

Turning Waste to Service His Life's Work

Men and Things Saved from Scrapheap by Captain Harry Kline

CAPTAIN HARRY HOLLISTER KLINE, in command of the Salvation Army's manrenovating plant at Eleventh and Dodge streets, is splendidly fitted by temperament and experience for his job.

Twenty-five years ago he was running a gambling joint in Fresno, Cal. He was converted by the Salvation Army in 1891, and has been an active soldier of the Lord and his fellowman ever since.

He has been a military soldier, also, going with the first expedition to the Philippines in the Spanish-American war, where he held meetings for his comrades under the bamboo trees of the far-away islands, and was invalided home after five years, with chronic dysentery.

His father was a captain, too. He was captain of a company of Kansas cavalry which he recruited and he fought Indians on the plains of Kansas in the early days.

"I have eaten, slept, stolen, gambled and been in jail with men just like those I am now trying to guide to the right path," says Captain Kline. "I have cooked tramp stews under railroad bridges. I know my men, their hearts, their minds, their temptations, their fine points. I am an ordinary, every-day man with a love for my fellowman and a sympathy for their faults and frailties. I have acquired this, not through belief in some creed, but because I have experienced what they are experiencing, and I have found in the salvation of God a living, vitalizing force which has helped me out of that quagmire. The reason I am in the Salvation Army is because it was through the Salvation Army that I came to myself."

No dreamer is Captain Kline. His is not a job for a dreamer, an idealist. It is a job that calls for such executive ability as is required for the management of large industrial enterprises.

Looking at the modest exterior on Dodge street west of Eleventh, you have no idea what a hive of industry it is. You wouldn't imagine that at night there may be over 100 men sleeping there, men who would be out in the cold or in unsympathetic jails but for this. You wouldn't imagine that during the day there are from fifteen to thirty men working there, men who would be idle or perhaps into mischief but for this.

It was an old, ramshackle building when Captain Kline took charge of it over three years ago, "not much but four walls," he says.

Right there he put into force a great principle of the Army, "Take waste labor and put it to work on waste material, and you save both to be of use to the world."

That's a mighty big, powerful principle and it has worked and is working marvels right here in Omaha.

By it the old building was converted into a snug, warm, clean place, that is a palace to men who are down-and-out. Moreover, the spirit of sympathy, understanding, helpfulness pervades its every corner.

Here the unfortunate, if they are worthy, can get a night's lodging or a meal for nothing. Here 15 cents will buy a warm bed for the night with opportunity for a man to take a hot bath, and wash his clothes and have them dry by morning.

Let's go over the big, busy place with Captain Kline. Leaving his office, we go through a narrow corridor and arrive in one of two large rooms, steam-heated and with electric lights. Here are long rows of cots, each with a number. Around the sides, small rooms, eighty by ten in size, are partitioned off. Those rent for 25 cents a night or \$1.50 a week.

In one corner of the big rooms are the bathrooms and big porcelain tubs, with abundance of hot water, where the men can wash their clothes.

Descending the stairs from here we come to the lobby, where there are chairs and tables with magazines and newspapers. Off of this is a little room for the clerk. Let us take a look at the register.

Last night nearly all the beds and rooms were taken. There are all the names of the occupants and below is a summary of the night's business, thus:

	Beds.	Rooms.
Cash	41	6
Charity	9	3
"Stand-offs"	7	1
Previously paid	17	1
One dollar and thirty-five cents received from "identys."		
Total receipts	\$12.75	

"Identys" are men who bring identification slips showing that they have worked for a railroad or other firm and have the money "coming" the next pay day.

The "stand-offs" are men on whom the captain takes a chance. He has come, by long experience, to be an expert character reader and can pick a flaw in almost any bogus hard-luck story. "If I err at all, though," he says, "I try to err on the side of mercy. Most of these fellows have good hearts. Some, of course, are just naturally no good, the dirty bums. Still if they come here hungry and cold I can't turn them away, and I give them an order for a bed and meal."

