



**The Good  
Old Days –  
They Were  
Terrible!**

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**Otto L. Bettmann**



**Random House  
New York**

# 1 Air



WHEN THE CIVIL WAR ENDED, the American North was fully mobilized for industry, and forests of smokestacks had grown along with its swelling cities. This was a period of confidence as the country set out boldly to shape a new destiny.

The smoke that billowed over the landscape was seen as a good omen; it meant prosperity.

In the industrial communities it was considered a sign of feminine delicacy to complain about the bad air or to have a coughing spell. Mary Gilson, growing up in Pittsburgh in the 1890's, was reprimanded by her parents for complaining about the foul air: "We should be grateful for God's goodness in making work, which made smoke, which made prosperity."

The intense pollution was thus rationalized by its victims and many doctors had only a hazy notion of its effects. Some went so far as to declare that smoke with carbon, sulfur and iodine in it acted as a curative for "lung and cutaneous diseases" and that it killed malaria.

There were other forms of pollution that made life in certain parts of the city unhealthy and degrading: streets caked with animal wastes and the oozeings of clogged sewers, and littered with the overflow of uncollected garbage that was piled on the sidewalks. The emanating stench combined to make New York, in the words of one visitor, a "nasal disaster."

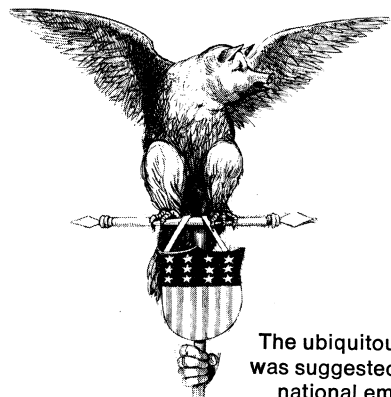
# Four-Legged Polluters

## When pigs roamed Broadway

Broadway's affinity with ham has an enduring quality. In the 1860's, however, two species competed for attention in the heart of the city—one panting on stage, the other squealing and grunting in the streets.

The pig in the city was a paradox—an element of rural culture transposed to urban life. Pigs roamed the streets rooting for food, the stink from their wastes poisoning the air.

Because they ate garbage, the pigs were tolerated to a degree in the absence of adequate sanitation facilities. But this dubious contribution to municipal services was tiny in comparison with the nuisance they caused. From the nation's capital to Midwestern "porkopolis," we are told, squares



The ubiquitous pig was suggested as a national emblem.

and parks amounted to public hogpens.

Urbana, Ill., boasted more hogs in the city than people. The human dwellings of Cincinnati in the 1860's comingled with fifty slaughterhouses, which drew a yearly mess of almost half a million pigs through the streets. And in Kansas City the confusion and stench of patrolling hogs were so penetrating that Oscar Wilde observed, "They made granite eyes weep."

Cincinnati:  
450,000 porkers  
passed through  
the city each year.  
The transient  
pig population  
of Kansas  
created so much dirt  
and stench it  
"made granite  
eyes shed tears."

New York:  
Broadway and  
Fourth Street,  
1858, when  
"his porkship"  
ruled the town.



## Equine smells

In city streets clogged with automobiles, the vision of a horse and buggy produces strong nostalgia. A century ago it produced a different feeling—distress, owing to the horse for what he dropped and to the buggy for spreading it.

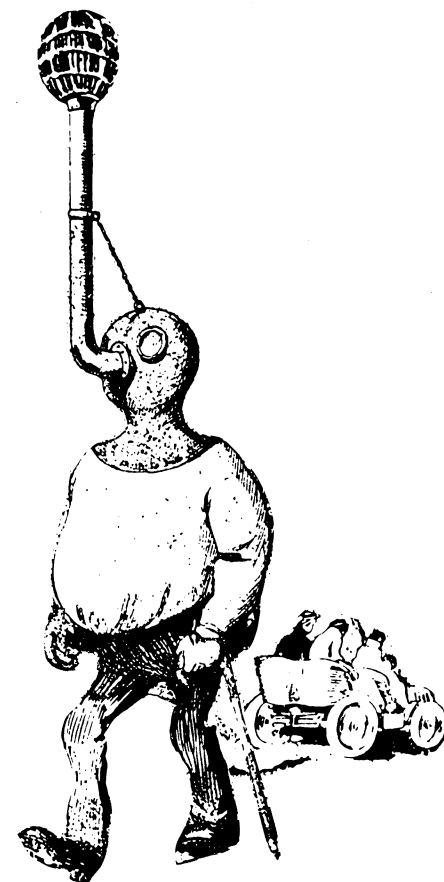
Of the three million horses in American cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, New York had some 150,000, the healthier ones each producing between twenty and twenty-five pounds of manure a day. These dumplings were numerous on every street, attracting swarms of flies and radiating a powerful stench. The ambiance was further debased by the presence on almost every block of stables filled with urine-saturated hay.

During dry spells the pounding traffic refined the manure to dust, which blew "from the pavement as a sharp, piercing powder, to cover our clothes, ruin our furniture and blow up into our nostrils."

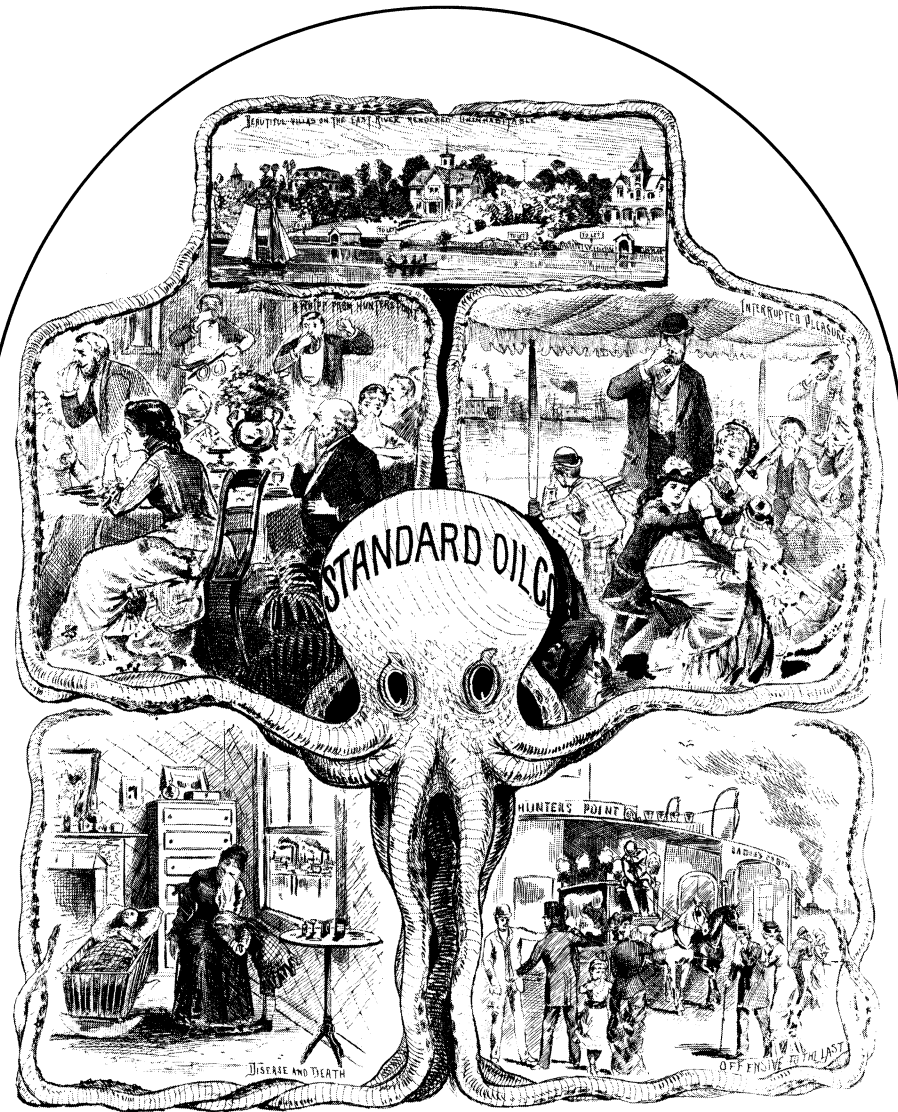
The 15,000 horses of Rochester, N.Y., produced enough manure in 1900 to cover an acre of ground with a layer 175 feet high. This steadily increasing production caused the more pessimistic observers to fear that American cities would disappear like Pompeii—not under ashes. The timely arrival of the horseless carriage prevented this, of course. It was widely hoped that the age of polluted air was coming to a close, that cities at long last would be healthier, cleaner, quieter places to live in. But as Proudhon once observed, "human history has a great propensity for surprises."



Sanitation man does battle with manure, Longacre Square, New York, 1900.



Hopes for relief from equine population were fulfilled, but a more poisonous fume came wafting through the air. (1905)



"The Horrible Monster whose tentacles spread disease and death." Fumes from Standard Oil refineries made New York a "nasal disaster."

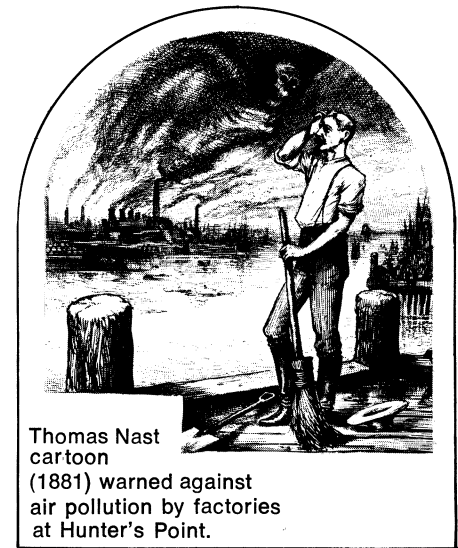
## Industrial Vapors

*They ensnare New York City—  
Hunter's Point a smelly scandal*

"Smog" is a portmanteau word ("smoke" plus "fog") that a Glasgow sanitary engineer coined in 1905. Its widespread use today makes it seem new, but the phenomenon it describes has long existed. Smoke and acrid vapors smothered the industrial cities of the post-Civil War U.S., and municipal control of offending plants was as sparse as clean air in Lower Manhattan.

As the largest city, with 287 foundries and machine shops, a printing industry powered by 125 steam engines, bone mills, refineries and tanneries, New York in 1880 was at one time both major sinner and major victim, symbolizing the unpleasant aspects of industrialization that her sister cities also endured.

The crux of New York's filthy air was Hunter's Point, on the



Thomas Nast cartoon (1881) warned against air pollution by factories at Hunter's Point.

rim of the Bronx, where established industries had moved in force by the late 1870's. Out of sight perhaps, but not out of smell. Grievous odors from the Point poured over Manhattan, affecting all who lived there regardless of rank or address. Frederick Law Olmsted, architect of Central Park, complained that "the stench [was] borne to his residence in



How Hunter's Point's foul odors aggravate the miseries of the sick room.

46th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues."

But by 1881 even the doggedly patient New Yorkers had coughed enough and angrily compelled the State Board of Health to investigate the origin of their misery. During the inquiry ninety witnesses specified the ingredients that gave the city air its rich flavor: sulfur, ammonia gases, offal rendering, bone boiling, manure heaps, putrid animal wastes, fish scrap, kerosene, acid fumes, phosphate fertilizer and sludge. Such an impressive menu enforced the Board's conclusion that the pollution was harming the citizens' health.

In their testimony, a number of doctors spoke of the violence of the stench; of oil refineries endlessly puffing black smoke "... to produce sickness and depression"; of acid fumes "irritating lungs and throat"; of odors causing "an inclination to vomit."

New Yorkers didn't call it smog

in the good old days, and perhaps they were wise. Considering what they breathed daily, the word sounds almost inoffensive.

### Arcadian suburbs?

To flee the city for the suburbs in the Gilded Age was often a case of leaving the frying pan for the fire. The miasma from ungraded swampy lands where family refuse decomposed in the sun made living conditions dismal. Municipal services were non-existent, and the dingy dirty tentacles of Hunter's Point stretched to the furthest shack.

In Glen Cove, L.I., according to the Board of Health records, the atmosphere was so polluted at times as to produce nausea and make normal breathing difficult. In fear for their health, summer residents petitioned the governor for redress.



The suburbs of the greatest city polluted by garbage-filled marshes.

## Garbage Revisited

*Some streets smell like bad eggs dissolved in ammonia.*

In terms of refuse the human is the richest animal, a fact that is hardly concealed even today by an efficient sanitation system. It was most clearly evident, however, in American cities of the 1860's through the 1880's, where man was surrounded by his own litter much as a champion is surrounded by his trophies. What garbage pickup did exist was capricious and inept.

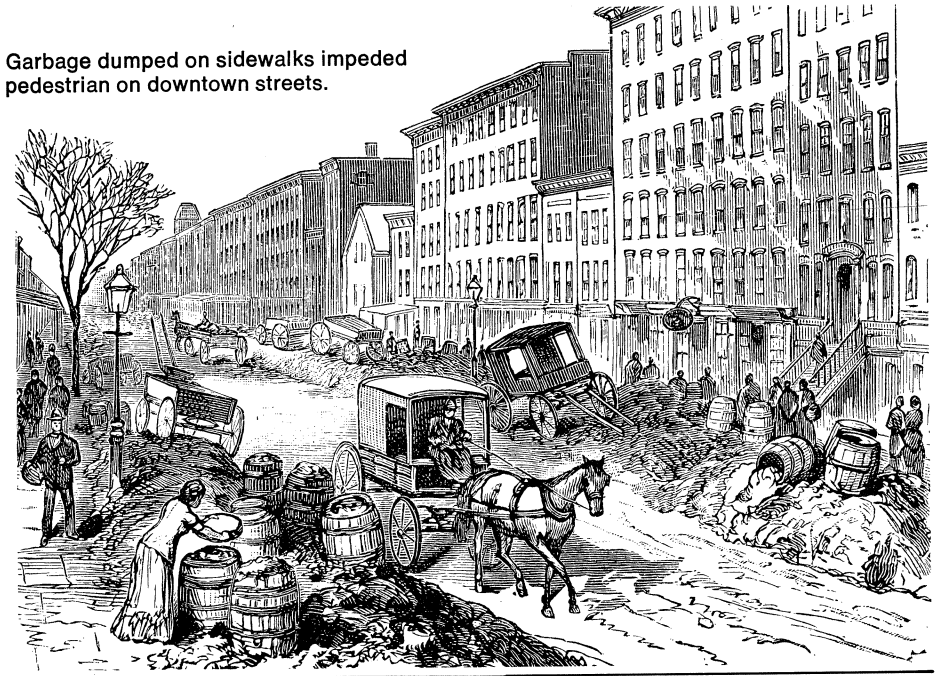
Again we turn to New York as our "model" city to describe the Golden Age of rubbish. The wastes of daily life, including kitchen slops, cinders, coal dust, horse manure, broken cobblestones and dumped merchandise, were piled high on the sidewalks. There was hardly a block in



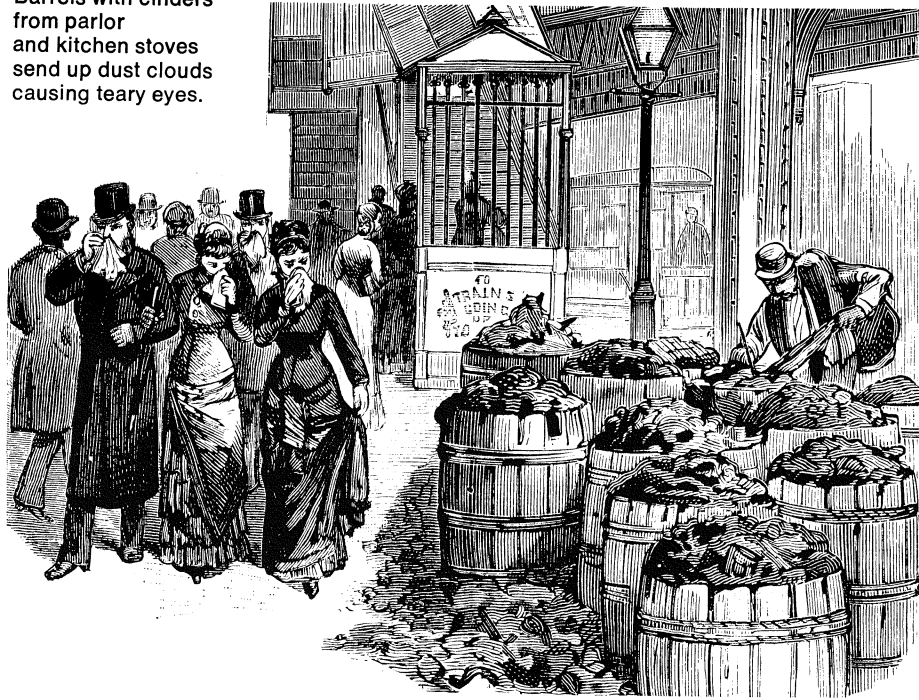
downtown Manhattan that a pedestrian could negotiate without climbing over a heap of trash or, in rain, wading through a bed of slime.

