

Newsboy

EDITOR

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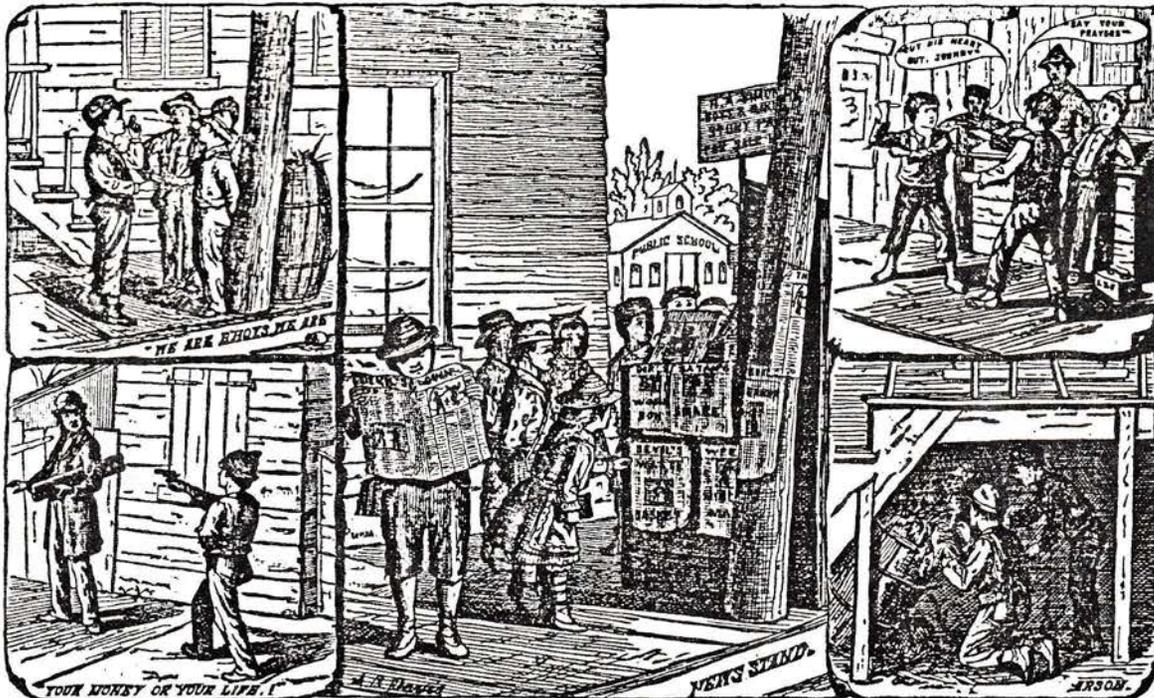


Volume 15
Number 9
April, 1977

Monthly Newsletter of
the HORATIO ALGER
SOCIETY. The World's
Only Publication Devoted
to That Wonderful
World of Horatio Alger.



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth Butler



THE MODERN NEWS STAND AND ITS RESULTS.

The above picture is the frontispiece of Anthony Comstock's Traps for the Young [New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1890], the well-known volume concerning the temptations that surrounded children during the last century (these included, for example, light fiction, paintings, sculpture, and lotteries).

Chapter III of this book—"Half-Dime Novels and Story Papers"—is included in this Newsboy and appears through the kindness of Gilbert K. Westgard II, who sent it to your editor for reprinting. An editorial preface precedes the chapter.

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr., and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes — lads whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and flamed hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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Newsboy, the official organ of the Horatio Alger Society, is published monthly (bimonthly January-February and June-July) and is distributed to HAS members. Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$10.00. Cost for single issues of Newsboy is \$1.00 apiece.

Please make all remittances payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address, claims for missing issues, and orders for single copies of current or back numbers of Newsboy should be sent to the society's secretary, Carl T. Hartmann, 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910.

A subject index to the first ten years of Newsboy (July, 1962 - June, 1972) is available for \$1.50 from Carl Hartmann at the above address.

Manuscripts relating to Horatio Alger's life and works are solicited, but the editor reserves the right to reject submitted material.

* * *

REMEMBER: Convention time will soon be here!! Don't forget the date - - - Thursday, May 12 through Sunday, May 15, 1977, in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston.

* * *

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

PF-259 John M. Lohn
305 Dean Circle
Bolingbrook, Illinois 60439

PF-457 John E. Clauss
% Aeonian Press
Box 1200
Mattituck, Long Island 11952
* * *

NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

PF-496 Peggy Cordon Roach
279 Hampton Blvd.
Rochester, New York 14612

Peggy learned of HAS through a local newspaper and called a library to obtain Carl Hartmann's address. She owns 55 Algers—most of which originally belonged to her father. Her other interests include painting, reading, and an involvement in children's and church activities.

PF-497 Ted Howe
1220 5th Street
#11
Davis, California 95616

Ted—owner of 33 Alger books—is a student at the University of California and was told of the society by his parents. He enjoys reading the Alger stories for relaxation, and is a "coin collecting music loving tennis playing unicyclist."

PF-498 Robert L. George
3705 Northwood Drive NW
Cleveland, Tennessee 37311

Robert's interest in Alger is a historical and philosophical one. He read of the society in the Dime Novel Round-Up, and he collects dime novels and other boys' books. His other hobbies include rafting and regional history. He owns 18 Algers.

PF-499 Robert Jennings
RFD 2, Whiting Rd.
Dudley, Massachusetts 01570

Robert is a salesman and owns 35 Alger titles. He collects science fiction, comics, dime novels, and some non-hero pulps. He read of HAS in the Dime Novel Round-Up.

NOTE: PF-500 and PF-501 were introduced in the August-September, 1976, issue of Newsboy.

PF-502 David F. Barton
436 Andover St.
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

1977 Convention Chairman Dick Seddon told David of the Horatio Alger Society. Besides collecting Alger books, David—an insurance agent—enjoys interests in sports, magic, and reading. He owns 10 Algers.

PF-503 Lucile Coleman
% A-Z Book Service
P. O. Box 610813
North Miami, Florida 33161

Lucile is an antiquarian and out of print book dealer. She read of HAS in Al Matzys's Book Report and wrote your editor to secure information about the society. Besides books, she has an avid interest in poetry and is a member of the Poetry Society of America. In a recent letter to me she says: "I recall when I was very, very young, hiding an Alger book inside of a textbook—probably geography—and reading it in class. Luckily I was never apprehended!"

PF-504 Lawrence C. Gibbs
309 Lasalle Drive
River Ridge, Louisiana 70123

Lawrence is a civil engineer—president of Gibbs Construction Company—and wishes to promote the HAS philosophy of "Strive and Succeed." He learned of the society in Success Unlimited Magazine and wrote your editor for information.

PF-505 Gary Strappazon
P. O. Box 467
Montrose, Michigan 48457

HAS member Charles Veitengruber told Gary—a caseworker—of the Horatio Alger

Society. Gary enjoys doing research, is interested in antiques and historical homes, and owns 37 Alger titles.

PF-506 Neil J. McCormick
1802 Thackeray Road
Madison, Wisconsin 53704

Neil is a water operator for the Madison Water Utility Company and is interested in collecting Algers simply for the enjoyable reading that they offer. He owns 100 titles, and also collects old marbles and old illustrated children's books. HAS members Dale Thomas and Percy Seamans told him of the Alger Society.

