SANITARY SKETCHES

The Immediate Attention of the Health Board Wanted—Unpleasant Spots in Hot Weather—Forty Families in a Single Tenement and No Ventilation—Smoky Hollow, Shin Bone Alley, Mariner's Row and Other Equally Classic Localities.

In view of the declared determination on the part of the Health Officers to make Brooklyn during the coming Summer a solitary Eden, the following sketches of localities that will bear a good deal of purifying will doubtless be appreciated by Jourdan, Hutchison, Conkling & Co.,

SMOKY HOLLOW

The section of the city known as "Smoky Hollow" is bounded on the north by Atlantic, on the south by Amity, on the east by Hicks, and on the west by the river. For the past twenty-five years it has been one of the most celebrated localities in the city, and glories in the reputation of having produced more thieves and burglars, of accumulating more filth, of engendering more epidemics, and emptying more bottles of bad whisky than almost any other portion of our good and pious village.

As the EAGLE reporter and a policeman turned into Hicks street, near Amity, yesterday, they found themselves abreast of the Round House, a block of three story brick buildings, so called from a circular projection that puts one in mind of a shot tower cut short off and plastered against the house. Inside the fence, and within arm's length of the gate, is an

IMMENSE PILE OF REEKING FILTH,

ashes, rotten vegetables, etc., presided over by a bantam rooster and an antiquated hen, which looked with surprise at the sight of two strangers invading their environs. They looked ashamed, and to spare their feelings the reporter hurried on, but with his hand placed in a careful manner over his olfactories. In this house are domiciled

FORTY-EIGHT FAMILIES.

and the number of children that scampered around, gave rise to a sudden fear that a Mormon settlement had been unwittingly invaded.

Here, said the officer, is where two brothers named Carney got into a dispute some years ago, which was settled by one throwing the other out of the window, coming down stairs after him, where, throwing his neck across a buck saw he proceeded to

SAW HIS BROTHER'S HEAD OFF.

He was finally argued into changing his mind by one of his relatives in the neighborhood—after a couple of vigorous strokes—to the intense disappointment of the "boys," who had promised themselves a rare treat in looking at a new method of decapitation.

On the corner of Pacific and Hicks streets is a two story brick building, formerly known as

WADE'S STABLE,

but which has lately been partially turned into a dwelling house, while a grocery store dignifies the corner itself. Across the street, No. 67 Pacific street, is a rookery, known as

"HOUSE O' BLAZES,"

which has no yard in the rear, but simply a platform of narrow, thin planks, like lathing, broken through here and there, forming a series of traps and short cuts to the cellar floor below. In the cellar is the room formerly used by the select club of the neighborhood, styled the

"GENTLEMEN'S SONS,"

a congregation of unmitigated sneak thieves, and other such elegant individuals, which the police had the audacity to descend on and break up last winter. These gentry had, on many former occasions, escaped from officers who were on their track, by running from one cellar to another, and opening communications in that portion of the building where the architect and masons had forgotten to do it. The room so honored has been turned into a water closet, and a leaky hydrant does not improve the earthen floor for "snoozing purposes." In this small building 13 families live in elegant retirement.

Across the street from the House o' Blazes, stands

MORRO CASTLE,

a four story brick dwelling, with two groceries and a gin mill on the street floor, and thirty-three families residing in the rest of the house. In front of this establishment is to be seen the usual pile of filth, and a delicate and balmy odor arises from that pile which makes a man sigh for the pure air of Barren Island.

On the corner of Emmet and Pacific streets stand the remains of a wooden shanty which fell down from sheer old age and rottenness, and next door a little one story building, which did not tumble all the way, but stuck at an angle of about 45 degrees, sufficient to induce the junk merchant who inhabited it to hunt for board in the neighborhood. It will not be straightened at present. Turning into Emmet street, the first building which attracted the eye of the EAGLE man was

JACOB'S LADDER,

a two story brick building, with a high wooden ladder or stairway, running from the sidewalk to the door in the first story. This is another famous locality, where thieves used to escape the officers of the law by jumping over fences, running from alley to alley and from cellar to cellar. Immediately opposite Jacob's Ladder is a low alley way under a frame dwelling, passing up which brought the reporter and officer to

ROTTEN ROW,

which consists of a yard some seventy-five or one hundred feet in length, along one side of which is a row of wooden shanties, tenanted by twelve or fourteen families, and on the other side, facing the tenants, little, low, tumble down wood houses. In this yard is another

MASS OF FILTH,

ruled over by a couple of goats, and the usual number of ghastly looking chickens. From out the window came heads, male and female, with hair unkempt, and here and there a pair of blear eyes, watching with suspicious look, and scowling at the reporter as he made notes of the surroundings. One old woman tried her best to read them over his shoulder, and numberless children, ragged and wild looking—shrank from the vicinity of the police officer, and sneaked away to distant parts of the long yard, keeping wary eyes, however, on the intruders upon their domain. Rotten Row is proud of having sheltered historical individuals like

PUCKERTY FLAHERTY AND TIM GLYNN,

two members of the club aforementioned, who are now serving the State as geological analyzers, thanks to the efforts of Officer Rorke.

