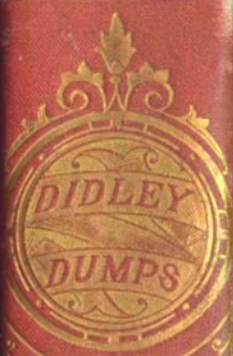
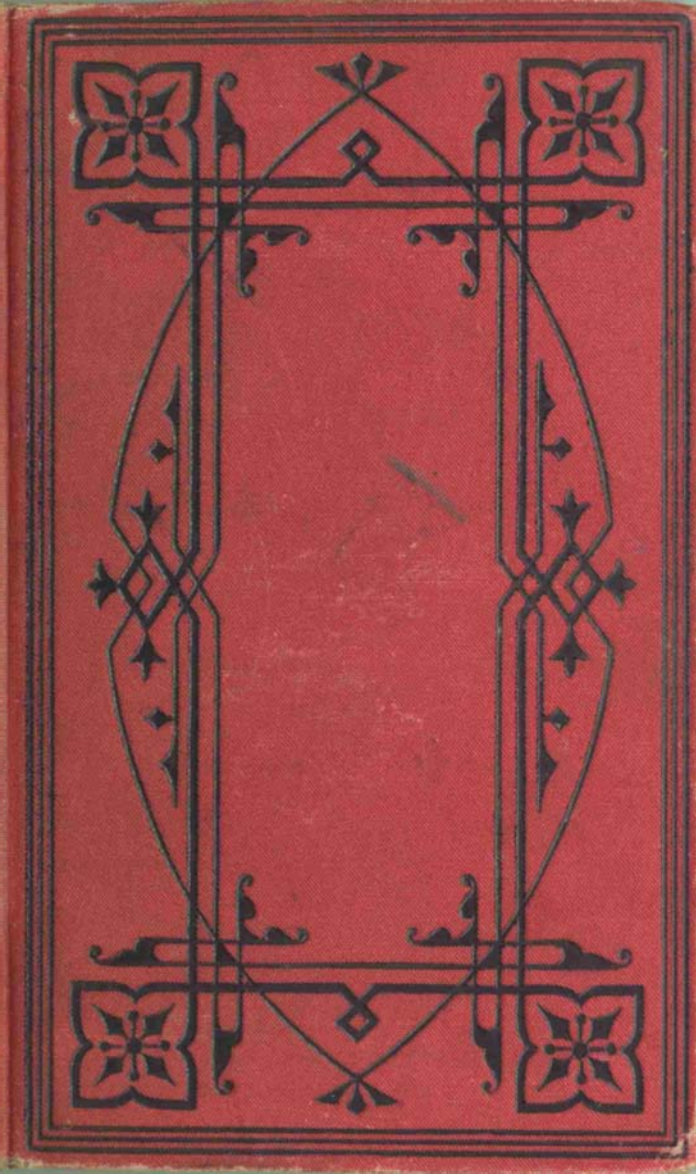
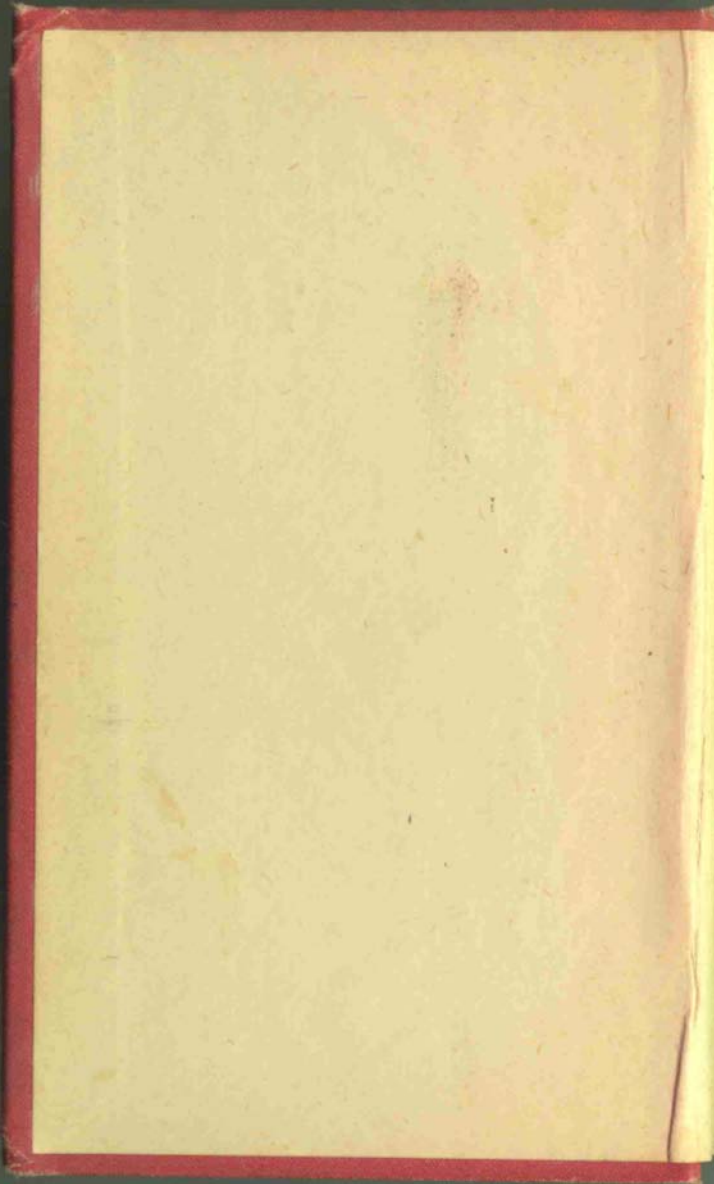