PF-507 Tracy Catledge
P. O. Box 583
Fern Park, Florida 32730

Though Tracy owns 75 Algers, his main interest in the book field is the collecting of Boy Scout books. As I recall, he periodically sends out a books for sale list called "Scouting for Boys' Books," and in the June-July, 1976, issue of Newsboy I mentioned the good plug that he gave HAS in one of his lists. He learned of the society through Carl Hartmann and Dave Kanarr.

L-16 Niedersaechsische Staats-U
Universitaetsbibliothek
Prinzenstr. 1 / Zugang IIa/Zss
3400 Goettingen
Germany

* * *

PROMISES, PROMISES

by Jack Schorr

Going into a book store in Northern California on my vacation I handed a dealer my Alger list, plus a list of other boys' books I wanted. He was a real friendly guy and seemed interested. Looking my list over, he said, "I have sixty boxes of these books in storage, but I can't get to them now as they're buried under other books." He took my number, promised to call next week at a friend's up north to let me know if he could dig them out. I dreamed of these books which never materialized.

Another bookshelf that passed in the night was the tempting possibility of obtaining a nice lot of G. A. Hentys in first and original editions which were in storage in the Northwest and were supposedly priced at \$3 - \$4. These had been discussed with, but not seen by, a good friend of mine who was sure these were what we wanted. I called on the source on a trip in 1975 and they were still in storage awaiting a visit from my friend. In 1976, after I wrote and said I was coming up, the books were now available in his store. I was excited about this. There were two huge stacks of Hentys and every one was a cheap reprint. What a letdown that was.

I have talked by phone to an eccentric Alger collector whose books I have been privileged to see once. I don't know how I did it, because he wouldn't let me see them twice. Anyway, he had two boxed sets of Algers. I have never seen them before. Small Porter & Coates books in mint condition with the gold on the spines like they just came off the press. I remarked about these books to him. He said he purchased them from a dealer whose father owned the book store before the son took over and who was a collector himself. He told me that Porter and Coates boxed the series of Algers and they came for Christmas giving. What books weren't sold were broken up and the boxes tossed out. He had the most beautiful Algers I had ever seen. All his Burts were absolutely mint. He was not strong on Loring, but what he had were fine, never read, apparently.

I am drifting afield, but I did extract a promise that he would let me take a picture of his boxed editions with a Polaroid. I wrote a short article about his collection for the Newsboy some time back [November, 1973] and I guess he wasn't pleased, for I never got back in again. Too bad he couldn't enjoy the pleasures of sharing his experiences.

Another area you never want to count on is estates. They can end up a disaster. Months of waiting, expecting litigation, and the end result nil, but that's another story.

Another promise I am awaiting, but not counting on, was a contact I made at a swap meet with a lady who saw my Raggedy Ann books I had for sale, and she said that her dad worked for Volland in the 1930's and that he had a lot of Volland books at his place. She promised to get them and give me first call. I am waiting, for I love those Volland books — quality paper, beautifully illustrated, and highly collectible.

Yes, I am waiting, but not holding my breath, I can tell you.

* * *

THE ARTIST'S APPRENTICE

by Horatio Alger, Jr.

(Editor's note: The following Alger short story is from the collection of Dick Seddon. It has appeared in The Flag of Our Union, August 26, 1854; Gleason's Literary Companion, January 28, 1865; and Gleason's Monthly Companion, August, 1873).

Burel, a Flemish artist, was one day busily engaged in his studio, when his attention was drawn to a timid knock at the door.

"Come in," said he, hastily.

The door opened slowly, and when at length the artist found time to look up, he saw standing before him a rough, uncouth lad, dressed poorly, and apparently quite embarrassed—since he was swinging his coarse straw hat in one hand while the other contained a thin packet.

"Well," said Burel, in some surprise, "what would you like with me? What is the business which calls you here?"

The boy still fumbled with his hat.

"What is your name?" continued Burel.

"Hans."

"Well, have you no other? There are many of that name."

"Sach. My name is Hans Sach."

"Well, master Hans Sach, since that is your name, I would thank you to declare your business without further ado, since I am busy."

"I want to be an artist," said the boy, very abruptly.

"Ah, that is it. But what proof have I that you have the requisite talent? It is not every one that can become an artist."

"I know that, sir; but I believe I have some taste for it. I will show you what I have done already."

With these words he took a knife from his pocket, quickly cut the string which contained the package which he carried, disclosing several little designs which he had executed. These he put into the hands of Burel.

The latter took them carelessly, and cast an eye over them, but his attention was speedily riveted. Judge of his surprise then when he beheld in these little sketches, clearly unstudied, and the fruit of nature alone, evidences of the most surprising talent.

Burel at once saw that it would be for his advantage to secure this genius in a rough exterior for a pupil. He was a shrewd, politic man, however, and was far from displaying the admiration with which these sketches had inspired him.

The boy looked at him with a gaze of eager inquiry, as if to learn what opinion he had formed.

"Hans," said he, "they are all well enough. I think in time and with hard study you might become a respectable artist. You wish to learn the art; is it so?"

"Yes, sir," said Hans.

"And you would like to become my pupil?"

"If you would be kind enough to take me."

"It is usual to give me a fee on entering upon the study. Are you in a condition to do it?"

The boy's countenance fell.

"Alas! sir," he replied, "my parents died recently, leaving me only their blessing with which to make my way through the world. I had hoped to become an artist; but I have not a florin. I must e'en become a plough-boy, as they would have me." He turned to go out.

"Stay," said Burel, "you are in too great haste. You are unable to give a fee, but I have not said I would not take you without one."

Hans's face lighted up once more.

"If you are willing to work hard, and fare plainly, I will take you. Shall it be so?"

"Most gratefully, sir, I will accept your offer."

Hans was immediately installed in the establishment of the artist as apprentice. He was not the only one. Here were some half dozen studying under the same master. They were all of them sons of rich men, but none of them had any considerable taste for the art of which he had become a student. Being able, however, to pay the entrance fee, Burel, who was exceedingly fond of money, had received them without the least objections, and was wont to give some flattering accounts of their progress to their friends whenever inquiries were made. He spent but little time with them, acquainting them with the few fundamental rules of the art, and then leaving them to make applications of them as best they might.

Being indolent, and having, as I have already said, little taste for the art, this contented the pupils, who disposed of the time which rested upon their hands as seemed most agreeable to them. Burel, however, did not introduce Hans into the company of his older

apprentices. It did not suit his purposes that he should employ his time in the same idle manner.

At the top of the house there was a small attic, sufficiently rough looking without plastering and unpainted. Into this apartment Hans was introduced.

"This," said Burel, "will be your apartment. Upon the floor is a bed on which you will rest at night. Here, by the window, is a table on which you can work."

"And what shall I do? What shall be my first lesson?"

"I shall not give you a regular lesson. You may execute any designs you think of similar to those which you showed me yesterday. Work industriously and you will yet become an artist."

Hans found it a little difficult to conceive in what manner he was to become an artist without instruction, and began to think that he might have made as rapid progress anywhere else as in his present situation. But of course his master knew best, and so he toiled early and late with unremitting ardor.

Three times a day a pitcher of water, and food of the plainest sort, would be brought to him. It was a confined life that he led, for Burel never invited him to leave his attic, except on Sundays, when he would be permitted to wander through the fields.

