

entrance seemed to listen to her stealthily descending feet.

The next morning, the two artists who had visited the dead man's room together, were walking—together again—upon the banks of the Seine, when they found themselves drawing near a crowd of men and women who were gathered at the water's edge.

"What has happened?" they asked as they approached the group. "What has been found?"

A cheerful fellow in a blue blouse, standing with his hands in his pockets, answered.

"A woman. *Ma foi!* what a night to drown oneself in! Imagine the discomfort!"

The older man pushed his way into the center, and a moment later uttered an exclamation.

"*Mon Dieu!*"

"What is it?" cried his companion.

His friend turned to him, breathlessly pointing to what lay upon the frozen earth.

"We asked each other who the original of the picture was," he said. "We did not know. The face lies there. Look!"

For that which Life had denied her, Death had given.

A DAY ON THE DOCKS.

THE night was almost gone. Not a star appeared, for the sky was black with clouds steeped in the gloom of night. A cold wind pierced me like a knife as I looked up and down the deserted wharves. Scarcely a sound—scarcely a human tread where the busiest throngs of all the great city surge in their daily ebb and flood. A deep groan shook the air; and a great wraith of steam arose from the river, floated over the low sheds along the docks, and came over the street. As the specter looked down on the glare of gas it flushed faintly, then disappeared in the sky. Beyond the brilliant sheds of Washington Market the river was a black expanse peopled with black ships; neither ships nor river could be seen, but their presence was felt through their gloom. The opposite shore of Jersey City showed a long belt of lights, like a zone of stars scattered along the horizon. I turned again to the street and the strange life about me.

This scene began my walk along the docks of New York. I started here, at Washington Market, because the day of the city first begins here, at night, and its scale of social life begins here at the lowest degree. Higher types are not wanting. For this water-front is the beach of a great sea of humanity. Toilers and idlers, drift and treasure, blooming youth and cold cadavers, all are found in this surging surf of human life. I penetrated still farther into the market, where it was thronged with butchers and grocers buying Sunday dinners for two millions of mouths. Wagons filled the narrow alleys half covered by low, projecting roofs and awnings. Some of the

open stalls were hung full of crimson and yellow meat; others were piled up with green vegetables; and some were decked with turkeys, ducks and other game. The wagons, too, were heaped with these contrasted colors.

The market-men were strong, ruddy figures, plump and comfortable in their long frocks. They rushed about in every direction among the wagons and stalls, one hugging a carcass of mutton, another struggling under a quarter of beef, and others plying hammer and adz while boxes and barrels were trucked about. Geese and men screamed and shouted, horses began to strike fire from their feet, the wagons moved, the alleys became a stream of meats and fruits, and the Sunday dinners started on their cheerful errands. And the whole scene of turmoil glowed like a magic world, dim in form yet intensely vivid, just under the blackness of night. Then some of the market-men began to depart, and I fancied they had a nipping and an eager air. So I followed them, and soon entered a large and elegant restaurant near by. The shining marble and mirrors, the glare of gas-lights, the warm air and the savory smells were certainly very welcome. The chairs were well filled with visible appetites in gray frocks and slouch hats. Broad, smooth, ruddy faces appeared through the columns of steam from plates. They were indeed a stag party—heavy, healthy and hearty; and the whole scene was imbued with the sentiment of feed.

When I returned to the street, day-break had come. The heavens wore a gray veil

through which the day struggled and at last looked down on the city. The irregular front of roofs, and the still more irregular sheds over the piers, appeared dimly far up and down West street. The gas-lights paled; the colors faded; and the city put on its common dress of dirty gray.

in a general way from the front platform of the car, it seemed disgusting to every sense. We sailed through a canal of filth, fetlock deep with black mud. Moreover, there was scarcely an attractive object in the whole view. The air throbbed with loud cries, here and there a hoarse curse, and the gen-



AMONG THE FIGURE-HEADS.

The plan of my walk was to begin at West Thirty-fourth street, pass down the west side of the city to the Battery, and then up the east side to the Dry Docks. This route includes all the chief objects of interest on the wharves, and presents them in the order of their succession, as a visitor will naturally find them. Having done, then, with the earliest scene on the docks,—the opening of Washington Market,—I jumped on a car to ride up town to begin the regular tour of the water-front. As I surveyed the scene

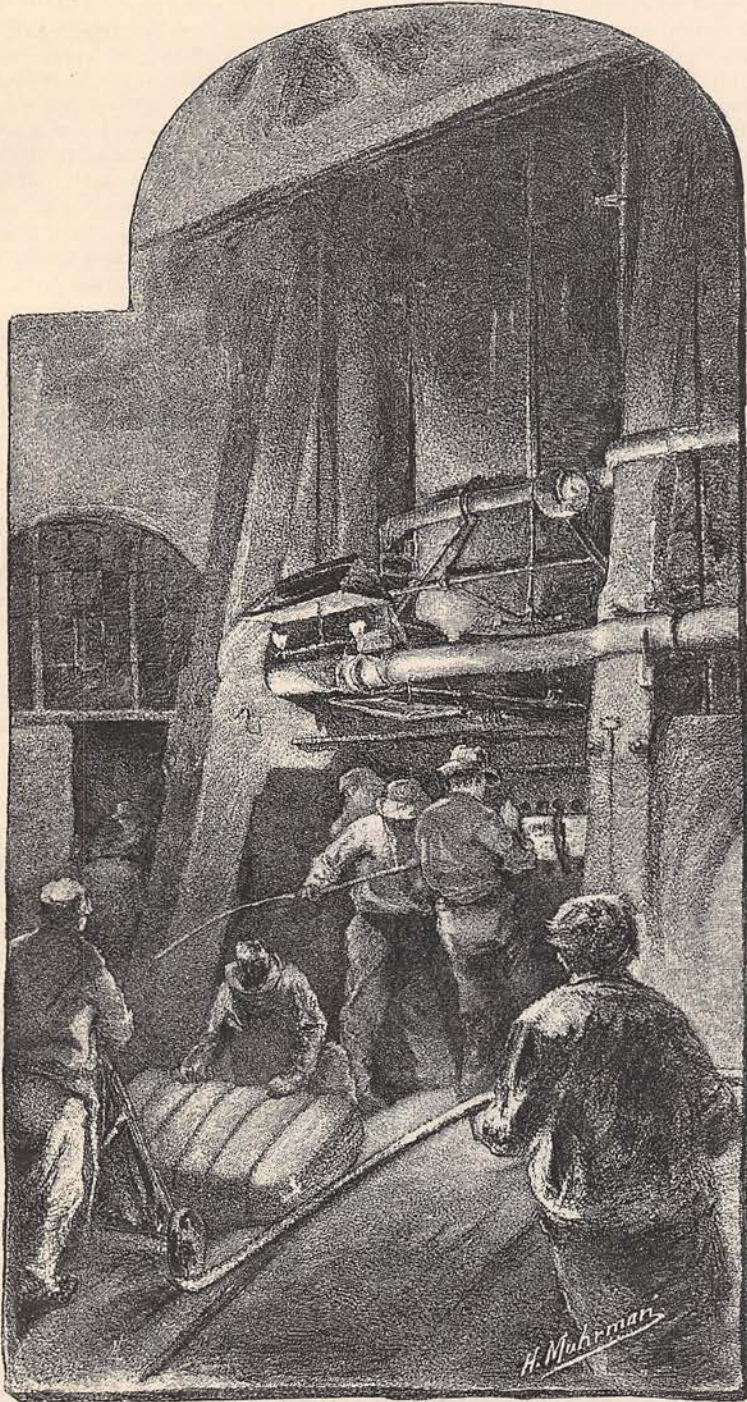
eral bedlam of low life. New York is bordered with rat-holes and rotten cribs, gin-mills and junk-shops. As you survey these superficial features you wonder that anything good should exist within such vile borders. A sensible savage would suggest that the water-front of a sea-port should be occupied by warehouses, large docks, industries connected with ship-building and other conveniences for maritime trade. But New York is neither savage nor sensible; and the miserable houses on our water-