This endemic mess dramatized how poorly equipped the authorities were to cope with the problems that developing cities encountered after the Civil War. The tumbling disorder caused by overcrowding, the cross purposes of commercial and domestic needs, and the lack of regulation

Garbage dumped on sidewalks impeded pedestrian on downtown streets.



Barrels with cinders from parlor and kitchen stoves send up dust clouds causing teary eyes.



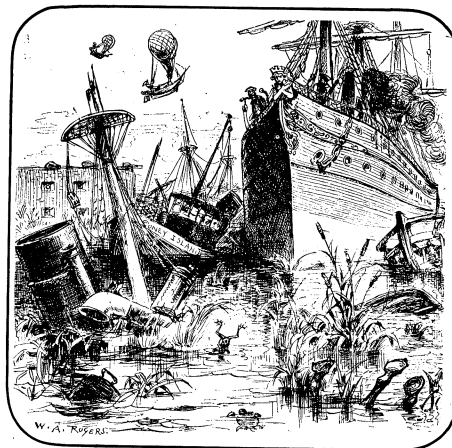
overwhelmed the meager facilities that were available. If liberty had an antic face, it leered from the sidewalks of New York.

Inflation compounded the difficulty of cleanup. In the Northern cities, contractors reneged on their agreements as the currency, like the air, sank in value. Conditions were even worse in Southern towns, such as Memphis and New Orleans, where sewerage facilities were more primitive and municipal supervision criminally lax.

New York's sidewalks were lined with unharnessed trucks, beneath and between which dirtier citizens threw their filth. A foreign visitor said of this antique parking problem that it made the city look "like a huge dirty stable." The wagons were coveted as a refuge by lovers and criminals, and one truck was distinguished by providing overnight shelter for a newly arrived Joseph Pulitzer. An 1895 ordinance to prohibit

this parking nuisance was impeded by truckmen who removed a wheel from their vehicles to prevent the city from towing them away. We can only speculate what such spirited fellows might have done to a parking meter.

New York Harbor Everglades: rivers clogged with dead horses, discarded vehicles, machines.



Traffic impeded by garbage thrown between unharnessed trucks.



# Wind

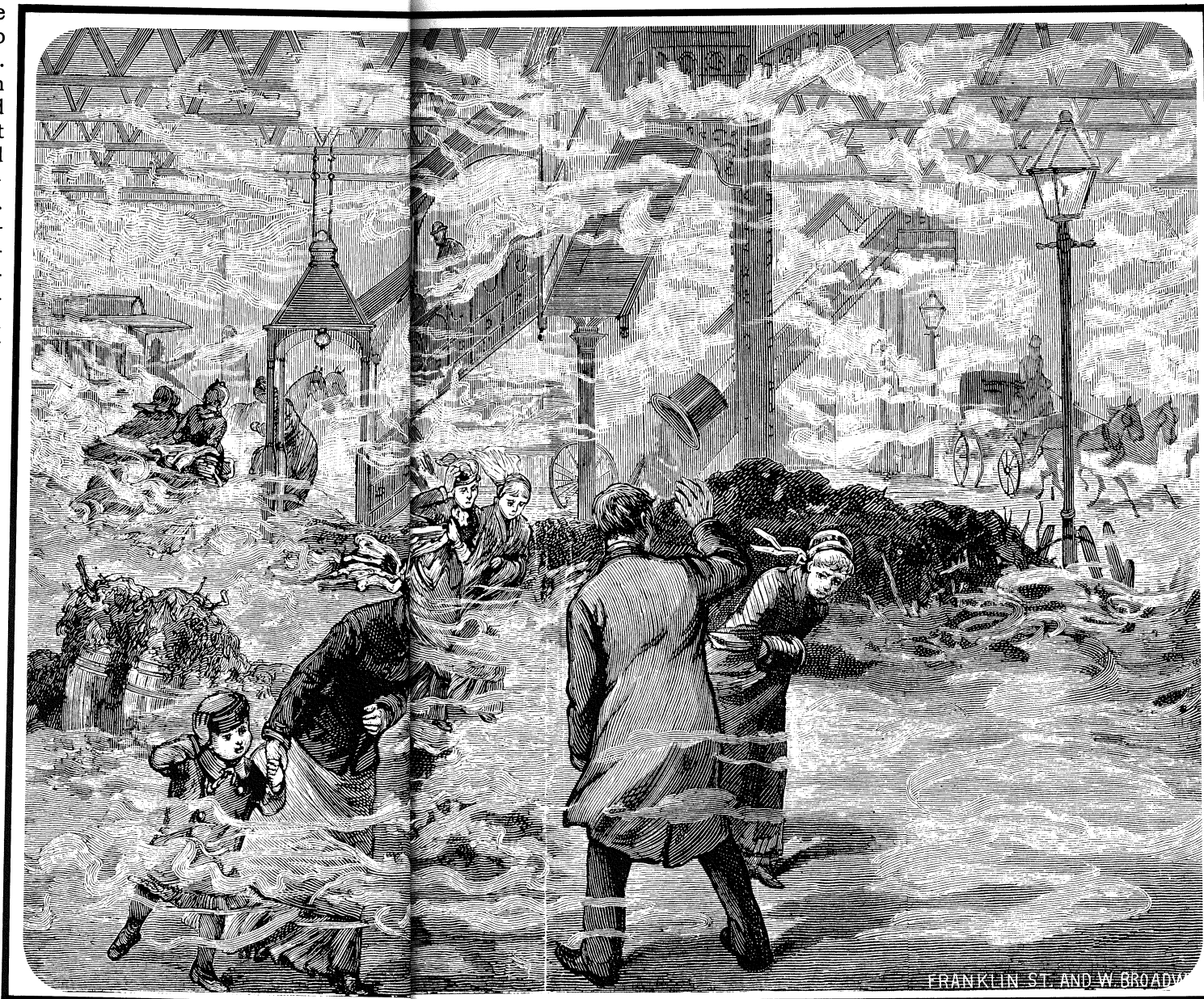
**"Wherever the wind blows, the foul corruption is carried."**

In nature's scheme of things the wind is messenger; it will carry with perfect fidelity to natural laws the scent of lilac or volcanic ash. And what man writes in the wind will be delivered back to him with immutable certainty. During the headlong celebration of industrial power that marked the Gilded Age, man wrote in it with septic muck, and the wind carried it straight back to him — to his nostrils and eyes and lungs.

In the opinion of *Leslie's Weekly* (1881), "... no dumping-ground, no sewer, no vault contains more filth or in greater variety than [does] the air in certain parts of [New York] city during the long season of drought. . . . No barrier can shut it out, no social distinction can save us from it; no domestic cleanliness, no private sanitary measures can substitute a pure atmosphere for a foul one."

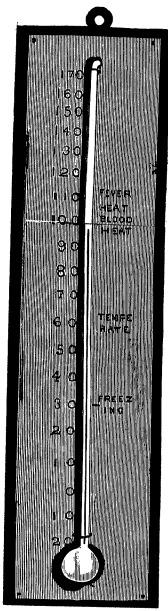


**"When the dust is upon the city, it becomes a terrible place to dwell in. Its sharp lung-piercing powder makes us the greatest sufferers from catarrh and consumption." Scene on Franklin Street, New York, 1881.**



# Summer

*"The great foul city  
emanating poison  
at every pore"*

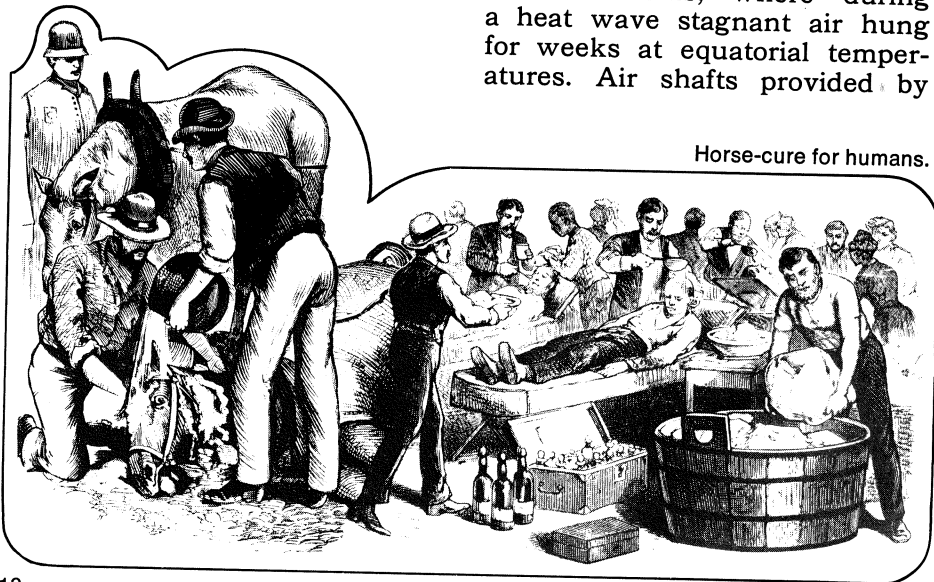


As warm-blooded creatures, we have always had more success coping with cold than with heat. The air conditioner, blessing that it is, alters but does not reverse that fact. Nonetheless, in hot weather we are cooler today by several degrees—without artificial help—than the city dwellers of the past.

The record shows that the "good old summer days" were often unbearable, indoors and out. New York City, for instance, was hotter then, with lower buildings that offered little protection from the sun. And the clothing of the period—heavy suits, long underwear, starched shirts plus vests, girdles and voluminous petticoats—added a penitential excess to the citizens' misery. Delirium and sunstroke were commonplace; a heat wave in August 1896 caused the deaths of some three thousand humans and two thousand horses.

The windowless room was another feature of city life that exacerbated summer hardships. An 1894 survey found 6576 New York slum families living in such "inside" rooms, where during a heat wave stagnant air hung for weeks at equatorial temperatures. Air shafts provided by

Humane help for horses.



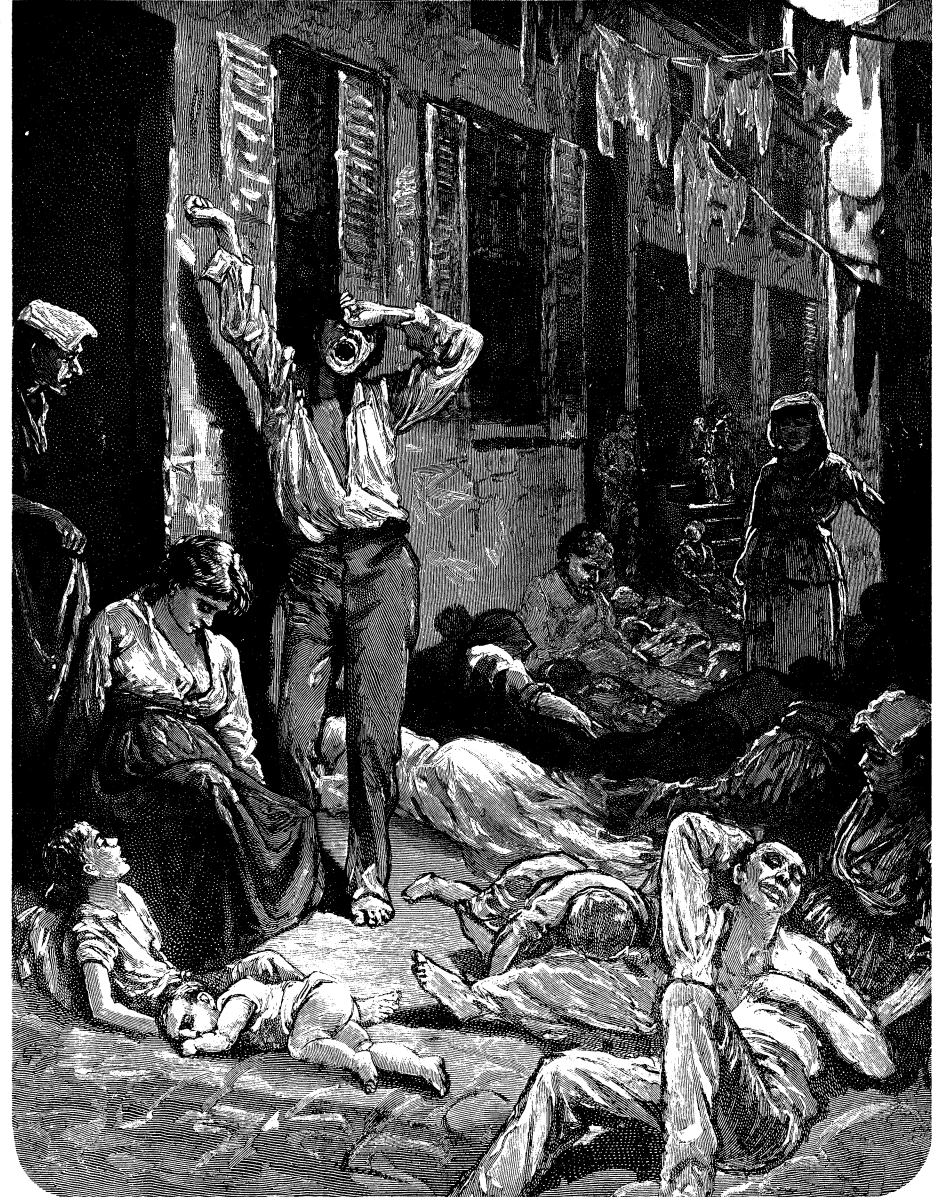
Horse-cure for humans.

landlords to circumvent an 1879 ban on these rooms were used as garbage chutes, infecting the oven-hot air with a rancid smell.