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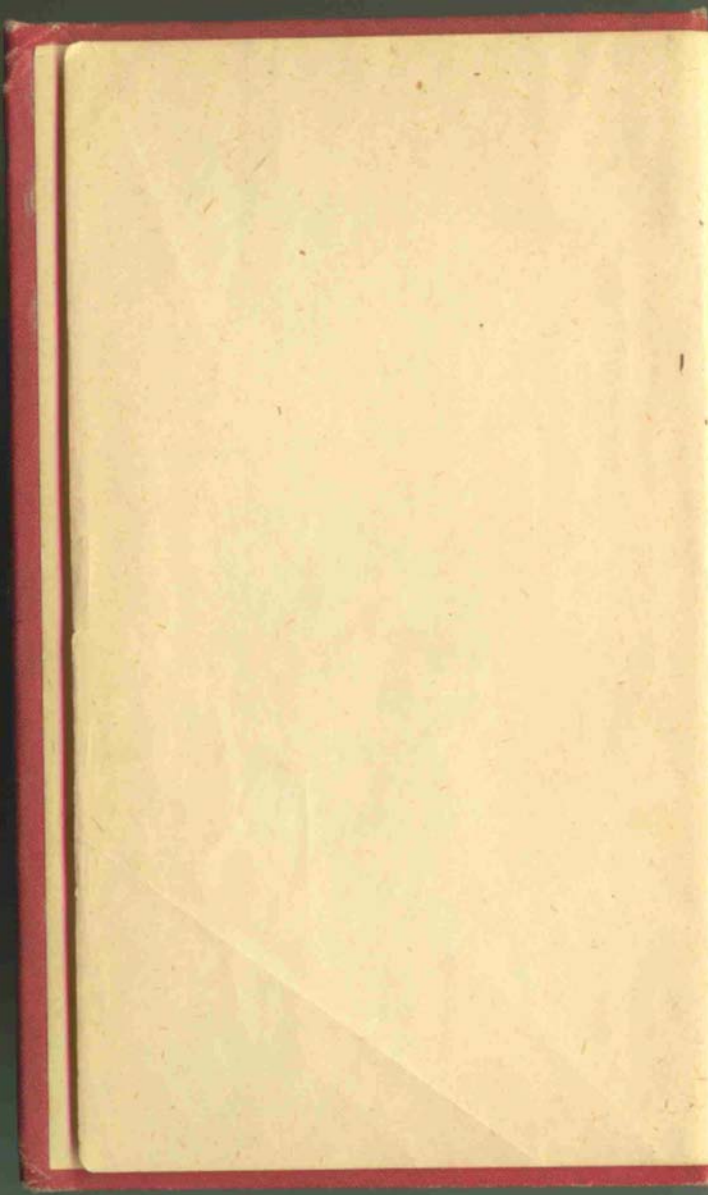




