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The "Lost" Newspaper Writings of Stephen Crane

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The "Lost" Newspaper Writings of Stephen Crane

BY THOMAS A. GULLASON *

Despite periodic bursts of activity in Stephen Crane scholarship over these several decades, much remains to be done. The late Melvin H. Schoberlin’s unpublished biography, “Flagon of Despair”, now in the possession of the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University, provides new information and valuable resource material that should help to stimulate another burst of scholarly activity. It should also lead to a clearer understanding of certain phases of Crane’s personal history and literary life.

Since Schoberlin was preparing his biography for publication in the late 1940s–early 1950s, some of his “new” material is now dated in the 1980s, due to the independent findings of others. In some ways, moreover, he repeats flaws similar to those of Thomas Beer, who wrote the first full-length biography, Stephen Crane: A Study in American Letters (1923). Schoberlin tends to be cryptic, and is so enamored of Crane’s impressionism that he imitates his style, making his biography a little too “creative”.

Schoberlin is unlike Thomas Beer in other ways. Presumably Beer had hired a detective agency to aid him in his research. The results were often disastrous, because important and obvious areas were left virtually untouched. In contrast, Schoberlin took a commonsense approach. He was an effective one-man detective agency, interviewing or corresponding with many people who knew Crane personally and collecting widely scattered materials. His practical-mindedness was evident in the way he systematically researched the files of the many newspapers with which Stephen Crane was associated. For the Philadelphia Press, Schoberlin went back to the files of the 1880s. For

* I wish to dedicate this essay to Dr. Walter E. Sutton, Emeritus Professor of English at Syracuse University and a distinguished critic of American literature.
the Newark Daily Advertiser, the New York Press, Tribune, Herald, World, and other newspapers he exhausted their files of the 1890s. Schoberlin also seems to have had access to the papers of Edith F. Crane (one of Stephen Crane's nieces), which must have been of inestimable value to him.

This long and involved research activity on Schoberlin's part brought results in an area—Crane's newspaper life—that has presumably been scrutinized in full by many others before and after Schoberlin. In his biography, Schoberlin describes and discusses still-unknown journalistic pieces by Crane. These reports or feature articles—some are unmistakably his, others remain conjectural—are important for several reasons. They help to pinpoint Crane's movements, and therefore are useful as basic biographical tools. They reveal early examples of Crane's style and subject. One item is of historical interest: Crane's first known published work, "Asbury's [Park] New Move" (Philadelphia Press, 12 July 1887). Elsewhere in his biography, however, Schoberlin makes reference to an earlier 'lost' piece: "The Summer Tramp" (The Daily Spray [Asbury Park], 20 June 1887). Schoberlin's most interesting newspaper discovery is "Where 'De Gang' Hears the Band Play" (New York Herald, 5 July 1891). In this feature article, Crane is on location in New York's Bowery, revising and rethinking his earlier sketch of Maggie that he had completed while a student at Syracuse University in the spring of 1891.

Even those pieces that are conjectural are of interest because they reflect the social consciousness of the New York City newspapers (the New York Herald reportedly printed at least one slum story a week in the early 1890s), along with other city issues that found their way into Crane's bona fide fiction. Moreover, because Crane was "fired" or "relieved" by three or four newspapers, including the New York Tribune, the New York Herald, and the Newark Daily Advertiser, one becomes more fully aware of his desperate financial straits as well as his frustration and depression as a newspaperman. Crane's inability or reluctance to compose straight newspaper copy had both positive and negative results; the most positive was that the demands of conventional journalism made him more deeply committed to his evolving and unconventional style and vision.

As Crane's first published work, "Asbury's New Move" deserves special attention. (It is reprinted in full beginning on page 68.) It proves that Crane was an 'infant precocious', for he was fifteen at
the time. Though Schoberlin presents no specific proofs, he is convinced that “the internal evidence points to the fact that it was written by Crane. . . .” The intrinsic bits of evidence are numerous. Crane’s penchant for brief sentences and dramatic statements (“It was Superintendent Snedeker’s mild but firm voice, and a beach entertainment was rudely broken up with a cloud of blushes and abashed looks”); his ability to distill diverse material—people, place, event—to get to the essence of things; his wit and cleverness; his ear for special colloquialisms (“nilly-noddles”); his sharp ironic contrasts (“They were partly protected from the sun’s rays by a very loud-striped parasol, but shielded from the gaze of the beach throng by nothing”)—all are on display. One thing surprises, even for the fifteen-year-old Crane. He is no arch rebel; in fact, he seems respectful toward traditional values. Only a few years later, he would have made a sardonic portrait of the law-and-order Superintendent Snedeker. And the last line of the sketch is without irony: “The young people say he is hardhearted, but he will go ahead with his project all the same and receive the plaudits of sensible folks everywhere”. At least young Crane is aware of changing values. The “modern” scene intrigues him. He is educating himself to the everyday world, as a student of careful observation and reflection. Already he has the seed idea for his future Asbury Park love story, “The Pace of Youth” (17–18 January 1895).

Schoberlin briefly mentions an earlier and unavailable piece, “The Summer Tramp”. This is probably the first version of a story variously titled “An American Tramp’s Excursion”, “An Excursion Ticket”, and “Billy Atkins Went to Omaha” (New York Press, 20 May 1894). At eastern seaside resorts like Asbury Park and Ocean Grove, young Crane was confronting and developing a fascination with other locales—the American West—with other classes of people—the tramp, the outcast—and with colloquial speech.

Stephen Crane’s first full-time employment as a newspaperman took place following his one semester at Syracuse University. By July 1891, he was employed by the New York Herald. Unfortunately, his position with the newspaper was shortlived; he was fired in February 1892. The last Herald piece that Schoberlin attributes to Crane appeared on 25 October 1891. Schoberlin claims that the Sunday editor had advised Crane to tone down his literary high jinks and to be more journalistic.
The four lost pieces Schoberlin identifies as Crane's work are: “Where 'De Gang' Hears the Band Play” (5 July 1891), “Tent Life at Ocean Grove” (19 July 1891), “In Casey Welch's Hole in the Wall” (4 October 1891), and “Who Has Not Been on 'Hurry Alley'?” (25 October 1891). Unmistakably by Crane, “Where 'De Gang' Hears the Band Play” is probably the most important literary resource in Schoberlin's entire biography and the one that should attract the most attention of American literature scholars. (It is reprinted in full beginning on page 69.)

“Where 'De Gang' Hears the Band Play” seems to be a later version of the Syracuse Maggie. This Herald version would be revised several times and for several reasons. Crane's presentation of the dialect speech of the Bowery is still awkward, for he shifts from formal English to slang in the same sentence (“Say, Jimmy, I'm going to the band play to-night an' I want de watch”). He has not yet settled on his portrait of Maggie; in the sketch, she is a female “tough”, and not the idealized and innocent girl. Crane already has a clearer and deeper perception of Jimmy's character. The local color of the Bowery world is presented, but the larger social environment beyond the Bowery has not yet been sketched.

But the imprint of the 1893 Maggie is here. First, there are the characters—Maggie, Jimmy, and Fred. Pete is implied when Jimmy threatens Maggie with: “An', say, if I catch you doin' the walk to-night with that dude mash I'll spoil his face, see?” Then there is the Bowery speech that fascinated Crane: “Rats”; “Have you soaked [pawned] that watch?”; “I'll fan ye”. The big and stuffy tenements, the babies, the street gang, the nationalities of the Bowery, the music (the playing of “The Star Spangled Banner”), the beer drinking, the policeman, the factory (Maggie's place of employment)—all are essential ingredients of Crane's developing narrative. Some of the material in the feature article would be distilled further, revised, or dropped altogether. And Crane's unconventional style and vision would be expanded, to include more of the following: “They danced shadow dances on the grass plats where the hissing electric lights cast fantastic figures for them”.