Meanwhile Hans accomplished a large amount of work. He threw off the sketches for which Burel had stipulated, with an inconceivable rapidity. These, when completed, were taken away by Burel, but whither Hans knew not. In reality, they were sold at good prices to admiring purchasers, who supposed they were the work of Burel himself. The uncouth apprentice was proving a source of considerable revenue to the artist.

Meanwhile his other apprentices were filled with the greatest curiosity to

know who could be whom their instructor so carefully kept apart from the rest of them. They seized an opportunity when Burel was away to satisfy themselves on this point.

Creeping up stairs they called on Hans to open the door. Entering, they beheld with surprise the mean quarters in which their fellow pupil was confined. But their surprise was still greater when they cast their eyes over a sketch which he had just completed.

"Is this by Burel, left for you to copy?" they inquired, scarcely believing their eyes. "In good faith, he has improved of late."

"That is my own," said Hans.

"Your own! And do you execute many such?"

"Yes, that's all I do. I am at work upon them all the time."

They looked at each other in surprise.

"Certainly you possess no ordinary talent," said they—for they knew sufficient of art to appreciate excellence.

"Do you think so?" asked Hans, overjoyed.

"Think so?—there can be no doubt of it. Burel himself could not do so well."

"But what becomes of these sketches, after you have completed them?"

"I do not know. M. Burel comes and takes them away, and I see no more of them."

"I'll warrant it, the miserly old curmudgeon. He sells them, no doubt, for a good round sum, which he coolly puts into his own pocket, and all the while that he is making money out of you, he starves you on such fare as this."

The speaker lifted contemptuously a plate of hard bread that lay on the table whereon Hans was working.

"I'll tell you what," he continued, "it's no more than fair that you should have at least some of the fruits of your own labors. I will engage you to paint for me designs emblematic of the four seasons, and I will give you ten francs apiece. If they are equal to this sketch, they will be well worth it. Don't have any scruples about diverting your time from Burel's employment. He has made enough out of you already. You may now work a little for yourself."

It will be believed that Hans readily acceded to this proposition which was so much to his advantage.

As he devoted but two hours a day to his own purposes, he accomplished sufficient for his master in the remaining part of the day to prevent any suspicions on his part; and when this commission was completed, it was followed by another on the part of his fellow students, who wished the months designed. This, also, was done to the complete satisfaction to the one who ordered it, and was immediately succeeded by something further from still another, till each of his fellow apprentices had given him a task to accomplish. As they were well paid for, Hans had accumulated what appeared to him quite a large sum of money. By this time, his fellow pupils having no more employment to offer him, advised him to run away from M. Burel's service.

"It is clear," said they, "that all the instruction you get is not from him, but due only to your own exertions. No longer stay to be imposed upon. Elsewhere you will get paid for the whole of your labors, and will not be compelled to work with next to nothing for a recompense, for his advantage."

Hans saw that this advice was good, and did not hesitate to follow it. Rising in the early morning, he collected what sketches he had executed, and stole forth as silently as possible, leaving,

however, the following note for M. Burel:

"M. Burel—If you had acted fairly by me, I should not now leave your house. I find, however, that you have used me solely with a view to your own profit, without any regard to my advantage. I have become tired of serving as a source of revenue in which I, myself, have no participation.

Hans."

When M. Burel discovered this note, and the disappearance of Hans, his anger and disappointment were unbounded. But he had no legal claims upon the services of the latter, as he well knew, and therefore thought it best to say as little as possible about it. Meanwhile, Hans walked leisurely through the city, of which, during his stay with M. Burel, he had seen but little, gazing at the principal objects of curiosity.

His attention was directed towards a shop wherein objects of art were displayed in a tempting array. He stopped to examine them more closely, and after a slight pause went in. A gentleman, well-dressed and of prepossessing appearance, was bargaining for an article which, on a casual glance, Hans was surprised to find was one of his own designs.

"My dear sir," said the shopkeeper, "you will find fifty francs not dear for so charming a design. It is, you perceive, by Burel, who of late has cultivated this branch of art with distinguished success. Shall I put it up for you?"

"If you please."

"You are fortunate to obtain it. It is the last I have. The fact is, these designs of Burel command a ready sale, being universally admired, so that I am rarely able to keep one in my shop for more than twenty-four hours."

Hans was pleased to find how popular his sketches had become, and his

indignation was in the same measure heightened against his master, who had diverted to his own purposes, both the reputation and the profit of his labors. He was resolved to unmask him. Stepping forward, he said composedly to the purchaser:

"That sketch is not by Burel."

"Is not by Burel!" said the shopkeeper, indignantly, scanning the rather rough-looking appearance of Hans. "Not by Burel? Perhaps, then," he continued, in an ironical manner, "Monsieur will deign to inform us whose it is."

"Mine," said Hans with composure.

"Yours!" The shopkeeper laughed scornfully. "And you expect us to believe this? Where is your proof?"

"Here," said Hans, and at the same time he unrolled the package in his hand, and displayed three more sketches.

The shopkeeper examined them with surprise.

"Certainly," said he, "these are the same style; but what assurance have I that they are yours, and how does it happen that the others had the name of Burel?"

"I was a pupil of his; and instead of instructing me, he kept me to work upon these sketches, which he sold for his own advantage. That they are mine I will satisfy you."

Seating himself at a table, Hans quickly improvised a sketch which though not so finished as the others, displayed the same artistic talent. There was now no room for doubt. The shopkeeper purchased at a good price Hans's remaining sketches. The gentleman who had before bargained with him invited him home to dinner, and, being a man of wealth, took care that he should receive the consideration due his talents. Hans studied faithfully the principles of the art in which as yet he was imperfectly grounded, and became in time one of the

most eminent of Flemish artists. His old instructor, Burel, learned to look up with reverence to the uncouth, awkward boy, who years before had made known to him his intention to become an artist, and he could not sufficiently regret the ill-advised love of money which had lost him the boast of having trained up the first artist in the kingdom.

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TRAPS FOR THE YOUNG
Chapter III

"Half-Dime Novels and Story Papers"

(Editor's preface: Beginning on page ten is a chapter from Anthony Comstock's notorious book, Traps for the Young [New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1890] which comes to Newsboy through the courtesy of Gilbert K. Westgard II.

As reported in the January-February, 1976, Newsboy, Anthony Comstock was a zealous nineteenth century reformer who for more than forty years stood guard at what he referred to as the "sewer mouth" of society, acting as a self-appointed bastion against the onslaught of "objectionable" literature and material aimed at children.

The title of the volume explains Comstock's purpose — to set before the reader the temptations that affected the moral fiber of juveniles living in nineteenth century America. These "traps for the young" included daily newspapers, lotteries, light fiction, paintings, sculptures, and works of literature which he declared obscene. ["Many 'classical' writers, as the word goes to-day, have gained fame by catering to the animal in man."]

As can be imagined, not all people agreed with Anthony Comstock, who in 1873 lobbied for passage of a federal anti-obscenity law (called the "Comstock Law"), and who that year was appointed a special agent of the Post Office Department, charged with the enforcement of that law. Many justifiably argued that his definition of obscenity was subjective. Whatever he deemed objectionable was

automatically illegal, at least as far as he was concerned.

Also, other individuals observed that although many of the children arrested by Comstock admitted reading dime novels, the reformer seldom — if ever — proved that there was a connection between the books and the crimes which the youngsters committed.