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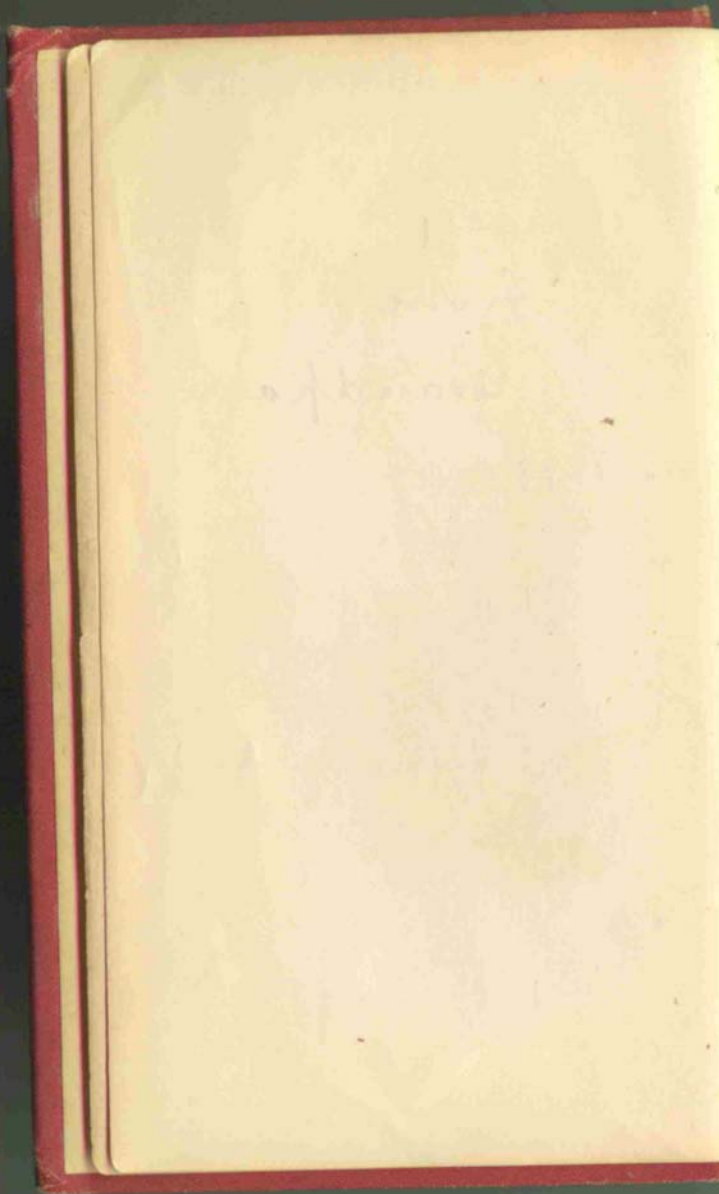
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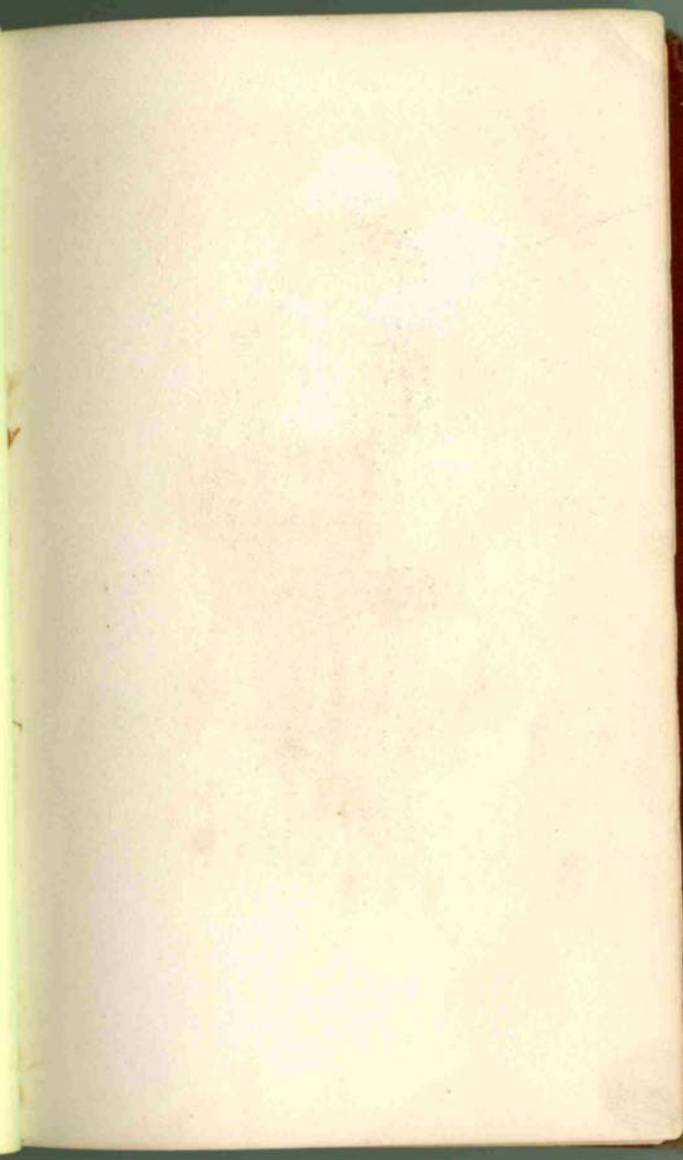


HENRY B. RICHARDS.

Harry  
from  
Grandpa

Xmas 1879









DESIGNED BY HENRY - CARTER AND A PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAMS

JOHN ELLARD.

*(DIXIEY DUMPS.)*

DIDLEY DUMPS;

OR

JOHN ELLARD

THE NEWSBOY.

*Alexander Sloan?*

NEW EDITION REVISED AND ENLARGED.

PHILADELPHIA:  
ALFRED MARTIEN,  
1214 CHESTNUT STREET.  
1873.