Two other pieces by Crane in the Herald also reflect the world of the 1893 Maggie, but they are far more reportorial and less unorthodox in style and manner; therefore they remain conjectural pieces. “In Casey Welch's Hole in the Wall” describes a “dive”, one of the
halls that Pete and Maggie visit in the 1893 novel. Drink, thievery, “the female decoys of the badger game”, and the “young lady frequenters of the place”—these suggest the atmosphere, the tempo and color of the lower depths of the Bowery that Crane researched for his forthcoming novel. In a few places, one catches hints of Crane’s ironic and dramatic style: “. . . your true dive keeper realizes that there must be occasional bursts of virtue on the part of the authorities for theatrical if for no more moral purpose”; “a background of hilarious vice”; “a human tigress”. “Who Has Not Been on ‘Hurry Alley’?” presents images of the dime museum, the Grand Central Station, and the cab horses, reflecting other environments of the 1893 Maggie.

Schoberlin identifies one more piece in the Herald as Crane’s: the feature article, “Tent Life at Ocean Grove”. The very next year, 1892, Crane would write a number of pieces on the summer crowds at Asbury Park and Ocean Grove for the New York Tribune. It was his notorious article, “Parades and Entertainments” (21 August 1892), describing the parade of the Junior Order of United American Me-
chanics, that ended his newspaper career with the Tribune, as well as his brother's, Jonathan Townley (though he was presumably rehired later).

Although Crane's sharp-edged irony is not there in "Tent Life at Ocean Grove", his critical attacks are familiar. It surprises that he was not reprimanded for this article on the Grove, for it is as reckless as his Junior Order of United American Mechanics parade article. ("Tent Life at Ocean Grove" is reprinted in full beginning on page 73.) On display is his special kind of reporting. He is clever: "At Ocean Grove all the ordinary conditions of summer resort life are turned upside down and sociologically man walks on his head". He shows his keen eye for scene and detail: "To Ocean Grove you go to bake and be baked, to raise the echoes with fervid hymnal, to be governed in every affair of life by arbitrary and incomprehensible laws, to toil ankle deep in burning sands and to top all, being civilized beings and not nomads, to live in tents".

Crane proceeds to point out the hypocrisies at the Grove. He summarizes his attitude toward the regulations of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association: "To live here, people surrender all their natural rights and live under an absolute despotism". He is amused by the public display of puritanical people, their "careless" morals and manners. He questions the piety of the place, noting the contrast between modest signs and immodest bathing attire, and the rampant use of outlawed refreshments—liquor, beer, and tobacco.

But before he moved on to join the staff of the Newark Daily Advertiser and while he was still assisting his brother Jonathan Townley, young Crane may well have taken on other assignments. Schoberlin considers "Rumors Startle Asbury" (New York World, 8 July 1892) another one of Crane's reports. Off and on, Crane had written about Asbury Park's most famous celebrity, the town's founder and moral policeman, James A. Bradley. As Crane described life at the summer resort—its stifling morality, strict ordinances, and endless rumors—he was becoming more and more committed to social problems and the plight of the poor in New York City.

Several places in "Rumors Startle Asbury" hint at Crane's style of reporting. Here are some examples of his "journalistic" sentences: "He [Bradley] just pulled himself together with a determined grip upon his beloved beard and his straw hat, and said that if he stood in imminent danger of going to the poorhouse he might consider the
offer” [for his beachfront property]; “This was enough to put the second section of the rumor in a hole large enough for a fat man in bathing trunks to hide in when pursued by the beach policemen”. And as Crane describes Bradley's obsessive attacks on the “abominable music”, the “wheezy organs and organettes” at the entertainments and amusements of the Park, he is again alert to gross hypocrisy: the open gambling taking place, with the sporting men betting on the horses at Monmouth Park, under the “watchful” eye of the local Law and Order League.

The next significant body of unknown newspaper writings that Schoberlin uncovers deals with a period not long after Crane's discharge from the New York Tribune, sometime after September 1892. As Schoberlin has it, young Crane was advised by Edgar Snyder, who took over Jonathan Townley's position as news bureau chief for the Tribune at Asbury Park, to apply for a position with the Newark Daily Advertiser. Jonathan Townley himself had worked there as a cub reporter some years before.

Schoberlin identifies six pieces he is “reasonably sure” that Crane wrote for the Advertiser between 3 October and 2 November 1892. Here follows a listing of the articles that Schoberlin claims are by Crane: “Three Depraved Boys” (3 October 1892), “A Shipping Clerk's Thefts” (3 October 1892), “Dispute Over a 'Yaller Cur'” (5 October 1892), “Edwards Was Landed in the Gutter” (10 October 1892), “Three Curious Cranks” (15 October 1892), and “They Gave the Baby Beer” (2 November 1892).

In terms of style, it is difficult to prove that Crane wrote these pieces. The telltale and sustained signs are not that much in evidence—the irony, the unusual turn of phrase, the wit, the combativeness. Of course, following his disastrous failures as a subjective reporter for the Tribune, Crane may now have tried to be ruthlessly objective.

The subject matter of the Advertiser reports, however, do suggest the kinds of things that would filter into Crane's Maggie and other of his New York City sketches—the references to thievery, drunkenness, the juvenile toughs, the fights, the police court, the weeping and unfit mother, the abused child, the eccentric characters, and the slang of the streets (“We didn't git our loads [drinks] on there”).

In the end, Crane may have forced himself to be the conventional reporter for the Advertiser because he needed a job badly. He was too
prideful to depend on his older brothers for financial support, and both his parents were dead. Here follows the first of Crane's alleged orthodox news reports for the *Advertiser*, "Three Depraved Boys".

Three boys stood in front of Judge Preisel's desk at the third precinct station this morning. Three women sat in the front seats and listened eagerly to the proceedings. The boys were Herman Kaiser, age 14, James O'Keefe, age 16, and Frank Murray, age 17. The women were their mothers.

"You are charged with being drunk and disorderly on the corner of Clover and Jackson streets," said the Judge.

"We didn't git our loads on there," said the youngest. "We got 'em on Market street."

The Judge took a note of the name of the saloon-keeper who had sold liquor to the minors. The mothers looked shocked. After a pause Judge Preisel fined them each $2.50. The boys looked happy, and the mothers began to hunt for their pocket-books, but affairs took an unexpected turn. A neighbor of the boys, Mr. Robinson, came in and informed the Court that a lead pipe several feet in length on his premises had been sawed off and carried away.

After some little parley the boys confessed that they had taken the pipe, sold it to a junk dealer, and that the proceeds had formed the basis of their spree. Judge Preisel announced that as the crime was changed from drunkenness to larceny, they would have to furnish bail in the sum of $200 for appearance at the upper courts. The boys walked dejectedly back to their cells, and the mothers wept and went to tell their husbands.