front are given up to every kind of trumpery retail trade. The structures on the docks are no better. Most of the piers are uncovered, an unfortunate circumstance in this inclement climate. Only here and there a shed covers a wharf and shelters the traffic of a ferry or an ocean steamer. The piers themselves are disgraceful. A few piles are driven in the mud, timbers are laid over them, and planks are spiked over these. When they have rotted sufficiently, these piers are offered by the city to the commerce of the world at exorbitant rents. They are too narrow even for the circulation of a junk-cart. The wonder is that a respectable ship will submit to be delivered in such a berth. Nevertheless, this unsightly, dangerous, and inconvenient water-front of New York offers very interesting studies. It is full of striking industries, that show by some astonishing feats, what strength, skill, and endurance men develop under the high pressure of commerce. It offers some of the most curious scenes of a great city's life, for it is the daily path of every kind of people, and it is crowded with the products of all nations. In short, the docks are a great panorama of human life, filled with its toils, pleasures, and miseries, and enlivened with the most picturesque aspects of human nature.

The industrial features of the water-front are quite as interesting as the more picturesque scenes; and they began at once to impress me with the remarkable amount of labor man performs here with the aid of his inventions, with the enormous proportions of every commodity and every industry, and with the extraordinary skill and endurance developed in individuals. I came at once to examples in point at the foot of Thirty-fourth street, the beginning of our walk. The great, useless Manhattan Market was the single exception to general activity. It was empty, quiet as a cathedral, and even more spacious. The market-scene contained two Sisters of Charity, pacing silently over the pavement to a solitary butcher's stall. The roof resounded with the twittering of sparrows flying among the net-work of iron braces. The pier, however, was a busy scene, with five brigs from Prince Edward's Island unloading that day 40,000 bushels of potatoes, and with lines of men tossing cabbages from canal-boats in the slip to wagons on the pier. Then I entered the grain elevator and mill, a humming hive of industry, a great cavern, dimly lighted, and obscured by mists of flour. Three men were at a

weighing machine under a grain spout; one was weighing, one was bagging, and another was tying up fifteen sacks of oats per minute and delivering them to a wagon below. Further up among the shadows, the mists, and the whirling shafts, I saw a solitary man with his hands on another apparatus, by which he screened, weighed, and put in a bin, 5,000 bushels of grain per hour. Then I climbed down among the shafts and great timbers to the street, and resumed my way southward. I soon came to a coal-yard, where two bulky fellows in the hold of a canal-boat were shoveling coal into the elevating buckets. They wore only boots, trowsers, and an undershirt without sleeves. Their great arms, strong necks, and manly, though heavy, faces, were all black and grimy with coal-dust and sweat. They shovel 200 long tons of coal per day. Farther on was a man working in a lumber-yard containing \$300,000 worth of choice lumber. He could pile 30,000 feet of green lumber in a day. Beyond this were some ice-wagons loading from barges at the dock; in summer they will cart away 20,000 tons per week, and distribute it all over the city and the suburbs, in quantities from ten pounds to 300 tons per day in a place. There are the iron-works, a great, shadowy cavern, with here and there a fire in its gloom, steam-giants groaning and striking blows that shake the earth, and men coming from dark corners to the forges and glowing at their toil like fiery demons. There is the cotton-press, a monster whose jaws close on a bale with a pressure of 1,000 tons, compress it to the thinness of one foot, and thus prepare 70 bales per hour for shipping to Europe. There is the wood-yard, where a saw and a knife cut and split four cords of wood per hour,—besides other industries on the walk, too many to be described.

But another aspect, also, of city life is presented in this part of the wharves. A mile or more of the shore below Thirty-fourth street is occupied chiefly by lumber-yards. The region is known among a certain class as Timber Town Hotel. This extensive establishment is a summer resort for the vagabonds of the city. It is what the French would call an *Hôtel meublé*, since it offers only beds. And yet it is full of lodgers every night from April till November. All the human experiences, from birth to marriage and death, literally transpire under its spacious roof. Sunday toilets are performed at the hydrant, with such odd bits of mirror, combs, and ribbons as the gutter may have



A COTTON PRESS.

yielded. Then the independent guests depart for their day's excursion, without paying their bills or caring even to close the door.

And at night they return to the hospitality of misery. The bulletins of the hotel were filled with notices announcing a reward of

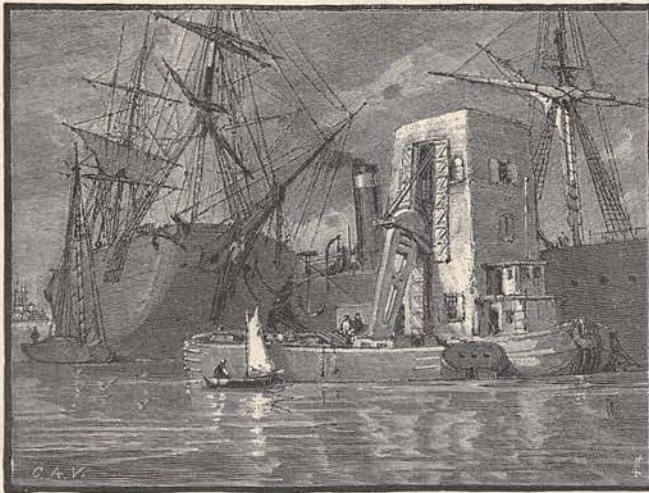
\$50 for the recovery of several tierces of lard stolen from a neighboring warehouse. Some years ago this front was infested with gangs of thieves and smugglers. But they have moved away, some to municipal offices of trust and emolument, others to subordinate positions in certain state institutions; and Thirteenth avenue is now a quiet lumber region.