In the slums, conditions were most pitiable. Seeking refuge outdoors from their furnacelike quarters, the poor lay in the alley-

ways and streets, where, according to a witness, the pavement was turned into "masses of fire in which the air quivers and palpitates." The nights brought no relief, only a still, sleepless languor filled with apprehension for the morrow.

New York's slum dwellers escape from their windowless hovels. "On a hot night the streets are filled with families all panting and praying for fresh air."





# Chicago

*"Having seen it . . . I desire urgently never to see it again. Its air is dirt."*

Rudyard Kipling made these remarks about Chicago, a city that during the Gilded Age yielded nothing to New York in the breadth and virulence of its pollution. Which city was dirtier was an academic question, but one visitor noted a difference in the character of Chicago's industry-created climate: "The smoke . . . has a peculiar aggressive individuality . . ."

It is possible that the observer was a romantic, attributing to Chicago's pollution the pugnacious, emotional qualities that the city was noted for. However, its very location on low prairie

flats militated against the chance of becoming a healthy place to live in. In early Chicago, natural drainage was nonexistent, flooding habitual, and the Chicago River fetid "with grease so thick on its surface it seemed a liquid rainbow."

The city tackled these problems with the buoyant spirit of the frontier, literally raising itself—on pilings and vast land-fill—seven to twelve feet above the prairie. Its population—only five thousand souls in 1840—grew to a startling one million by 1890. The great fire of 1871 did not stop Chicago's blustering advance; indeed the fire and smoke it produced may have had a baptismal effect on its people, tempering them for the ordeal to come.

As it grew during the 1870's into a major transportation center,

with eight railroads, a busy port, and heavy industry keeping pace, Chicago's pollution assumed a permanent, almost solid quality. "During my stay of one week, I did not see in Chicago anything but darkness, smoke, clouds of dirt," reported the Italian dramatist Giuseppe Giacosa. "One morning, when I happened to be on a high railroad viaduct, the city seemed to smolder, a vast, unyielding conflagration."

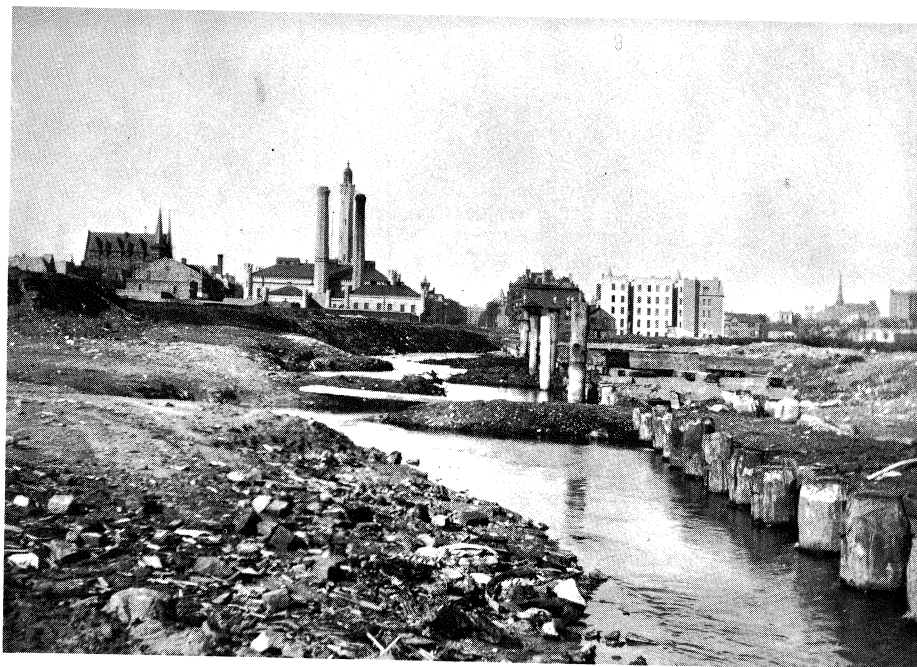
The largest assemblage of stockyards in the world added a pungent flavor to Chicago's air. The stockyards were the city's pride, and visitors were constantly being dragged to see them. After witnessing the disemboweling ceremonies, Lord Coleridge plead-

ed to be led outside or he "never could eat sausage again."

A feature of the city's outlying districts, which lacked paved streets, was the sandstorms blown by the wind from Lake Michigan, stinging the eyes and making travel a hardship. A visitor remarked: "How a person can navigate this dirty city at night is a mystery to me."

Because of its assault on eye, ear, nose and throat in the good old days, Chicago was rarely mentioned without the adornment of various uncomplimentary adjectives. Today it is known affectionately as the Windy City. And that is a monumental achievement.

Swampy Chicago, built at prairie level, was crisscrossed by fetid inlets. The river floated grease "so thick it seemed a liquid rainbow."



Smells from garbage heaps aggravated by exudation from stockyard poisoned Chicago air. Children shown are searching for food.

# Pittsburgh

***"Nothing dingier and more dispiriting can be imagined."***

At the turn of the century Pittsburgh and its environs along the Monongahela Valley boasted some 14,000 chimneys (most of them belonging to iron and steel plants) that provided a 24-hour barrage of soot, ashes and glowing embers. A Hungarian visitor, Count Vay de Vaya, described it as "a noisome vomit, killing everything that grows—trees, grass and flowers." Workers were hardly able to breathe in this atmosphere "worthy of Satan himself."

Thousands, moreover, were compelled to live close to these factories—in drab, unpainted shanties with smoke belching right through the windows, the backyards thick with mud and strewn with beer kegs and rubbish. No attempt was made to separate industry and human habitation. On the contrary, com-

panies welcomed such proximity because it enabled them to exert tighter control over the workers.

Merely keeping clean became a problem in Pittsburgh—even for the middle class that lived apart from the industrial sections. Around 1900 the residents spent \$1,500,000 on extra laundry work and \$750,000 a year for extra general cleaning, according to Chamber of Commerce figures. Cincinnati had similar problems. People's hands and faces were constantly grimy, clean collars quickly acquired a thin layer of soot, and the bituminous coal dust gave clothes hung out in the weekly wash a permanent yellow tinge.

But Pittsburghers were not to be daunted. They pronounced the city "one of the healthiest in the United States. . . . People work so hard here they don't notice the smoke."

## ***Farther West***

Contrary to the sanitized view that Hollywood gives us, Western

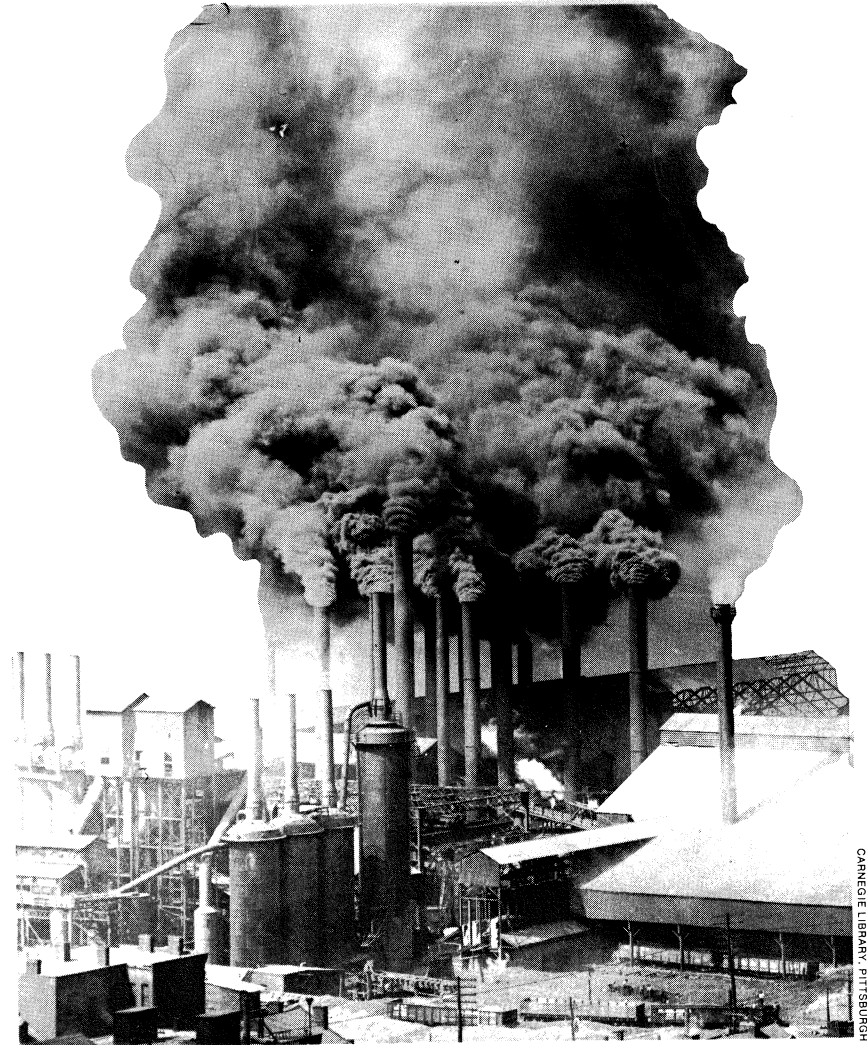
towns were actually quite dirty, and so were the cowpokes who frequented them. The horses—everybody had at least one—created steamy cesspools around the hitching posts, where flies plagued man and beast and a vile odor abounded. Frequently oxen and cattle contributed to the mess, and after a rainfall the streets were filled with a yellow-brown ooze.

Leadville, Colo., reported a

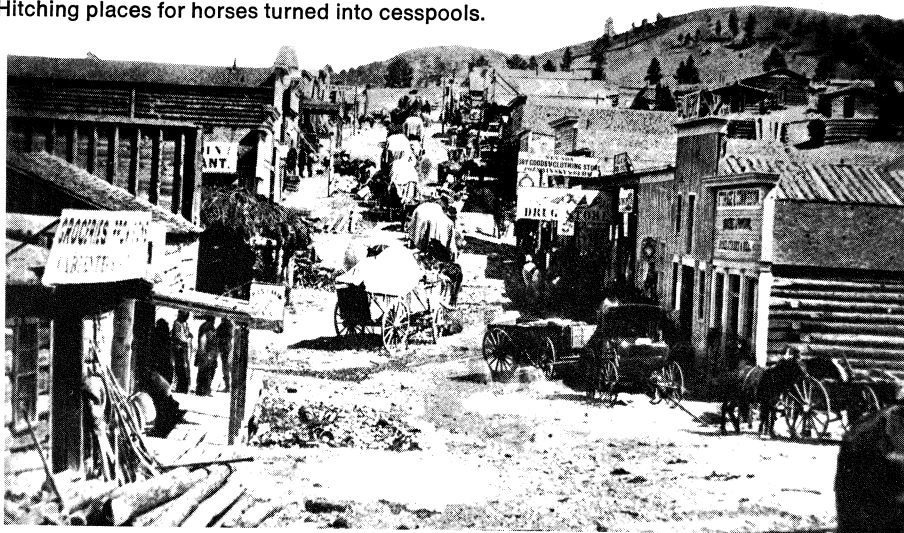
morass on its Main Street 18 inches deep in which the wooden sidewalks formed a "sort of raft," an ideal nest for rats. This mess seeped into pools to be pumped up as drinking water so putrid "it made liquor drinking a virtue."

Pioneers trekked westward to breathe what they expected would be the fresh air of small frontier towns. What they often encountered was air like that of a malarial swamp.

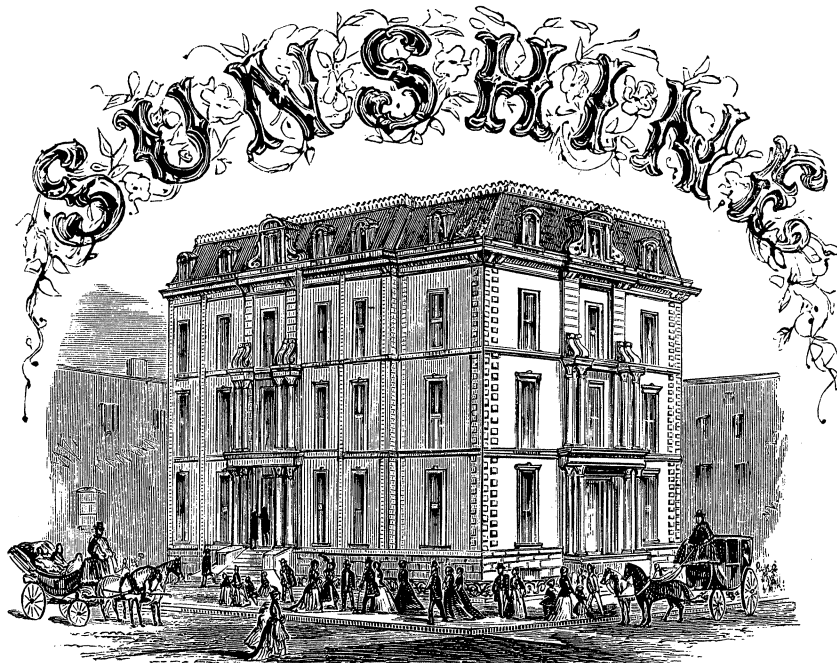
Pittsburgh in the 1890's: "The realm of Vulcan couldn't be more filthy with burning fires spurting flames on every side."



Bridge Street, Helena, Montana. Lacking municipal facilities, frontier towns reeked of filth. Hitching places for horses turned into cesspools.



# 3 Housing



AND



New York, "the filthiest, wealthiest town" in the world: on 23rd Street, the Stewart mansion with its 18-foot ceilings; downtown, shaky firetraps—bedrooms without windows.

THE RAGS-AND-RICHES paradox of America during the Gilded Age was nowhere more visible than in New York City.

The poor lived close by the rich, and the contrast in their housing embarrassed those of sensitivity, troubled those of conscience, and mocked those of faith.

Tenements huddled pitifully in the shadow of mansions, and next to the splendors of Fifth Avenue were the rocky wastes of a shantytown that in the 1880's extended from 42nd to 110th Street. This counterpoint of squalor and luxury was compared, by a British traveler, to a lady with diamonds around her neck and her toes sticking out of shabby shoes.