In "A Shipping Clerk's Thefts" and "Dispute Over a 'Yaller Cur'", Crane's eye for dramatic openings is revealed. A hint of his stylistic manner is found in "Edwards Was Landed in the Gutter", when he mentions Edwards "spreading a sulphurous glow about the atmosphere. . . ." In "Three Curious Cranks", the eccentric Mary McCracken reminds one of Mary Johnson (the mother in *Maggie*), for she "takes such long and deep potations that her mind is unsettled, and she often falls in prolonged fits of innocuous desuetude". In "They Gave the Baby Beer", Crane's wit and his crusade against
alcoholism (involving children especially) are suggested when he reports: “In order to becalm his informant and get the rest of the story, the reporter was forced to admit that if he had a wife, a baby and a keg of beer he would endeavor not to get the baby and the beer mixed”.

On the occasion of Stephen Crane’s death, an anonymous obituary writer in the Advertiser (5 June 1900) noted that Crane had once worked for the paper, and referred to his problems as a journalist: “He had a faculty for writing descriptive sketches, but lacked the peculiar qualities necessary for a reporter. . . . He . . . was better suited to do imaginative work than the somewhat dryer general work of historian of a day. . . .”

The obituary writer failed to point out—nor have Crane’s critics, including Schoberlin—that young Crane was “fired” in other ways by his experience with the Advertiser. For his editor at the time was Noah Brooks (he served as editor from 1884 until August 1893), a distinguished journalist and author. Formerly, Brooks had assisted Bret Harte on the Overland Monthly and was later employed by the New York Tribune and the New York Times. During the Civil War, he was a war correspondent for the Sacramento Daily Union and visited military hospitals and the battlefronts. He developed a personal friendship with Abraham Lincoln. He was also a successful writer of children’s stories. Therefore, Brooks could have played some part in directing Crane’s future. For, eventually, Crane wrote stories of the American West (like Harte), he developed a flair for stories about children, and, most important, he wrote of the Civil War, making his international fame with The Red Badge of Courage.

The last body of newspaper reports that Schoberlin identifies as “probably” Crane’s he locates in the New York Press, where young Crane was a special reporter for a time and had published sketches like “An Experiment in Misery” (22 April 1894), “An Experiment in Luxury” (29 April 1894), “Mr. Binks’ Day Off” (8 July 1894), “Coney Island’s Failing Days” (14 October 1894), and others. Schoberlin attributes these following lost pieces to Crane: “Beggars and Crooks Herd Together” (6 May 1894), “Philosophic Tramps” (27 May 1894), “Coney’s Gay Refugees” (24 June 1894), and “Sham, Sham, Sham Killed Sadie Bell” (14 October 1894).

It is difficult to accept these lost pieces as Crane’s because they are too reportorial, too close, too detailed. His other writings for the
Poster for the Metropolitan Magazine of February 1901, which carried the story "The Man from Duluth".
Press, like "An Experiment in Misery", are clearly in Crane's highly individualized style. Yet these new pieces certainly reflect the kind of subject matter that would interest Crane. He reveled in "experiments", to experience new things firsthand. In "Beggars and Crooks Herd Together", a newspaper reporter penetrates a school for thieves in the Bowery and gains experience about the life of beggars, burglars, and pickpockets. He does everything but participate in a burglary. "Philosophic Tramps" reveals the kind of sensitivity and compassion that Crane had for tramps and outcasts; the report describes the mental agility of the tramps, who have a taste for philosophy, criticism, poetry, and fiction. "Coney's Gay Refugees" returns to the concert hall atmosphere of Maggie. All of these lost pieces, however, are too literal; the creative and swaggering style of the young Crane are missing.

Although Stephen Crane had many reservations about journalism (see his sardonic poem in War Is Kind, "A newspaper is a collection of half-injustices"), he never disassociated himself from it. Much remains unknown about the various phases of his newspaper career. For example, Schoberlin alludes very briefly to another lost Crane news report—concerning a race riot at Asbury Park—which his brother Jonathan Townley refused to publish.

Stephen Crane's limited successes and extended failures as a conventional reporter had some positive effects on his literary development. He did develop friendships, which opened up opportunities. His editor at the New York Press, Edward Marshall, recommended him to Irving Bacheller, whose syndicate published an abbreviated version of The Red Badge in the newspapers, bringing to Crane instant national attention. Crane's journalistic reports, like "Nebraska's Bitter Fight for Life" (24 February 1895) and "A Freight Car Incident" (12 April 1896), were necessary literary rehearsals for the sweep and grandeur of his great short story, "The Blue Hotel". Sensation-seeking newspapers made Crane appreciate the virtues of understatement and control more, leading to his major artistic creation, "The Open Boat".

To some of the literary historians, Stephen Crane is basically the literary journalist and not the creative artist. In this, his fortunes can be compared to Ernest Hemingway, who, on more than one occasion, tried to prove that he was far more than a practising journalist. In Men At War, he said: "A writer's job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his invention,
out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly; but when a good writer is creating something, he has time and scope to make it of an absolute truth."

Stephen Crane's goals were similar to Hemingway's. He told Edgar Snyder, in a lengthy quote that Schoberlin reprints, "It is no simple task . . . for the writer to get close to life", adding "... but then comes the harder one of putting life equally close to the reader, of writing what you know so clearly that the reader will see it exactly as you do, instead of seeing it through a glass or through a haze. I look upon my work as a constant effort to clear away the haze which separates from life the reader of a book written without strict attention to truth. . . . I feel that I succeed just in proportion as I clear away the mist."

Stephen Crane's newspaper training was important to his literary development and to his evolving ideas about life and art. The newspaper world provided him with the opportunity to observe and to experiment, to seek out the higher truths of fiction, beyond the bare facts of journalism.¹

I

ASBURY'S NEW MOVE.²

"I think you had better move."

It was Superintendent Snedeker's mild but firm voice, and a beach entertainment was rudely broken up with a cloud of blushes and abashed looks.

Nearly everybody on the beach near the bathing ground had been amused during the half hour preceding the superintendent's unwelcome

¹. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to many people who were very helpful during the preparation of this manuscript. First, a large thanks to my wife Betty, who transcribed the Schoberlin materials relevant to my research with great diligence and skill, and to my son Edward for his expert typing and editing. Special thanks to Mrs. Vicki Burnett, Head of the Interlibrary Loan Department at the University of Rhode Island, for collecting all those scarce microfilms. Also, my deep appreciation goes to the staff of the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University, especially Edward Lyon, and to Mark F. Weimer, Rare Book Librarian, and Mrs. Gwen G. Robinson, editor of the Courier, for inviting me to review the Schoberlin materials. Finally, I owe again much to Vice-President William R. Ferrante of the University of Rhode Island for continuing financial support so that I could carry on my research of the Schoberlin materials.

appearance by a pair of those tender seaside doves who have been so numerous at Asbury Park. They were partly protected from the sun’s rays by a very loud-striped parasol, but shielded from the gaze of the beach throng by nothing. There they sat, or rather reclined, upon the half-dry sand, and the whole world was but a myth to them. She gazed fondly down upon him. One of her hands lay by her side and he, a young creature with very fluffy side beards and nice hair that fell from beneath a little straw hat with a white band, covered it with sand and then tenderly brushed it off. They were very close together and no doubt thoroughly understood each other, for at each repetition of the covering and brushing process she would smile right merrily and look into his eyes, while he gazed up unutterable things to the face half hidden by a big white straw hat full of huge lilac ostrich tips.

The Superintendent’s voice was a rude awakening. “Take my advice,” he said, “and let these scenes be left for your home.”

If you have ever been here you’ll recognize that scene. It has been common for a good while at Asbury Park, and the beach has come to be quite famous as a big free entertainment ground, where great numbers may be amused any afternoon about sundown. Superintendent Snedeker has determined to break it up.

