

MOTHERHOOD ON BLACKWELL'S ISLAND

THE MANOR HOUSE WHERE THE LITTLE ONES OF THE CITY'S UNFORTUNATE ENTER THE WORLD



IN THE MATERNITY WARD



A WHITE AND A COLORED BABY FOR ONE NURSING MOTHER

MYTHOLOGICAL infants have fed at strange founts. In a Parisienne crèche the great city's waifs have their clean little donkeys, but the meekest infant of New York is frequently just half fed by unhappy women who give thus of their bodies—a strange fee to the city.

The long eared, patient, well groomed little ass, standing upon a marble mate overlaid with sweet smelling straw, giving up its milk to sadly foredoomed little bundles of humanity, is not an unpleasant sight. A decent ass is pretty well adapted to discharge certain motherly functions and is not without maternal instinct. A goat will serve, recorded that the raven croaked more than 'tis its nature to when it fed Elijah, but from Blackwell's Island, where certain women know maternity under the auspices of a great city's charity, an undebauched mind turns with melancholy.

It is not because such motherhood as may be found on the Island is generally illegitimate that the mind protests. The Sloane Maternity Hospital is a refuge daily for such cases. It is not because the charity of Blackwell's Island is unbecomingly brightest jewels in the crowd of a city's charity, but the little child born to Blackwell's enters the world foredoomed to a sentence of \$10 or ten days, while yet resting 'neath its mother's heart.

The city cannot help that now—but some day it may.

Yet, if the traditions of Blackwell's Island shadow the little child, the charity which shelters it is a great white light lessening the gloom of commonplace iniquity that homes there.

The mothers are not generally of vicious character; they are more likely to be unfortunate, themselves of illegitimate birth, and possibly of Blackwell's Island, who have no place to lay their heads when their dark hour shall come.

Accidents at Birth.

On the Island, in a certain well kept room, clean and coarsely habitable, stand eighteen beds awaiting their part in the problem of true race suicide—the accident of unfortunate birth.

As those beds are occupied in the course of weeks or months, and women on the road to recovery or already arrived at the grave, have been removed elsewhere, each bed is stripped of its furniture. When all shall have been occupied, all are removed and steeled, and thus made fit for the next woman, who may possibly, though not probably, bear a future President of the United States. However degraded or unfortunate the conditions of a male child's birth, it has always this pleasing possibility to support it.

In that room, known appropriately as the

"clean room," are born from two hundred to two hundred and seventy-five babies yearly. Without this provision those two hundred and odd babies would be born in the gutter. No infant may know the inestimable privilege of being born on Blackwell's Island who has a better place than a gutter as heritage.

From the room technically known as the "clean room" the mother and child are transferred to another ward as clean, but known as the room of recovery; and in that room is inaugurated a strange telegraphic charity. A charity within a charity. In most cases, but in some it implies curse upon curse.



A QUARTET OF LITTLE BLACK AND WHITES

Some women who must bear their kind, or yet future Presidents, under the auspices of a ten day sentence, frequently know the privilege of dying even as their betters know it; thus there are tender mouths which in the course of puerile babyhood seek many alien breasts—and still go hungry.

On Blackwell's Island a woman may bear her child, and go away into outer darkness, or into light—if Heaven be as charitably inclined as a great city and does its best for her—and she may thus have to leave behind a child doomed to a

sort of itinerant, Barnacle feast. It may look and long, and find nothing.

Babies who are not germane to the domestic situation must continue to reckon with unappreciative motherhood. The woman who goes to Blackwell's Island are seldom of a vicious sort, yet among so strange an assortment there must be found some who are opulent in naught but vicious experience, and when it is demanded that they suckle some waif with their own unwelcome offspring there is a heavy irony in that arrangement that no other could furnish.

However, not all, nor even a large part, conduct this personal charity under protest. Indeed, it is a beautiful anomaly—the willing kindness of the most miserable who undertake thus to sustain the offspring of some equally unfortunate sister.