New York's reputation of the period was that of a gay, raffish high society, whose ostentation and carryings-on diverted attention from the despair and the realities of life among the poor and lower-middle class. Decent accommodation at modest rentals was nonexistent, as a "housing famine" proved an economic calamity to the mass of city residents. Trapped in serfdom, poor families were unable to escape the slums, and unwilling too, perhaps, because of ethnic ties and the proximity to casual jobs. "Except for those who are very rich, it is impossible to live in the city with any degree of decency." Even in the fine brownstones life was commonly short of the serene orderliness suggested by their façades.



Bathing baby: a splashy ordeal, requiring hot water from the kitchen stove.

Homes overloaded with "superannuated trash" suffered from street dust, cinders from stoves.

Kerosene replacing whale oil as illuminant proved "explosive as gunpowder." In 1880, 39 percent of all New York fires were caused by defective lamps.

## Townhouses

*"Constantly demanding structures with few alleviating graces"*

Townhouses give a city architectural balance; they soften the heavy presence of commercial and institutional buildings. Among the fashionable of New York it is now considered chic to own one. The handsome façades have not been altered since the Gilded Age, but the interiors have, and for good reason. In their heyday these houses were stuffy, difficult to maintain and occasionally injurious to health.

A basic problem was the polluted air that permeated almost all sections of the city. Brownstone residents were advised to keep their windows permanently shut against outside air, which was "redolent with a mixture of soot, factory vapors, and animal stench." Indoors, because of the lack of ventilation, the air was comparable in quality, if not worse. Sewer gas from primitive drainage systems posed a constant peril to health; dampness and odors plagued the homes of rich and poor alike.

The indoor air was befouled further by the standard coal stove, which gobbled oxygen in exchange for soot and dust. Central steam heat provided a costly (\$2000-\$4000) alternative in the



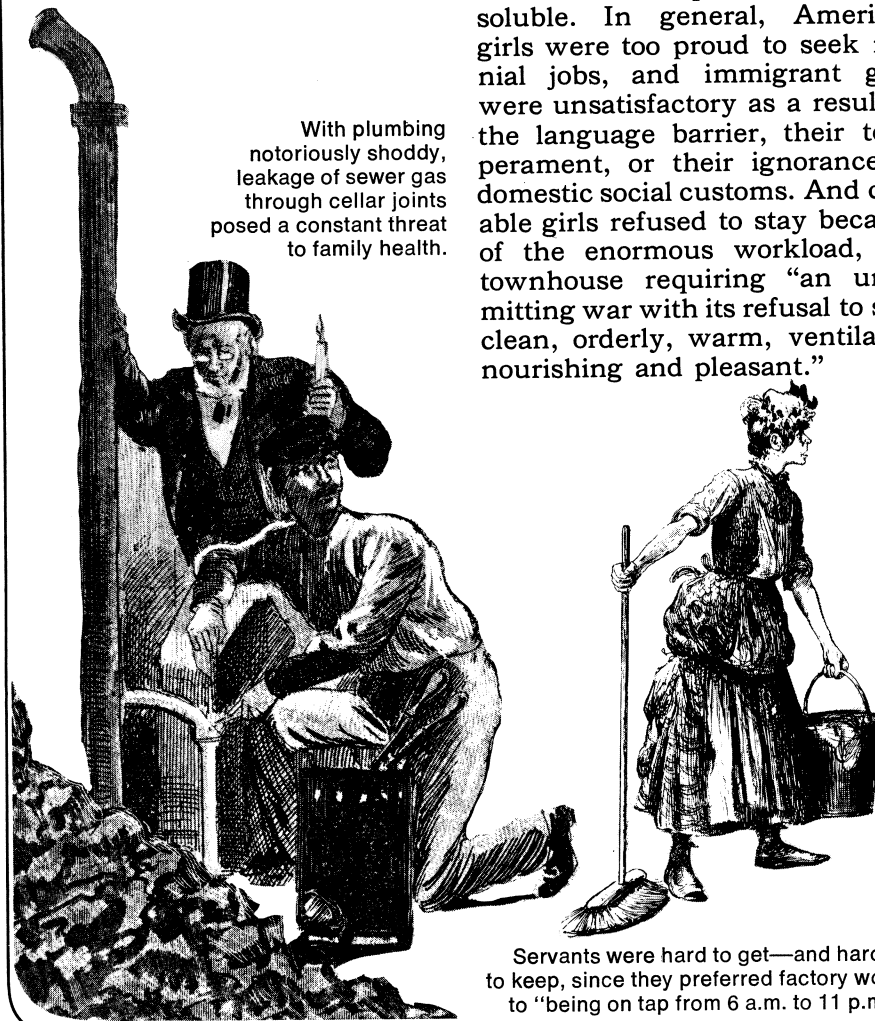
1880's, but the early radiators were afflicted by a novel form of nuisance, water hammer and hissing. One wonders if the brownstone resident annoyed by these noises was consoled by the thought that the air was cleaner.

In one area of personal care, the Victorians appeared untroubled. They seldom bathed. Glorification of the bathroom is a modern fetish. In 1882 only 2 percent of New York's homes

had water connections, and these in all probability were leaky and, if attached to a stove, dangerous. Bathing was considered harmful by some doctors, and one, C. E. Sargent, described it as "a needless waste of time." In an ornate or overstuffed townhouse regular chores, from bathing the baby (generally approved) to dusting and cleaning, were a grinding toil, but most wearisome of all was cooking. Preparation of a Victorian dinner was a monumental task in a kitchen of spartan design.

The servant problem was insoluble. In general, American girls were too proud to seek menial jobs, and immigrant girls were unsatisfactory as a result of the language barrier, their temperament, or their ignorance of domestic social customs. And capable girls refused to stay because of the enormous workload, the townhouse requiring "an unremitting war with its refusal to stay clean, orderly, warm, ventilated, nourishing and pleasant."

With plumbing notoriously shoddy, leakage of sewer gas through cellar joints posed a constant threat to family health.



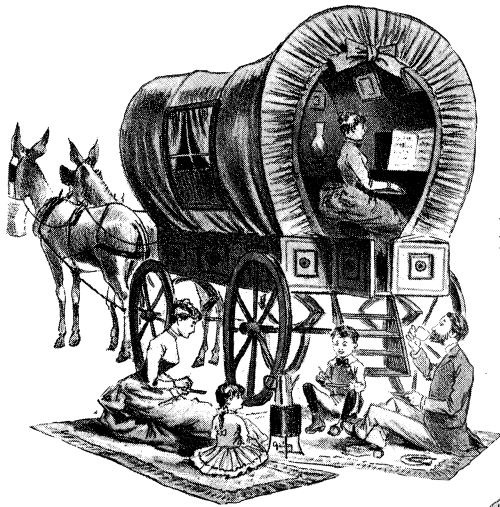
Servants were hard to get—and harder to keep, since they preferred factory work to "being on tap from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m."

# Tenant Trouble

*I am the landlord—my rights  
none can dispute  
I am the lord though they call  
me a brute*

In public affection the landlord's rating was comparable to that of the kidnaper; and the richer he was, the more likely he was to deserve it. His victim, the tenant, is today protected by the law, but a hundred years ago he was vulnerable, ignorant and utterly misused.

New York's soaring population—augmented by the continuing influx of Europeans—aggravated the housing shortage and inflated real estate values. Keen as foxes to the scent of weaker game,



"Camp in a covered wagon" was the wry advice to New Yorkers caught between low incomes and high rents.

speculators piously came to the rescue by building the cheapest form of tenements.

Cracked walls, sagging floors and a total absence of fire exits were features of these neglected buildings, whose dingy overcrowded rooms drew extortionate rents. Landlords bullied poor and middle-class families with yearly rent increases and unpardonably brutal evictions.

## Boarding houses

For New Yorkers who became casualties of the rent spiral the boarding house offered a solution, though not an ideal one. For \$3 to \$5 a week the clerk or working girl could find refuge here, along with childless couples, adventurers and ne'er-do-wells. Together they comprised a true cross section of America's transient population—a culture of the homeless who were bound to a fixed place by neither blood nor tradition.

No invention of the Gilded Age, the boarding house had flourished before the Civil War

in frontier cities and towns as a vital element in the nation's growth. Charles Dickens, among others, missed their significance when he waspishly compared America's rootless ways with those of the English.

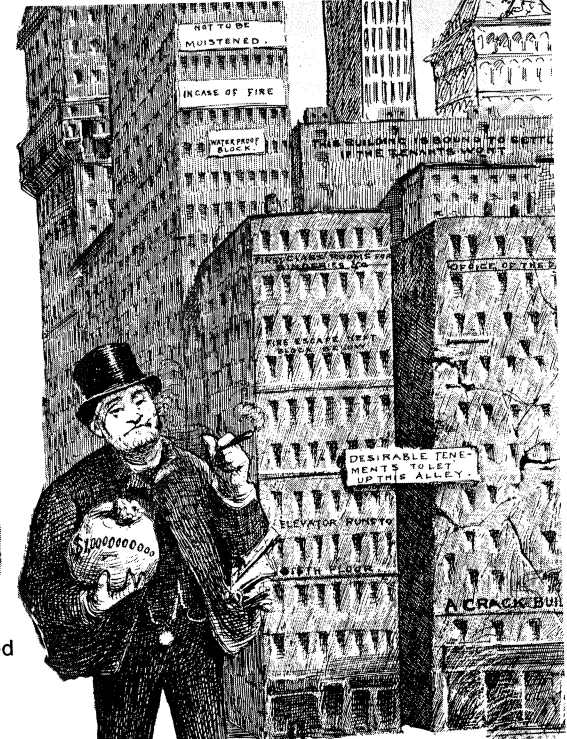
Domestic moralists saw them as a threat to Victorian rectitude that loosened family ties and encouraged sinful liaisons. No doubt these dangers existed, but for legions with meager resources the boarding house was home.



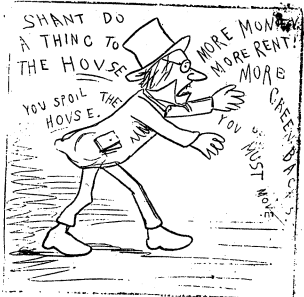
"Boarding houses are unnatural and the result of an overcrowded civilization." The New York of the 1870's was called "one vast boarding house."



No court procedures were needed to dispossess tenants. In 1884, over 43,000 New York families were evicted for failure to pay rent.



Money-bagged landlord stands in front of his "crack tenements," erected with no concern for tenants' comfort, safety or health.



A tenant's sketch of the landlord.

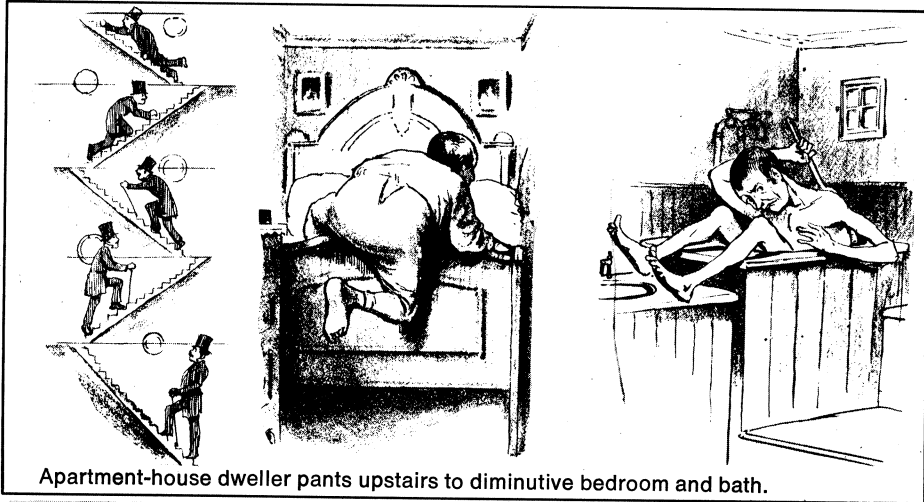
# Conglomerate Living

*Middle-class apartment houses were crammed . . .*

The need for the apartment house existed for many years before its evolution. The boarding house and tenement were too little; the townhouse, too much. The intense frustration of city life

literally forced the development of the apartment building, which was to convert millions of Americans into "cliff dwellers."

The flight from private dwellings began with the well-to-do, whose townhouses had become a financial burden. Richard M. Hunt created the prototype of a new style of housing in his Stuyvesant Apartments on 18th Street in New York. Contrary to dire predictions that New Yorkers would never consent to live "on



Apartment-house dweller pants upstairs to diminutive bedroom and bath.



mere shelves under a common roof," this building and similar ones that followed it proved very successful. Class privilege was safeguarded by rents up to \$3000 for seven rooms.

Reassured by the acceptance of communal living by the wealthy, real estate entrepreneurs built lower-rent apartment houses for the middle class. But these structures, which soon mushroomed in American cities, were little more than glorified tenements; and the style of living that was a pleasure for the rich became, in imitation, a curse to the wage

Higher buildings were made possible by installation of elevators. Passengers feared that cable might snap and send them crashing to death.

earner. As a contemporary observed, "Reasonable apartments are not good, and good apartments are not reasonable."

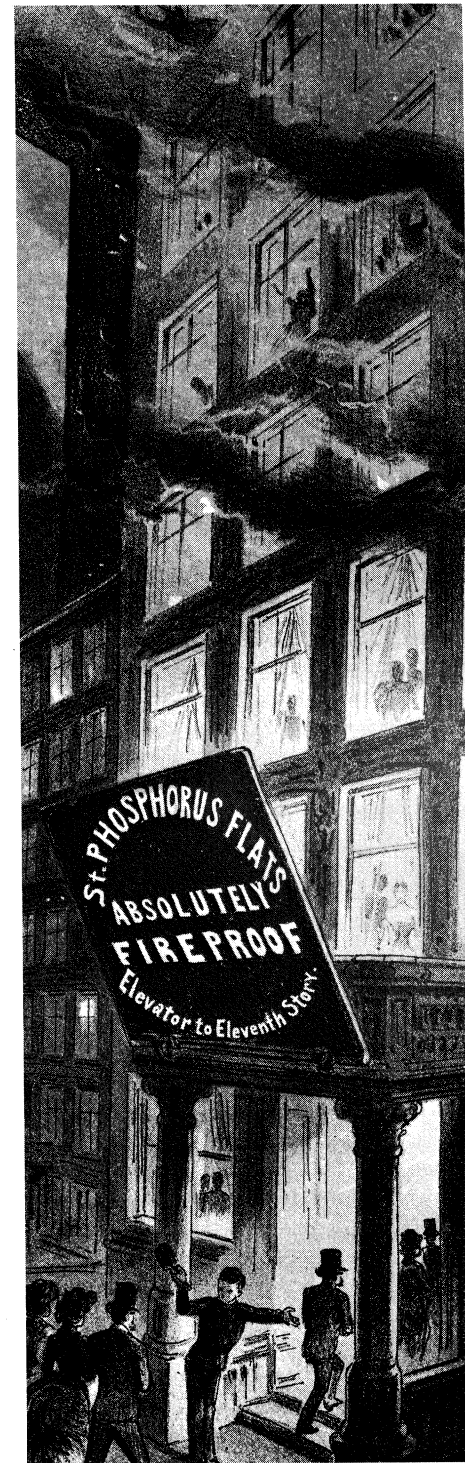
Families were shelved in layers, sharing floors that were subdivided into several apartments—three or four tiny rooms providing no insulation from the neighbors' cooking smells or babies' squallings. Garbage removal and sanitary facilities were comparably wretched, and overcrowding made the buildings "more difficult to manage than the tenement houses of the slum districts."