Really, though, the breaking up of these demonstrations of the nilly-noddles in loud costumes will be a wonderful relief. The Superintendent declares that he will do it. The young people say he is hardhearted, but he will go ahead with his project all the same and receive the plaudits of sensible folks everywhere.

II

WHERE “DE GANG” HEARS THE BAND PLAY.³

Hard featured is the “tough youth.” Hard mannered is the tough girl. She abounds on the east side. Down around Tompkins square she and her striped jersey are particularly prevalent. There are musicales in Tompkins square these hot summer nights—band concerts they are called—and great is the rejoicing thereabouts each season at the advent of the band.

This particular tough girl’s name was Maggie. Her intimates call her “Mag.” And Mag goes.

After supper last Wednesday in the apartments of her parents in a Stanton street tenement house Mag announced to her brother:

“Say, Jimmy, I’m going to the band play to-night an’ I want de watch.”

"Oh, you do, do you! Well, now, I'm just goin' out meself to-night an' I need de ticker mor'n I need a dollar. So you don't get it, see?"

"Don't be fresh, Jimmy, you know it's me own watch, an' you said you'd give it me back last week. Give it me now or you don't get it again."

"Again! Rats! I don't need to get it again. I got it now."

A cloud of suspicion settled in the narrow strip between Mag's bang and her eyebrows.

"Say, Jim, give it to me straight. Have you soaked that watch? If you have, I'll tell dad."

"Soakin' nothin'. You'r always thinking people are soakin' things. If the band loses the air to-night you'll think they've hocked it. An', say, if I catch you doin' the walk to-night with that dude mash I'll spoil his face, see? You'r getting too lifted, anyway, since ye got in de factory."

Mag resorted to the feminine reply of slamming the door, and ten minutes later was lounging down the street with both hands stuck in the pockets of her black jacket, a flat brimmed glazed hat on the back of her head and some pliable substance in her mouth which she assiduously chewed upon. "Mag" was out for a good time, not a bad time in the sense of viciousness, mind you, but simply to lounge around that dreary, house hemmed, overcrowded, electric lighted square and to listen to the brassy melodies of the band.

Hundreds of other girls were there in the same way, and yet Local Propriety did not think of holding up its hands, scarcely of washing them.

It was Leiboldt's band that furnished the attraction for the streams of infantile, young and middle aged humanity that poured into the square from the big tenements roundabout, meandered aimlessly along the paths and overflowed the benches. Babies with thin faces, that had breathed the air of stuffy little kitchens all their lives, were there to get a mouthful of what passed current for ozone.

The music was like a tonic to them. They danced shadow dances on the grass plats where the hissing electric lights cast fantastic figures for them.

"Them kids are havin' all the fun," observed Mag to her "ladifriend," who had met her.

"Did you hear the heat laid out Bella's baby 'safternoon? Umha, so Ed told me. Hard on Bella, ain't it? That's four she's lost, you know. She's takin' on awful, Ed says."

"Didn't she have no doctor?"

"Ayap, young fellow from de hospital. Didn't do no good. Let's go round the square and touch some of the gang for soda. I'm broke; you got any coin?"
“Nope, only a half, an’ I’m a savin’ up hard now.”
“What you goin’ to get?”
“One of them yachting waists, with a white cap. I think they real neat an’ stylish lookin’, don’t you?”
“Do fur your figger all right. I’m goin’ to have one of those long coat basques, with lace around the bottom of the skirt, made o’ that blue sa-teen I got. Going to get it made next week so I can have it for the excurs- ion. Goin’, ain’t you?”
“Was, but Jimmy ain’t in de ’sociation now; says they ain’t nathin’ but speelers in it, and when I told him I was goin’ swore he’d hock me shoes and give me away to the old man about Fred. Nice way to treat a sister, ain’t it, after me puttin’ up me wages fur him to rush the growler with ever since he lost his job. Jimmy’s getting awful tough and sometimes I feel real mortified about him. He don’t seem to care nathin’ about society nowadays. He’s left off keepin’ company with May too.”
“What’s he going to do anyway? Goin’ back to his trade in the fall when they open up?”
“I dunno. He talks a good deal about primaries and such things. Guess he’ll be a politician, if he don’t get some steady work this summer.”

It is eight o’clock and the music has begun. They are playing “The Star Spangled Banner,” and that melodious expression of a nation’s pride floats out over a queer and cosmopolitan audience. Hun and Hebrew, German and Gentile, Gaul and Celt, they all applaud it, though it is safe to say that at least one half the listeners don’t know what the air is.

It is music, however, and music of any kind is balm to the workworn souls of the teeming east side. Old men are there puffing stubby pipes and listening attentively.

Two grizzled sons of Erin, whose raiment bore plenteous marks of mother earth and mortar, were sitting solemnly together and discussing the quality of the music.
“To me moind this band do play the classical tunes pretty well, Tim,” said one, “but O’im thinking ye’ll agree wid me that fur rale music the Sixty-ninth regiment band do beat out anything there be in this country.”
“These min do play smooth, but they don’t hav’ the shnap to um. Oi’ll say they do play smooth.”
“Your right; they do play smooth.”
“Yis, they do.”
“They do.”
“Yis.”
“O’i do say they play smooth.”
“So they may, but O’i know —.”

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And the argument then grew heated.

Dark browed Italians slouched about in little groups chattering like magpies and then relapsing into sullen silence. Great admirers are they of Leader Leiboldt and his players. So, too, are the Italian women. Now and then you see one made picturesque by a gay colored native headdress or a bright hued gown. Queer colors there are in some of those costumes, shades that if introduced into a Broadway window would immediately be fashionable from very novelty.

But outnumbering all the rest are the Germans, the blue eyed, good natured Germans, who stand around and hum the airs to themselves.

And mingling with them all, giving a spice to every nationality, is the "tough girl" and her "tough brother."

They are of no nation.
They are just "eastsiders."

"Jimmy" gets there with the proceeds of his sister's pawned watch, and generously buys beer for "the gang." Everybody buys beer for that matter, it seems, not by the glassful; the financial resources of the east side could not stand such a pressure; but by the pailful. "Growler" is the only word known for it.

No matter what the size of the receptacle may be seven cents is the price. The hot nights have come and how the "growlers" are rushed!

The bearers hurry away in a stream, either to a convenient truck, there to lie down, gulp the beer and listen to the music, or to the roof of some neighboring tenement, where a little air comes stirring from the river, laden with suggestions of Hunter's Point. Highly flavored, but enjoyable nevertheless.

"Say, Jimmy, what was ye sayin' to me girl last?"
"Oh, I was just a stringin' her about you; just guff. She said you hadn't asked her to de picnic, and I told her ye had an important engagement with a cop and couldn't get away to see her."

"Ye just cut yer string; ye hear, young feller. I'll take care of me girl meself. See?"

"All right, but, just the same, you don't go to de picnic 'less ye giv' me de case fur de ticket first, see? I got stuck one already."

"Who did you?"
"Billy."

"What's he doin' now, anyway?"
"Nothin'. He's married."

"Come, now, you fellows, move on there. Move on, I tell you, or I'll fan ye." This from a policeman.

And they moved.
Only to stop on the next corner, join raspy voices with the band while it played “Annie Rooney” and loudly demand an encore.

The music programme, however, was a good one.

III

TENT LIFE AT OCEAN GROVE.4

If that ye be philosophical and it is meat and drink to you to see the strange things people do, come with me to Ocean Grove and have a feast.

