

THE NARRATIVE OF A VISITOR WHO SAYS THAT BEING "USED TO IT" IS THE SECRET OF ASTORIA'S PRESENT WRETCHEDNESS

Our Municipal Shortcomings Pointed Out by an Observing Gentleman Who Scores Our Carelessness.

Our Miserable Thoroughfares Startle Him and Cause Him to Wonder if We Are Lost to All Sense of Civic Duty, While Un-sightily Woodpiles Greet His Astonished Gaze as He Goes About Sightseeing.

Astoria, Oct. 1.—(Editor The Astorian)—Out here I am an easterner. Where I came from I am a westerner. From those statements you may rightly conclude that I came from what is generally called the middle west. Back in my state, Wisconsin, the people have heard of Astoria. The little boys and girls there read about Astoria in their geography books. Before deciding to visit your town I looked up Astoria in the encyclopedia and atlas and found out some hard, cold facts about location, population and natural advantages. Then I boarded a train and started west. "Ever been in Astoria?" I asked a fellow-traveler. "Yep; once," he said, dryly. "Never goin' again." "Why not?" I asked. "Ever there?" "No." "Then you'd better turn back." The conversation I have quoted is an actual one. The man I questioned told me more, but I decided to come on nevertheless. I was determined that I should like Astoria. I heard that Astoria was built on piles and on a sidehill. The sidehill I saw at once, but it was a whole day before I discovered the piles. I walked up and down your main street—Commercial—several times that first day, but it was almost dinner time when I discovered that it was paved with planks supported by piles. Before that I had supposed the street was macadamized and the work done poorly. I lived a year in Chicago and I have seen streets at their worst there. I have seen

sand streets where the wheels sink almost to the hubs and mud streets where the slime is a foot deep on the level and two feet deep in the holes, but I never saw such bad streets as you have here in Astoria. Down town it isn't so bad as it is in the residence parts. But all over it's bad enough. I walked over Eleventh street to Duane Friday afternoon. Looking west on Duane I saw several boards lying lengthwise on the street and I walked up to investigate. Then, too, I saw that there were holes that were not covered. I looked down one of these and saw dirty water 10 feet below. The hole was wide enough for me to put my foot through. "Why don't they fix that hole?" I asked a man who was standing on the sidewalk. "Oh, I don't know; they will after a while, I guess," and he yawned and started to walk away. "Don't people ever get hurt by stepping into these holes?" I called after him. "Naw," he said; "they're used to them." In that last statement it seems to me, lies the secret of Astoria's wretchedness. I went riding the other day. I sat on the front seat as we drove down one of your steep hills. The wooden pavement was broken in numerous places, and the horses stumbled and threatened to fall, while the carriage lurched like a ship in a storm. The driver kept looking down at the pavement. "Trying to dodge the holes?" I asked. "No; trying to ride on the girders,"

he said. "The trouble is the blamed things don't run the same all alone. They ought to fix this street, but, then, we're used to it." You're used to too many things out here in Astoria. You ought to get over being used to things and make a few changes. I stood on the corner of Eleventh street and Franklin avenue yesterday afternoon and looked at the woodpiles. To the north I saw, by the Cole, one big woodpile that occupied the gutter for half a block. To the south I saw five piles of various sizes. To the west I saw two woodpiles and a dilapidated wagon. Looking toward the east I could see only one woodpile, but, then, the street was torn up after a block. I walked down to the corner of Duane street. There were a piledriver and four wagons in sight to the east, and six wagons and four woodpiles to the west. "Why the woodpiles?" I asked an old man. "No alleys," he said. "But why don't the people move the wood into their yards?" I persisted. "Oh, they will after a while. They're used to having it in the street." There you have it again—"they're used to it." Astoria will have to get over being "used to it" and begin to do things. But I don't want to be a "knocker." Astoria is a good town, better than most towns; and it's growing, and growing fast. Anyone can see that. I took a long walk the other day and saw new houses being built everywhere, and good houses, too. I went through one of your mills and one of your canneries, and saw hustle and business. Your stores look busy; there are few loafers on the streets, and everything looks lively and business-like. Astoria has had a past. I am sure it is to have a future that will be a surprise to the people. But the good citizens of Astoria will have to wake up. They will have to get over being "used to it." I may write more later. There are lots of nice things I have omitted to say in this letter. AN EASTERNER.

LIVING FOR OTHERS IS THE HIGHEST AIM OF LIFE

The Rev. Dr. Dean Babbitt, of the Church of the Epiphany, New York, Says Society Is Responsible for Itself.

"Neither you nor I know the tremendous powers locked up in us for moral advancement and for doing good, realizing high ideals and making a large success in life. There are some of the young here who possibly have no plan of scheme of life. Morally, they are just living from hand to mouth, with no definite objects, no particular aims, just taking life idly, a kind of shiftless, indolent way from day to day, subject to any temptation, enjoying in a haphazard way any pleasure that comes along, living for the day or the moment, just like those insects called 'ephemera,' which exist for a day, die in its sunlight, or drive before its storm, then are gone forever, for their nature is to die with the day; these young people are not doing their best with a purpose. Now, that we are to consider the great basal fundamental fact that to do our best, live our best, realize the best in us, we must get out of ourselves and do good to others. Now, take this basal, fundamental truth of living for others, for self-realization, for doing our best in the church, in society, and in the family, and see the bracing power of this golden band of unity and harmony. "First—The Church. Look at what that is, what it stands for, and what are its fundamentals, and then see how necessary St. Paul's principle is to its proper working and the accomplishment of its human and divine purposes. The Church, by its nature and constitution, is an embodiment of the principle of organic unity stated by St. Paul when he says 'we are all members one of another,' and the Church is the 'body of Christ.' "This calls for a special kind of living of Christians in the Church. If we be 'the body of Christ,' if we be 'members one of another,' what love, tenderness, sweetness, gentleness we should have toward one another? What intimate acquaintanceship we should have with each other? What consider-

ation we should manifest for the faults and failings of each other? What effort we should make to help and please each other, and by all this we come to our best selves. But this teaching of the Gospel, as I have already intimated, reaches out farther than the church, to all society. It is impossible to have this truth sink deep into the heart and life without it profoundly affecting our relations to all men, women and children. The Christian meddles, so to say, with all things, all institutions, all reforms, because his relationship takes in all men, for society itself has been built on this great truth, that 'we are all members one of another,' that one class cannot suffer without another class suffers. If a saloon keeper ruins young men or boys, the Christian must be interested, profoundly interested, in that and try to prevent it. If corruption exists in city government and officials are bribed, or the police ply blackmail or graft the Christian cannot keep away from interference in these matters, because we are all members one of another. "If lawlessness, mobs and lynchings attack and undermine the fabric of government and make havoc with private and public rights, lessen the security of all men in their homes or business, or overthrow the fair fabric of civilization and reduce society to its primal, savage lust for revenge and blood, the Christian, in the pulpit or in the pew, cannot refrain from acting and setting his face as a flint against all this mobbishness and violence against social and government order, because we are members one of another. If negroes are hunted, hounded, persecuted on account of their color or race; deprived of protection, made the football of lynching madness, stripped of their political rights, made a byword and a reproach all on account of the blackness of their skin, the weakness or difference of their race, the Christian, whether in the pulpit or the pew, must, will intermeddle, for the negro is a

child of God, a member of the social order, a brother, and we are all members one of another. "And, then, this same principle of service and self-realization applies to the members of a family living together. The father, the mother, the children will live in gentleness and love, in the richness and joy of a fellowship unknown before, when they see that the altruism they are called upon to practice has such a profound basis in great fundamental facts of organic unity."

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