*. . . Fires threatened their residents.*

As the size and number of apartment buildings increased, so too did the danger that a fire would turn them into blazing prisons. Of course, they were not the only firetraps, but they accounted for the heaviest loss of life in the great conflagrations of the period. Between 1870 and 1906 four American cities—Chicago, Boston, Baltimore and San Francisco—burned to the ground, a record unmatched anywhere else in the world. Boston's assessment of its yearly fire damage—\$1 to \$1.5 million—was ten times greater than that of a European city of comparable size.

The frequency and destructiveness of fires in American cities were blamed on shoddy construction and the use of flammable materials in the construction of "fireproof" apartments. Even as late as 1904, after steel had replaced the less heat-resistant cast iron for building, 7000 lives were lost in city fires.

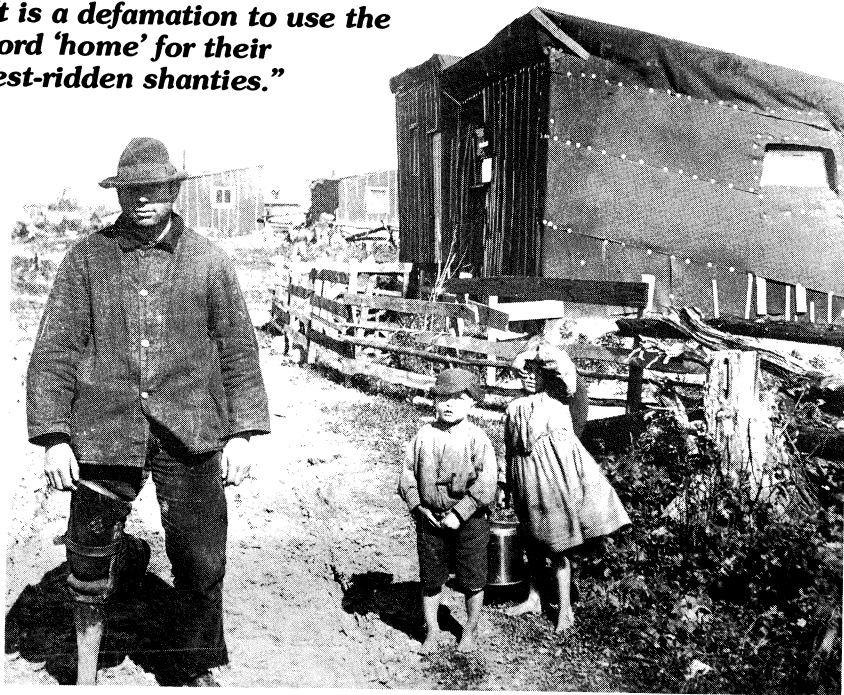
Nowhere is the fireman more celebrated than in the United States. And for sound, historical reasons.



Apartment houses for the less affluent were flimsily built, and lacking insulation, became fire traps.

# Workers and Squatters

**"It is a defamation to use the word 'home' for their pest-ridden shanties."**



Invalid Pennsylvania coal miner with children in front of makeshift company shack.

Squatters near Central Park. "When eviction notices were served, squatters fed them to their goats."



A close-knit family, animals and all. Garbage was thrown into the backyard.

The word "shanty" is of Gaelic origin and means old house. To the laborers who lived in shanties in the coal regions of Pennsylvania, the meaning must have seemed unnecessarily flattering.

Strewn over the landscape like so many abandoned, rotting crates — some actually perched, with macabre inspiration, on slag heaps — they were home to thousands of European workers and their families.

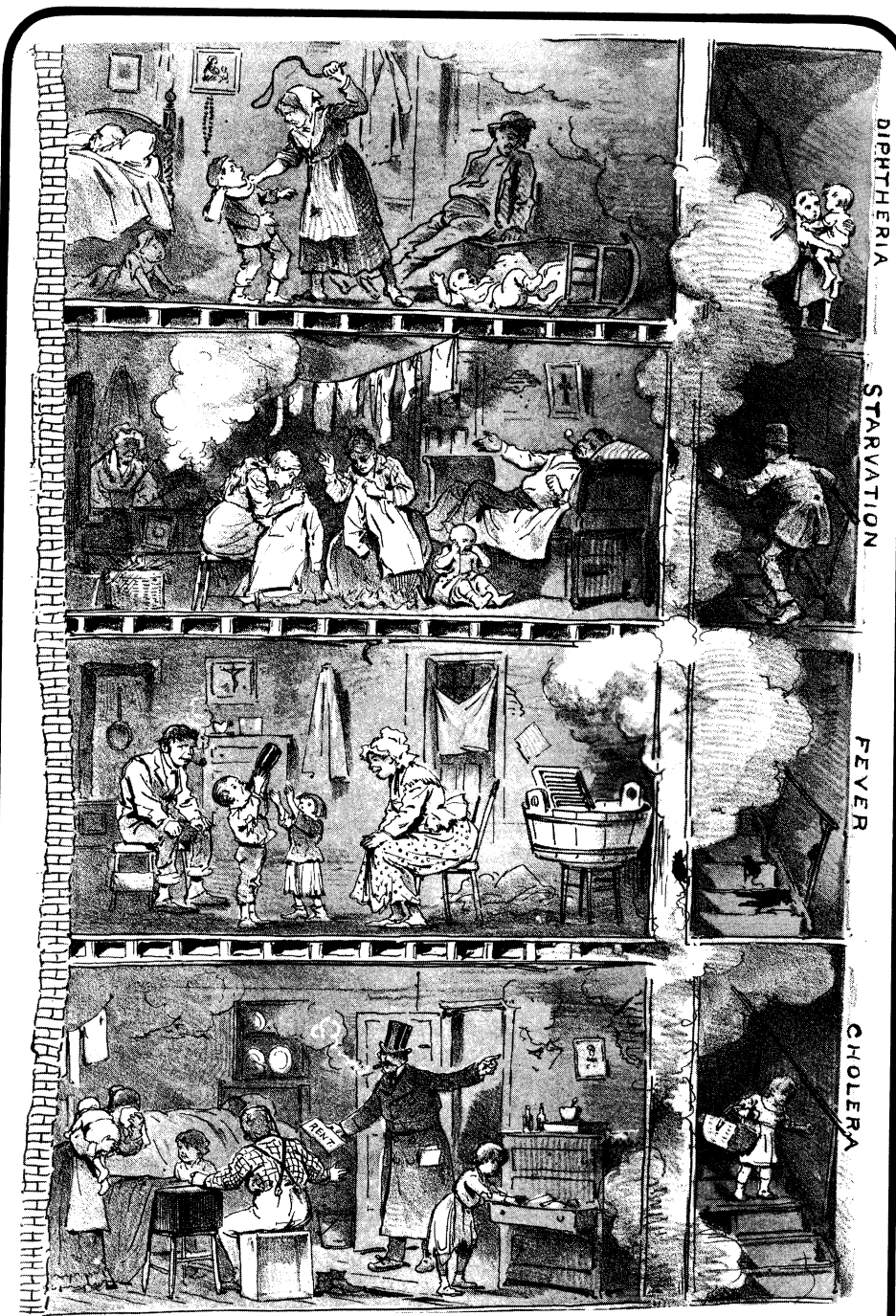
The industrialists who provided these homes, which dismayed even the humblest of the wretched newcomers, rationalized easily: "[they] were only foreigners . . . there was no use giving them anything decent, for they weren't used to decent surroundings and wouldn't appreciate them if they had them."

In New York, meanwhile, the same type of dwelling had taken flourishing root on the periphery of the city, which until the turn

of the century was largely open land. For thousands of families, squatting in their own wretched box was more endurable than life in a tenement. In the Good Old Days, common alternatives were degrees of ignominy.

The formless squatter encampments surrounded the city like a ring of scum around a tub. Built of discarded boxes and construction-site refuse, the hovels presented a grotesque counterpoint to fashionable areas nearby. When the American Museum of Natural History opened its doors in 1877, it stood in majestic relief amid the wreckage of a new civilization.

The inhabitants of shantytown lived within the city but did not belong to it. Democracy's flotsam, they lived in unspeakable squalor — ignored, resented and, in good times, pitied.



Cross section of a New York tenement house, its inhabitants beset by grinding poverty, filth and disease, "drunk, bestial, vile . . . steadily sinking."  
 In these dungeons, parents were demoralized and children became depraved.  
 "Fever has taken a perennial lease and will obey no summons to quit."

## The Slums

### Uninhabitable pens crowded to suffocation

A hundred years after the Founding Fathers had dedicated themselves to forming a new nation based on man's innate dignity, millions of its citizens wallowed in degradation.

These were the slum dwellers: the losers in the system that exalted the individual. They came by the slums through a quirk of fate, and once in them they fell victim to plagues of body and mind that produced crime, drunkenness, disease and early death in a remorseless cycle.

The authors of the Constitution could not have foreseen this blight on their earnest hopes. The slums, curiously, were a natural result of the optimism that marked the good old days, the rampant growth of industry and population that turned towns into cities and adventurers into exploiters with bewildering speed. As always, the devil had to have his due, and he was paid in slums.

Cleveland's infected area was known as the Flats; in St. Louis it was Cross Keys and Clabber Alley; in Boston, the North End. Chicago's extensive slums adjoined the stockyards, street after street of pitiful wreckage lacking sanitation, drainage, ventilation, light and safety. But worst of all, typically, was New York.

Between 1868 and 1875 an estimated 500,000 lived in New York's slums—about half the city's population. As many as eight persons shared a living room that was 10 by 12 feet and a bedroom 6 by 8 feet. One tenement on the Lower East Side was packed with 101 adults and 91 children.

Among the indignities they were forced to suffer—all noted by city health inspectors—were vile privies; dirt-filled sinks; slop oozing down stairwells; children urinating on the walls; dangerously dilapidated stairs; plumbing pipes pockmarked with holes that emitted sewer gases so virulent they were flammable.

Even among slum residents there was a ghastly hierarchy, at the bottom of which were the cellar dwellers. Their quarters acted as a repository for street filth that washed down on rainy days, caking a floor that men, women and children often shared with goats and pigs. "The inmates exhibited the same lethargic habits as animals burrowing in the ground."

An absorbing footnote is the fact that the rent per square foot of the slums of the period was 25 to 35 percent higher than that of apartments in fashionable uptown New York. The slumlords, unable to resist profits of 50 to 70 percent on their original investment, squeezed tenants mercilessly. Politicians, exclusive club members and even churches were among the owners, who no doubt rationalized their greed as the mine operators did for their workers' shacks.



"The most astounding feature of this land of plenty is the absolute indifference of the rich toward the poor."



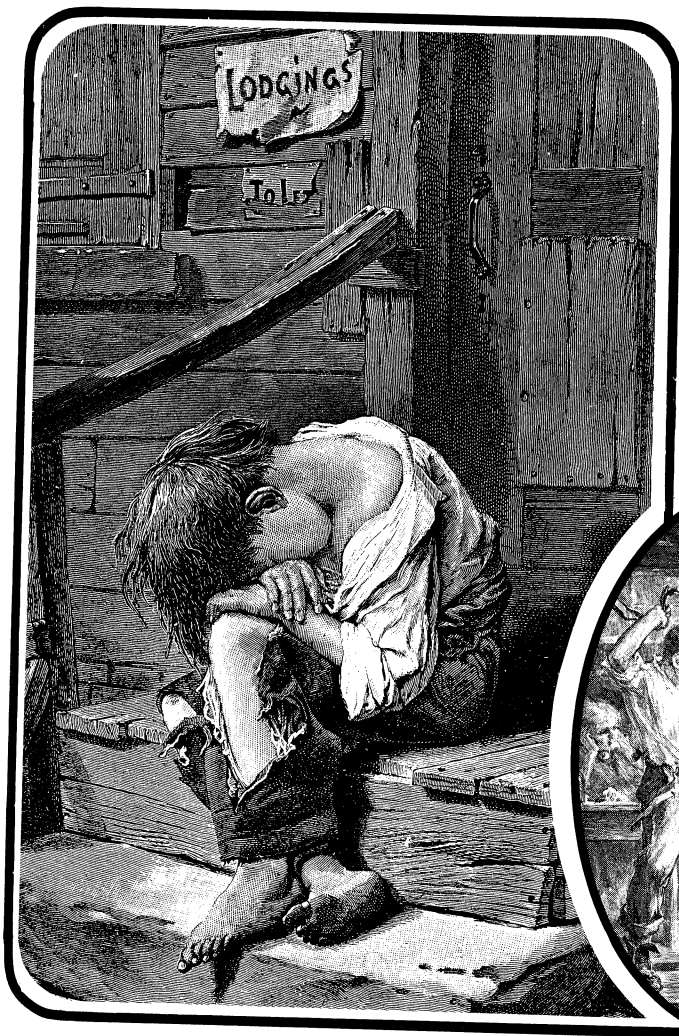
# Slum Children

## *Their home is the street*

In 1874 a New York social worker, Etta Angel Wheeler found a little girl wandering naked through the slums. The child had been beaten and slashed by her drunken foster mother and then chased from home. Unable to find a haven for her, Miss Wheeler asked the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for help; it was decided that "the child being an animal" the Society

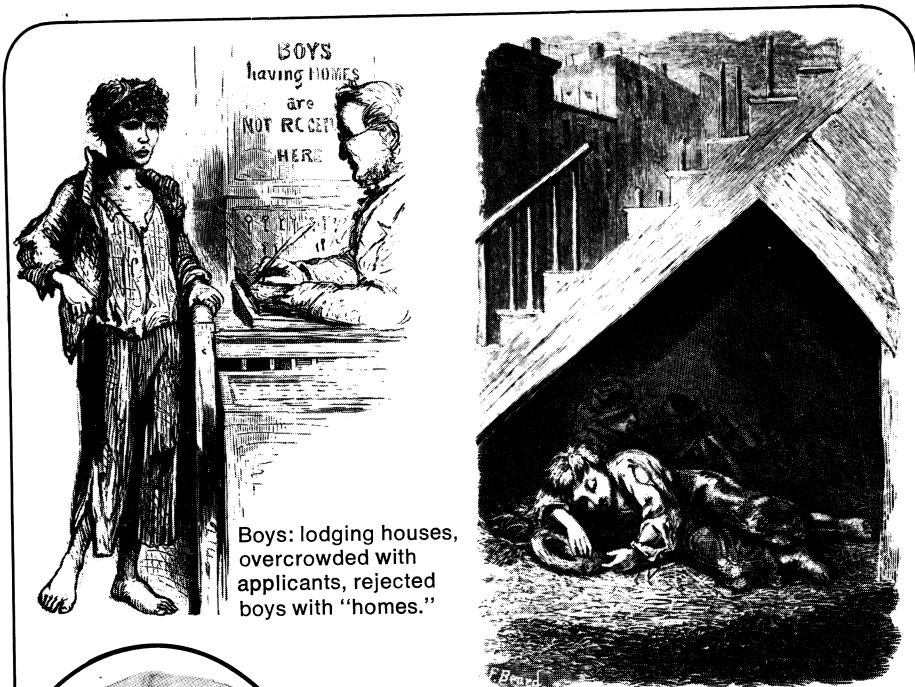
would give it protection.