One who witnesses this must know, furthermore, an abiding faith in the goodness of mankind. Those women who, having nothing to give, yet give of their very lives to those who have no claim upon them but the claim of a common misfor-

ture, and who give this in gentle mood, with kindly spirit!

Behold the human conundrum—Who, having nothing at all, gave all? Answer—My mother.

That is what a poor little misbegotten may boast of.

In the Manor House of Blackwell's Island, where striped clothes are rampant, the lock step couchant, the conscience dormant and where the motto is "Ten Dollars or Ten Days," a despairing or defiant woman may go to bed weeping or cursing, as the case may be, and she may arise with her tears still undried or with her vocabulary and morals all unimproved, only to find two babies in her arms—one her own, the other somebody's else. But the city takes care that emaciated women do not do double service. Women required thus to divide their natural resources are selected for their strength and should be rewarded for their valor by being permitted to dwell forevermore, with her natural and alien charges, in one of Mr. Carnegie's nicest libraries.

This spectacle of supererogation forces

In some instances he has said goodby forever to all the kindness he will ever know unless in after years it in turn shall come back to add a little Ten Days to the vast total of misables.

For Black and White Alike.

Race has nothing to do by way of limiting this city charity. All that counts is the previous condition of servitude. There little negro babies are in the picture with their white brother, sharing their white brother's food. It is hard on both, because organically stomachs are quite the same in little babies, and a black one needs as much to fill it as does a white one, and infancy should not be called upon to divvy up.

On the Island there is no lack of science or of kindness and there is plenty of room always, which speaks well for somebody, of female sex.

Certain phenomena belonging to the seasons are to be observed. Babies do not seem to be born on the Island with any degree of frequency in the good old summer time.



A PATIENT WHEELED INTO THE "CLEAN ROOM"

the mind to other days and to the paper maché cow of ancient Coney Island fame, the milk giver who worked with a spring and who worked all of the time. It is hard that those little mouths cannot be born feeding at the fount of knowledge, their little American stomachs fitted to digest a Rockefeller college.

There would be more glory for a certain kind of philanthropist if there could be a reconstruction of the human organism. If the human race could be projected in the form of a cerebrum, posterity would unquestionably endorse a certain sort of philanthropy, and those gentlemen who represent it would be mightily pleased; however, they are as it is.

One invariable rule of the Manor is that women may not revisit the mainland and "leave the baby just a couple of days." Once this was permitted, but the women to whom this service was granted had an invariable rule of their own. Without exception they failed to return for the blot upon their escutcheon, and city charity has been further invoked. Now when a mother is discharged little Ten Days must become a part of her baggage.

Poor, poor little Ten Days!

There may be two explanations of this. Poetically, virtue is supposed to take a vacation in the summer time; thus we may look for births on the Island in cold weather with the precision that an astronomer anticipates the passage of a comet. Or perhaps those unfortunate women may seek green fields and hedge rows for their agony in the benign summer time, while the best selected grating over a bakeshop in winter would be both uninviting and unseemly as a place in which to bring even blind kittens into the world.

Where are now the people who have died rich, and who forget when living that children are born to desolate, helpless women?

We may charitably hope that they are where cold never creeps in.

Every institution that alleviates the agonies of child bearing and that gives women time and place to learn maternally, is a rivet in the eternal crown of glory, that goes with beneficence; and rich men and women are eliminating unknown dangers to their sons and daughters in the laying of every brick that goes to form a shelter for unfortunate motherhood.

James McCormick, the Picture Miser of Wall Street, Worshipped His Canvases.

(CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE.)

away from business and more and more into the realm of art.

Mr. McCormick began to make yearly pilgrimages to Europe, where he became a well known figure in the Continental art galleries, and upon his return brought many pictures of early English and mediaeval masters, the finest examples of the Hague painters, and many other celebrated works. Among his collection are works by Mauve, Jacques, Verboeckhoven, Corot, Troyon, Frère, Diaz, Von Mareke and others.

Upon the walls of the office in the Lord's Court building are hung many choice paintings by Troyon, Constable, Zamoels, Noble, Jacques and others, including a balcony scene by Ripari. There are fully one hundred and fifty pictures which belonged to Mr. McCormick scattered about the country in the homes of his friends. Gêrome's famous "The Slave Market" occupies a prominent panel in his late office.