On the corner of Atlantic and Emmet is a row of brick tenement houses, with one yard running the entire length at the rear, and with the entrance to the yard on Emmet street. Here again are

PILES OF GARBAGE

and other filth, with the hot sun pouring down upon it. Turning to a woman who was standing near, the EAGLE man inquired if that was likely to stand there long, and was answered that it no doubt would, as the contractors would not remove it, since it was not outside the fence, in the street.

On the corner of Atlantic and Columbia street is a liquor store, at present kept by Mr. James Bracken, known as

"THE ROCK,"

a quiet and orderly place now, but in former years, under other proprietors, a rendezvous for the "hard cases" of the neighborhood. Here the dancers and "pivoters" had ample chance to show their agility in the "light fantastic," and many a plot to crack a crib had its origin there. Now, however, it is used for nobler purposes, performances being sometimes given in the hall for the benefit of poor widows or some other equally charitable purpose.

Across Columbia street, on the east side, is situated a three story brick house rejoicing in the euphonious title of the

"COLLAR AND ELBOW."

Some two years ago, a party of girls who worked in neighboring factories, kept house in the basement. They were denominated "picnicers"—that is, they could be invited with perfect impunity to accompany the young bloods of the vicinity to Lefferts Park and other places for night rambles. Hall, who shot young Rorke about that time was a visitor at the Collar and Elbow at the time of the affray, and the establishment was shortly after broken up by the police. Down Atlantic, past the buildings which formerly composed the old Long Island Railroad Depot, which were moved to their present site and occupied as stores and dwellings, and the EAGLE reporter and his companion came to the

COLUMBIA STORES,

the cleanliness of which was a decided relief to the eye, after what had been passed through before. The dock was as clean as the deck of a man-of-war. Stalwart 'longshoremen sat in the shade here and there, waiting like Micawber for "something to turn up." On the Pacific street side was a steam dredge, busily engaged in hoisting up masses of black, foul smelling mud from the channel.

Returning up Pacific street, the officer stopped at No. 16, the first of a row of three story brick tenements. Here the

"CAP. O'DONNELL ASSOCIATION"

held court. It boasted of such members as Bull Masterson, Tim Glynn, Johnny Manoke, Puckerty Flaherty, and other gentlemen of State Prison renown. This row was a trifle cleaner than some of the others, and did not show up such an extensive assortment of rotten vegetables and fishbones as some of its contemporaries.

On the southeast corner of Pacific and Columbia is situated a liquor shop known as the

"CONSTITUTION,"

for many years the headquarters of the Sixth Ward Democracy, the walls of which have rung "full many a time and oft" with the eloquence born of genius, and "rot-gut." Past it was reeling a man, young in years, but old in whisky drinking—whose brother died a violent death in a "gin mill" some two months before, a severe lesson to an ordinary man, but evidently one that had made but little impression on him.

Walking up Columbia to Amity Mike Holmes, alias "Indian Chief," was encountered. Mike is a character, the possessor of but one arm, and presides over a rag and junk business round the corner. Stopping at an open alley way the officer informed the reporter that here was the

ORIGINAL SMOKY HOLLOW.

In the rear was a piece of open ground, half filth, which had hardened into and become part of the real estate. On the right and farthest to the rear is an old one story shanty, used first as a stable, but more recently as a residence—at least the upper part of it. Old Time had battered it up to such an extent, however, that the inmates had been obliged to leave its meagre shelter, and as the only thing about it of any use was the stoop or ladder which led up to the human dormitory, that had been taken away, and the front door locked—with a hasp. In front of this are two more shanties—one a little one story tumble down, built in an original style of architecture, with positively a little piece of latticework on a sort of piazza, from behind which peeped a buxom Grecian female, who showed a pair of arms like—Samson, and a skin the color of which bore testimony to the varieties of climate in the neighborhood. She was engaged in bathing the family linen. Children, ragged and numerous, with olfactories impervious to the balmy odors which floated in the air, played around the filth, and evidently enjoyed rugged health. Here the reporter encountered the

COMMANDER OF MORRO CASTLE,

as Mr. Meany, the agent of the proprietor, is called. Mr. M. is a medium sized Irishman, perhaps fifty years of age, genial and smiling, and with what is still a handsome face. He collects the rents of Smoky Hollow, does all the repairs in the place, and is a generally useful man. Mr. Meany is, of course, an oracle and a great man, and is much respected in the vicinity.