An animal—the end product of slum life. Disfigured by the bestiality of home, thousands of urchins wandered the streets—an 1880 estimate had 100,000 loose in New York—cunning, predatory, with an instinct for survival that rivaled an alley cat's. They slept under doorways, in discarded boxes and barrels; they fought, blasphemed, begged and stole; and in the end they gravitated to prostitution and crime. It was the natural succession of their unnatural orbit.



Homeless and friendless.

"Poverty breeds brutality." Drunken father whips his son, forcing him out onto the street.



Boys: lodging houses, overcrowded with applicants, rejected boys with "homes."

Abandoned children slept under stairs, crept into ashcans to escape the cops.

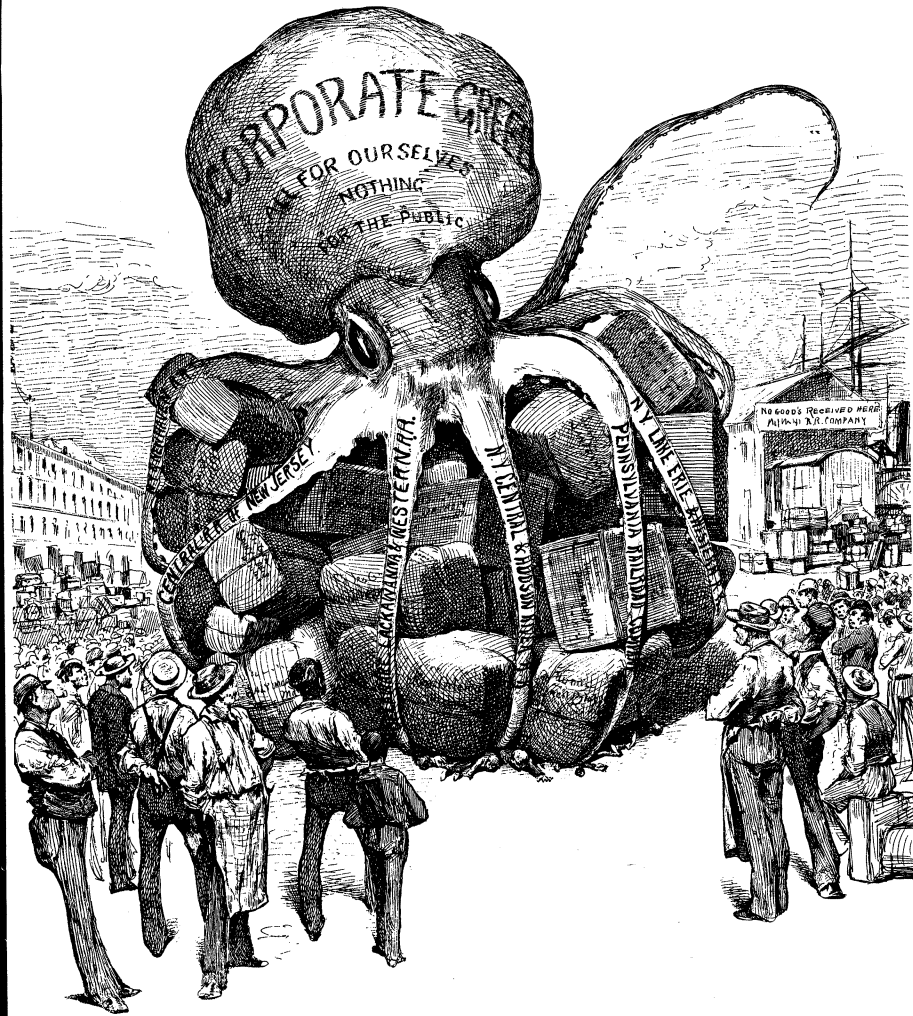


Girl traders hardened by alley-cat existence fell into prostitution.



Atop a steam grating, half-frozen street urchins try to catch some heat.

# 5 Work



Railroad monopoly takes control of New York wharves, depriving freight handlers of work that brought them 17 cents an hour—\$10 for a 7-day week.

HISTORY OFFERS A YARDSTICK by which to measure the status of the American worker. Today he has dignity and protection; less than a hundred years ago he was poor, debased and unprotected. Industrialists of the period regarded labor as a commodity—a raw material like ore or lumber to be mined of its vitality and flushed away. Profits were enormous against meager wages—“Never before have the rich been so rich and the poor been so poor”—an imbalance that helped 1 percent of the population by 1890 to own as much as the remaining 99 percent put together.

Marshall Field's income was calculated to be \$600 an hour, while his shopgirls, at a salary of \$3 to \$5 a week, had to work over three years to earn that amount.

Virtually unopposed by any organized front—by 1900 only 3.5 percent of the work force was unionized—employers hired and fired at will. A New England shoe manufacturer sacked outright all of his workers and replaced them with Chinese laborers he brought from the West Coast who were willing to work for \$26 a month.

To survive in the absence of social benefits, workers endured wretched conditions. The huge labor pool, augmented by a massive influx of foreigners, created a rivalry for even the most repugnant jobs. And if labor unrest caused an occasional stir, industrialist Jay Gould was confident he had the solution for it: “I can hire one half of the working class to kill the other half.”

# Working Conditions

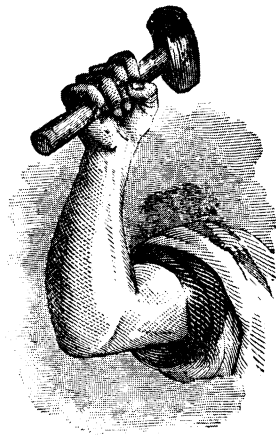
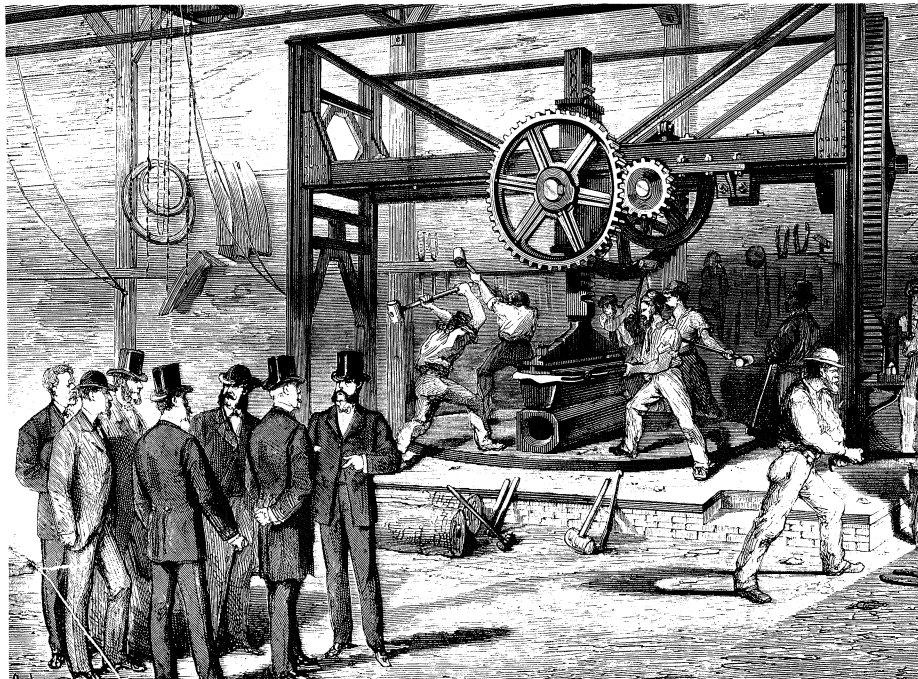
*"The laboring man in this bounteous and hospitable country has no ground for complaint."*

It is apparent from this statement that Chauncey Depew never put in a 12-hour shift on the floor of a steel mill. Unless, of course, he enjoyed working in 117-degree heat in a smoky, clangorous bedlam for a maximum of \$1.25 a day. Or perhaps he was attracted by the laborers' hovels and their 7-day workweek.

Conditions that were attended by constant danger, that had destroyed the health of thousands by age forty, were inspired less by malice than by the entrepreneurs' holy pledge to keep the cost of labor down—at any cost—which meant to keep the people

down. Coal mines and iron and steel mills, the primordial industries, were especially brutal on their manpower because of the constant pressure exerted on them by every other industry.

Entrepreneurs viewed the worker as part of the great cogwheel of industry.

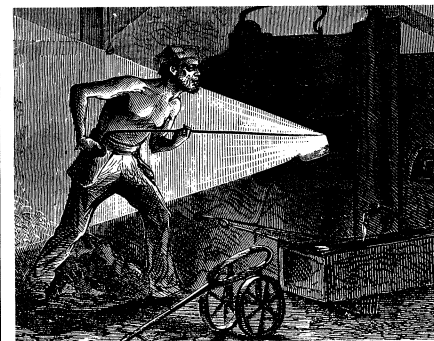


In the mills two shifts worked round the clock at a demonic pace, which faltered only at shift changeover. Shorter work periods, with their added pauses in production, were never considered. The economist J. G. Brooks quotes a mill foreman who admitted that the machines were deliberately set at the utmost speed a human could endure: "It is a pity that men have to work like this, but there is no help for it. The machinery drives us at a gallop."

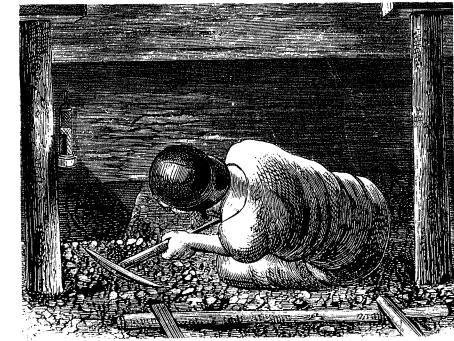
Exposure to the infernal heat and poisonous gases endemic to their work shattered many steelworkers' physique prematurely. Of these individuals, the unlucky ones were sacked and the lucky ones were demoted,

with a concomitant wage reduction from \$1.25 to \$1 or less a day. Aged workers were given jobs as sweepers or submenials, preferring to labor 12 hours for 75 cents than face a pensionless retirement.

Steel mills had no monopoly on serious health hazards. There was the sawdust of factories, the stone dust of quarries, the toxic emanations in chemical plants, and the coal dust in the mines. The miner, it was said, "went down to work as to an open grave, not knowing when it might close on him." Usually the son followed the father, starting as a breaker boy at age six, and often entering manhood stunted from the effects of early employment.

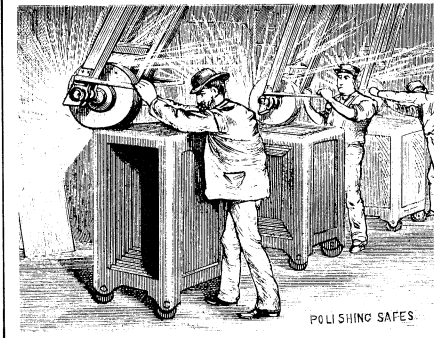


Iron puddler, stripped to waist and exposed to suffocating gas and smoke.

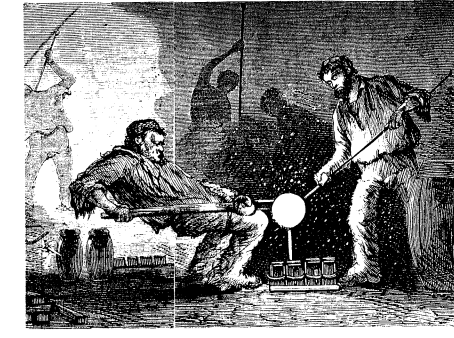


Miners had to spend days crawling through shafts filled with coal-gas and dust.

Their eyes exposed to metal grindings, workers polish safes.



Long-handled ladle used for pouring steel forced the worker into a twisted posture.

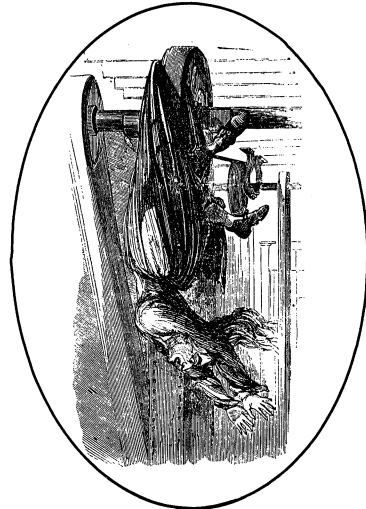


# Accidents

**"If you accept a job, you must accept its risk."**

The headlong excesses of domestic industry were reflected in an accident rate that moved President Harrison in 1892 to observe: "American workmen are subjected to peril of life and limb as great as a soldier in time of war." In his classic book on poverty, Robert Hunter put the yearly total of killed and injured at one million, a higher number in proportion to the labor force than in any other nation.

Aside from the steel mills the railroad industry was the most lethal to its workers, killing in 1890 one railroader for every 306 employed and injuring one for every 30 employed. Out of a work force of 749,301 this amounted to a yearly total of 2451 deaths, which rose in 1900 to 2675 killed and 41,142 injured. It should be noted that these casualty lists cover only railroaders in the line of duty: civilian casualties in



Unprotected powershafts maimed and killed hoopskirted workers.

The miner: "Gas hurls us to eternity and the props and timbers to a chaos."



train collisions and level-crossing accidents were another matter. The *New York Evening Post* concluded that the deaths caused by American railroads between June 1898 and 1900 were about equal to British Army losses in the three-year Boer War.

In the high-risk job category the circus stuntman and test pilot today enjoy greater life assurance than did the brakeman of yesterday, whose work called for precarious leaps between bucking freight cars at the command of the locomotive's whistle. In icy weather, it often became a macabre dance of death. Also subject to sudden death—albeit to a lesser degree—were the train couplers, whose omnipresent hazard was loss of hands and fingers in the primitive link-and-pin devices. It took an act of law in 1893 to force the railroads to replace these man-traps.

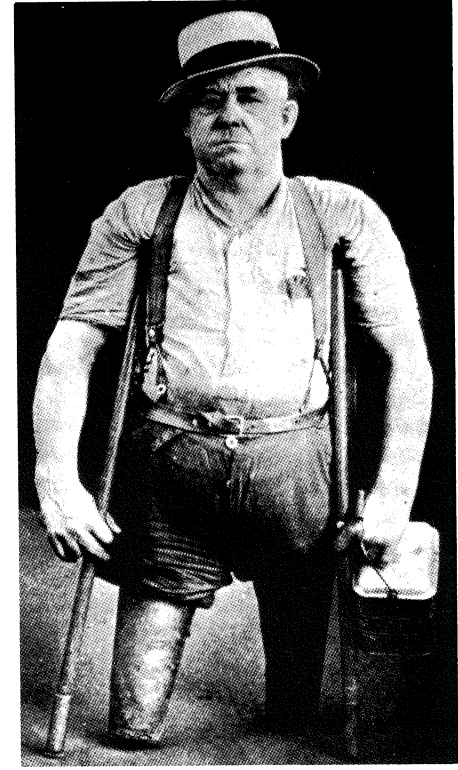
Industry's cavalier attitude to safety had a predictable effect on lower-echelon bosses. One railroad-yard superintendent refused to roof a loading platform, even though in the cold his men had contracted rheumatism and asthma. His observation: "Men are cheaper than shingles. . . . There's a dozen waiting when one drops out."