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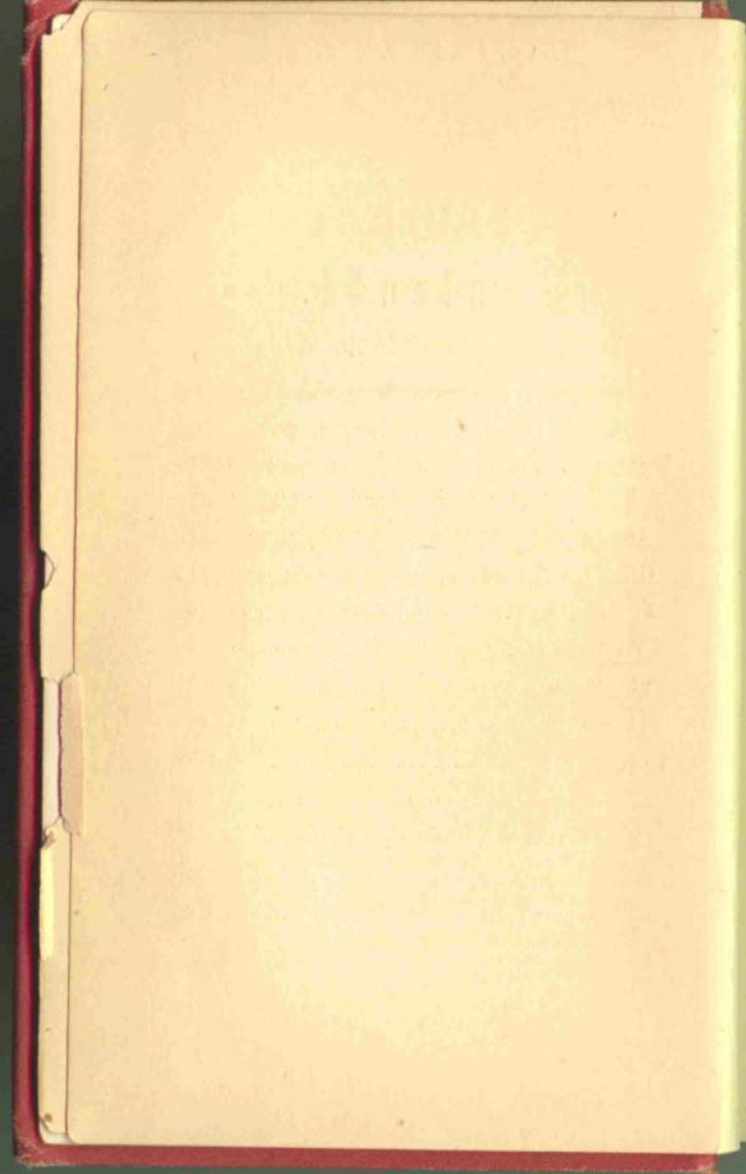
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STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY ALFRED MARTIN.

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# P R E F A C E

*TO THE FOURTH THOUSAND.*

---

IN order to continue the protection of the Home to those of the boarders who, having changed their avocation, had ceased to be newsboys, as also to provide for a large class of homeless youth of other callings, the Managers of the Newsboys' Aid Society applied in 1861 for a change in the charter, when the title of the Society became

THE YOUNG MEN'S HOME OF PHILADELPHIA.

Many an honest lad has looked with pain and surprise upon the institutions of REFORMATION for which this city is famed, and sighed for a Home, where he could escape the numerous and fearful evils which consign their victims to such enclosures

Public sympathy and public charity stood ready to care for him when he became an outcast, but extended no friendly hand to help him on in the path of rectitude. In the midst of this great Christian community, he was unprovided for, unless, through a course of vice, he made himself amenable to the penalty of its violated laws.

The former excellent custom of apprentices living with their employers has long since been abandoned, and few, if any, restraints are now thrown around the thousands of youth in our city, after the toil of the day is over. They have performed the amount of labor required of them, and are left, till the hour for resuming their occupation in the morning, to the designing and unprincipled ones who prey upon them, and who, for the miserable pittance they can make, are willing to hasten these unprotected and uncared for youth onward in the road to ruin. In this

respect the apprentice is, in many cases, worse off than the stabled cattle of his employer—the dumb beast is carefully housed and provided for, but not so the immortal human being.

There are some noble exceptions, but this is a true picture in most cases. Doubtless many philanthropic and excellent employers are ignorant of the sad condition of their apprentices, and would be amazed could they see them after business hours. Such as do not realize the responsibility devolving upon them in this respect, would do well to read a little book entitled "Bosses and their Boys."

Many of the *cheap* habitations (they cannot be called homes) where the scanty means of young men compel them to live, are fraught with much evil. Desirous of having them about the premises as little as possible, the proprietors render everything as unattractive as can be, and the young men are forced



into the streets, or into drinking or dancing saloons for shelter and company.

For want of suitable accommodation, and owing to the deranged state of affairs consequent upon the war, the building occupied by the Society was closed in May, 1864, but it is confidently hoped that funds may soon be obtained to enable the Managers of "The Young Men's Home" to erect one adapted to the requirements of the Society.


This city of BROTHERLY LOVE abounds in monuments of philanthropy, telling of the benevolent care of the blind, the dumb, the orphan, the infirm, and others in distress. May it soon be adorned with a Home to cheer and encourage the youth who support themselves by their industry, but who, as strangers, or through Providential bereavement, are HOMELESS in our midst.

# DIDLEY DUMPS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### NEWSBOYS.

HO and what is a News-boy? All familiar with our large cities know him to be, as the name suggests, a vender of newspapers. With but few exceptions, his scanty apparel and pallid face tell of his acquaintance with great want and suffering. Whatever the state of the weather, he goes his round, with his stock of

merchandize under his arm, vociferously crying, "*Second E-deshun,*" "*Extree,*" "*Arrival of the Ameri-kee,*" "*Latest News,*" &c. He invests his money in the papers of the day, and hastens to the railway depots, steamboat landings, hotels, or some thoroughfare of the city, to sell them at once, or else suffer a loss. The morning issue must give place to that of the afternoon, which has no market value the next morning. Despite his efforts to sell, he is not unfrequently left with a supply on hand, and the temptation to pass them off for those of the following day, is greater than some can resist. For quickness and shrewd-

ness, newsboys as a class excel all others. A lad of mere ordinary capacity would starve at the business. The spirit of rivalry which exists among them calls forth every energy, and exposes them to much evil. On one occasion, when reading to a number of them, I pointed to a picture of a boy, and asked if he looked like a newsboy, when I was answered, "No! *he's* not a newsboy—that fellow! he's too innocent."