At Ocean Grove all the ordinary conditions of summer resort life are turned upside down and sociologically man walks on his head. Elsewhere you go to the seaside for coolness, for comfort, for recreation and relaxation. To Ocean Grove you go to bake and be baked, to raise the echoes with fervid hymnal, to be governed in every affair of life by arbitrary and incomprehensible laws, to toil ankle deep in burning sands and to top all, being civilized beings and not nomads, to live in tents.

That is, you go there, as near as the uninitiated stranger can make out, to be elaborately, intricately and compositely uncomfortable.

Twenty-five or thirty thousand people do this every year and I believe most of them could just as well go where discomfort is not reduced to a science.

Ho, philosopher! come read me this riddle.

How is it that these people not only fret not at these things but like them and come again for them year after year?

Here is the big, populous town of cottages and tents without any especial attractions in the way of natural beauty, some of the cottages fairly pretty and inhabitable, and the tents things that should be the last resort of distressed humanity.

To live here people surrender all their natural rights and live under an absolute despotism.

Law regulates their goings out and comings in, law fixes what they shall buy and when they buy it, law determines when they may travel and when they may not.

Law, which is to say the regulations of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association, holds every resident in an iron grasp.

And then, how about those tents? Ah! here is where the melancholy Jacques will flout, indeed. Come, let us consider those tents.

I suppose six thousand or seven thousand people in Ocean Grove live in tents.

After this fashion.
The Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association, which owns everything
and everybody in Ocean Grove, builds along one of the sandy roads called
avenues a row of rude shanties, eight by ten feet, roughly clapboarded and
roofed and open in front.
Before this they put down a board platform, about 12 by 14 feet, and
raised a foot from the ground.
Then they rent you this luxurious outfit with a wall tent.
The sides of the tent just fit the raised platform. Poles driven into the
ground outside hold the tent up. From these poles you stretch a broad
sheet of canvas over the tent as an extra roof. That keeps the sun from
beating clean through upon you on a hot day and serves to shut out a part
of the moisture when it rains. In front of your palace you now rig out a
striped awning as a porch and inside you put up sheets of canvas for parti-
tions and the thing is done.
There is a hole two feet square on each side for a window, and a roll of
canvas, operated by an ingenious contrivance of strings, is window sash,
blind and shutter combined. For a front door you pull the flats of the tent
together and tie them with a shoe string or a bit of twine. If you are reck-
less and do not care for expense you can have another roll of canvas to let
down for a door, and if you are a bloated aristocrat determined to shine
above your neighbors at whatever cost, you get a tent with a blue and
white fringe around the corners and belong to Ocean Grove's Four
Hundred.
Only these things cost from $1.50 to $3 a month more.
You dignify the shanty behind by the name of kitchen because every-
body else does and generally you eat as well as cook in it. The tent is bed
chamber, sitting room and parlor. The platform becomes the floor of the
whole.
There are hundreds of such structures in Ocean Grove as much alike as
two oysters.
Living in them possesses the interest of novelty certainly—to all except
cowboys and red Indians.
I think, too, there are some features about it that are not likely to pass
out of your notice, even after the novelty has worn off.
Canvas, considered in the light of building material, is not calculated to
arouse the enthusiastic admiration of him who has practised the times of
waking and sleeping customary in a Christian land.
It is too thin.
Along about four A.M. on these bright summer days the blessed morn-
ing light begins to pour in a flood through the walls and ceiling of your
chamber. Then wakes the busy fly, ever present in large and tuneful numbers, and begins to operate upon your slumbering person.

After that, farewell, balmy sleep.

You have now two courses of action before you. You may either pull the sheet over your head and lie awake and suffocating till a civilized hour of arising, or you may get up and view the beauties of nature and Ocean Grove by the rising sun's young beams. Take the advice of one made wise by experience and get up.

I have tried both.

True enough, in either case you will feel sleepy and miserable all the rest of the day, but as you cannot sleep until darkness puts the merry fly to rest you will likely practice that early to bed going so highly recommended by physicians.

If you should conclude to lie in bed and be miserable, however, you will before breakfast is ready be regaled with the doings of all your neighbors within a stone's throw.

The tents being about as close together as they can be and like gauze for stopping sound the morning conversation of the inmates of one is perfectly audible in the next three or four. Consequently you are likely to know all that the people in your vicinity did yesterday and all that they intend to do to-day, mixed with a great deal of information of a purely personal nature.

I wish I could reproduce the clishmaclaver I heard the morning I stayed abed and fought flies, but type won't show inflections.

First arose two voices in the next tent—voices of women and young at that. After awhile I judged they were putting on bathing dresses to take a morning dip in the surf. Presently a loud demand for a needle and thread.

Second voice—What, for goodness' sake, do you want of a needle and thread?

First voice—To sew on my stockings with.

(Derisive howl.) Then second voice—What do you want to sew your stockings on for?

First Voice—I don't care. My stocking came down when I was bathing yesterday, and right before all those people, and I never was so ashamed in my life.

Second Voice (after a pause and some indignant snorts)—Well, for the land's sake, Mamie! and you walk half a mile through the streets every day dressed like a circus woman and never mind it.

Mamie (indignantly)—I don't either. (Then illogically) Besides, that's different.
I knew now all about them. They were girls from the interior of Jersey, fresher than the winds of March. "Land's sake" settled that.

Fragments of a domestic battle on the other side came mixed with this idyll of the bathing suit. There was a man's voice and a woman's voice pitched in angry parle.

"Say, Jen," roared the big bassoon, "where have you hid my clean undershirt? Why don't you put things where a man can find them?"

A voice that was mingled with the clatter of kitchen dishes said thinly:

"It's in the canvas keester, you big goose. Don't you want me to come and put it on for you?"

Sounds of grunting followed and the tearing of cloth and then some expressions that would have torn the souls of the Camp Meeting Association people if they could have heard. Finally the bassoon broke out again:

"There ain't a button left on the whole dod gasted shirt. Where in the Halifax is that girl? Oh, suffering Moses, if I had only packed that trunk myself! If I ever go away again with a trunk that a woman has packed I hope I may die. And I ain't got a pair of socks to my name!"

There was the sound of a snifflle or two, and then the thin voice said—

"Give me the shirt and I'll fix it for you; but what's the use o' bein' so rabid?" And then the sounds of conflict slowly died away.

No need to speculate much about these people. They are from somewhere out West—Indiana likely. "Keester," I think is a Hoosier word.

People are getting up in the other tents now. Across the narrow way where I have seen that sour faced woman with the tenpenny nail voice somebody is saying:

"Ten cents a pound for bluefish! That is too much."

"Did you ever see such a lot of softies as there were down at the board walk last night," breaks in another female voice. "Two of them followed us all the way home and didn't dare to say a word."

"Ma, where's my shoes?" shrieks a childish treble.

"John! Johnny! Come now, an' wake up an' get that wood in for me or I'll tell your father."

"We had a lovely time last night. Charlie, that one with the blond mustache, took us clear to Asbury Park, and we had three plates of ice cream apiece."

And so on for two hours or more.

I could tell what most of the families about were going to have for breakfast by dickerings that were going on with hucksters, as well as by the variegated odors that arose from a dozen kitchens.

Principally fish.
The children kept up a cheerful clatter, and that was the best part of
the music. Eager demands for certain articles of their attire was the burden
of their song for though the room in the tents is so scant I judged stock-
ings and petticoats must get lost in them mighty easily. "Ma, where's my
shoes?" Well, I'd rather hear that than the long discussions about toilets
that arose from other quarters.