And finally, it was pointed out that Comstock would often use trickery or strong arm tactics to get arrests. In detecting violations of postal laws [the 1873 law was titled, "An Act for the Suppression of Trade in, and Circulation of, Obscene Literature and Articles of Immoral Use"], he would employ various aliases so that he could correspond with suspects.

Though I doubt that much credence will be given to the following pages, they are reprinted for the interest of all Horatio Alger Society members. Anthony Comstock was a nationally known reformer, and his diatribes—though farfetched—seriously attempted to tarnish the gold in the post war Gilded Age).

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RANDOM REPORTS FROM ALGERLAND
by Jack Bales

The character, Miles O'Reilly, that is mentioned in Chapter II of Julius was originally created by Charles Graham Halpine (1829-1868). Halpine's O'Reilly was an Irish private in the Union Army during the Civil War. The adventures of Miles O'Reilly, as created by Halpine, were no doubt very popular among the street boys of New York City. (Sent in by "Wordsmith").

International Bookfinders Inc. recently offered two Algers for sale. A "very good copy" of Bertha's Christmas Vision [Boston: Brown Bazin & Co., 1856] had a price of \$350. The other volume was a "good copy" of a first edition of Ragged Dick, and the asking price was \$750. Your editor does not know if either of these books was sold.

Thursday, May 12 through Sunday, May 15, 1977 — the dates of "Booked in Boston," the thirteenth annual convention of the Horatio Alger Society. Hosted by Dick Seddon, this is one meeting you won't want to miss!!

We're waiting to welcome you

A MEETING PLACE FOR ALL SEASONS

BOSTON

TRAPS FOR THE YOUNG.

CHAPTER III.

HALF-DIME NOVELS AND STORY PAPERS.

AND it came to pass that as Satan went to and fro upon the earth, watching his traps and rejoicing over his numerous victims, he found room for improvement in some of his schemes. The daily press did not meet all his requirements. The *weekly* illustrated papers of crime would do for young men and sports, for brothels, gin-mills, and thieves' resorts, but were found to be so gross, so libidinous, so monstrous, that every decent person spurned them. They were excluded from the home on sight. They were too high-priced for children, and too cumbersome to be conveniently hid from the parent's eye or carried in the boy's pocket. So he resolved to make another trap for boys and girls especially.

He also resolved to make the most of these vile illustrated weekly papers, by lining the news-stands and shop-windows along the pathway of the children from home to school and church, so that they could not go to and from these places of instruction without giving him opportunity to defile their pure minds by flaunting these atrocities before their eyes.

And Satan rejoiced greatly that professing Christians were silent and apparently acquiesced in his plans. He found that our most refined men and women went freely to trade with persons who displayed these traps for sale; that few, if any, had moral courage to enter a protest against this public display of indecencies, and scarcely one in all the land had the boldness to say to the dealer in filth, "I will not give you one cent of my patronage so long as you sell these devil-traps to ruin the young." And he was proud of professing Christians and respectable citizens on this account, and caused honorable mention to be made of them in general order to his imps, because of the quiet and orderly assistance thus rendered him.

Satan stirred up certain of his willing tools on earth by the promise of a few paltry dollars to improve greatly on the death-dealing quality of the weekly death-traps, and forthwith came a series of new snares of fascinating construction, small and tempting in price, and baited with high-sounding names. These sure-ruin traps comprise a large variety of half-dime novels, five and ten cent story papers, and low-priced pamphlets for boys and girls.

This class includes the silly, insipid tale, the coarse, slangy story in the dialect of the barroom, the blood-and-thunder romance of border life, and the exaggerated details of crimes, real and imaginary. Some have highly colored sensational reports of real crimes, while others, and by far the larger number, deal with most improbable creations of fiction. The unreal far outstrips the real. Crimes are gilded, and lawlessness is painted to resemble valor, making a bid for bandits, brigands, murderers, thieves, and criminals in general. Who would go to the State prison, the gambling saloon, or the brothel to find a suitable companion for the child? Yet a more insidious foe is selected when these stories are allowed to become associates for the child's mind and to shape and direct the thoughts.

The finest fruits of civilization are consumed by these ver-

min. Nay, these products of corrupt minds are the eggs from which all kinds of villainies are hatched. Put the entire batch of these stories together, and I challenge the publishers and venders to show a single instance where any boy or girl has been elevated in morals, or where any noble or refined instinct has been developed by them.

The leading character in many, if not in the vast majority of these stories, is some boy or girl who possesses usually extraordinary beauty of countenance, the most superb clothing, abundant wealth, the strength of a giant, the agility of a squirrel, the cunning of a fox, the brazen effrontery of the most daring villain, and who is utterly destitute of any regard for the laws of God or man. Such a one is foremost among desperadoes, the companion and beau-ideal of maidens, and the high favorite of some rich person, who by his patronage and indorsement lifts the young villain into lofty positions in society, and provides liberally of his wealth to secure him immunity for his crimes. These stories link the pure maiden with the most foul and loathsome criminals. Many of them favor violation of marriage laws and cheapen female virtue.

One day while riding on the cars I purchased a copy of one of these papers. It is claimed to be "high-toned." The reader may judge of the *tone* when he learns that the copy now before me contains made-up stories with the following crimes woven into them. It must be premised that the following is taken from a single issue, and from parts of continued stories. To complete the grand total of infamies it would be necessary to commence at the beginning and go to the end of the fractional parts of the tales from which these extracts are taken.

The gist of these stories consists of—

A conspiracy against a school-girl.

One girl hired to personate a rich girl and marry a villain in her stead.

A man murdered by being blown up by explosives.

A beautiful girl, by lying and deceit, seeks to captivate one whom she loves.

Six assaults upon an officer while resisting arrests.

A conspiracy against an officer to prevent the arrest of a criminal.

A burglary.

An illegitimate child.

A woman murdered by masked burglars.

An attempt to force a beautiful girl to marry a scoundrel to save her benefactor.

Two attempts to coerce a girl to marry against her wishes.

One woman who died in New York comes to life in Italy.

Two attempted assassinations.

One confidence operator at work to swindle a stranger.

An assault on the highway.

A hired assassin.

A massacre by Indians.

One babe stolen to substitute for another.

An attempt to murder a child.

Two women concealing their secretly-born babes.

A rich man is confronted in a castle by a woman he has ruined, who raises such an outcry that he becomes purple and rigid, while blood gushes from his mouth. The woman takes a vial from her pocket and instantly cures him.

One case of clandestine correspondence and meetings between a girl and her lover. This results in the girl running away at night and getting married to hide her shame. This is followed by a scene in their room, where the husband refuses to acknowledge his wife publicly; she being in a delicate condition pleads to have the marriage made public. The husband dares not do this for fear of arrest for other crimes.

In addition to the above horrors, as a catch-penny advertisement to "give tone" to this paper, on the fourth page appears a portion of a sermon by a celebrated Brooklyn divine.

As if it were an antidote to the sermon, and for fear some good might possibly be done by it, directly following the sermon is a story of a heartless wretch who had married a young lady of "princely beauty." He soon deserts her and marries a haughty rich young woman. On the way from the wedding ceremony he passes his first bride, who falls dead lisping his name. The story leads this heartless villain to his new and elegant home, and makes him say:

"Not within sight of my window could I bear the narrow mound; not within sound of the voice of my haughty titled bride should she lie. So I carried her away . . . still in her bridal gown of white, to rest forever."