Every calamity is so much capital to them, and the more awful or startling it may be, the better for their business. This they well understand, and no efforts are spared

to magnify the comparatively unimportant news of the day into affairs of great consequence. A dearth of news is often supplied by their ingenuity. They can bring a "steamer from Europe" at any time—accidents happen whenever they feel it necessary that they should, and while the House of Representatives is contesting for a Speaker, "Speaker elected!" is shouted in all directions.

"How is business now?" I once inquired of one of the lads.

"Very dull, sir; so few accidents."

It is no uncommon thing for a lower grade called "grubbers" to gamble away their last penny, and then apply to those to whom they

had been in the habit of selling, for money to "set them up in business, as they were *busted*." Many of our citizens conscientiously refused to purchase their papers, and would, sometimes at considerable personal inconvenience, go to the office or newspaper store, rather than encourage an occupation which seemed to promise only evil to those engaged in it.

Let us follow these boys, when the business and excitement of the day are over, and learn where their homes are—if homes they have. The more favored ones return to their parents—in some cases to a widowed mother, for whom the little

fellow, patiently toiling from early morning, brings home at the close of the day the few pennies he has earned for their joint support. This is the best phase of a newsboy's life, and were it oftener found, there would be less cause for commiseration. One lad—the support of his mother—has been a communicant in one of our city churches for eight years, and is actively engaged in distributing tracts, when not selling papers. In some instances, parents wait the return of their children, merely for the sake of the little money they are expected to bring with them, to be taken from them with abuse because it was not more,

and spent in drunkenness and riot. It is not to be wondered at that the poor lads shun such unnatural homes, and seek more attractive associations at the low gambling and drinking saloons. The evenings spent in these places, or at the theatre, or other haunts with which all large cities abound, leaving them penniless, fitly closes with a chance lodging for the night upon the pavement, doorstep, or in the station-house.

This is no fancy sketch, but a true picture of the newsboy's life. And upon whom does the accountability rest for the neglect which abandoned these lads to the certain consequences



of such a life? Some have entered the army and navy, and were in the Mexican war;\* a letter has recently been received from one, dated Utah, where his regiment is now stationed; but many have found their way to the House of Refuge or Penitentiary, and others were on their way there, without a friend to warn them of their danger, or speak to them one kind word of advice. Surely the

It will be interesting to the reader to know that over forty of the newsboys, who had been at the "Home," entered the service of their country at the breaking out of the rebellion in 1861. This embraced nearly every one of sufficient age and health. Many interesting letters were received from these young soldiers, not a few of whom had their first instruction in military affairs, as members of a company formed at the Home before the war commenced.

plea of ignorance cannot be urged, for the very appearance of the lads told their sad story; and their shrill, piercing cry, proclaiming the papers they had for sale, arrested the attention of many who might otherwise have passed them unnoticed. Efforts had been made in isolated cases, but there had been no concert of action on their behalf as a class.

“What can be done for these poor newsboys?” I often asked myself, when my sympathy was first awakened by their neglected appearance, and the hopelessness with which all seemed to regard their present condition, and their future prospects. What can be done?


Some answer, "They are past recovery; and the sooner they get into the House of Refuge or Penitentiary, the better for themselves and for the community." But no. If an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, then surely it is infinitely better to take them by the hand and affectionately lead them off in the opposite direction. However rough may be their exterior, an honest and true heart beats in many a breast, and if *let alone* by the evil and designing ones who prey upon them, their condition would be entirely different from what it now is.

They do the poor newsboy gross injustice who pronounce his case,

hopeless. However it may be in other cities, there are in Philadelphia men who have worked their way up in this honorable and legitimate business, and who are now in comfortable circumstances, deservedly possessing the respect of the community. Many a youth has his eye fixed upon those who have passed successively through the several grades of the profession, and, struggling to overcome the many difficulties which beset his path, sighs for a helping hand and sympathetic heart, which must not be withheld.

## CHAPTER II.

OPENING OF THE LODGING-ROOM IN  
PEAR STREET.

IN 1856 I was led to a serious consideration of my duty in reference to the newsboys; and the desire to know more of them, and to cheer and encourage them, increased as I became better acquainted with their circumstances and wants, but other engagements, and absence from the city, prevented a consummation of my long cherished plans till 1858.

In coöperation with others, a

meeting was held at Jayne's Hall, on Sunday, January 31, 1858, which was attended by fifty-three newsboys. Several gentlemen were present, some of whom took part in the exercises. As one of them, a member of the press, made his appearance, he was greeted with hearty cheers, and clapping of hands, so delighted were the boys to see him.