They say the confirmed tent dwellers don't mind these things. I should
think it very likely. Tent dwelling ought to have a tendency to blunt the
sensibilities for a fact.

It is living in the public gaze with a vengeance.
At night, for instance.

Strangely enough the Camp Meeting Association, which is so prodigal
of rules, has not yet made a rule that all persons who live in tents shall go
to bed in the dark. I cannot understand the oversight, but I have viewed
the results. They are striking—at times overwhelming.

In my homeward walks at night I have seen shadow pictures of most of
the families in my neighborhood in the act of going to bed. They stand
out in front of a lamp and make themselves like Adam in his innocence
with an indifference to the public that beats anything I ever heard of. The
female form divine can be observed in silhouette every night at Ocean
Grove, and in every style and degree of drapery. Old sinners do not miss
the comic opera chorus as much as you might think—so they say. They
can sit out on the awning porches of their tents and view the prospect
'round, and that beats any ballet in creation.

I don't know how that is, but I know that every movement of a person
inside one of those tents is clearly pictured to an outsider, for I have seen
that myself.

In one tent I passed last night a mother was hearing her little child say
its prayers. They sat on the bed, the little one kneeling in its night slip,
with its hands up in front of it and its head down, and the outlines of the
two figures were as plainly stamped on the canvas as if painted there in
black and white.

I stopped and looked at that sweet and singular picture, and while I
looked a man came and hung his vest on the side of the tent wall. The
shadow was so clear I could see he was in shirt and trousers and had taken
one suspender off. A watch chain hung from the vest pocket and dangled
there in full sight. I suppose it hung like that all night.

You would think, then, that Ocean Grove would be the paradise of
thieves.

All they would have to do is to watch the shadow pictures and see what
a family did with its things. Then when the lights were out cut a hole in
the canvas and get what they wanted.
Pretty easy burglary where the only tool required is a sharp knife. What would hinder a clever thief from cutting into a dozen tents in one night and carrying off a dozen vests and watches hung against the canvas wall?

Yet, strange to say, there are no thieves and no burglaries. People sleep in their frail houses in absolute security. With a piece of canvas for a front door they are safer than they are in a city with double locked iron and brass. So I am solemnly assured. Yet I don’t know why. I have seen two policemen since I came here. One was a withered old gentleman with a lath for a club who threatened to have me fined $10 for bringing a camera upon the beach, and the other was a merry person who was guying the boys and girls around the Post Office. The streets are not patrolled and except on Sunday Ocean Grove is open to the world. I don’t understand it.

Some people say that tent dwelling is injurious to morals and manners alike. Living like a lot of people in the same room begets, they say, a contempt for the conventionalities of life that they are pleased to regard as moral safeguards. It is a sort of moral toboggan slide, like De Quincey’s downward path of crime. You begin with disrobing before the public gaze, and pretty soon you are ready to eat pie with your knife, and some day you will wipe your face with your napkin.

To the tent, therefore, in the pride of their philosophical strength, these people ascribe whatever of scandals and loose morals there may be at Ocean Grove, and defy you to disprove it.

There may be something in that. Thus:—

Ocean Grove is the only resort where people live in tents; Ocean Grove is the only resort where you can get on intimate terms with respectable young women without the formality of an introduction. Therefore tents and a lax social condition go together.

At which nobody who has tried tent life will wonder.

Then some folks say that tent dwelling is destructive to the finer sense of delicacy in manners. It is like a perpetual picnic. You get so you don’t care whether the dishes are clean or whether the sociable ladybugs and black ants attend you at your meals, or whether you wear a coat or whether your back hair is done up or trails a flag of distress in the breeze.

Possibly. But I know this—that when all the indictments against the tents are in one thing must be said in their favor. They offer—some of them—the most wonderful illustrations of the ingenuity and artistic sense of the female mind I have ever seen.

In the first place, it is past belief how pretty some of the tents have been made, and all at a trifling cost, I should say. Some of these deft fingered women who know how to do these things take some scarfs, some panels, a screen or two, a lace curtain, a lamp and a few Chinese lan-
terns, and, lo! they have made the bare canvas walls aglow with pretty tints. I have in mind now a tent where the outside is a blooming flower garden and the awning porch gay with hanging things—flower pots I think they are. The entrance is draped with lace, and inside you get a glimpse of decorative work as clever in its way as anything you will see in the average well-to-do citizen's home.

How do they do it?

Then there is another marvel. How do the women manage to get so much room in their tents? They will partition and cross-partition a space that, to begin with, isn't big enough to swing a cat in, and yet each division will somehow look about as big as the whole tent looked when they began. They will have a nice little room in front for a parlor and put the cottage organ in it—I must tell you here that no tent in Ocean Grove is complete without a cottage organ—then they will rig off a room back of that where they keep the sewing machine, and that is clearly the sitting room. Behind that they will have bedrooms for themselves, their children and their guests from town. To crown all, the sly foxes, they will so arrange the draperies and entrances in the apartments that when you look in you think you are looking down a vista of a hundred feet or so, and, behold! when you size it by the outside it is only a couple of paces.

At one tent I know of they have carried this sort of witchery so far that they are able to take boarders. I expect to hear of their turning one of the things into a hotel some of these days.

But to come back to tent life.

Most of the tents are clustered close around the auditorium, where the inmates can sit at home if they like and join in the services that go on daily under the big roof. I suppose that is so they shall lose no droppings from the sanctuary. The women can be doing their housework and still hear the precious words uttered by the stentorian voice of Dr. Stack. They can join in the hymns, too. It is rather a curious thing to stroll around the auditorium when there is singing going on and hear the chorus that is raised in the tents. Lest there should be any interruption to these pious delights vehicles of all kinds are excluded from the streets where the tents are. That's a fact. Hucksters and grocers have to deliver their goods in push carts in that part of the town, and woe to the unlucky wight who drives a wagon in there. I think he would be torn limb from limb.

And that reminds me I spoke a little while ago of the old sinner. Well, there is precious few of the old sinner in these parts.

No, indeed. On the contrary Ocean Grove is redolent with the very odor of sanctity. I say this not flippantly—a week in Ocean Grove is not conducive to flippancy—but as a fact. Piety, sincere no doubt, but rather oppressive, holds the whole place.
All day the air resounds with the wheezy organ, that doleful instrument of praise, giving forth Sunday school melodies and revival tunes. Early in the morning the concert begins; late at night I hear the farewell strains of “I Need Thee Every Hour.”

You must bear in mind that Ocean Grove is the greatest camp meeting in the world. Holding religious meetings is the regular business of the place; people come here come [sic] for just that purpose. Of course they have that privilege free from carping criticism. Only it does seem odd to the worldly observer to work at the humdrum of trade and household duties nine months in the year and put in the other three in this kind of relaxation.

However, here, methinks, philosophy is getting beyond its depths. Stand by to go about, as John Silver says.

The typical folks of Ocean Grove are solemn faced—there’s no denying that; but they have their amusements. When the cottage organ is given a much needed rest they go down to the beach, and either go in bathing themselves, if they are young, or stand on the shore and watch the others.

Some odd things about bathing as she is bathed in Ocean Grove.