The walk has brought us down to West Eleventh street, where you leave the quieter docks devoted to the bulky commodities of grain, lumber, iron, and ice, and enter the bustle of the great sea-port. Here begins the beach of humanity, and it extends for miles, all around the lower half of the city. Long lines of men and teams surge up and down, farther than the eye can see or the ear can hear their busy march. And along the piers lie fleets of ships from every quarter of the globe. The scene, as a whole, is grand; too large, too full of intense activity, too vivid with all the colors of human life, for any one to grasp or portray. The first object met here is the oyster market. It is a long block of two-storied sheds built on boats. Little verandas and arched windows under the projecting roofs give them a tasty look. Broad gang-planks, leading up from the boats to the wharf, form the sidewalk. In

and their oyster-beds. Other men, with their hands in their pockets, lean against the buildings and chew their quids, while keeping a weather eye on the crowded street. Here and there a wharf loafer overhauls a pile of refuse shells and cullings, to find a few rejected oysters. Inside the boat is a row of twenty busy men, seated along one side. Each sits on a low stool, and spreads his knees wide apart, on each side of a pile of oysters and an upright iron bar. A pail of water for washing, a pail for the oysters, and a basket for shells, stand before him. He catches up an oyster, lays its edge on the iron bar, and knocks off a chip of the shells with his short, heavy knife; then he pries open the shells, and in a twinkling takes the slippery tenant between his thumb and the blade and tosses it into the pail. The men are grimy, silent, deft, and quick at their work; and they must be attentive to open 6,000 oysters each in a day. 30,000 barrels a year are sold in this house, and about 2,500,000 barrels in the entire city. The slip in the rear of the market is filled with pretty sloops. The place is a net-work of masts and rigging, with here and there a basket hoisted by a tackle, and a sail hanging in shaded folds. Men are going from boat to boat, and some are coming over gang-planks to

the market, with baskets on their shoulders. A peddler of bright mittens and socks is trading with a black cook in a cabin gang-way; and on another boat the head and shoulders of a woman and a child appear above deck. The sun shines on them all, and here and there flashes up from the bits of water between the sloops.

Ocean steamers occupy several consecutive piers below Tenth street and give their locality a distinctive character. I went on board one of the ships and looked down her hold, four stories deep. It was all dirty and disordered with barrels,



FLOATING ELEVATOR TRANSFERRING GRAIN FROM A CANAL-BOAT TO AN OCEAN STEAMER.

front are wagons loading with baskets of oysters, carts taking away heaps of shells, and piles of barrels, kegs, and baskets standing about the doors. The place smells of the salt sea, and the characters idling about are from the sea-shore. Skippers in blue pea-jackets discuss the merits of their crafts

cases, lumber. The donkey engines were rattling, tackles were running, officers were whistling, gesticulating, and hallooing up and down the hold. A gang of men were laboring below to get a great log of mahogany out with the tackle. Another hold was like an ant's hill—swarming with men loading sacks

of grain. An elevator alongside raised the grain from a canal-boat, and then sent it down a spout pouring two six-inch streams of wheat. A man opened and closed the valves of the spout while two adjusted the sacks under it; four sewed up the bags as fast as

sons, from occupying any permanent abode. They are the wandering owls, hawks, and foxes of the population; they prey by day and night on the rest of creation, and hide in the dens along this water-front. This region of the ocean steamers is their chief



A SECTIONAL DOCK.

they were filled at the rate of about eight per minute. Sometimes a ship arrives so late that only three days are allowed for the work. 3,000 tons of freight are to be taken out, and as much put in, besides her coal. 200 men are set to work in her; she swarms and buzzes night and day like a hive. Every hatchway and port-hole is giving or taking some kind of package, from a steam-engine to a log of wood. But the men work methodically, under the direction of skillful stevedores, and steam does the hoisting; so at the appointed time she is ready again for sea.

The population of the wharves is wonderfully varied. In fact, if all who use them be included in the estimate it will embrace parts of the whole human family. Drift from every nation comes to this beach; and men, women and children from every field of life come and go in this restless tide of humanity. Some classes, of course, have a connection with the wharves more permanent than that of a passenger; such are the various artisans connected with shipping, the merchants whose wares come chiefly by water, and other men established in the houses along West and South streets. But one of the most interesting classes refrain, for obvious rea-

lurking-place. My interest in these thieves, wharf-rats, smugglers and their kind, led me to engage one of the steamboat squad of police to row me about for a view of the life and scenery under the wharves. We embarked at Charlton street in a small boat, suitable for entering narrow passages, and commenced our explorations at low tide. We picked a passage among canal-boats and lighters filling the slip, and finally reached the open water to pull up the river a few blocks. Fortunately, the day was bright, though cool, so we had a good light for our subterranean voyage. The officer talked freely of his experiences:

"You see, sir, there are two kinds of watermen, as there are of landmen,—honest and dishonest ones. And besides these, there is a third kind, the negotiator between the thief and the honest man. There is one, now, rowing around that pier. He is a licensed junkman; he holds a license for running a boat and buying and selling old refuse articles of any kind—a kind of water-ragman. Well, these fellows sell a great deal more than they buy; and what they buy was often neither bought nor earned, but stolen by the wharf thieves. But they have a license and that shields them."

As the man rowed by us in his dirty brown boat, with a large pile of old ropes in the stern sheets, the officer hailed him.

"Well, Jerry, you've made quite a haul. It cost something, I suppose?" queried the officer, significantly.

"Yes, sir," said the man with a sly smile on his averted face as he rested on his oars. "It cost enough."

"But it was your own price, I'll bet. Anything new going on?"

"Well, no; not much. Only the Doctor was caught nappin' by a flat last night, and his plant was dug up. I guess he'll garden somewhere else now."

When we had parted the officer resumed:

"Perhaps you don't understand his lingo. He meant that one of the wharf-rats, called the Doctor, had been arrested last night by a policeman and that his plant, or his plunder, planted or hidden away, had been found. He thinks the Doctor will have to cultivate a patch at Sing Sing."

The view of the piers from the water is singularly out of keeping with the grandeur of the city, or with the commercial activity at their inner end along West street. If it were not for the dignity of the great harbor and the vast collection of fine ships, the city front would be contemptible. The docks are a tattered, dirty fringe to the city. They are of all widths that are too narrow, of all lengths too short; a few are covered with sheds, but the most are bare piers on open cribs of spiles and braces. Scarcely any life is seen on the pier-heads; they seem deserted country docks, waiting to receive some inland steamboat. The activity is on the streets, and inside of the piers, or on the water, covered with steam-tugs and ferry-boats. But I forgot the piers in the presence of the great ocean steamers, whose grandeur and beauty are very impressive when seen from a little boat. We soon turned under the pier of the Christopher street ferry and left the sunshine for shadows, among long rows of piles sprinkled with barnacles, and under a low, level roof of heavy stringers, braces, and planks. At last we came to a large square structure, like a flat-boat, floating on the water and supporting one end of the ferry bridge. Between the top or deck of the float and the bridge there is a large space.