Whether a worker was mutilated by a buzz saw, crushed by a beam, interred in a mine, or fell down a shaft, it was always "his own bad luck." The courts as a rule sided with the employer; in any event, few accident victims or their kin had the money to bring suit. Companies disclaimed responsibility, refused to install protective apparatus, and paid no compensation. Their only concession to human life was to pay for burying the dead!



Brakemen often fell as the train curved or came to a sudden stop. Balancing on icy roofs was railroading's most hazardous job.

Victim of an accident, a worker on the Pennsylvania railroad is forced to return to the job to sustain himself. Workmen's compensation was unknown. PHOTO COURTESY OF A. M. SCHAPPER



# Sweatshops

**"A slavery as real as ever disgraced the South."**

There was one industry in the Gilded Age where sudden death and maiming were not occupational hazards, but where, instead of this luxury, the alternatives of exhaustion or starvation were offered. This was the garment industry, and at its heart was the sweatshop.

Manned largely by newly arrived immigrants who had landed with high hopes and little cash, the sweatshop ran from factory-size hall where men and women slaved under regimental supervision to the informality of a squalid room with an entire family engaged in piecework. The sweatshop operator, called "sweater," shrewdly exploited the need of work and shelter by offering the newcomers a package deal: against an initial "key payment" of \$5 he stuffed them into a slum

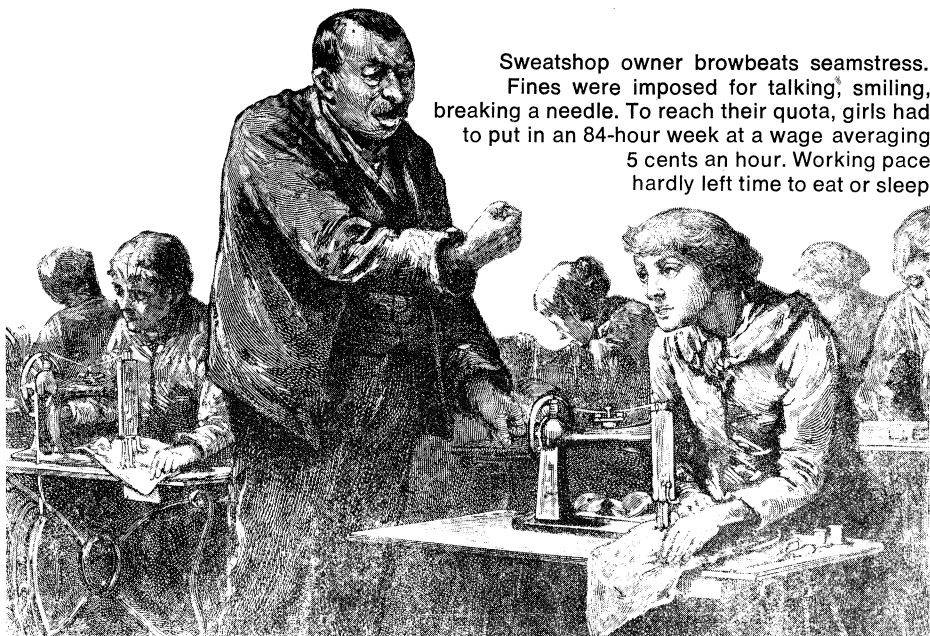
and subcontracted work to them for a pittance.

In New York's Lower East Side—the center of the industry—it was commonplace to find whole families working through the night merely to subsist. With rents \$8 to \$12 a month and living costs per individual a minimum of \$5 a month, a garment worker could not support a family solely on his own pay. Consequently his wife—and children—were sucked into the grim cycle of working and sleeping.

At the risk of his health a man could make \$9 to \$10 a week for pressing and delivering new garments to the wholesaler; a woman, \$7, for the punishing job of seaming three dozen shirts. The standard wage for a girl was \$3 to \$5, which, according to the head of the Women's Protective Union, Mrs. M. W. Ferrer, yielded her no more than a loaf of bread, a cup of tea, and a bed in a tenement attic. When asked how the sweatshop girls could live, she said, "They can't."

Sweatshop owner browbeats seamstress.

Fines were imposed for talking, smiling, breaking a needle. To reach their quota, girls had to put in an 84-hour week at a wage averaging 5 cents an hour. Working pace hardly left time to eat or sleep.



Garment carrier.  
Lithograph by Jacob Epstein, made when he was beginning his career on New York's Lower East Side.

Bread and tea formed the staple diet of the sweater's victims, to whom even the preparation of beans was a costly and wearisome task. And the pressure to produce

increased as families grew. The humanitarian Robert Spargo recalls an interview with a mother of four whose husband's greatest efforts brought home no more than \$6 per week. "It's awful," she said, "I must work, else we get nothing to eat and turned into the street besides. . . . Often we go to our beds as we left them. Cooking? Oh, I cook nothing, for I haven't the time."

While *Cosmopolitan* magazine observed that sewing in a sweatshop was "the most grinding oppression that can be practiced on a woman," it was not the most dangerous occupation. There were the soap-packing plants, for instance, where girls were exposed to caustic soda that turned their nails yellow and ate away at their fingers. There were the flower-making workshops where arsenic, liberally applied to produce vivid colors, wrecked the appearance and health of thousands of girls with sores, swelling of the limbs, nausea and, often, complete debility.

"Eat? Who has time to eat? Tea and a piece of bread is all we have time for. Sometimes you want to swallow the teapot."



The cities of the Gilded Age had an excess of these plants, and twelve hours a day in their toxic atmosphere left their mark on workers for life.

But nothing compared with the hazards and indignities of the tobacco "in home" factories. Here, for a meager income, women and children were forced to endure the most sickening exhalations as they stripped the leaves. *Harper's Magazine* described the effects of endless hours of this work: "Their eyes are dead, a stupor overcomes them, their nerves are unsettled and their lungs diseased in almost every case."

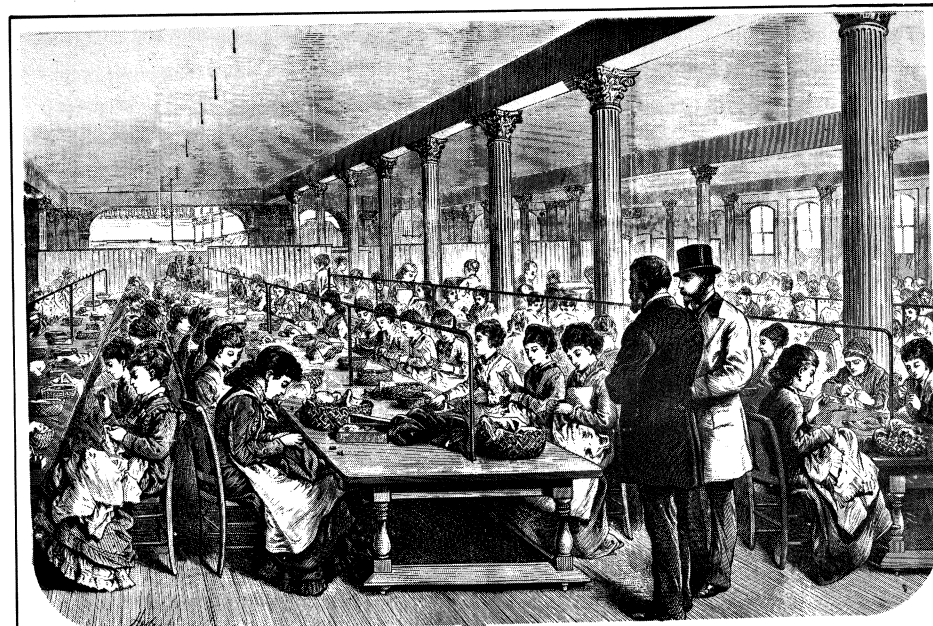
If tobacco stripping was the nadir of sweatshop employment, then the sewing room of A. T. Stewart, New York's greatest retailer of the 1870's, was perhaps its zenith. Here was to be found a thin layer of civility, and air that was relatively clean. But Stewart ran his two thousand workers with an iron hand, assessing fines against latecomers and those who misdirected bun-



Twenty cents a day.

dles. Hours were from 7:30 A.M. to 9 P.M., and sewing girls received \$3 a week—a notoriously low salary even then. Bathroom facilities were inadequate—perhaps deliberately so, in order to keep the needles humming—and this proved a menace to the health of young girls who endured discomfort when men were

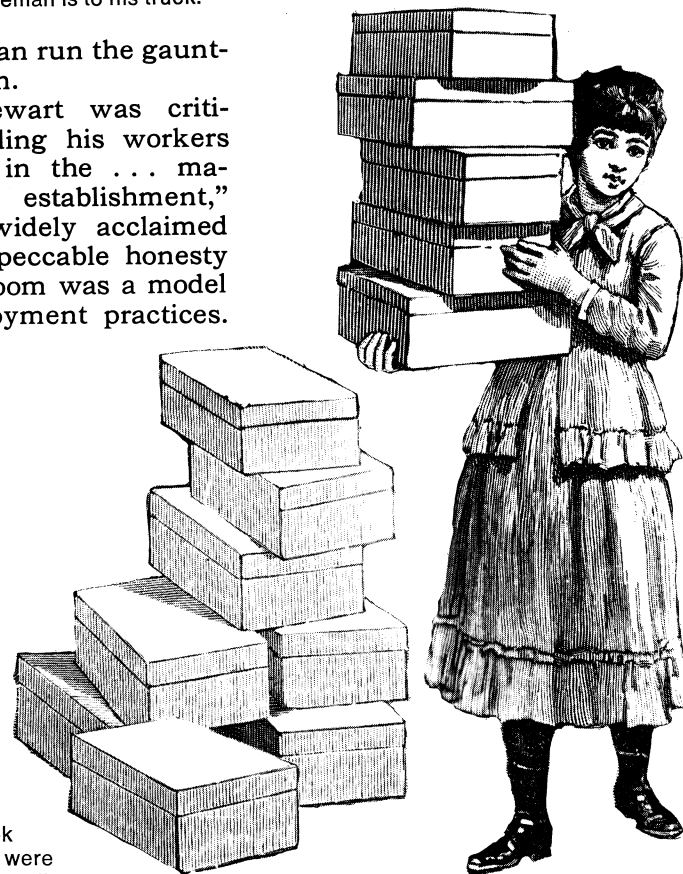
Young tobacco strippers, exposed to air that would make the most inveterate smoker sick. "Tobacco is everywhere—children delve in it, roll in it, sleep beside it. The dust seasons their food and befouls the water they drink."



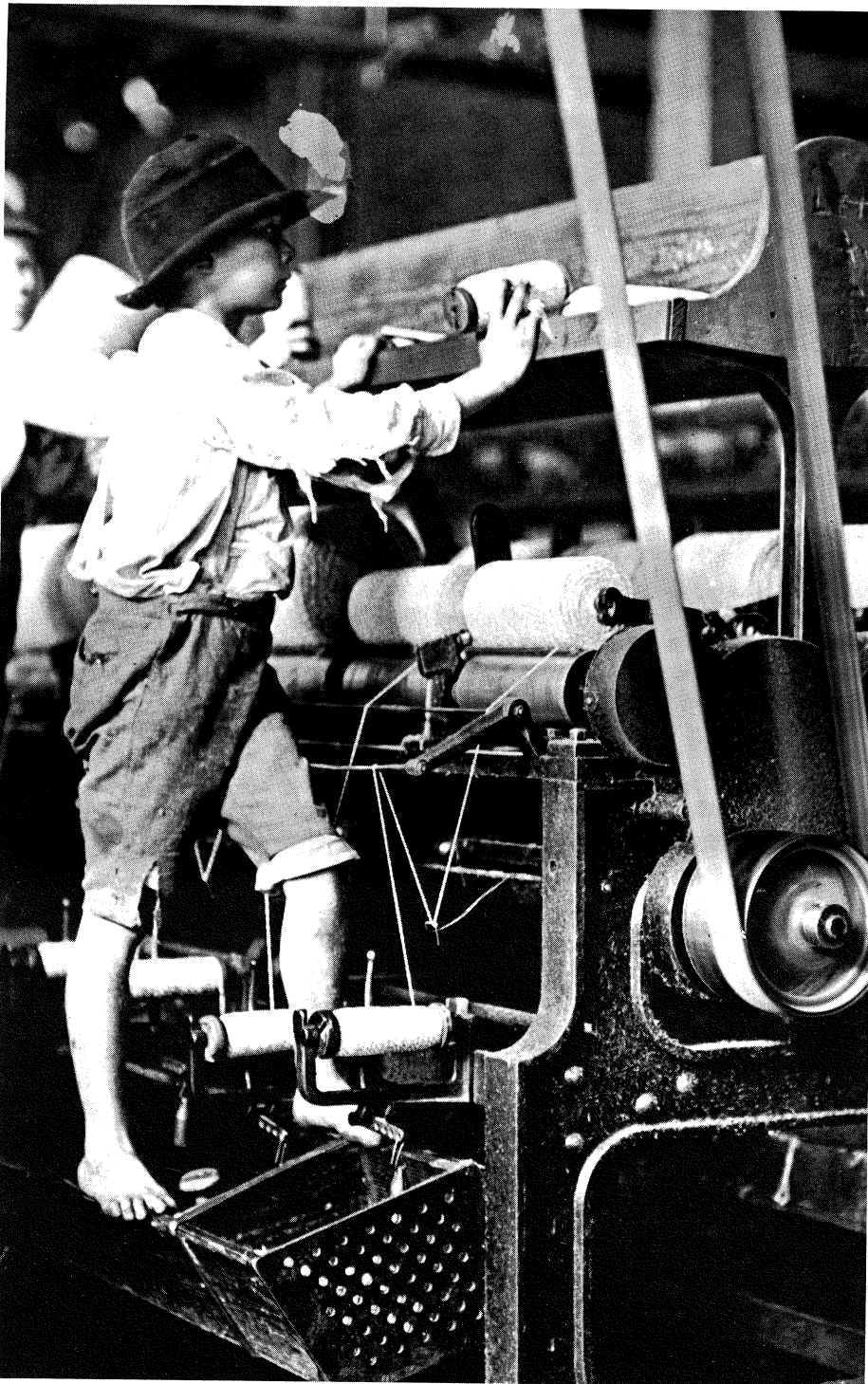
Sewing room in department store of A. T. Stewart, who was said to be "as tender to his employees as a fireman is to his truck."

around rather than run the gauntlet in humiliation.