It is a matter of interest, worthy of record in the history of this first meeting, that great doubts were expressed by one of the gentlemen as to the propriety of opening the meeting with prayer, fearing interruption on the part of the boys. He, however, complied with my request to do

so, but first referred the matter to the boys for an expression of their wishes. All manifested their approval by holding up their hands, and, although told by him that they might retain their seats, they immediately arose and remained in respectful silence. Their behaviour was excellent during the two hours the meeting lasted.

A second meeting was held at the same place on the following Sunday, February 7th, when I endeavoured to instruct the boys from the word of God, the only true and safe guide in the path of life. They conducted themselves admirably, except in the use of tobacco to an alarming extent.

The smallest lads had not only adopted the vile habit of chewing, but some of them actually *ate tobacco!* A little friendly advice had the desired effect, and there was not only no further trouble upon this score during the remainder of the meeting, but their promise to abstain from the use of the nauseous weed the next Sunday was faithfully kept, as I felt assured it would be.

One of the gentlemen present at the first meeting, and who was well acquainted with most of the boys, having informed me that some of them had on that occasion heard the first kind words ever spoken to them, I was led to ask if this was



really the case, when several of these poor, ill-used youth, touchingly answered in the affirmative.

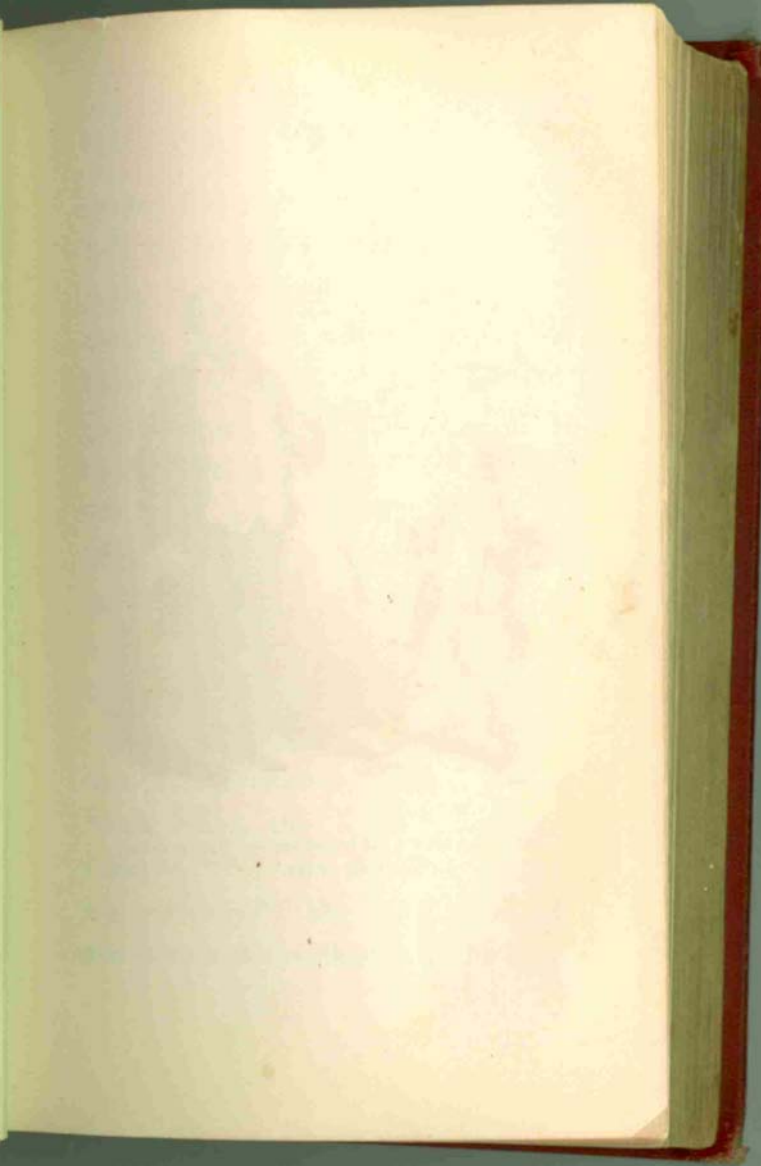
A third meeting was held on Sunday the 14th of February, but indisposition prevented my assembling the boys for several succeeding Sundays, after which few could be gathered, and it soon became evident that some other plan must be adopted to secure the desired object. Their great and pressing need was a *home*, and this I had at our first interview encouraged them to expect, being fully convinced that it was indispensable. The boys never lost sight of this prospect, but pressed the subject upon me whenever I met them in

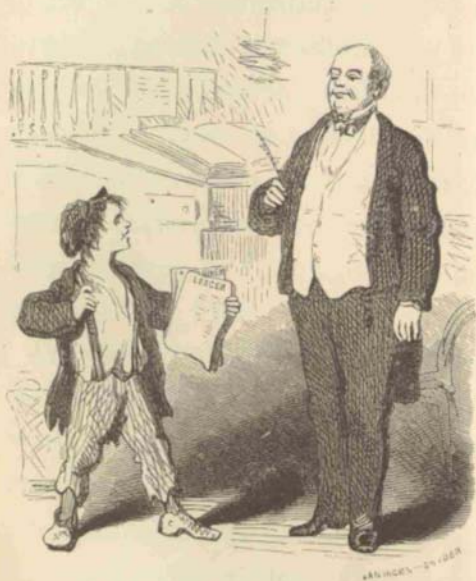
the street, with an earnestness that showed how keenly they felt the want of such a shelter. So eager was their expectation, that they watched with interest every furniture wagon, in the hope that it was to their new quarters. Some of them made tours to the west end or most fashionable part of the city, to aid me in my efforts to procure a suitable building, and brought back favorable reports of several of the costly mansions there, which exactly met their lofty ideas.