There are no bath houses. The people put on their bathing clothes in their tents and walk down to the water. The laws of health and custom elsewhere being defied, afternoon is the fashionable time for bathing. So along about two o’clock you will see the procession headed for the beach. It is not an entrancing sight. A succession of forms closely wrapped in ragged old cloaks and worn-out gossamers, with here and there a girl who defies observation and walks through the streets with an ample display of black hosiery. When they get to the beach those who are robed dump their drapery on the sands and plunge in. There is a sign down there which reads thus:—

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MODESTY IN APPAREL

Is as Becoming to a Lady in a

BATHING SUIT

As it is when she is dressed in

SILKS AND SATINS.

“A word to the wise is sufficient.”
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After reading that it gives you a shock to notice that there is rather a freer exhibition of limbs at the Ocean Grove beach than at any other place along the Jersey coast.

Most of the people here come from the interior, and clearly sea bathing is a novel experience for them. A Methodist minister from the wilds of Iowa taking his first dip in the surf is a strange, weird and impressive spectacle.

You can recognize him always by his extreme embarrassment and his obvious efforts to appear at ease. He comes down to the beach with an old overcoat buttoned tightly around him and a big straw hat to keep the sun off his face. He gets as close to the water as he can, and stands there screwing up his courage. When he gets it to the now or never stage he suddenly flings off his overcoat and stands revealed in the glories of a brand new bathing suit. You can tell at a glance it was made by his wife from a design in a pattern book, it is so large, so flapping and so new. He stands there and looks doubtfully at the tumbling waves. His thoughts are like an open book. He's afraid to go into the water, and yet he knows he must. He's aware that he looks a tremendous guy, and still he doesn't dare either to plunge in like the rest or turn tail and run away. He is thinking now what his congregation would say if they could see him in that outlandish rig. He thinks he will wade out and hide himself, and he thinks he won't. Meantime he fingers his side whiskers foolishly and appears to be studiously examining the coast steamer going by, a false and hollow pretence that deceives nobody.

At last he thinks he really must do something, and he advances his thin legs, holding tenaciously to the life ropes meantime till he gets one foot where a wave washes over it. The water is cold and he gives a little gasp and wishes he were home. Then he stands miserably while the Philistines on the pier make jests about him, and he knows it, until by and by there comes a bigger roller. A lot of shrieking, happy children are tumbled in on it, and fetching up against the dominie in a heap bowl him over. Down he flounders into the swirling brine, and at last he is wet from top to toe.

The Philistines cheer, and the dominie, thus encouraged, ventures out to his knees and takes his first sea bath.

Then he goes home about ten minutes later dripping, miserable and guyed, his teeth chattering, his improvised bath robe clinging about his long legs, and his wet feet making the tracks of tertiary birds along the sidewalk. I don't think he is happy.

Bathing at Ocean Grove is rather demure sport. The Methodist maidens stand in a line holding to the life rope and waiting for the wave. When it comes they send up in chorus a modest giggle. A wilder hilarity would, I
suppose, be frowned upon by the Camp Meeting Association. Anyway there is none of the romping, joyous merrymaking you see in the surf elsewhere. Digging in the sand between dips is allowable, however. So is sitting on the beach and making eyes at strangers.

At least it is practised.

There is little of the stiff conventionalities. If you see a pretty Methodist girl making a sand castle with a wooden spade and she looks at you out of the corner of her demure eye you needn't fear to go up and speak to her without any formality. She rather expects it. If you will keep at a respectful distance and talk at first about the meetings and discuss reverently the speakers she will let you walk home with her when the strange procession of dripping naiads starts up the street.

Then I suppose she will tell her watchful "ma"—there are few mothers or mammas here, "ma" is the accepted word—that you are a visiting theological student from Oshkosh, and if you have made a good impression she will be looking for you down at the board walk to-night. According to common report it is not necessary to sustain any interest in the meetings and the speakers after the first few minutes of getting acquainted on the beach. Girls are girls, even at Ocean Grove. I suppose the opening conversation about the meetings is a sop to their consciences. After which they plunge in and flirt desperately.

The bathing suit at Ocean Grove is always a deep, dark, serious blue, without ornamentation of any kind. I suppose if a woman were to come out on the beach here in one of the gorgeous costumes we see at Manhattan Beach and West End there would be a riot. The lynx eyed policeman who watches for cameras would have her in the lockup in a jiffy. Still, by my fay, I have yet to see at any of the other resorts a gorgeous suit that exhibits more than some of the sober ones. "Modesty of apparel," & c.

What make you of that, philosopher?

Still, whatever display there is at Ocean Grove is to a great extent unconscious, and that is a great thing.

Hours at which you may and may not bathe at Ocean Grove are regulated by two flags flying at the beach. When the flags are up you are all right; when the flags come down out you must go, willy nilly. The operation of the flags is left to the caprices of two stalwart youths, who sit on the edge of a lifeboat all day, as a concession to the unconquerable fears of people from the interior, who think that the sea is coming to devour them every time it rolls a breaker in.

The young men pull the flags down when they get tired of sitting in the boat and want to go home. Then the Methodist naiads come sedately out of the surf, wring out their soaked back hair, pick up their ancient cloaks
and disabled gossamers and waddle home dripping. Some of them live so far off that they are dry when they get there.

Bathing is not all the amusement you are allowed in Ocean Grove; oh dear no.

After you have bathed you can put on your Sunday clothes and go down to the Post Office.

Now there is more fun in that than appears in the name of it, for all the young people in town will be there, each in his or her best attire, looking bright and spick span and ready for a quiet lark. The girls go down to get the family mails and the boys go down to walk home with the girls. The girls go into the office while the boys wait outside and there is a great pairing off when the pretty letter carriers come out. There is life and color and bustle about Ocean Grove then. The women look at their best instead of at their worst, and I withdraw any ungracious remarks I was tempted to make about their appearance at the shore.

Youth and spirits cannot be kept down, all the rules of all the camp meeting associations in the world to the contrary notwithstanding. There is more of mirth and flirtation and lovemaking in the hour or so of going to the Post Office than the elders dream of, I warrant. Then Ocean Grove begins to seem like other places.

Most of the people who come here have families, and they choose Ocean Grove and stick to it because they think the religious influences of the place and the strict regulations will save their children from the temptations of the average resort. They have no clear idea of what these temptations are, but they are convinced that they are something terrible. Hence the Grove, where there are no balls, no dancing, no theatres and few transient guests, has particular attractions for anxious parents.

I hope their expectations are realized, but I have my doubts.

Acquaintances are too easily made and there is too much flirtation and moonlight strolling going on to make me believe that everything is as it should be.

The ease with which you may get on terms of acquaintance with people rather takes your breath away. The first evening I was here I strolled out with a friend who is spending the summer down here. As we walked down the street we passed a perfectly charming girl in a beach wagon—a round faced, black haired, olive complexioned girl, for a wonder dressed in exquisite taste. We looked at her admiringly I suppose—no one could help it—and she bowed and smiled and threw up the tips of her fingers. Off came our hats.

“Who’s that?” I asked, breathlessly.

“I don’t know,” said my friend. “Never saw her before.”
I was a little bit dashed.

We passed a tent with a striped awning porch, under which sat two young women making a pretence of reading. They looked up and smiled and bowed, and one of them rejoined to our lifted hats with a "good evening."

"Who are they?" I asked.

"I don't know," said my friend. "Never saw them before."

By and by it began to dawn upon me that the rule in Ocean Grove is to speak to everybody you want to.

This same friend told me that if we had stopped and talked to either the girl in the beach wagon or the girls on the porch, it would have been regarded as nothing out of the way—if the girls had been favorably impressed, that is.