Was ever such sacrilege! such a mixture of the sublime and villainous! such a monstrous attempt to serve the devil in the livery of heaven!

A sermon in such a place! *Two* columns of a sermon to help sell *thirty-four* columns of such diabolical trash! Such publications do more to debase the young than an endowed chair in every college in the land will or can do to ennoble them.

Let every candid reader say, after noting the above bill of fare, whether or no this is a fit "companion" for the "fire-side" for any person, old or young.

Again, many of these publishers weave a tale upon some startling crime, such as the Phoenix Park assassins of Ireland, or on the exploits of some bandit, and add to the real crimes most monstrously absurd exaggerations, dragging some beautiful girl through all the mire of the most bloody scenes, or making some boy a victor over the most brutal of man-butchers, endowing him with abilities which eclipse the shrewdest detective genius! These stories familiarize one with the horrors of murder and carnage, adding to them the seductive excitements of fiction.

A word about bound books.

Recently I purchased a book offered for sale on the railroads, and recommended by the newsboy on a train on the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad as the "boss book," the "fastest selling book of the day." The web of the story consisted of four murders, three highway robberies, two burglaries, one blackmailing scheme, three attempts to murder women, one attempt to poison a young woman, two conspiracies to ruin a pure girl, one den of counterfeiters in full blast, two gambling hells, one confidence game, one brothel, procurers abducting a young girl for a rich man, three cases of assault and battery, one street fight, two dens of thieves, one forced marriage, two suicides, and oaths, lies, wine-drinking, smoking cigars, *et cetera*. The character that figured throughout all this was a beautiful young wife, who was the murderess

and principal actor in all these horrible and disgusting scenes.

Again, these stories give utterly false and debasing ideas of life. All high moral purposes are made to give way to self-gratification. The great safeguard of human society—reverence to law—is broken down. Disobedience to parents is encouraged. The healthful restraint of parental authority is treated as a species of tyranny which the hero first chafes under, then resists, and lastly ignores.

The boy cheats himself by imagining he is doing a manly thing when he naturally follows a base example. To the child that chafes under home restraint, having taken the initiative step to ignore proper authority, a dangerous and lawless life comes easy.

Again, these stories breed vulgarity, profanity, loose ideas of life, impurity of thought and deed. They render the imagination unclean, destroy domestic peace, desolate homes, cheapen woman's virtue, and make foul-mouthed bullies, cheats, vagabonds, thieves, desperadoes, and libertines. They disparage honest toil, and make real life a drudge and burden. What young man will serve an apprenticeship, working early and late, if his mind is filled with the idea that sudden wealth may be acquired by following the hero of the story? In real life, to begin at the foot of the ladder and work up, step by step, is the rule; but in these stories, inexperienced youth, with no moral character, take the foremost positions, and by trick and device, knife and revolver, bribery and corruption, carry everything before them, lifting themselves in a few short weeks to positions of ease and affluence. Moral courage with such is a thing to be sneered at and despised in many of these stories. If one is asked to drink and refuses, he is set up and twitted till he yields or is compelled to by force. The idea of doing anything from principle is ridiculous in the extreme. As well fill a kerosene-oil lamp with water and expect a brilliant light. And so, in addition to all else, there is early inculcated a distaste for the good, and the piercing blast of ridicule is turned upon the reader to destroy effectually all moral character.

Many critics seem to think it necessary to quote liberally from these authors, to show the dialect or to expose to public contempt the coarse language and worse morals. It is not the writer's purpose to quote these expressions or name these publications. Those who are informed on this subject know what is meant, and others need not know further than the *effects*.

I proceed to give a truthful synopsis of one of the "ten-cent" pamphlets recently issued by a publisher of boy literature in New York City.

This book opens with an account of an assault on a woman. It contains a number of shooting scenes. It tells of several seductions and murders. It describes with minuteness of detail a burglary, and a den of thieves from which a band of burglars and assassins is hired. It gives an account of a gambling saloon, where a young man wins \$30,000, which in turn is won from him by a beautiful woman, whereupon he drinks to the health of King Death and shoots himself dead. There is an account of a negro and a beautiful but abandoned woman making their home in a cave, where in four days they dig gold to the amount of \$1,750,000, to which they add \$200,000 by speculation in Wall Street. There is a story of a man illegally imprisoned and bound to an iron bedstead. Several prisoners

are walled into a room and left to die, and the monstrous story ends with the man on the iron bedstead calling a fellow-prisoner to him, when he discovers that he is his father. Thereupon the son fastens his teeth into the throat of his father and they die together.

This book is in the possession of the present writer, and can be seen by any one who wants corroboration of the foregoing statement.

Think of feeding the youthful mind on such carrion, of distorting the imagination by putting such abominations before children. From examining a large number of these stories, I can say that the moral in a vast number is not one whit better than the above. Trick and device, lying and deceit, dishonesty and bloodshed, lawlessness and licentiousness, is the lesson taught in most of these stories.

These boy and girl devil-traps are ruining hundreds of youth. Boys read these stories almost incessantly after once a taste is acquired. The loftiest ambition inspired by many of these senseless exaggerations is to be a "tough." It is but a few weeks ago that three young men under twenty years of age burglariously entered a saloon at night for the purpose of robbery. They were all sons of respectable parents, but these "hurrah-for-hades" publications had done their work. While robbing the saloon, the proprietor heard them and came down to protect his possessions. As he came down the stairs the eldest of the trio deliberately drew his revolver and shot him down. After arrest this young murderer said, when it was announced that the man was dead, "Well, I must be a tough if I have killed a man." Again he said, "A fellow is not considered a tough till he has downed his man." These murderers have all since been convicted and sentenced, and the publishers of this kind of murderous literature can boast of three more victims—another certificate to these cancer-planters that their productions are "death sure." This young man has since been hanged at the Tombs in New York City.

There is a good deal of monkey in a bad boy. He delights to imitate, and imagines himself capable of enjoying all the celebrity with which his mind surrounds the character he has read about.

Not long ago at the Tombs a boy twelve years of age was brought in for felonious assault, and held to await the results of shooting another boy of about his own age. It came out in evidence that four boys were gambling at cards. One of them told this boy, in a controversy they got into over a piece of pencil, he lied. This youthful gambler, acting out the story, arose with impressive dignity, no doubt, and said, "Johnny, that's got to be wiped out with blood," and drawing his revolver sent a bullet into the head of his little companion.

A lad sixteen years of age, after reading about train wrecking, tied a log across a railroad over a culvert, and then deliberately stationed himself upon the top of a rail fence in a field a short distance away to see a train wrecked. Providentially the engineer saw it in time to slow up, so that but slight damage was done his train, and but one man killed. After the arrest of this desperado, he said he "had been reading about a train which had been wrecked, and thought he would like to see one himself."

Last April another lad, fifteen years of age, was arrested after

three attempts to wreck a train just beyond Saratoga. Pleasant thought for the traveller, that we are safe from the armed brigands of Italy and the outlaws of the plains, but in imminent danger from schoolboys crazed by the accursed blood-and-thunder story papers! Only five cents apiece! Step up, parents, and buy a cheap way of getting rid of your boys! Supply these books and papers, and your boy will soon be behind prison-bars and be off your hands.

Satan is more interested in the child than many parents are. Parents do not stop to think or look for their children in these matters, while the arch-enemy is thinking, watching, and plotting continually to effect their ruin.