"This," said the officer, "is one of the best hiding-places they have—on top of this float. Sometimes they cut a hole in the planks and then use the inside of the float for a store-room. It is protected from rain by

the ferry-house, and it is safe from the tide, because the float always floats above the waves. The tramping of the passengers overhead drowns any noise these men make in operating down here, and they can live in safety here till discovered by some boating expedition. The passengers overhead don't imagine that they walk over a robber's cave, but some strange things are done under ground as well as over it. We lately found \$3,700 worth of velvets and silks on such a ferry-float in Jersey City. They get such goods from the European steamers, where the people often aid them in smuggling. Men on the ships drop overboard packages of cigars or other valuables, and they generally fall in one of these boats of thieves. Sometimes a private watchman on a dock accepts an invitation to the neighboring saloon, and leaves the pier long enough for the purposes intended. Sometimes the thief saws part of a plank out from under a pile of goods and then fills his boat; or he bores an auger-hole up till he taps a barrel of liquor, and runs it into his own cask. They have a thousand tricks of the kind. One of us lately heard a man working at a pile of fruit. He soon filled his boat under a hole in the planking and then started away; but just as he came out from under the pier, the officer above dropped a slip-noose over his head and hauled him up to the dock, and that thief was about as much surprised as any man you ever saw."

We resumed our voyage, passing under pier after pier, picking our way through the intervening slips filled with various craft, or prowling under West street, where it is built over the water on piles. This under side of the city is a shadowy world even at high noon, and its structure, as well as its seclusion, makes it as good as a forest for hiding. The piles stand in rows running across the pier, a stringer or heavy timber lies on top of each row, joists lie across the stringers, and planks cover the whole. Thus between the top of each stringer and the planks there is quite a space, where boxes and bundles can be hidden. The under side of a pier can hold a good sloop-load of packages, and a box on a stringer is invisible to any one passing under the pier, unless he passes very close to it. There are many miles of piers about the city, and each pier has a great quantity of stringers. So here is a vast region of secrecy right under the busiest part of New York. Many of the piers are supported on such a dense

forest of spiles that only the smallest skiff can pass through the narrow, tortuous openings. Formerly the thieves had a channel of this kind from one end of the city to the other, by which they could travel nearly the whole distance without showing themselves.

"You see, sir, here are plenty of chances to hide. These cribs of beams and spiles, mouths of sewers, odd holes here and there along the rocky shores, and all of it covered over from daylight, and some of it almost inaccessible,—all that you would think is enough for any set of thieves. But it is not; for we follow them up and clean out their holes. They find new places now and then. Once we discovered a lot of hardware and tools hidden under the guards and in the paddle-box of a steamboat that was laid up for the winter. Many things they hide under water, such as spelter and other metals. It is almost impossible to discover these 'plants'; but sometimes we hit on them by chance. Once, a man who had been loafing about the deck of one of the Troy steamboats threw overboard a valuable hawser, and then plunged overboard himself before anybody could catch him, although the boat and the wharf were full of people. Both the hawser and the man fell into a skiff alongside the steamboat and disappeared under the pier. He had the start, and of course escaped before any of us could get a boat and follow him. But we heard of him afterward under a certain pier, and we went there to look for the rope. We dredged between the piles for three days, and by good luck hooked up the hawser. These men sometimes get their deserts without any of our help. One of them who had stolen a boat-load of pig-iron, ran under Pier 49 to hide. That pier had a shaft and gearing under it for hoisting ice. He hitched his boat, and then climbed up near the shaft; the gearing caught his clothes, and we found him in pieces scattered over his boat. Wharf-thieves used to be more successful than they are now; they were organized in regular gangs. But we have broken them up, scattered them, and driven the most of them away from the docks."

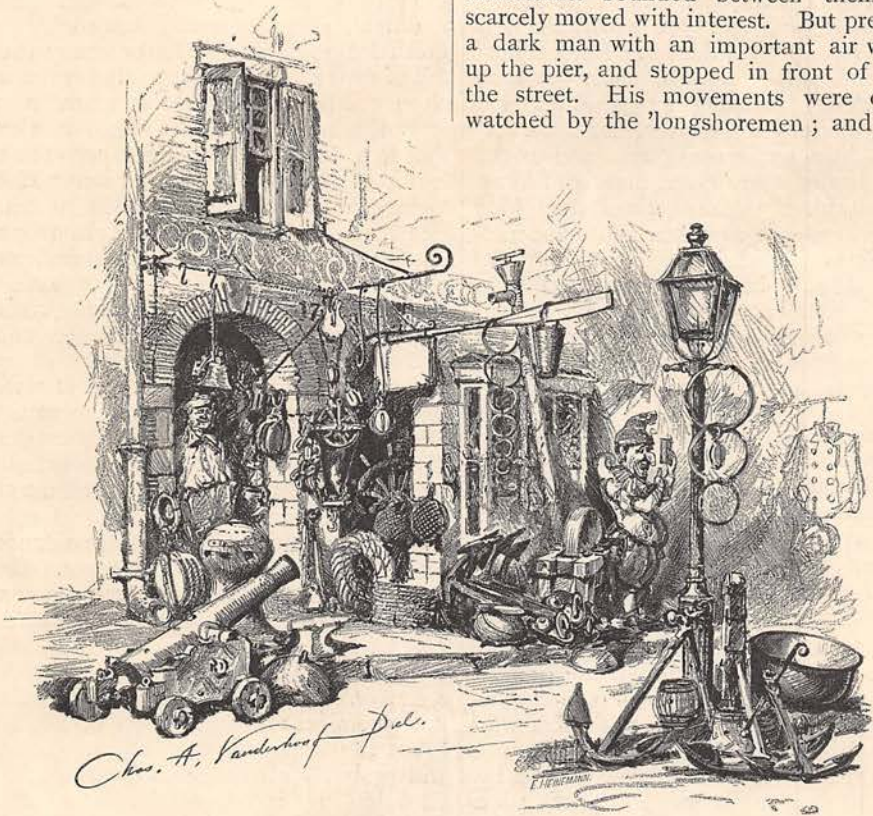
Still darker scenes might be recorded of this under side of the docks. The actors appear first in the city's brighter haunts of pleasure, or in its miserable dens of want and crime. Then they wander in the streets alone; and gradually but surely stray to the water. Night is around them, in them. The city behind them sparkles with life. But it

cannot penetrate their night, nor light their dark passage under these waves to the morgue.