There is one picture in the Oxford street house of which the broker always spoke in the highest terms. It was referred to by the connoisseur as representing the work of some old master, and its identity would some day be cleared. He also maintained that when that discovery was made it would be found to be of enormous value.

He took an unusual interest in this picture and was never tired of pointing out its features to the friends he entertained at his home.

It is a Magdalen, on a large canvas, the background being black with age. The flesh tints of the neck and arms are beautiful in their illumination. The figure is leaning over a book which is supported by a skull. Over the head is a bent and battered crucifix.

The executors of Mr. McCormick's estate, from information given by the broker's friends

in the New street room will be found a Murillo and examples of Turner, Correggio, Rubens, Rousseau and Van Dyke.

His Collection of Jewels.

Mr. McCormick also had a taste for rare and expensive jewels. He searched for them in the same spirit he displayed in the pursuit of art objects. At his death he possessed fine specimens of rubies, emeralds, sapphires, pearls and diamonds. It was his custom to carry a morocco case, three inches wide and eight inches long, containing twenty-seven precious stones, each a perfect example of some variety of jewel.

It was a common sight to see Mr. McCormick open this case in the street, or on a ferryboat, to allow his friends a glimpse of its contents. He did not seem to realize that this was a dangerous proceeding, in view of the number of thieves who enjoy a lucrative livelihood by preying upon the crowds which cross the river to Brooklyn. Mr. McCormick never lost one jewel by theft. Among the gems he leaves are a sapphire of sixty carats and a pearl said to have been worn in the crown of a foreign potentate.

Frequently Mr. McCormick's friends have seen him, in reaching into a pocket for a cigar or pencil, pull out instead parcels of loose stones of great value. A friend relates that upon one of his trips he was asked by the broker to take care of a jewel case. Mr. McCormick refused a receipt for the same, and the friend had the case and contents for two years, finally insisting upon returning it. Upon another occasion Mr. McCormick attended a club dinner and, in drawing a handkerchief from his pocket, brought to light a pearl necklace, the value of which ran into five figures.

He pursued both these branches of luxury until he became known as one of the most expert critics of paintings and jewels

in the country, and his services were frequently sought by art associations and his own friends.

McCormick's Life Story.

James McCormick was born in Streetsville, Ont. His father was Lachlan McCormick, who brought his family to New York several years before the civil war. Lachlan McCormick was a warm personal friend of Henry Ward Beecher, and a pillar of Plymouth Church. Young McCormick as a child was almost delicate, with a beautiful face, a high, artistic forehead and abundant hair. He looked a dreamer even in his younger days.

He went to live in the substantial, old fashioned, roomy structure at No. 131 North Oxford street, Brooklyn, in the aristocratic section of the city, more than fifty years ago. It was his home up to the day of his death.

Mr. McCormick began his business career in 1863, when he entered a broker's office in Broad street. Within six years he was a member of the Stock Exchange. His associations with the big men of the street began at once. Of handsome race and figure, always dressed in the correct fashion, he was known as the "Beau Brummel of Wall street," a title which clung to him for long years.

A happy event in his life was his appointment as one of Jay Gould's brokers. During the awful days preceding and following the eventual Black Friday, when the country was shaken by the crashes in Wall street, Mr. McCormick made a record which earned him the friendship of Gould. "Jim" Fisk was another friend he made during the rehabilitation of the market.

Deflected by Fisk.

An interesting story is told in this connection. When Fisk called upon Mr. McCormick for a bill of his commissions the financier was staggered by the figures. Whether he paid the amount is not known, but the interview resulted in some

argument. So emphatically and precisely did young McCormick state his case that Fisk was impressed with him, and said: "Why don't you buy a seat in the Exchange? I'll help you."

And help him he did. Fisk's influence resulted in Mr. McCormick being elected a member of the body.

When he was active in the street the bulk of business that passed through his hands was enormous. His papers to-day show that one day more than a million dollars went through his office. And in those days that amount was considerable, and, indeed, it is to-day.