Thoughtless parents, heedless guardians, negligent teachers, you are each of you just the kind that old Satan delights to see placed over the child. He sets his base traps right in your very presence, captures and ruins your children, and you are each of you criminally responsible.

Take further instances of the effect of this class of publications, and then say if my language is too strong. Does it startle and offend? To startle, to awaken, to put you on your guard, to arouse you to your duty over your own children, is my earnest purpose. *Your child is in danger of having its pure mind cursed for life.*

A few months ago, in a small town in Massachusetts, I arrested a young man about twenty-one years of age, for sending most obscene and foul matter by mail. He was in the field with his father at work at the time of arrest. He desired to go to his room to change his apparel before going to court. While in his room, and up to the moment of the finding of a pile of these vile five-cent story-papers in one corner, he had been perfectly cool and stolid. When these were discovered, he started as though a nest of adders had been opened, and said with great feeling, "There! that's what has cursed me! That has brought me to this!"

A short time ago a lad about thirteen years of age ran away from home. He had played truant from school, and had been punished by his parent. This was too much for him. No boy in the ten-cent story would stand that! He joined a band of youthful robbers, who had a rendezvous in an old unoccupied house. He was initiated at night, with ceremonies and a solemn oath to secrecy, after which a banquet was served. A short while afterward he was arrested for picking pockets, tried, convicted, and sentenced. After sentence, with the bragadocio of a hardened criminal, he said he thought "a dime novel could be written about him; he had read lots of them."

For the benefit of boys who think the imitation of the careers portrayed in these vile stories such a smart thing to do, let me just here present the experience of one lad who ran away to become a hero.

He, like many others, was ensnared by these crime-breeding stories, upon which he had been feeding. He thought it would be a grand thing to pattern after the deeds of valor (?) he had read about, and so find fame and glory. He gathered a little money together, and ran away from home. This is commonly the first scene in the story. His money soon gave out, but no glory or fame came. He went to New Orleans, there had an attack of fever, and came very near dying among strangers. After that he went to Galveston, where he broke his arm.

Then he stole a ride to Houston on a freight train, and there was pushed off the train, breaking two ribs. After recovering he was wounded by a pistol-shot, and then got into a fight and was beaten almost to death. After this, to get a living he had to sell papers, black boots, work in a livery-stable, theatre, restaurant, cut heavy timbers, and herd cattle on the plains in the far West.

Another illustration is the story as told by Mrs. Marie B. Williams, in the *Congregationalist* of September 28th, 1881.

In a drunken brawl a young man had stabbed a loafer who taunted him upon his being a judge's son, and by speaking insultingly of the youth's mother. The boy in a rage flew at the man and stabbed him, and, in turn, was badly beaten over the head, receiving fatal wounds. This youth had run away from home, and was homeless and friendless when this good Samaritan found him and ministered to him, by providing comfortable lodgings, interesting friends in his behalf, and securing a nurse to care for him. I let this lady tell the story in her own words, and I ask closest attention to the awful tale of wreck and ruin as it falls from the lips of the youthful victim.

" 'Yes, I'm the son of Judge W., of Mississippi,' he said, 'but I would never have told it if the doctor hadn't confessed to me I couldn't live long. I made him tell me, you see, and I don't much care.'

" 'Do you not wish me to write to your father?' I asked.

" 'No, indeed, not until it's all over. I ran away a year ago.'

" 'Were your parents unkind to you that you left them, and won't you let me tell them your situation?'

" 'Unkind!' he repeated, with a sob; 'oh, I only wish I could remember a single harsh or unjust word from them. That would be a little excuse, you know. No, they were only too indulgent. I was a little wild then, and I've heard father say after I'd sowed my wild oats I'd come out all right. It's been a heavy crop, hasn't it? I think he forgot that if you sow the seed you're bound to gather in a harvest.' This is mine.'

" 'I can't understand why you left good parents and home,' I said.

" 'Wait a minute; I'm coming to that. I'm almost ashamed to tell, it sounds so silly. You see I had been reading a great many stories of adventure. I bought every new volume as it was issued, particularly the — series.' [I will not name the volumes he mentioned, for they are no worse than thousands of others.] 'My parents did not disapprove of these books, and never questioned me about them. They did not suspect how tired I was growing of my dull life, and how I longed to imitate some of my plucky young heroes. I thought as soon as I was free, adventures would pile in upon me. Then *freedom* was such a great thing.'

" I interrupted him, 'How is it possible that you, whose education had been so carefully carried on, who can even appreciate the beauties of classical literature, could be influenced by that trash?'

" 'I don't know, but I was. Perhaps I really didn't what you call "appreciate" better things, but just learned them by rote because I liked the sound. They didn't seem to belong

to my real life, but these stories did. They were boys like myself who did these wonderful things, and who were so brave and reckless, and they lived in a world like ours. Well, I ran away; I always had plenty of money, and it didn't give out till I got to Mexico.'

" 'Did you write to your parents?'

" 'I left a letter telling them I wanted to enjoy a free life and depend on myself. When I was tired I could always come home, I told them, and they must not fret about me.'

" 'But why did you not return? It could not have taken you long to find out that you were deceived, and that running away did not turn you into a hero of adventure?'

" He laughed a hard, bitter laugh. 'Oh, I had adventure enough, but it wasn't of the heroic kind. I got down so low, with drinking and gambling and low associates, that I didn't even like to think of home. Can you understand it, for I can't? I had been carefully raised. My associations were among refined, virtuous people, yet I went down into that hog's wallow as if I had been born to it.'

" 'Were you never disgusted, never repentant?'

" 'Sometimes, for a minute or two, but then a drink or so brought me round again. Oh, if I could only blot out that wicked time.'

" 'Make a point for a new life,' I said.

" 'I can't. If I try and have better thoughts, the scenes of vice come right back to me like a slap in the face. They're burned in. I can't get rid of them. When you read the Bible to me, I see the faces and I hear the words which filled those terrible dens, and I can hear nothing else. They come, too, between me and the memory of my precious mother. How dare I think of her? Oh, I couldn't look in her dear face again.' . . . He said one day, 'They will forgive me, and they will not realize how low I could fall. But if they saw me, why it would haunt them. Tell them I was penitent, but don't tell all. But warn all young people whom you know to let those foolish books alone. They're very silly, but they do harm to many, and they've ruined me. They take you one step on a bad road, and the rest comes quick and easy.'

" He was very humble and penitent toward the last, but still between him and the most comforting gospel promises came that veil of past sin.

" 'If through His infinite mercy I am ever forgiven,' he said faintly, 'don't you think that I will cease to remember? How could I enter heaven with those polluting memories clinging to me. Oh, if I could only forget.' "

Such are some of the real experiences of dime-novel run-aways.

A few months ago a young lad who had been caught by this kind of trap organized a company of boy bandits to go to Texas. They had their rendezvous in a cave in the woods, and prowled about the country armed with knives and revolvers. At night by twos and threes these little villains would patrol the highways, robbing passers-by. At last the leader started out, determined to secure funds for three of them to go to Texas with at once. A gentleman approached. This little fifteen-year-old murderer fires three shots after demanding "Your money or your life." One ball struck the man's suspender buckle and glanced off, one his pocketbook, and the other

wounded him in the thigh. These youthful bandits, then thoroughly frightened, rushed to their cave, changed their clothes, and then, with reckless bravado, after the fashion of the stories, walked forth as interested spectators of what was going on. At last they were arrested, indicted, and the leader was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

Three boys, aged nine, twelve, and thirteen, were arrested about two o'clock A.M. one night in New York City some months ago. Four loaded revolvers were found in their possession, and a quantity of these foolish stories. They had run away from respectable homes in Worcester, Mass., and were on their way to Leadville to seek their fortune. The younger one had stolen twelve dollars from his employer, and with this these babes had armed themselves at a junk-store and then set out. The act of these three boys starting in life, and going to Leadville on a capital of twelve dollars, is no more absurd than are the most of the adventures published for our boys and girls in the cheap papers and novels of the day.