We came at last to the slip of the oyster market, picked our way among sloops and lighters, and passed under the crooked pier at the foot of West Tenth street. Here we followed a long, narrow passage between the back of the new sea-wall on the right and rows of spiles on the left. The faint light shone through the forest of spiles and lighted a dismal, slimy cavern, bounded by the green ledges of the wall, the rocky shore full of dens and holes, and the heavy timbers close overhead. Large rats stared at us from the beams; sewers vomited filth and the water and the air were unendurably loathsome. This is known as "Hell's kitchen." It may seem incredible that any free man should choose such a place for his abode; yet where could a criminal find more congenial gloom? We found a home in Hell's kitchen, but the host was not visible. A few boards lay across three stringers, and a bed on these was made of a heap of rags and papers from the gutter. A few vials of medicine completed the picture of utter misery with suggestions of sickness and death. When at last I disembarked, I was glad to walk again in the sunshine and feel the presence of honest life and industry on the docks. The docks are a dangerous region for the unwary stranger. Here the most expert of all thieves—the confidence-man—meets him as he lands, and commences one of those games so plausible while they are played, so absurd when they are over. Even well-read school-teachers and prominent business men of this very smart city are among the victims. The fox will probably always catch the goose; and doubtless this is better than for all of us to be either foxes or geese. Besides this cunning class, the docks have many ordinary thieves who depend more on their heels and hands. The wharves are the general market of the city, where every kind of produce is landed and kept until bought and stored in shops or houses. Of course, it is impracticable to guard thoroughly such a long line of merchandise; and the irregular, nook-and-corner structures along the docks offer abundant shelter for prowlers. There is a man for every place in this world; so the docks are full of irregular, nook-and-corner men, preying on every kind of produce landed on the wharves. There are little children picking up pieces of coal in their caps and aprons; women with baskets, loi-

tering about the market sheds to pick up potatoes or onions that may roll from a barrel; men overhauling heaps of rubbish for a stray bit of food; and a great many loafing about, and waiting for any opportunity to take or accept anything in the world. Some of these are organized in gangs and accomplish quite important results. The cotton thieves, for example,

and others mislabeled in the same way. At last I came on a crowd of peculiar aspect at the corner of Spring street. It was a hundred or more 'longshoremen, standing in two parallel lines, between which two of them were competing for drinks at "hop-skip-and-jump." They were ragged and dirty; they were heavy, lifeless, and even monotonous in various shades of ignorance. They waited for the jumping; yet when the contestants bounded between them they scarcely moved with interest. But presently a dark man with an important air walked up the pier, and stopped in front of me in the street. His movements were closely watched by the 'longshoremen; and when

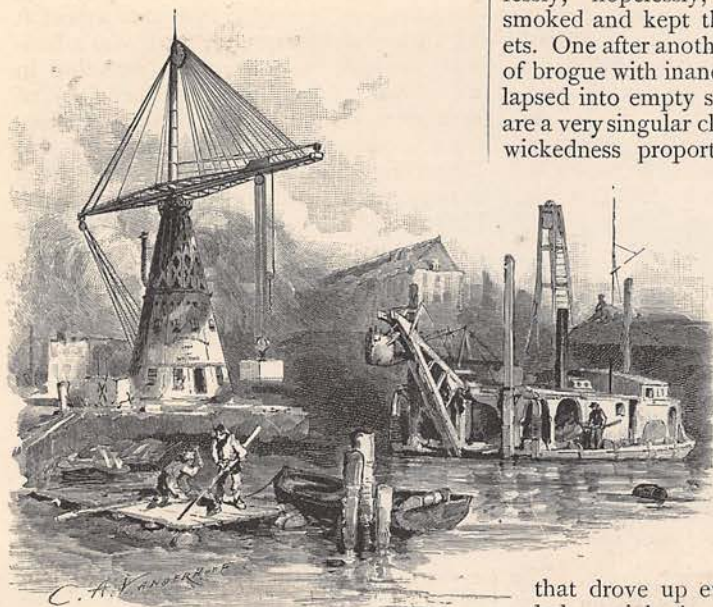


SHIP-CHANDLERY.

operate with much daring and success. A squad of boys, with sheath-knives in their sleeves, steal up to the side of a truck-load of cotton, cut open the bales, pull out armfuls of cotton and escape to their nooks and corners. If they are noticed and molested, a squad of men join, ostensibly, in the charge or pursuit, but to really defeat the capture of the rascals.

As I walked along southward I was jostled by a continuous stream of men, of wonderful diversity, of every shade of cleanliness, honesty, industry, and intelligence. In fact, every species seemed to be represented; some labeled by their ragged coats,

he came to a halt there, they all hurried over to my corner, and forming a line on the curbstone, bent all their attention on this man from the pier. He was a stevedore seeking a few more hands to help unload one of the steamers. He looked gravely and slowly up and down the line, and finally nodded to one of the men, who then left the ranks and walked toward the ship. The rest stood motionless, and kept their eyes fixed on those of the stevedore, while they silently chewed their quids with the vigor of expectation. They seemed subjected to the severest discipline. When a dozen men had been selected, the stevedore turned to follow them



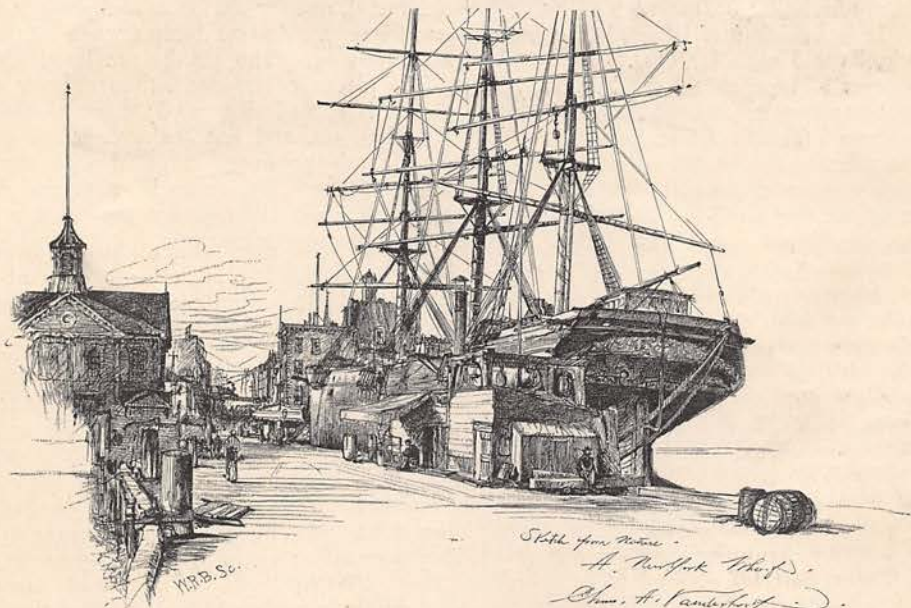
DERRICK AND DREDGING BOAT.

to the ship. The rest of the crowd broke up into groups of loungers leaning against the wall, and relapsed into their habitual stolidity and inertia. The day was cool, so they kept up a perpetual yet aimless movement of big feet; still they had not the wit to button their coats. They stood about aim-