Had Mr. McCormick devoted his earnings to the purchase of stocks and bonds he might have left a considerable fortune. But he followed the bent of his inclinations, and who shall say that his days were not filled with more peace and happiness in the ownership of works of art he loved so dearly and the satisfaction he derived in collecting them?

Taken II on "Change."

Death came suddenly to the broker. At four o'clock on June 30 he was standing on the paper littered floor of the New York Stock Exchange, gazing at the groups of excited men who surrounded the various posts. The tone of the market was improving, and a hum of expectant satisfaction thrilled through the room. When the stolid, clicking indicators showed decided advances on the essential securities that formed the backbone of the market, the excitement increased. Suddenly a cheer swept through the room. It was taken up and re-echoed.

A telephone bell jingled, and a messenger, clad in khaki uniform, hustled in and out among the members till he espied Mr. McCormick, to whom he delivered a written order to sell. As he stood up to receive it the veteran broker pressed his hand above his heart. Those nearest him say his breathings were labored. Clasp-

ing the paper in his hand he moved unsteadily till he had left the Exchange floor.

Behind him the murmur went from lip to lip that "Jim" McCormick was ill. He proceeded out till he caught sight of what is known in Wall street parlance as a "specialist." To him Mr. McCormick delivered the unfulfilled orders for execution, stating that he was unwell, and adding:—

"I am going home, perhaps to die."

In the corridor he was surrounded by anxious friends—men with whom he had played as a boy, associated with in youthful pleasures and mingled later in the close co-operation of old and tried friendship. One among them assisted him into a carriage and he was driven home. There a physician stated he had received a stroke of apoplexy. He died at eleven o'clock the same night, surrounded by relatives and friends.

Mr. McCormick was a bachelor, so that his estate, the value of which is probably estimated before it is appraised, he willed to relatives and friends. The executor snapped a heavy padlock on the underground salon in New street, wherein the dazzling bits of color of world famous artists, to the number of perhaps six or seven hundred, lay stacked side by side. Later those to whom was intrusted the care of arranging and appraising the works of art entered the dimly lighted cloisterlike apartment and began their work. One who had been a close personal friend of the art lover cast his eyes over the room and its treasures and spoke reminiscences.

"Jim" McCormick," he said, "did more for others than he ever did for himself. If any of his business friends wanted accommodation; if the indorsement on a paper they held would make it collateral, he was to 'Jim' they hastened. To a friend he could never bring himself to say 'no.' His generosity and openhandedness are bywords in the street. To him

and after him flocked the army of dispirited, frayed hasbeens of Wall street for assistance.

"Some were content with the broker's small change. Others, working on 'Jim' McCormick's ready sympathy, made plans for rent money; for funds to start again; for a note to save them from being precipitated into the final abyss of the out-cast. He would hear the story and his hand would slip into his pocket, or his name would be indited on paper, perhaps trumped up for the occasion by the holder, and, save for the indorsement, otherwise worthless.

"I have seen him stroll along New street, cigar in mouth, exchanging hurried but jovial greetings with friends, and seen him stopped twice before he reached Wall street by 'street beggars.' He knew them by sight, as they knew him. He would drop all his spare coins into their hands. Next day it would be the same thing all over again. No man, not even 'Jim's' closest friend, may estimate the amount of money he has distributed through largesse in twenty years.

When a youth Mr. McCormick was a slim, blue eyed stripling, active and quick in his movements, but as he grew older his habits of life caused him to gain flesh, so that at the time of his death he weighed 240 pounds. Yet he was always a brisk walker. Next to the delight of roaming through an Old World picture gallery or salon, gaining the keenest aesthetic enjoyment by drinking in the poetic moods of Fortuny, or standing reading the sequential history of Greece and Rome through the paintings of Alma-Tadema, and, next to that, allowing the changing scintillations of flawless jewels to hold his attention, Mr. McCormick's delight was in pastoral rambles and drives. Often he would drive through country scenery for a whole day, content merely with the gold of the grain, the green of the trees and the waterfalls and rivers he saw.