A young lad fourteen years of age, of respectable parentage, was a short time ago apprehended by the writer for stealing twenty dollars from his brother. He had in his pocket one of these papers. He promised to reform, and that he would not read these papers any more. A short time afterward he was again overhauled for a like offence, and had two of these abominable papers of the five-cent series in one pocket, a package of cigarettes and a piece of plug tobacco in another, and his plunder in another.

A neighbor called upon me one day to assist him in discovering a thief who was systematically robbing him and his friends in his house. Suspicion pointed to a young lad about seventeen years of age, in his employ. I interviewed the lad. At first he was defiant, and dared me to arrest him; then he began to threaten that he would show me up for making him out a thief; then he tried the pathetic and wept copious tears, and talked about ruining a poor boy. Every move he made he furnished me proof of his guilt by acting out the different characters of the stories. At last he did what I have never yet seen in this class of papers—to wit, he confessed his guilt. I then asked him what he had been reading. He named two papers of the kind now under discussion, and added, "I never thought of stealing until I began to read these stories."

A sad sequel to this incident is, that notwithstanding his employer forgave him and kindly retained him in his service, yet he had taken one false step, and others naturally followed. It was but a short time afterward that the employer had to discharge him, as he was so diseased that he had to be turned away like the leper of old, because of his dissipation.

The following is cut from one of the daily papers of recent date, and not only illustrates the fearful crimes children can be guilty of, but also shows the sensational and encouraging tone of the editor in announcing the fact:

"*A Youthful Garroter and a Brave Little Maid.*—Charlie Gustin, a portly little gentleman of the mature age of nine, who lives at No. 15 Nassau Street, called yesterday at No. 62 Broadway and took his little six-year-old sweetheart, Lena Calhoun, out for a walk. They stopped at an old woman's stand, and the lad bought the girl an orange. He offered in payment a one-dollar bill, but before the old woman could take

it, Martin Sullivan, a twelve-year-old highwayman, who resides, when he is not on the road, at No. 45 Washington Street, threw his left arm around Charlie's neck after the style of a finished garroter, silenced his call for help, and with his right hand he seized the bill and started to run. But the brave Lady Lena caught hold of Sullivan's legs and held him firmly, aided by Charlie, until a towering policeman came up and carried him off to a dungeon vile."

As showing that the writer is not alone in his views as to the thorough and complete education given our youth by these publications, read what the "funny man" of the *New York Times* satirically says, in his most admirable article on "Juvenile Education," printed in that paper recently:

"No one who has made a railway trip this summer, and incidentally examined the 'news offices' in country towns in search of something to read, can have failed to notice with pride the splendid educational advantages which are offered to the youth of our happy land. The dime novel is more plentiful than the sands of a reasonably large sea. The old-fashioned schools doubtless give a certain amount of instruction in worthless branches of knowledge, such as arithmetic, writing, and spelling, but they no longer have any important share in developing the character of boys, and of fitting them for the active duties of criminal life. The dime novels, that every boy buys or borrows, are the grand agency in developing character, and one may well feel proud of the admirable and thorough manner in which, for the most part, the work is done.

"In the department of murder the instruction given by the dime-novel writers is all that could be desired. There is not a possible method of murder that is not fully described and illustrated by brilliant examples in these admirable educational works. Our boys are taught where and how to deal effective stabs, in what part of the body to plant pistol bullets to the best advantage, and how to handle poison skilfully, and without too great danger of detection. Not only are they taught how to kill, but what is of far more consequence, they are deftly led to look upon murder, not as a repulsive and dangerous task, but as an elegant and desirable recreation."

What is so well and sarcastically said about educating our youth to murder applies to all other felonies, and what he says about dime novels as educators applies with equal force to the sickening details of revolting crimes as published in the daily papers.

Again, this kind of matter leads boys many times to believe that recklessness and daring are signs of smartness and greatness, and that to act out the story or to imitate the hero makes them heroes, and covers them with the same halo of glory which they conceive as surrounding their favorite in the story.

In March of last year a boy eleven years of age committed a burglary on a store at Red Bank, N. J. He entered the store by removing a pane of glass, and then, reaching through, he unlocked the back door. He imagined himself "hail fellow well met" as soon as he secured the money in the cash-drawer and went out and spent it lavishly, treating people he met. He filled his pockets with cigars and cigarettes, which he also freely dispensed. When arraigned in court after being arrested, he boldly denied his guilt, but afterward confessed. To show

that he was full fledged, let me add his remarks to his poor, heart-broken mother. She came into court. When she asked him a question, he turned upon her, and in loud, defiant tone said to her, "Shut up! Who's runnin' this thing, me or you?" When taken to jail he was surrounded with boon companions, with whom he laughed and talked in the most non-chalant manner.

In May last a lad but sixteen years of age was arrested for murder. He shot his step-mother, and then, after robbing her in the most heartless manner, left her to die while he went out, bought him a new suit of clothes, and then went over to the Bowery to carouse with his low companions. He was arrested in a shooting-gallery, and when asked why he shot his mother, replied, "I shot her because I wanted money."

If any one doubts this phase of crime in the young, let him spend a week of observation in the criminal courts in New York City.

Another feature is that these stories suggest a ready means of revenge when the mind of the youth becomes excited from some crossing of his views or some fancied insult.

When passion is aroused, the hand instinctively follows the turn of thought suggested by something read in the story. The hero there always had knife, club, or revolver ready, and at once placed his opponent *hors de combat*.

In Missouri, in July last, a boy of twelve years of age was tried for murder in the first degree and convicted. His victim was his own father. In this case the boy imagined that he had been unjustly punished.

A girl eighteen years of age recently shot her father because he would not consent to her marrying a young man whom the father thought unworthy of her.

June 9th John Tibbetts, aged fourteen, was lynched by armed men in Perham, Minn. He had murdered two men. After being forcibly taken from the jail and led to the place of execution, this boy addressed the mob, and said he had been incited to the act for which he was about to die by reading sensational novels and an irresistible impulse to make a noise in the world by some bloody act, if necessary. While the preparations were going on about him, he remarked, without the slightest concern, "Hurry up; don't keep a fellow waiting." When asked at last if he had any further remarks to make, he said, in the same heartless and shameless manner, "I guess my mother'll cry when she hears this."

A St. Louis lad stabbed a playmate who teased him for ignorance of English.

A Texas boy shot a girl last summer because she refused to put down a pail she was carrying when he commanded her to.

In Paris, Ky., October 24th, 1882, Professor Yerkes, who has charge of a private school for boys and young men, was shot by a boy fourteen years of age, named Oldron. The day previous the teacher had corrected him for tardiness, and told him he must bring an excuse. The boy brought an excuse, and as he handed it to the professor said, "Take that too!" and shot him with a thirty-two calibre pistol.