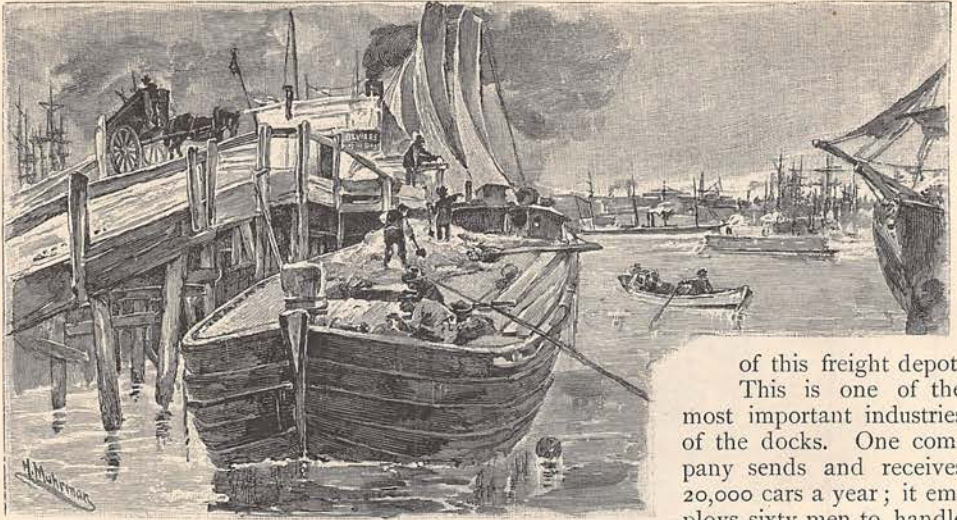
lessly, hopelessly, uncomfortably; they smoked and kept their hands in their pockets. One after another broke out in a new key of brogue with inane inflections, and then relapsed into empty silence. Altogether they are a very singular class,—apparently without wickedness proportioned to their physical brutality; without thrift or intelligence; without purpose, and without any apparent knowledge or hope of better things.

A livelier scene was in action on the pier opposite, where the Southern steamers land their cargoes of cotton. Hundreds of bales covered the quay, and men were loading them upon trucks that drove up every few minutes. The bales weigh about 500 pounds each, yet I saw two negroes put fourteen of them, or 7,000 pounds, from the ground upon a wagon in nine minutes. It was a treat to watch their sinewy arms and strong backs as they tossed the bales about with apparent ease.

West street contracts to its original meanness below Canal street. The general view here is of a narrow street crowded with



Sketch from Nature
 H. W. P. (H. W. P. Street)
 Done, H. W. P. (H. W. P. Street)



A GARBAGE DUMP.

trucks and horse-cars moving slowly. The docks for river craft in this vicinity and farther south are a busy place, even at night, in the early summer; for then large quantities of fruit, and other perishable articles, arrive every day. They must be delivered to the commission merchants and market men before daylight, to be ready for sale in the early morning. Wagons begin to arrive about midnight; the piers are soon crowded with vehicles, and with men working at the top of their speed in unloading boats and loading wagons. It is a bedlam of boxes, baskets, and barrels, lighted with lanterns. By sunrise the berries and peaches have been bought by grocers; they are at once carted up town, and exposed for sale before breakfast.

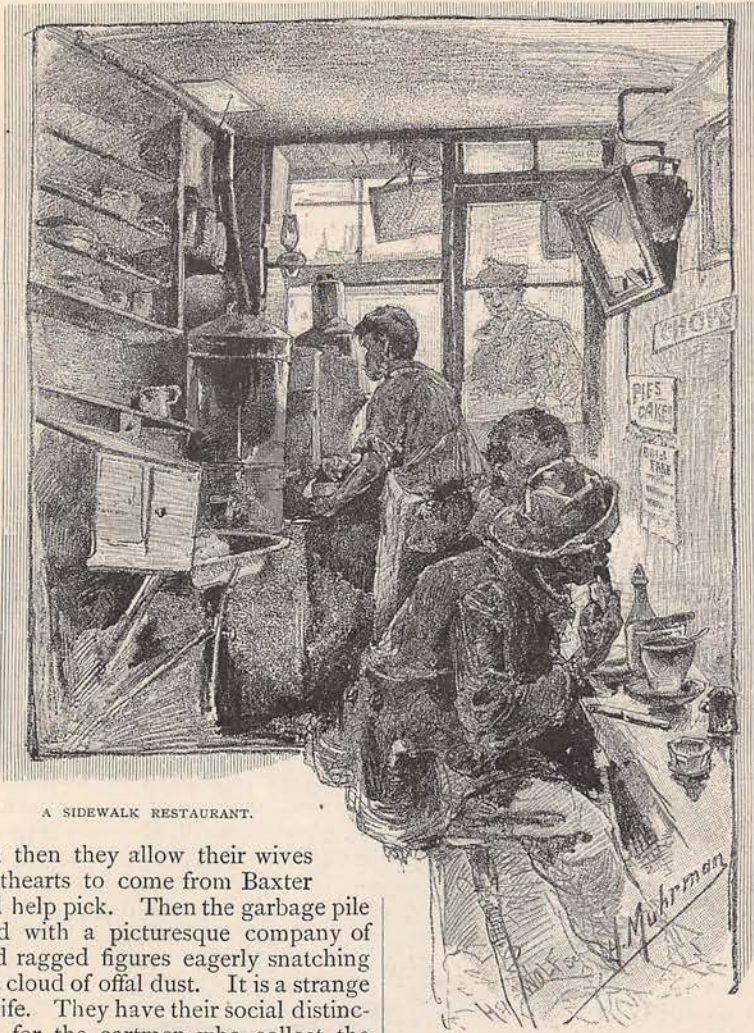
The railroad freight depots on the docks are also busy centers for man and beast. The front of the low shed is covered with the names of distant cities and states. The approach to it is filled with teams from all parts of the city with all kinds of merchandise in cases and barrels. Within the wide opening are seen piles of boxes; also little cabins, near the front, with a platform scale on each side, and men signing receipts, marking cases, and calling out weights and addresses. Behind these are lines of men going and coming with truck-loads of freight. They pass to the rear and over a gang-plank on to a barge carrying ten freight cars. When the cars are loaded the barge is towed across the river, where they are run on to the railroad and sent to the distant cities and states named on the front

of this freight depot.

This is one of the most important industries of the docks. One company sends and receives 20,000 cars a year; it employs sixty men to handle the freight, and twenty-

eight clerks for the systematic booking of every package in its 150,000 tons of merchandise.

In the midst of all this commercial wealth, we meet another side of life at the garbage-dump. The pier is built quite high, that the carts may rise above the heap of refuse on the deck of the lighter even at high tide. The space just under the floor of the pier, between the rows of piles, is inclosed with old planks, and divided into several rooms, one for storing bones, one for tin-cans and old metal, one for old boots and shoes, and one for rags. At one dump a room is fitted up for living. The planks are lined with refuse pieces of oil-cloth, then a layer of carpet is spread all around; more oil-cloth is tacked on, and finally the walls are papered and the floors carpeted with more refuse pieces. The room is warm and inhabitable even there under the dock, and but a foot above spring tide. But the whole scene is extremely repulsive, although the business is quite profitable. The city hires a trimmer to trim or pile the loads on the lighter. He lets out this work to two or three Italians for one-half of the pickings, and now and then visits his dump, dressed in broadcloth, kids, and diamonds. The Italians sell the bones, metal, rags, and boots to peddlers, and thus make from \$12 to \$20 per week. The watchman on the pier told me that they live chiefly on the garbage, that they save enough money in a few years to go home as a count and spree it a while, and then return from sunny Italy to claw over the garbage of New York.