Although Stewart was criticized for regarding his workers as mere "cogs in the . . . machinery of his establishment," he was more widely acclaimed as a man of impeccable honesty whose sewing room was a model of decent employment practices.



Young women functioned as conveyor belts in store and factory. Cashgirls at \$3 a week complained that they were "box-carrying machines."



Spindle boy in Georgia cotton mill. Small children had to stand on boxes to reach the spools which whirled without a break. Children's hands could be caught and badly hurt. "If you speak, they say, 'Get out.'"

## Child Labor

*"We take them as soon as they can stand up."*

Not only did they take them, as the Southern manager said in reference to children working in his factory, but running machines late at night they were sometimes kept awake "by the vigilant superintendent with cold water dashed into their faces." "Late" meant two o'clock in the morning in upstate New York, where "mere babies" were found employed in a cannery. In their utter weariness after work, these children often forgot their hunger and fell asleep with food in their mouths.

Child labor was not just a sporadic manifestation of Victorian cold-bloodedness, it was a widespread practice encouraged by industry, agreed to by parents, and generally ignored by government. For employers the tiny workers were a bargain at \$1.50



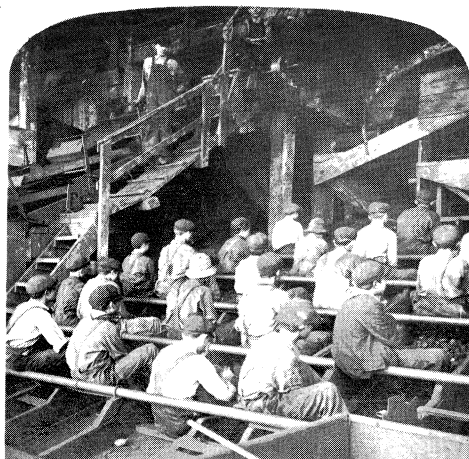
Ruined for life by an accident, child workers received no compensation. Upon receipt of \$1, parents released the company of claims in case of injury. Charitable employers made one-time \$5 payment to an injured child.

Philadelphia factory boys demonstrate for better pay and time out for school. Once employed in a factory, schooling ended for most boys and condemned them to a lifetime of menial labor.





Trapper boys, paid 25 cents a day, worked 12 to 14 hours in dark, air-swept shafts.



Breaker boys crouched as they picked slate from newly broken coal moving on a conveyor belt. Their hands bled from sharp stones; coal dust ruined their lungs; "like old men," they had a permanent stoop. "You begin in the breaker," the miners said, "and end up at the breaker, broken yourself."

to \$2.50 a week, and, besides, they claimed that factory work was good for the little devils; the Puritan Work Ethic prevailed against the "sloth of children, their idleness by which they are corrupted."

Less culpable perhaps were the poor parents, who were seduced into giving their assent at the prospect of reducing their struggle even by so small a margin. And many children appeased their parents' conscience by fancying factory over school, which by law they had to attend fourteen weeks a year to become eligible for work. Sometimes child laborers—and their parents—would lie about their age to obtain employment. In fact, children in Syracuse, New York, in 1904 were heard to complain, "The factories will not take you unless you are eight years old."

Whatever the circumstances, the little workers got no special favors. Their hours were as long and their conditions as grim as those of an adult. Some textile-

mill boys were so small they had to be raised on boxes to service the twirling spindles, their hands in constant danger of being caught. Young mine workers, exposed to poisonous dust and injury, earned 25 cents for a 12- to 14-hour day.

There were opponents of child labor, among them charitable institutions, but they proved powerless. A law had been passed as early as 1842 by Massachusetts—always a leader in humanitarian causes—that confined the work-day of children under age twelve to ten hours. But this state and others with similar statutes lacked the means to enforce them. With an estimated 6 percent of its child population engaged in factory work in the 1880's, New York State had only two industrial inspectors. Under such sparse surveillance, the "importing" of child labor went on freely. Children were transported from Tennessee, where a prohibitive law was in force, to South Carolina, where none existed. "Little chil-

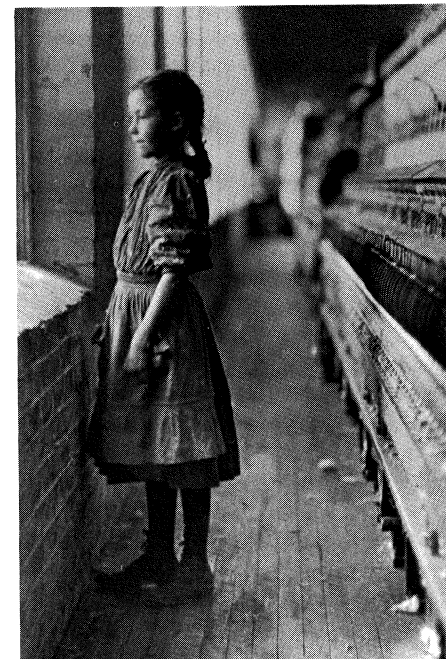


Boys labored as glass factory workers from 5 p.m. to 3 a.m., "disappearing into the night." As molder boys they replaced men, who found the work "too hot."

dren from seven to fourteen years of age [were] shipped like cattle or hogs."

An 1870 census put the total of child workers at 700,000, but this did not include the thousands who worked city streets as vendors, messengers and shoeshine boys. Child labor actually grew threefold in the South in the decade from 1890, increasing the national figure in 1900 to 1,752, 187.

One third of all mill employees were children. They also worked in tobacco fields, canneries and mines; in meatpacking, hosiery, silk, wool, hemp and jute mills. Finally, in 1904, the National Child Labor Committee was formed and began its vigorous campaign to protect the coming generation.



"The golf links lie so near the mill That nearly every day The laboring children can look out And see the men at play."



# Standard of Living

*"Steady work? Nothing steady but want and misery."*

To most workers, the miseries of employment were more acceptable than the alternative: unemployment. Layoff—a constant threat—meant ruin, and the bands of tramps that menaced the countryside during the depression of the 1870's included decent men who were merely jobless and in despair. The crisis year of 1877 saw an estimated two and a quarter to three million men unemployed. In the depression of 1893-98 the total was four million—almost one out of every five workers. In the absence of benefits or relief of any kind, many families had to sleep in police stations.

Ruin followed loss of work because what came in on Friday was gone by Thursday. And contrary to popular belief, \$2 a day in the 1870's was not a lot of money. Except for New Yorkers, rents were lower, taking only 10 to 15 percent of an average wage (for dismal accommodations), and certain foods could be bought reasonably. But statistics show that food absorbed 50 percent of low incomes.

In 1882 a Boston bootmaker with a family of five and \$660 yearly income spent \$120 on rent, \$319.29 on groceries. Measured against \$2 a day, an acceptable wage, the average prices per pound—butter, 19 cents; bacon, 10 cents; fowl, 10-15 cents; and eggs, 15 cents a dozen—were quite high. Many families had only \$1 a day to spend—a desperate hardship. "They often live



on bread alone and have no meat for weeks."

Through a larcenous scheme, workers were forced to pay higher food prices in company towns. Wages were mostly in scrip, redeemable only in company stores that charged inflated prices. In the coal regions of Pennsylvania a barrel of flour that cost \$6.50 in a "cash" store was \$8.50 at the company store; butter at 19 cents was 25 cents in scrip, and so on. Workers who protested this extortion were not only sacked but evicted from their homes, which the company also owned.

The refusal to accept wage cuts led to lockouts, lifted only after the workers pledged not to join a union.



Fear of inflation was kindled by capitalists when labor sided with "greenbackers" who proposed a shift from gold to paper money.



Striker's family, expelled from company dwelling, seeks refuge in tent—a far cry from Carnegie's dictum: "The American workman should be appreciative of all the refinements of life. His home must be the most artistic."

# Strikes

*"We struck . . . because we were without hope."*

To most people of the upper classes, crowds of angry men in shabby clothes—no matter what their cause—were always wrong. No matter that they were workers driven to the wall by the practices of their employers. No matter that their families were hungry. No matter that they were infuriated by wage reductions while profits were rising.

In the face of such total blindness to legitimate grievances, violence was inevitable. Between 1881 and 1900 American labor staged 2378 strikes involving more than six million workers. With few exceptions, such as the railroad walkout against Jay Gould in 1888, these strikes proved calamitous to the workers' cause. The powerful industrialists, taking refuge in the respectable sanctuary of "law and order," controlled public opinion and slandered the labor movement as a seditious form of conspiracy. Strikes were blamed on "blatant anarchists," "socialists," or "hordes of untrained immigrants yet unfamiliar with the institutions of the Republic."

No doubt there were some ruthless agitators within the rank and file, not to speak of roughnecks who welcomed mob rule, but labor hardly needed such incitement. It was already charged to the brim by abuses and economic hardship, and it struck only as a last resort. For instance, the great railroad strike of 1877 was called to protest a 10 percent cut in wages. Regrettable brutalities occurred along the line, but the men could hardly be blamed for

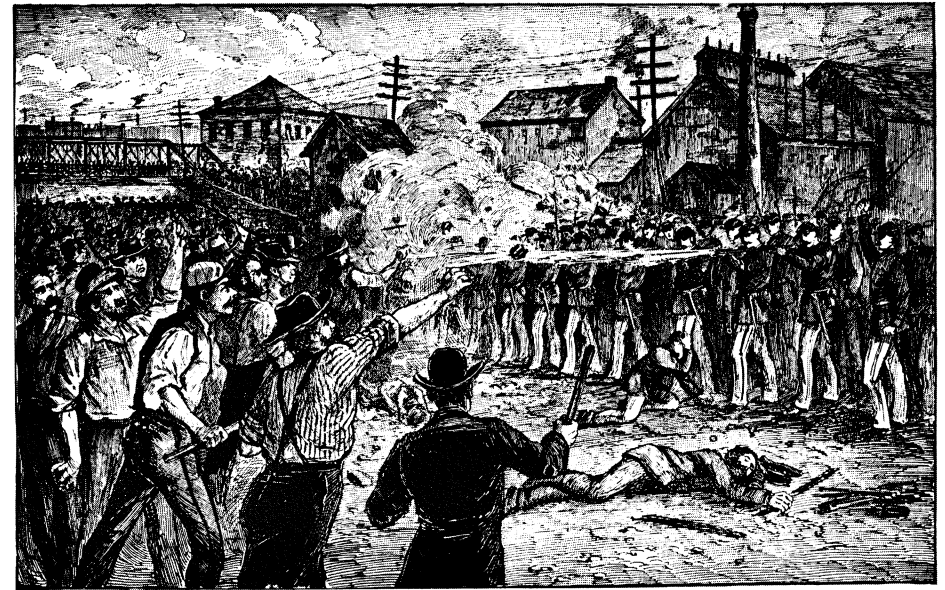


The Great American Scarecrow.  
The public blamed Communists for inciting strikes.

resisting the plunder of their starvation pay. Militia bayonets forced the workers to give in.

The Pullman strike had a similar origin and outcome. Pullman, who ran his company towns with the authority of a medieval lord, had instituted five reductions in wages between May and December 1893, the last one amounting to almost 30 percent—all this notwithstanding the fact that the company had about \$25 million in its coffers, with a distribution of \$2.5 million in dividends for 1891.

The Homestead steel strike of 1892 was generated by Henry Clay Frick himself with the admitted intention of breaking the union he hated. More than twenty died in the subsequent uprising, which was crushed by five thousand militiamen and led to the dismissal of three thousand workers. These strikes, an observer noted, achieved "nothing but heightened police power—and the erection of great armories across the land" to have troops



Labor's acts led only to suppression by armies hired to "stem the awful tide of socialism."

ready should "anarchists" dare to interfere with the orderly conduct of business.

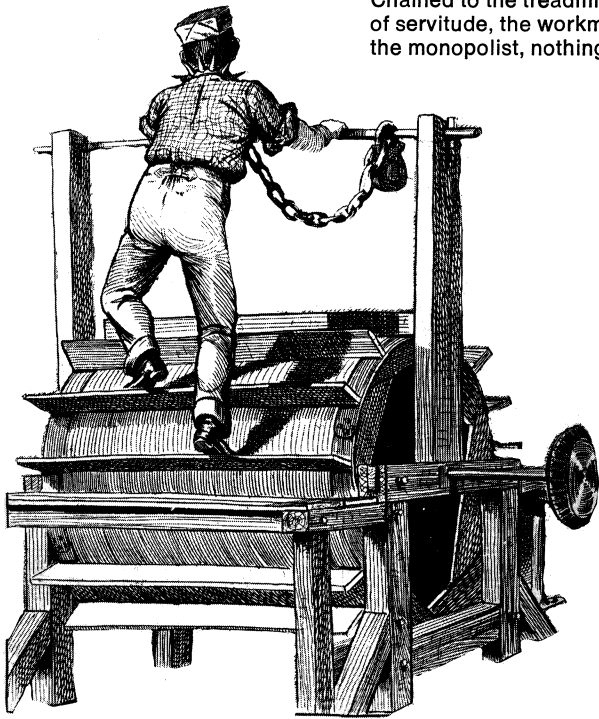
The attitude of the authorities toward strikers, in fact toward any manifestation of mass disgruntlement, was exclusively punitive, and the public at large agreed with this approach. Henry Ward Beecher, gentle, unctuous brother of Harriet, who had held many antislavery meetings in

his church, said of strikers: "If the club of the policeman, knocking out the brains of the rioter, will answer, then well and good; but if it does not promptly meet the exigency, then bullets and bayonets, canister and grape . . . constitute the one remedy. . . . Napoleon was right when he said the way to deal with a mob is to exterminate it."



Pullman striker assailed by militiamen.

Chained to the treadmill, "wearing the collar of servitude, the workman created millions for the monopolist, nothing but misery for himself."



## Technology

### *"The demon which is destroying the people"*

Mankind's attitude toward the machine has always been ambivalent. What Edward Bellamy called "the soulless machine, incapable of any motive but insatiable greed" was feared by the workers, many of whose jobs would not have existed without it. Particularly bitter were former artisans—shoemakers, handworkers in iron, wood and stone—whose crafts had been absorbed by mechanization. They felt debased working in factories at repetitive tasks a child could perform, their fine skills exchanged for the relentless rhythm of the machine.

The early trade unions, immersed in the old craftsmen's

philosophy, warned workers of the day when giant robots that made human labor expendable would chase them from the factories. They watched with fear the installation of new machinery, though they did not go as far as the Luddites, the English machine smashers of the early 1800's.

Countering this widespread alarm, however, was the view of several far-sighted economists that the factory system produced more good than evil, "that the machine does not rob of work but gives more employment" by its constant proliferation of new industries providing new jobs.

The dehumanizing aspects of the assembly line are still hotly

proclaimed, even though it has increased workers' prosperity and leisure time. In his book, *The Doomsday Syndrome*, J. R. Maddox asks: "... who now afflicted by technology would

willingly settle instead for the life of a Victorian laborer . . .?"

The answer could be that the machine is merely nuts and bolts; we do the dehumanizing all by ourselves.

The Demon which is destroying the People:  
cartoon of 1882 propounds Frankenstein  
theory of mechanization:  
workers are doomed to be replaced by robots.