Are the foregoing isolated cases, or are there statistics to emphasize and sustain them?

In General Sessions Court, New York City, in May, 1882, the Grand Jury, after being in session twenty-three days, and

passing upon two hundred and thirty-six separate complaints, made a final presentment to the court, saying, "Not far from three fourths of the complaints are against boys ranging from twelve to eighteen years of age."

On March 13th, 1882, in the same court, Judge Cowing, in passing sentence upon a batch of seven youthful burglars, said: "To see the number of bright, intelligent young men brought up in this court every day is a painful spectacle. A great majority of the prisoners arraigned in this court for burglary and other serious crimes, punishable by sentences ranging from five to twenty-five years in State Prison, are young men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five years. The judges of this court are doing all they can, by the imposition of heavy sentences, to put a stop to the commission of crime by young men, but it seems to have very little effect." He then sentenced the seven convicts as follows: Three, aged seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen respectively, to five years each in State Prison; another burglar, twenty-two years of age, to seven and a half years; another one of the same age, who committed a burglary and then tried to kill by shooting the officer who attempted to arrest him, was sent for eight years to State Prison; two others, under twenty-three years of age, each received three years in the same institution. Why is it that their efforts "seem to have very little effect"?

The answer must be found in the fact that the terrible increase of recruits made by criminal reading is far outstripping the capacity and power of the courts to correct. The courts cannot keep pace with the increase.

June 22d, 1882, in General Sessions Court might well have been called "Boys' Day." On that date no less than seventeen boys were arraigned on indictments ordered by the Grand Jury. Fourteen of these boys pleaded guilty or were convicted, and three were acquitted. Twelve were indicted for burglary, and five for larceny. Three were thirteen years of age, three fourteen, four sixteen, three eighteen, two nineteen, and two twenty. The sentences ranged from two and a half years in the Penitentiary or State Prison, to commitment to the House of Refuge. Take another day as reported in the *Herald*:

"*Boy Criminals.*—It was a noticeable fact in the Court of General Sessions yesterday that among a large batch of convicted prisoners the majority of them were boys, or those who had not attained their majority. Isaac Adams, eighteen years, convicted of larceny, was sent to State Prison for one year; Harry Jacobs, fourteen years, felonious assault and battery (the jury disagreed and he was discharged by the court); Leonard Droids, nineteen years, larceny, State Prison for eighteen months; Thomas Maloney, twenty years, petit larceny from the person, State Prison for four years. William Brown, thirteen years; Daniel Donovan, nine years, and Otto Baer, eleven years, were jointly tried for burglary in the third degree. They were found guilty and sent to the House of Refuge. Richard Delaney, aged eighteen years, was convicted of two charges—larceny from the person and larceny. He was sent to the Elmira Reformatory. John McCabe, aged sixteen years; Thomas McDonald, eleven years, John Hayes, ten years, and Frank Smith, eighteen years, were jointly tried on a charge of burglary in the third degree. Hayes was discharged, and the others sent to the House of Refuge. Charles Neiland,

aged eighteen years, pleaded guilty to grand larceny ; George Johnson, aged nineteen years, convicted of grand larceny, was sent to State Prison for two and a half years ; Joseph Henry, aged nineteen years, found guilty of burglary, was sentenced to State Prison for two and a half years."

Meeting one of the officers of the Prison Association recently, I asked him, How many criminals of all those arraigned in our New York courts are under twenty-one years of age? He replied at once, without hesitation, " Fifty per cent." How many, I asked, are sixteen years of age or under? His reply came as unhesitatingly, " One third."

But figures do not lie. I have in my office a scrap-book containing the newspaper items of arrests made. This is gathered just from casual reading, and from the papers as they come to hand from day to day. This record shows that from February 1st to August 15th, 1882, there were four hundred and sixty-four arrests and suicides of youth. The following tabular statement gives their crimes and ages :

(See chart below.)

Compare the following record, secured in the same manner, for the first half of the year 1883 with the above, and note the increase in the crime of murder, and attempted murder or felonious assault, and the higher crimes of felonies. The boy who arms himself with a deadly weapon and then attempts to take the life of another is none the less a murderer at heart because his efforts miscarry. Youths were arrested from January 1st to August 1st, 1883, as follows : Twenty-four for murder, eighty-seven for attempted murder, eighty for burglary, ninety-two for larceny, thirty-eight for highway robbery, fifty-seven girls for prostitution, four youths for arson, nine for forgery, eighteen attempted suicides, nine pickpockets, four mail-robbers, twelve gamblers, while twenty-one committed suicide.

Reader, has the language been too strong in condemnation of this evil ?

What is the remedy for children's crimes ?

Virtue and honesty must be instilled by the parent ; they must be a part of the child's education. Parental authority must be exercised wisely, lovingly, but firmly. The child's mind must be protected from the virus of putrid imaginations. The passions of the child must be kept subdued, and wholesome restraint ever maintained over youthful desires and whims. Evil communications must be shunned.

Parents and teachers, you may look upon the dumb pages of these story-papers and think there is no harm in them. You may be indifferent, negligent, and careless. But I warn you against these leprous influences. They speak to many youthful minds like the piercings of a sword — a *poisoned* sword !

" There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword." — Proverbs 12 : 18.

This evil is on the increase. These publications, like the fishes of the sea, spawn millions of seed, and each year these seeds germinate and spring up to a harvest of death. There is at present no law by which this monstrous evil can be checked. The remedy lies in your hands, by not patronizing any person who offers these death-traps for sale. It may seem a slight thing to do, but it is better than sitting indifferent. It is manly and speaks of moral courage for the right, for you to enter a dignified protest against the dissemination of this literary poison. Encourage the sale and publication of good wholesome reading by subscribing for some good paper or magazine for your children. Let your newsdealer feel that, just in proportion as he prunes his stock of that which is vicious, your interest in his welfare increases and your patronage becomes more constant. But, above all, at every hazard, rid the home of all of Satan's household traps, and whenever you discover one burn it to ashes !

There is another evil which accompanies the sickening details of crimes into the home. The same sheets are the signboards in many cases to dens of iniquity and marts of vice.

Ages.	Murder.	Attempted Murder.	Burglary.	Highway Robbery.	Grand Larceny.	Larceny.	Forgery.	Arson.	Manslaughter.	Counterfeiters.	Train Wrecking.	Mail Robbery.	Conspiracy to Kill.	Pickpockets.	Attempted Suicides.	Malicious Mischief.	Suicides.	Drunkards.	Youths Murdered.	Ages.
6	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
7	..	..	3	..	..	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	7
8	..	1	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	8
9	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
10	..	..	1	1	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
11	..	..	1	..	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	11
12	2	3	1	2	1	2	..	..	2	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	12
13	..	1	6	5	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	13
14	1	2	9	2	..	12	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	2	..	..	2	1	2	14
15	..	3	4	4	1	8	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	15
16	1	9	8	1	5	4	..	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	..	16
17	1	2	9	4	4	6	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	5	17
18	2	3	14	1	11	10	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	3	2	..	18
19	6	11	14	4	6	8	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	7	..	4	3	3	19
20	3	10	17	4	3	15	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	..	..	20
21	2	5	10	4	1	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	21
Totals	18	50	100	32	35	99	5	5	2	2	4	2	2	6	12	46	16	19	11	

46 between the ages of 6 and 16 years of age.