A SIDEWALK RESTAURANT.

Now and then they allow their wives and sweethearts to come from Baxter street and help pick. Then the garbage pile is covered with a picturesque company of grimy and ragged figures eagerly snatching refuse in a cloud of offal dust. It is a strange phase of life. They have their social distinctions, too, for the cartmen who collect the refuse consider themselves immeasurably superior to the pickers. And certainly they have, at least, the advantage of an honest and hard-working horse.

But I was loitering too long on the many details of this west side of the city, so I pushed on southward again to Washington Market. It is a quaint little village of low sheds, very narrow alleys, and very small blocks,—all on the pier-side of the street. But as I had seen it in its more picturesque aspect of night, I did not enter it now. One of its queerest nooks, however, a sidewalk restaurant on a street corner, attracted me, and I walked, or rather, in one stride stepped, into the midst of it and called for a cup of coffee. The place is five feet wide and twelve long on the ground, though of no exact di-

mensions on the ceiling. For it is the space under an outside flight of stairs, inclosed with glass and boards. It rents at \$540 per year. A shelf on each side of the entrance serves as a table where two men can sit on stools. Mine host is a plump, pompous German with the taciturn and important air of a public functionary. Such is the run of custom, and such are the customers, that he keeps his place open night and day. After drinking my coffee, I continued my walk, past more freight depots, more ferries, more shipping, to the end of this western side of the city at the Battery.

The Battery is the only oasis of the docks. This little park on the southern point of the island is very welcome after miles of dirty

bustling wharves. The granite sea-wall and the clean walks are such a contrast to the rickety and disgraceful piers! One is almost ready to despise the prudence and economy that limited such work to the Battery-front, and to one stone pier. I rested a moment in this delightful retreat, while the distant roar of the city came from behind me through the trees, and mingled with the softer splash of waves. The bay stretches away in front,

is one of the oldest parts of the docks. The view up the wedge-shape street is quite picturesque, with the converging rows of old houses, and here and there a dormer-window above the pinched and faded fronts. The elevated railroad is a surprise in this picture of the past. What amazement it would have caused if it had been dropped into the place a hundred years ago! One can imagine the wigs and night-caps thrust



SAILORS' CHAPEL.

showing cities on every shore, islands, busy ferries and steamers puffing about, and fleets of great ships from the sea. It is the meeting-point of two worlds,—the commerce of the continent and the trade of the ocean; yet it is a quiet nook, where your dreams are quickened, not broken, by the distant whistle of the locomotive, the strokes of the ship's bell, the roar of the city, and the murmur of the ocean.

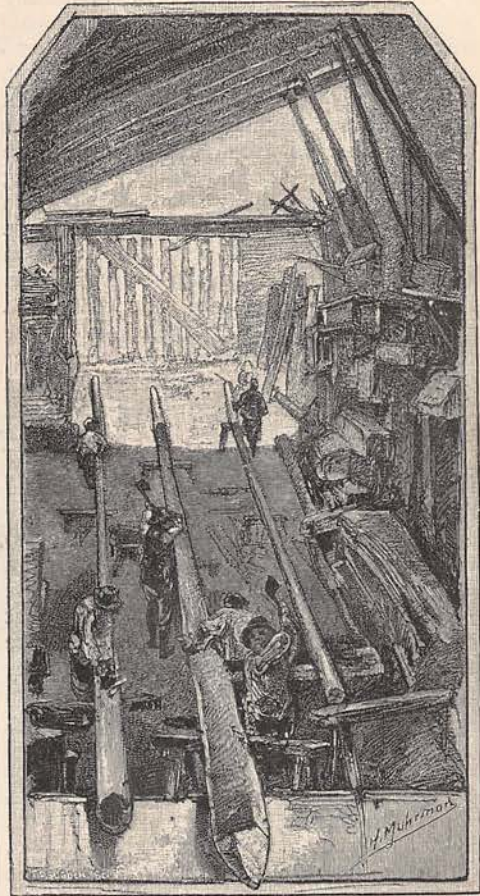
The rush of commercial life met me again at South Ferry, as I rounded this end of the city and turned eastward. The flour trade begins here, and extends along South street, and up the side streets. Coenties Slip

out of the little windows. The finest view of ships in the port of New York is just east of Coenties Slip. For several blocks one side of the street is a row of high bows at the edge of the docks. Bow-sprits run in over the wagons and the traffic of the street, and beyond these masts and rigging make a forest. The vessels are all noble clippers, pressing close to the city. You can put your hand on their anchors, their figure-heads, and their shapely bows. They seem almost human in their confident intimacy. The view down one of these uncovered piers is quite animated with the loading and unloading of ships.

Carting is one of the most important divisions of wharf life, for horses throng along all the docks to move every day thousands of tons of freight and thousands of people. A characteristic scene is a long line of loaded trucks, waiting at the pier of some one of the Southern steamers. One of these lines began at South street, ran up Maiden Lane to Broadway, and down Fulton to South street again. Part of the line had two trucks abreast, and, if it had been in single file, the total length would have been four-fifths of a mile. Some of the trucks stood in the line twenty-four hours, and some came three times without reaching the ship. Every truck was overloaded by taking the loads of those who could not wait for their turn. The loads of New York teams are amazing. Two horses usually haul fourteen bales of cotton, four hogsheads of tobacco, or twenty-five barrels of flour or sugar. But the market-men take the heaviest loads. One horse commonly draws twenty to twenty-five barrels of apples, but sometimes he takes as many as forty barrels, and often over three tons of oranges or lemons. None of these loads are hauled up steep hills, but the pavements are often defective with holes or hollows, the car-tracks are troublesome, and the footing is slippery; moreover, the route is never clear, so that frequent stops and starts also make the labor very heavy. Even with the best of feed and care the average service of a horse in this over-work is but four years.

But the day was waning, and I left the cartmen to their day or night of waiting and hurried forward on my walk. In the rear of the Fulton Fish Market I saw a smack unloading with a scoop-net live cod-fish from the well in her hold to a crate or car alongside. This car is a large covered box floating in the water like a raft; it is about twelve feet square and five deep; its sides and bottom have cracks for the flow of water in and out, and it will keep alive about 4,000 pounds of black-fish. The slip, half filled with long rows of these cars, can hold 100,000 pounds of live fish. Near by are the vessels from the tropics, unloading oranges, bananas and lemons. And on the dock were eager figures diving into the barrels of damaged fruit for now and then a half-sound orange. There are more busy freight depots along South street, and steamers from the Mediterranean, and others from Maine. There are also canal-boats stowed away here and there in a slip for the winter,

while the captain and his family live in the cabin and enjoy a season of metropolitan life. There is also a welcome sign of civilization among all this roughness of the docks—the Bethel ship with its cross and its church bell. One hopes that some social pleasures may await the sailor landing from boisterous seas; but these miserable boarding-houses and hotels for seamen scarcely encourage the hope. South street has strong naval characteristics. Not only do you find a large fleet of ocean clippers along the dock, but you meet the sailors themselves, congregating within sight of their vessels. You very seldom see the typical jolly tar in his sailor's shirt. They are generally a lot of



