

A well-to-do young college graduate is studying the labor question from the point of view of the laborer and reporting the effects of the labor upon himself and the intimate knowledge he gains of his fellow-workers to *Scribner's Monthly*. The October number contains the third installment of his report. Young Mr. Wyckoff left a house party in a villa where he was an honored guest, without any money in his pocket and only a small packet of extra clothing in his hand. He started out like any other tramp on the road, but unlike the tramp, he sought work. His most recent experience is that of a porter in a summer hotel. He shows the social cleavage which exists among the servants, the exalted position of the head waiter as compared to that of the dishwashers and porters. Although his board and lodging are part of the wage which he receives from the landlord, on Saturdays he has to give up the small room where he sleeps, the other nights of the week to the city "transients" who come to the resort to spend Sunday. On Saturday and Sunday nights the porter must sleep in the barn on the hay. Then, the lower servants, which include the stablemen and boys, the porter and dishwashers, eat from a long shelf in a dark, close pantry, where the food as it comes from the tables, is dumped in appetite-destroying heaps. The porter's hours are from five in the morning to eleven at night. He scrubs, rakes, cleans lamps and spittoons and waits upon guests. The hardest thing to bear in his position is the disdain of the little children who look upon him in his unshaven condition, with clothes soiled by his occupation, as the boy man their nurses threaten them with. This young aristocrat who has studied "labor" from books in college, in his eagerness to know from personal experience how a man is treated who starts out to earn his living with only his hands and industrious tendencies, does not hesitate to accept everything that tends to make his experience as a day laborer complete. So far his experiences confirm the belief that social system is built entirely for the advantage of the man that has. The man who has not must give up his commonest rights to the man who has, in order to procure food and lodging of the poorest kind.

The power of the political boss in American cities is making democracy something to be laughed at. In our own city he has succeeded in putting into administrative offices, men who have lived lives which shut them out of all social relations with the respectable families of Lincoln. Not one in a hundred of the men who voted for them will invite them to their houses. Yet they put them in a place where they can dictate the influences which shall surround their children—the rising generation. In the last year or two it has been demonstrated that the boss himself shares in this social disability. He himself has shown that social discriminations have no effect on his real power. Now it does not make any difference who this man is. It is the type. And the type lives and rules in nearly every city of the United States. A characteristic of his rule is that once in a certain number of years, say eight or ten, the people lashed to a fury by his destruction of popular rights, by his conspiracies, the aim of all of which is to make money out of the people's necessities, rise up and dethrone him. But in a month or so he crawls back again or some individual of the same type takes his place. The indications in Lincoln politics are that the time of the decennial dethronement has ar-

rived. The long conspiracy which has kept the people of Lincoln drinking salt water when new wells of purest water were available, has at last been revealed to the people at large. If they give this franchise to the Thompson water company the real and completed slavery which will follow such a grant be upon their own heads. It is indicative of the interest that the *Journal* takes in the affairs of the city of Lincoln that the morning after Mr. Thompson's bid for the water franchise that paper had editorials on Ohio wool, the gold shipment, a New York divorce case, the President's message to Spain, the Dingley tariff, the Duchess of Marlborough, the Tammany matter in New York, repaving Eleventh street—eighteen lines, the Omaha *World-Herald* and the fair, the price of products, the New York mayoralty and the Sultan of Turkey. Eighteen lines out of 3:2 devoted to a local interest. And not a word about the transference of so important an interest from municipal to individual control until the cat shows which way she is going to jump.

Mothers of boys who attend the high school of this city have been complaining to the mayor of the cigar, candy and fruit shops where small boys gather to try their luck at the nickel-in-the-slot machines. Such a shop in the Brace building, which is only two 11 c's from the high school, is crowded with boys of tender years and unformed characters who are cultivating dissolute habits which will prevent them from becoming useful members of society. The nickel-in-the-slot machine is just as much a gambling instrument as the roulette wheel. It is more dangerous, for in broad daylight in the respectable company of newspapers and magazines it tempts the passer-by with the prospect of getting five times the worth of the nickel which sets the machine in motion. The swagger of the young male animal who has been successful in winning twenty-five cents worth of cigarettes for five cents is threatening to maternal authority. The laws protect these fledglings from the evil influence of gambling and saloons, but they are not enforced. Just across the street from the Brace building is a saloon, where, *THE COURIER* is informed, it is the practice of the proprietor to sell beer and other liquors to little shavers whose heads scarcely reach the counter. The school authorities seem not to be able to stop this trade. Forfeiture of his license under a strict police system would be the result of a saloon-keeper's violation of the law forbidding the selling of liquor to minors. But under the present mayor and chief the law is a dead letter. The youth of the city are being destroyed in shoals and the poor mothers weep and plead in vain. If they united in an appeal to the mayor and city council for the removal of the slot machines and for the enforcement of the laws against selling cigarettes and liquor to minors, their very numbers might prevail. For the sake of the small boy it would be worth while trying. That silly saying about "sowing his wild oats" has been the destruction of more than one youngster by making those who might otherwise seek to remove temptation from his path regard drunkenness and other vices as inevitable to youth. The wrecks of thirty years old and more who are now drifting up and down the streets of Lincoln in company with a cigarette are those whose boyish feet strayed into the saloon when they were "sowing their wild oats." They have become habitués now and are

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