Here we meet a cheery, gristled, bustling little man and the captain introduces him.

"This is my foreman, William Hodge," he says. "He came to me down-and-out and he could hardly stand up. Boose had got the best of him. From a common roustabout he has worked up till now he is my right-hand man and he's a crackerjacket. Always on the job and I can always depend on him."

Mr. Hodge beams with the pleasure that comes of high commendation and appreciation of work conscientiously done. On invitation of the captain he is glad to tell his story:

"I had a fine position with the Union Pacific as foreman of depot construction, got my \$110 a month. But every bit of it went for drink. Seemed I couldn't let it alone and never saved a cent. Since

ers. Most of the workers are men who work for I'm here, while I don't get but a small fraction of what I got with the Union Pacific. I've got \$300 or \$400 dollars in the bank."

Mr. Hodge, you see, is now a man of worth in the community. He's doing useful work and he's doing it well and has the commendation of his superior officer and money in the bank and self-respect. What more is there in life for anyone? But for the Salvation Army where and what would this useful man be?

In this room, also, calls are received and filled for men for all kinds of work. A book is filled with entries like this:

"Evans laundry—man to clean around laundry—sent Concannon, Room 20."

"Gilchrist, 5002 Davenport—man carry ashes out of cellar—sent Baker."

"El's South Twentieth street—man carry in coal—sent McPherson."

Next we enter the store which is the greatest old curiosity shop you can imagine. Everything here that goes to furnish a house. It is presided over by Mrs. Brown, twenty years a Salvationist. She knows the customers and her scale of prices is not fixed merely by values, but by the ability and respectability of the customers. Where respectability is very high and ability to pay very low, things are given away.

Back of the store is a big room where all the stuff collected by the five wagons from all over the city is received. Here the paper is sorted and then shot down a hole into a big paper press where it is made into bales weighing from 200 to 1,200 pounds each. This is shipped in carload lots to

their board and lodging and, of course, they are constantly coming and going.

In the little kitchen the captain shows a large ice box. He saw it lying in the cellar of the old Myers-Dillon building at Sixteenth and Farnam streets. He "rescued" it and it's as good as new.

"What I need now is a good sized range," he says. "You see, we have to do all the cooking on that little kitchen range and it's altogether too small."

The dining room with oilcloth-covered tables is made cheery with pictures—Sampson, Schley, Dewey, colored landscapes and a portrait of Miss Eva Booth, head of the army.

"This linoleum," says the captain, "came from the old Board of Trade building. Some of these dishes were given to us by hotels when they discarded them for others. These chairs came from the old court house and were sat in by judges and newspaper men and all sorts of important people before we got them."

"Efficiency." That is the thing that impresses one after a trip through this establishment. Not the blunt efficiency that simply seeks to grind human labor to extract the ultimate possible dollar, but a higher efficiency that makes useful men while it is making useful furniture and clothing out of the castoffs.

And the wages! Even the highest are mere trifles. But the expenses of these men are trifles, too, and they have the boon of something to do where otherwise they would be idle. And they have a home and sympathetic companionship of their fellows.



*Captain Harry Hollister Kline
Salvation Army*

eastern paper mills. The cellar is filled at present with about sixty of these great bales.

"You see," says the captain, "I used to be a gambler. I'm a speculator and I believe paper is going up, so I'm holding this for the market. Before the war we got 90 cents a hundred for rags. Now we are getting \$3 a hundred."

Come now into a little room lighted by a basement window. Here a little man is engaged in staining a table top.

"This table came in with only three legs and half a top," explains the little man proudly. "I got the wood for this top from a headboard out of an old bed and the extra leg I took from another old table that only had two legs."

This explains what they are doing all the time at this great factory—making useful things out of castoffs and giving them to the deserving or selling them for a fraction of their value.

A comfortable reading room is provided for the workers in the industrial home and the dormitory adjoins. It has seventeen cots and seventeen lock-