A SPAR YARD.

dull-looking men, unshaven, dressed in patched coats and caps, and devoted to their black pipes. They sometimes pace up and down the sidewalk as if still on their watch; but oftener loaf about in small

groups and lean against the wall. They wear an uneasy expression in the city, as if out of their element, and wishing to make sail and stand out to sea. North of Market street the surroundings are entirely maritime. The houses are full of ship-chandlery,—great cables, blocks, anchors and wheels; the signs of sail-lofts flap from upper stories; boats run their bows out-of-doors; spar-yards are full of men hewing great timbers; and shipsmith shops glow with forges and echo with blows on the anvil. Here and there a window is full of quadrants, compasses, chronometers and other navigating instruments. On the water-side are the dry-docks where some large ocean steamers were being repaired by gangs of men. The great hulls looked imposing with their high masses contrasted with such mites as men. I found also a figure-head carver making a woman for a new vessel. I had always been interested in the wooden sex. This man is their creator. He marks a center line on each side of the square block from which the figure is to be made; then he sketches the profile outline on two sides of the block and hews down to those lines. Then he sketches the front view on the hewed sides and cuts the block down. Afterward the corners are reduced to that plump roundness so characteristic of the figure-head. From four to six days suffice for making the average specimen. Just now the Indian is the prevailing fashion in this race.

The last great rush of life along the docks is the afternoon crowd at the ferries. So I returned to the more populous part of the docks to see the close of the day. Not to be too alliterative, I call Fulton Ferry a funnel for folks. They converge at the wicket from all directions, and slip in out of sight as if engulfed in oblivion. The squalor of South street is thus crossed by sparkling streams of wealth and fashion, flowing down from the heights of the city. As the people come in close columns, you see a panorama of hats and chins; as they pass, hats and noses, and as they crowd about the ferry entrance, hats and back hair. They are a crowd devoted to bundles, for every one has a package or a bag. One poor woman carries a great bundle of tailor-work; and an elderly man, rather excited by his own hurry and the bustle of the street, comes on a run, while a turkey's long neck hangs out of his basket and whips about his legs. There go two youths with guns on their shoulders and glowing anticipations

on their faces. In fact, the air seems loaded with sighs, and songs, and flitting visions of human lives.

But the street is as crowded as the sidewalk. From curb to curb, and as far as you can see, it is full of wagons as closely packed as the pieces of a puzzle. It is a long line of piles of merchandise; a driver is perched on every pile, and a team is before it. There are loads of oranges, boxes of tea, four-bushel bags of pea-nuts, cases of silk and Indian shawls, a steam-boiler, and coops of geese that stick up their heads and look concerned. Indeed, parts of every quarter of the earth are here rolling on wheels along the docks. The wagons are emblazoned with the modern heraldry of commerce—signs and trade-marks. There is the great four-horse truck strong and plain. There is the jaunty butcher's cart with the sleek, saucy butcher; there is the brewer's wagon with its fat horses; and there is the elegant carriage moving with a low, soft murmur like the rustle of silk. It is the great army of commerce moving slowly along with the roar of wheels and the sharp click of hoofs. But now they halt by their own crowding. Not a figure moves where just now all were in ceaseless, eager activity. The street becomes as quiet as a country road. But here and there a driver hails his fellow in gruff tones, jeering the stupid teamster who blocked the lines of march. So they all stand still in a hopeless blockade. But presently one wagon moves a few feet; the next drives up behind, and then the next, and the short motion runs along the whole line like a wave, away off to the distance. Then they all stop again and the puzzle is a new one through fresh entanglements. Meantime a policeman walks here and there among the wagons and teams, and tries to keep all in moving order. But here is the key-wagon of the jam. It is loaded with over seven thousand pounds of lemons; and the horse is stalled with his enormous load. The right fore-wheel is in a slight hollow in the pavement. The horse turns to the left to twist it out of the hollow; he leans to the task, strains every cord in his strong limbs, and almost gets the load in motion. But he finally slips on the treacherous pavement, the fire flies from his shoes, and after a courageous struggle the poor animal falls. Then the policeman and the driver loosen the harness that holds him like a net; they lift his head, speak to him; he kicks and scrapes on the smooth stones, and finally regains his feet. When all is ready

again two or three men put their shoulders to the wheels, the horse pulls again with the nervous energy of a fine nature, and at last the key-wagon is drawn out of the blockade. At the first movement every horse awakes and waits. The drivers gather up the reins, and steady their teams. The horses arch their necks, cautiously plant their feet as if on ice, and crouch to the hard, steady pull. The army moves again all along the line; and the roar breaks out afresh. In the general uproar you distinguish the separate noises near by,—the chuckle of heavy wheels on the axle, the sharp click of horses' feet, the rattle of light carts, the tinkle of street-car bells. Humanity also roars; and you hear, besides the low tramp of feet on the pavement, the constant babble of voices,—the scream of the newsboy, the whistle, the whining speech of peddlers or beggars, the loud gruff shout, and the more melodious fragments of passing conversation. The scene is crammed with eager struggling men and horses, and the air is filled with the roar of their toil. But under this combat are also the softer strains of human joy and sorrow.

Twilight lent the docks the poetry of mystery and color. The sun, setting in a crimson sky, touched the bay, the shipping and the brick house-tops with a ruddy light. The scene was almost Oriental in richness. Then as the shadows of night fell the lights of the city made another view. The piers were still more obscure, the shipping was more gloomy with massive black hulls and overhanging rigging, and the water shone with the blackness of night. The houses were lighted here and there, but scarcely offered any cheer. A few straggling teams passed with their last loads. After that the occasional rumble of cars, and the tinkling of bells were the only sounds along the street. Here and there a ferry-boat whistled, and then the splashing of her wheels sounded from the slip, but soon died away over the waves. Now and then a suspicious figure skulked along the docks; a watchman yawned on his monotonous beat; sounds of gruff life issued from a groggery, and fainter echoes from the heart of the town floated down a street. But out on the piers the silence of night reigned above the eddying tide and enveloped the city for a short repose.

THE VOYAGER.

I.

FRIEND, why goest thou forth
When the wind blows from the north,
And the ice-hills crush together?"

"The work that me doth call
Heeds not the ice-hill's fall,
Nor wind, nor weather."

II.

"But, friend, the night is black,
Behold the driving wrack
And wild seas under!"

"My straight and narrow bark
Fears not the threat'ning dark,
Nor storm, nor thunder."

III.

"But oh, thy children dear!
Thy wife—she is not here—
Let me go bring her!"

"No—no—it is too late!
Hush—hush! I may not wait,
Nor weep, nor linger."

IV.

"Hark! Who is it that knocks
With slow and dreadful shocks,
The very walls to sever?"

"It is my master's call.
I go, whate'er befall;
Farewell forever."