Arrangements were at last completed, and "The Newsboys' Aid Society," formed for the purpose of "providing lodging and education

for homeless and indigent boys, engaged in the occupation of vending newspapers and periodicals in the city of Philadelphia, and to encourage in them, by suitable means, habits of morality and economy," opened their plain, yet comfortable, lodging rooms in Pear street, on the 29th of May, 1858.

The boys were in high spirits on this occasion, and did ample justice to the "good things" provided for them, and which had been tastefully arranged upon the tables by an experienced public waiter. One of the lads, after watching the movements of this waiter, and gazing upon the banquet he had prepared for them,





“Come and see me eat boned-turkey, with a darkey  
to wait on me.”

p. 27.

hastened to a gentleman, and invited him to be present at the appointed hour, and "see him eat boned turkey, with a darkey waiting upon him." This first entertainment was quite a grand affair, and all seemed to enjoy themselves most heartily. The Rev. Dr. Newton opened the Home with prayer, and reading of the Scriptures. In addressing the boys, he related an interesting anecdote of a lad, who, in his endeavors to untie a knot, was met by a gentleman, who offered to cut it with a knife, when the little fellow exclaimed, "No, sir! I belong to the try company." The application of the story was excellent, and the boys

were affectionately urged to form a "Newsboys' Try Company," and to try and be good, and avoid evil of every kind.

The Rev. John Chambers was also present, and took part in the opening services. In rising to address the boys, he pointed to the well provided tables, and said, "Boys! I expect you would rather be eating those refreshments, than listening to any more speeches." Immediately a loud "*Yes, sir,*" was heard in various directions, to the great amusement of all in the room, not one of whom enjoyed the joke more than the good man who caused it. His address was listened to with an attention

which proved how completely he had drawn their thoughts from the direction to which he at first called them. All passed off pleasantly, and boys and visitors seemed equally pleased.

The lodging rooms were provided with twenty-five new iron bedsteads, with new bedding, arranged in a large and airy room. Each bedstead was labelled with the name of its occupant, the boys making their own selection. At nine o'clock that night, I read the twenty-third Psalm at family worship at the Home, and committed to the care of the *Good Shepherd* the wandering ones he had



graciously gathered into our fold, praying Him to lead them "in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

## CHAPTER III.

JOHN ELLARD.

**M**OST of the boys had nicknames, some of which were very odd. Among the most prominent of these were "Didley Dumps," "Oliver Twist," "Dick Turpin," "Splasher," "Butter bowls and hot cakes," "Butcher," "Soldier," "Poodle," "Canes," &c. On one occasion, while waiting for some of the boys, I asked where they were, and was answered, "Butcher ain't come—Piggie ain't come—"

Splasher's awful hard up, and goin' to enlist.'

As new boys present themselves at the Home, they most generally are introduced to us by some nickname. The last is "Harper's Ferry," so called because he sold papers on the railroad train passing through Harper's Ferry, and was present at the capture of John Brown.

I soon found that this practice had a degrading tendency, and interfered not a little with the efforts made to elevate the boys. To lift them up, their *low* names must be abandoned, and I am happy to say that very few of them now remain. One was, however, too highly prized

to be dropped, and the little fellow who bore it was better known as "Didley Dumps" than as "John Ellard."

John Ellard was born in New York, on the 22d of February, 1843. When three years of age he fell from a woodshed, in Albany, where his parents then lived, and received an injury which resulted in a lump on his breast and back, and rendered him deformed for life.

It is said he had a decided aversion for school, and while there, that he was more fond of play than study. A favorite amusement was to get under the benches, unknown to the teacher, and "play tricks on the

boys." He was whipped one day for being late at school, and finding it was not "better late than never," resolved not to venture there again. As a child, he had a fondness for peddling, and sold songs and matches when only eight years of age.

In 1856 he came to Philadelphia, and commenced business as a News-boy at the time of the fearful Burdell tragedy, which created quite a demand for newspapers, and proved a harvest to the boys engaged in selling them.

His malformation so affected his breathing as to render it impossible for him to walk any great distance without resting. He paid the boys





Ellard returning from his stand.

a cent a ride for carrying him to and from the Home upon their back. It was grand sport to them to have "Didley" on their back, to say nothing of the *pay*. A ride on some vehicle was stolen as chances occurred, and the passing of an omnibus afforded too good an opportunity to be lost. In jumping from one, opposite the Girard House, he was run over by a carriage, and taken into the hotel, where he was attended by a medical gentleman, who pronounced him not seriously injured. A quarter of a dollar was given him, and off he started to sell his papers.