"How is the old gentleman?" said Officer McCullough.

"Well, he is confined to his room, sir."

The old gentleman referred to is

MR. GEORGE M. PATCHEN,

the owner of Smoky Hollow. A year ago last Christmas Mr. Patchen, while visiting in the Hollow, had a fall, from which he never fully recovered. He is seventy-eight years old and has a wife, but no children. He never improves his property, and portions of it are simply ruins, while more of it is rapidly falling into decay. As the party returned to the street, the eyes of the reporter lighted upon the Pacific Mills, formerly

"KELSEY'S ALLEY,"

and one of the landmarks of the Hollow.

"How long since the building was pulled down?" asked the reporter.

"Well, it must be five or six years," said the officer.

"Oh, bless your soul, it's more nor that," interrupted the commandant, "it's double that time I think." "I say, Mrs. Flinn," addressing a jolly looking Hibernian matron who just came along, "how long since the mills was built? Tell this gintleman."

"Well, sur, sure an' it's twelve years, and divilish sorry I am that the old place was iver pulled down, for we had nice rooms and mighty chape rint there, so we did."

Proceeding up Amity street No. 12 is reached, an old vinegar factory on the street floor, now closed. The building is in a terrible state of dilapidation and threatens to tumble down at the shortest notice, yet here there are

FOUR FAMILIES

existing. In the yard is a pile of rotting filth, emitting the foul odor that is to be found in that locality, in abundance. In the rear of 51 and 53—a junk store—is a tumbledown shed about three feet in height and about fifty in length, which covers a hole of that length sunk some three feet in the ground, the receptacle of old bottles, rags, and the other paraphernalia of a junk shop.

Turning into Emmet street, and walking to the rear of a four story brick double house—Nos. 47 and 49—two immense piles of seething garbage meet the eye. The rooms and people in the house, however, are much cleaner and neater than some of their neighbors.

Hicks street, from Atlantic to Amity, has long been known in Smoky Hollow as

"THE DEVIL'S KITCHEN."

which name is said to have been given to it on account of the number of screeching, yelling children who are forever roaming up and down, making it a youthful pandemonium—half naked in Summer time—dirty and saucy at all times. On the fourth floor of one house the reporter and officer encountered young Canane eating his dinner. The door was open, and he shouted out a cordial invitation to come in and take some, which was politely declined. "All right," said he, in a maudlin manner, "report me at the EAGLE office." No. 340, in this locality, is where Burke murdered his wife some nine years ago, for which he received four years in the State Prison. Timmy Glynn, afore mentioned, also lived here. In the rear of 354 Hicks is a pile of garbage and other nuisances, which an old woman took pains to inform the reporter belonged to the next house. A good natured fellow named

RILEY THE SWIMMER,

who has performed some extraordinary swimming feats in the river, some time ago jumped down one of the outhouses in this yard to save what in the dark he supposed was an infant who had fallen in there and was smothering. On his successful exit he discovered he had extricated a young goat, and not the "kind of a kid" that he supposed. Riley received the sympathy of the man that owned the quadruped, and treated himself to a bath in the river with his clothes on.

"Well," said Officer McCullough, "we have seen about all there is of Smoky Hollow." It has of late been christened with a new name, and the old one is falling into disuse. The name now coming into vogue is

"THE LAVA BED."

This, in one sense, is an appropriate name. As a refuge for thieves and murderers it was at one time unequalled, and it was on rare occasions that justice overtook the thieves who hid in its recesses. Within the past few years it has, however, changed in that respect, and the disreputable characters, both male and female, have been gradually weeded out and "sent up" by the police. Two or three years ago a respectable stranger would not have dared to walk through the locality. If he did he was sure to be struck with a brickbat, mobbed or robbed before he got clear of its boundaries. The great objection now to be found there is the immense

MASSES OF FILTH AND GARBAGE,

which block up the yards and portions of the streets, and the numbers of human creatures, who, in their poverty and dirt, are crowded into the tenements and dilapidated stables. Should

YELLOW FEVER OR CHOLERA

make their way to this locality—and it being on the river edge makes it doubly dangerous—Death would reap a frightful harvest, and ours would in truth become a plague-smitten city. What can the Health Board be thinking about, to let such a sleeping Nemesis rest quietly in the midst of the city? Something should be done, and that quickly, to rid the streets of the seeds of epidemic which here wait an opportunity to burst into fruit.