After you have been to the post office you may have "supper," for in Ocean Grove you eat "dinner" at noon and "supper" at six o'clock, the chief difference being that at "dinner" you get rather the more fish, and after "supper" you may take in the great amusement, the crowning joy of all the day, the board walk.

All the young people and most of the old ones go to the board walk.

At the board walk you may promenade up and down in the damp air and look at the white surf and the people.

There is no other entertainment, but it is not so bad even at that as it might be.

If social conventionalities are relaxed on the beach they are thrown away on the board walk. What you want to do is select your girl, brace up to her, stroll down the board walk to Asbury Park and buy her some ice cream. She will reward you with as fine a lot of innocent prattle about her native town as you ever heard in your life. You can sit down here and there on benches out by a special act of beneficent kindness just wide enough for two and put in corners where the electric light casts a shadow, and if you can't make love there you can't anywhere. There are many worse things in this world than to sit there with the sea breaking in front of you and a charming Western Methodist girl beside you pouring out a mixture of the fun that has been bottled up in her all day and the piety she knows she is morally bound to talk.

It is a great lark to her.

I suppose the relief from the somewhat sombre coloring of things around her at the Grove must be immense. It is light hearted animal spirits breaking out of too narrow bounds—that's all. She will talk like that to a different young man every night and ordinarily think nothing of it.

Only to the worldly experienced it does seem a good deal like playing with fire, and Ocean Grove has its sad stories just like other places, and
proportionately just as many. Ah! Jacques, Jacques, the rules of camp
meeting associations don't change human nature, do they? The human
spider spins here as in the congregations of sinners, and the poor human
fly is caught and lost and thrown away just as out in the world.

At nine o'clock the crowds on the board walk begin to diminish; people
who were roused out of bed at four o'clock by the busy fly are getting
sleepy. The old heads disappear first; by and by the young folks wander
away; at ten o'clock the walk is almost deserted except for a few couples,
of which the girls are risking maternal denunciation by staying out after
the appointed hour. Gradually even these saunter off. The startling silhou-
ettes appear and disappear on the tent walls and the cottage organ sends
out its last wails. Before eleven o'clock Ocean Grove is like a graveyard.
There is absolutely no noise except the wind in the trees, the waves on
the shore and an occasional snore in the tents.

Such is one day with a tent dweller in Ocean Grove.

The others are like unto it, except that you may slightly vary the round
of gayety.

In the morning at nine o'clock you may attend the prayer meeting in
the tabernacle, or later in the day you can see Dr. Stokes in the Audito-
rium leading the music with both arms, a spectacle worth going far to wit-
tness. You can visit the model of Jerusalem and hear a native Egyptian,
warranted to be genuine and without deception, lecture about the ancient
city. You can drink water from the Bethesda well. You can wander up and
down the tent streets and see how near one tent is like another. You can
refresh yourself by noting the odd combination of Biblical and modern
names the streets bear—Pisgah way, Mount Tabor street, Mount Hebron
avenue, Smith lane, Ballard avenue, Abbott street, and so on. You can
attend the various meetings and talk with many distinguished visitors from
other States, for Ocean Grove is the Mecca of Methodists. You can walk
over to Asbury Park and view the awful wickedness of its ginger ale bars
and the total depravity of its ice cream saloons. You can stroll down and
view with pride and satisfaction the stout iron gates with which Ocean
Grove keeps out these works of the flesh. You can wander up one sandy
street and down another and speculate on just how much hotter it proba-
bly is there than it is in New York. You can go to drive if you will do it
discreetly and keep away from the tents and take care not to interrupt the
services. But as the available vehicles have to be brought from Asbury
Park, and when they get here consist usually of the slow creeping hack
kind and nothing else[,] few people drive.

This is not a very exhilarating programme of entertainment, but if you
don't like it you can keep away from Ocean Grove.

The association doesn't care whether you come or not. It does an an-
annual business of $175,000 to $200,000 and that pays a splendid interest on the investment, so why should the association care? There are plenty of people who will come whether you do or not. But one thing is sure—if you do come you must live up to the ironclad rules or out you go.

Some of these rules, in my humble judgment, afford more amusement than even Dr. Stokes leading the singing and some of them are just mortifying to the flesh.

No tobacco is allowed to be sold in Ocean Grove. At times this is amusing, as when you think how little it discourages the consumption of tobacco there and what great quantities of it are daily carried over from Asbury Park. It being against the rule of course nearly all the boys here smoke cigarettes. I am afraid many of the girls smoke them, too. Ocean Grove furnishes the best part of Asbury Park’s cigarette trade. You observe with a cynical smile that this foolish and arbitrary law, like all foolish and arbitrary laws, is helping on what it was intended to suppress.

But it is coming a little too near home when at ten or eleven o’clock at night a man suddenly discovers that he is out of cigars and if he is to have that smoke he wants so much he must tramp all the way to the Park to get it. He does not see the amusing features of the law then, nor those which are food for the cynical, and the wrath which he devotes to the managers of the Camp Meeting Association would make the ears of those gentlemen tingle if they could hear what he says.

I doubt whether their account stands any better for ruling out tobacco. Think of the enormous amount of profanity they have caused!

A commercial traveller whose home is in New York came down here for the first time the other day, and along in the evening when the cigars gave out heard with incredulity that he was in a town of twenty-five thousand people where tobacco was absolutely prohibited. He was a smart young man and had been around a good deal. He had bought whiskey in Kansas and got boiling drunk in Maine; he had observed the “blind pig” in Minnesota and toyed with the “speak easies” of Philadelphia. There was no trick or rope of the anti-prohibitionist that he didn’t know. If he could get red liquor in Neal Dow’s town he rather thought he could get tobacco in Ocean Grove. Well, he should say so. And he was willing to lay a small wager that he could go out and buy five cigars in five minutes.

The wager was made for about $10 all told. Where was the principal hotel? The others told him. Well, just wait a minute and he would be back. They waited not one minute alone, but more than thirty, during which the smart young man had visited the hotel, winked at the drug store clerks, crooked his finger at the candy store man, whistled at the grocer and tried all the arts and devices known to his order, but in vain. In despair he had begged from a boatman a piece of plug chewing as black
as your hat and stronger than the scents of Barren Island. And that was as near to a purchase of tobacco as the young man came in Ocean Grove.

The same night he went disgustedly over to Asbury Park to sleep and on the first train in the morning hied him home.

Oh, yes; tobacco is strictly forbidden in Ocean Grove, therefore everybody smokes.

Liquor and beer and all other like beverages are strictly prohibited, consequently the outside grocery wagons rumble through the streets all day delivering case beer and demijohns.

The sale of Sunday newspapers is forbidden, consequently half the town walks down to the gates on Sunday morning and trades with the newsboys through the iron bars.

About the only rules that really achieve their purpose are those which prohibit any kind of vehicle from entering an Ocean Grove street on Sunday, and that can be enforced because the gates can be shut.

Even about that, though, people will go to drive on Sunday, and hundreds of people go down to the gates every Sunday morning to get their daily supply of milk, so except it may be desirable to cause as much inconvenience as possible, what is the use?

Yet for all these things that to the worldly mind seem annoyances and drawbacks to legitimate amusement the Ocean Grove people undoubtedly thrive, and in their own peculiar way are happy. Probably they would not be so happy under any other conditions. "For people who like this sort of thing this is the sort of thing they like." And that is the conclusion of the whole matter.