett, T. R. Robertson, Masters, Kentville; Messrs. R. Seaton, Harrington, Willis, Wiswell, Halifax; Mrs. and Miss Payne and Miss M. Seely, St. John; Miss Fisher and Miss Elderkin, Bridgetown; Messrs. W. A. Payne and Mr. R. E. G. Leckie and Miss Leckie, Rev. Mr. Goodacre, Rev. Mr. Gale, Rev. F. Draper, Miss Gilska, Halifax; Miss Afford, Miss Armstrong, Mr. J. W. S. Bonit.

Mrs. A. Hessein, of Halifax, is visiting Mrs. Forsyth.

Mrs. Murdoch's friends are very sorry to hear of her serious accident.

The Hon. Senator and Mrs. Kaulbach, of Lunenburg, and Mr. Murray, of Belleville, Ont., are visiting Windsor, the guests of Rev. Father Kennedy.

Ven. Archbishop Weston-Jones, and Mrs. Weston-Jones, left on Monday for Charlottetown P. E. I.

Miss Machin, Lady Principal of the Church School for Girls, sailed on Sunday for Europe. She will return in the autumn with a reinforcement of teachers.

Judge de Wolfe and family have gone to Bridge-water for the summer.

Miss Falkner is visiting her sister, Mrs. Reid.

On Monday evening the Misses Bowman entertained a few of their friends.

Miss May Doran, who has been visiting in Antigonish, is home again.

Miss Louise McLintosh, of Halifax, is in town, the guest of Mrs. F. W. Ryan.

Mrs. Shuttleworth, of Montreal, is visiting her daughter, Mrs. J. Tobin.

Miss Stubbings, of Halifax, is the guest of her aunt, Mrs. Walter Lawson.

Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Shand, spent a few days in Halifax, last week.

Miss Louise Blanchard and Miss Frances Woodworth, spent Sunday in Grand Pre.

Miss Madeline Black, left on Saturday morning for St. John, where she is visiting friends.

Miss L. Wilson of Halifax, is visiting her aunt, Mrs. John Keith who has gone to Lunenburg.

Rev. Father Kennedy entertained a few of his friends at supper last evening.

Captain Morris who has been very ill, is, I am glad to hear, on the road to recovery.

HOULTON, ME.

JULY 5.—Mrs. T. Clowes Miles and daughter have arrived from Silver Bow, Montana, and are visiting relatives here.

Mrs. Lucas Waterall of Philadelphia, formerly a Houlton girl, is home visiting relatives and friends.

Mr. John A. Tenney and bride have returned from the World's Fair, where they passed their honeymoon.

Mr. S. Friedman, the prominent clothier, will soon leave for Boston where, it is said, he will take to him a bride, and sail across the Great Land to his old home in Germany.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis B. Johnson will return from the Columbian Exposition the last of this week.

Mr. Thomas P. Putnam, of the firm of Powers & Putnam, attorneys, and Mr. John B. Madigan, of the law firm of Madigan & Madigan, left Wednesday evening for Chicago.

Hon. A. A. Burleigh, president of the Bangor and Ansonia R. R., has returned from a pleasant western trip, stopping a short time at the Fair on his return.

Chief Engineer, Moses Burpee, of the B. & A. Railroad wife and children have returned from Chicago.

Leon Mansur, son of Mr. Walter Mansur, president of the First National Bank, has arrived from Boston, where he has been attending the Technological Institute. He will spend his vacation at home.

Mrs. J. V. Downs and daughter, Miss Belle, have returned home from Calais, after a pleasant visit of two weeks.

Miss Cassie Page of Shawmut, Me., is visiting Mrs. M. Philbrick, on Court street.

The "Charity Ten," King's Daughters, held a profitable ice-cream sale on Friday evening.

Miss Estelle Newhouse, of Boston, is home visiting her parents and friends. Miss Newhouse is a talented musician.

Rev. Kenneth McKay, wife and daughter, Miss Katie, left Tuesday morning for the C. E. convention, at Montreal. They will also go to Chicago.

APOHAQUI, N. B.

JULY 5.—Hudson Flewelling M. P. P., was here on Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Mont. Riecker, St. John, spent the holiday here at their former home. Miss Georgia Riecker accompanied them to St. John, where she will probably remain a month.

Miss Langley, who has been visiting Mrs. Pearson, returned on Monday to her home, in Bridge-town, N. S.

Hon. George E. and Mrs. Foster, were in St. John on Saturday, attending the opening of the Industrial school.

Miss Lizzie Fenwick spent a few days of this week with Miss Ethel Burgess.

W. Tyne, Peters, St. John, spent Sunday at Mr. Geo. Edmond's.

Miss Yexxa, of Snyrna, Maine, is visiting her friend, Miss Maggie Burgess.

Sir Leonard and Lady Tilly are expected this evening. They will remain a few days with Mr. and Mrs. Foster.

Mr. H. A. Synnott was in St. John last week. Miss Olive Fairweather returned on Friday from Petecodiac, where she has been for several months.

MUSQUASH.

JULY 3.—Mr. Joshua Knight spent a few days in the city last week.

The closing exercises of the school took place Thursday.

Miss Robb is spending the vacation at her home in St. John.

Hon. A. F. Randolph of Fredericton, was the guest last week of Mrs. Albert Henderson "Menzie's Manor."

Mrs. Joshua Knight entertained a number of friends, Thursday evening. Among the guests present were some talented musicians.

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