Previous to the appearance of Master Ellard in Philadelphia, there



had been a hump-backed newsboy, known as "Didley Dumps," and the boys thought that Ellard, being similarly shaped, should bear the same name as "Old Did," but he thought otherwise, and indignantly refused to answer to it. At last some ten or twelve of his companions accompanied him to the theatre one night, and there obtained his consent to the soubriquet by which he became so generally and favorably known.

Sometimes his bed for the night was a door-step, at other times a box on the pavement, or some vacated cellar or garret. Once he secreted himself under a basket in the Post-office, and spent the night there. A

newspaper bag would afford him shelter at other times. It was rare sport to him to get into one of these bags at a printing office, and roll himself about. On winter nights he would find his way between the iron bars of a window leading to the boiler room of a printing office, and there seek shelter from the cold and storm. One of these bars was bent, so that when the curve was downwards he could manage to crawl through, but unhappily the bar once turned as he was half way in, and held him fast, till rescued by some of his comrades, who heard his cries for relief.

Ellard was a dear lover of fencing.

A sword was presented to him by one of his customers, and he made free use of it among the boys. One day while thus engaged in front of an office on Third street, an elderly gentleman, disturbed by their noise, attempted to drive them away, but Ellard thought himself too well armed to beat a retreat, and commenced flourishing his sword in a manner that soon convinced the gentleman of the propriety of self-defence. Master Dumps was arrested and marched off *a la militaire* to the police station. One of his companions sought him out, soon after he was taken prisoner, and carried him a cent's worth of tobacco

to comfort him. After a hearing before an alderman, he was released the same evening.

As might be expected in a boy thus deprived of the benefits of any proper moral training, Ellard, when incensed, would frequently give way to such violent passion, as rendered him dangerous to those who had offended him; and at other times, under a sense of real or fancied injuries, he would indulge in sullen obstinacy, from which it was not easy to arouse him. Experience proved that it was best to leave him to reflection, which soon brought him to his senses.

He was a great favorite with the

boys, though he sometimes handled them rather more roughly than they liked, and beyond what any other than a cripple would have dared to do. They were often entertained by him with remarkable stories of fairies, kings, &c. How many of these tales originated in his imaginative brain I know not, but he used to get well "posted up" in conversation with some old huckster women, who would tell wonderful things of great men, beginning, very properly, with George Washington, and descending the scale to lesser lights—as a matter of course dealing extensively in the marvellous.

One of his favorite amusements

was to stand on the table, wrapped in a sheet, and repeat portions of Macbeth and other plays. Thus clad, he would also repeat the following favorite passage:

"Were I so tall to reach the pole,  
Or grasp the ocean with a span,  
I must be measured by my soul:  
The mind's the standard of the man."

Though not a member of the Numismatic Society, he had quite a passion for old coins, of which he was said to be a good judge, and *turned many a penny* in this lucrative trade.

The most prominent trait in his character was his generosity. He had a sympathizing heart, and would

give liberally to those in need, though he valued his money too highly to spend it foolishly. Many of the boys received pecuniary assistance from him. Seeing one of the boarders, who was dismissed from the Home because he was too lazy to work for a living, lounging about the door one day, he said to the Superintendent: "I pity poor ——. If you will take him in again, I will go security for his board." In speaking to the lad about his sad want of energy, and of the noble and generous offer of Ellard, I urged him to prove his appreciation of the kindness, and not to allow his benefactor to suffer for it. His reply was,

“That is not all that Ellard has done for me; many a three and five cent piece he has given me to buy bread with.”

Ellard had a number of regular customers to whom he carried papers. A poor blind man was sure to be at the door of one of these customers every day, in time to receive a penny. Sometimes he would ask the little girl that led him who gave the money, and, upon being told that it was “the little newsboy,” he would say, “God bless you, my son, and may you sell all the papers you have;” “and,” added Ellard, in telling this, “it comes true, for I sell



double the papers that any other boy does."

A poor lame man also received a daily allowance of a penny from him; and if Ellard missed him on his way home in the evening, he gave two cents the next evening.

It was his custom to buy a box of matches of a poor blind man whom he passed every morning on his way to business. After lighting his cigar with one, he returned the box, as a present to the man, who was so blind to his own interest as to quarrel with his little customer, and accused him of stealing his matches. Ellard was exceedingly indignant at this unjust accusation, and pronounced

him an impostor, declaring that he *could* see, and was only pretending to be blind.

While selling papers at the Girard House one day, a beggar entered the hall, and solicited alms of one of the boarders, who asked Ellard if he would give the man anything. "Whatever you give, I will give double," was the reply. The gentleman gave a cent, and Ellard handed him a quarter of a dollar. Feeling this silent but severe rebuke of a poor deformed lad, the gentleman tendered Ellard half a dollar, saying, "You are an honorable little fellow." The offer was refused by Ellard, who, turning away with an air of

independence, replied: "I make my money by selling papers."

This generous lad not only took pleasure in doing for others, but was grateful for every act of kindness extended to him. Several times I have heard my name called in the street, and, upon looking around, found him running after me, to give me a paper; and I was obliged to avoid passing his stand, as he was sure to press upon me the most expensive paper he had.