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HORRORS

OF

HOTEL LIFE.

BY A REFORMED LANDLORD.

Price 20 Cents.



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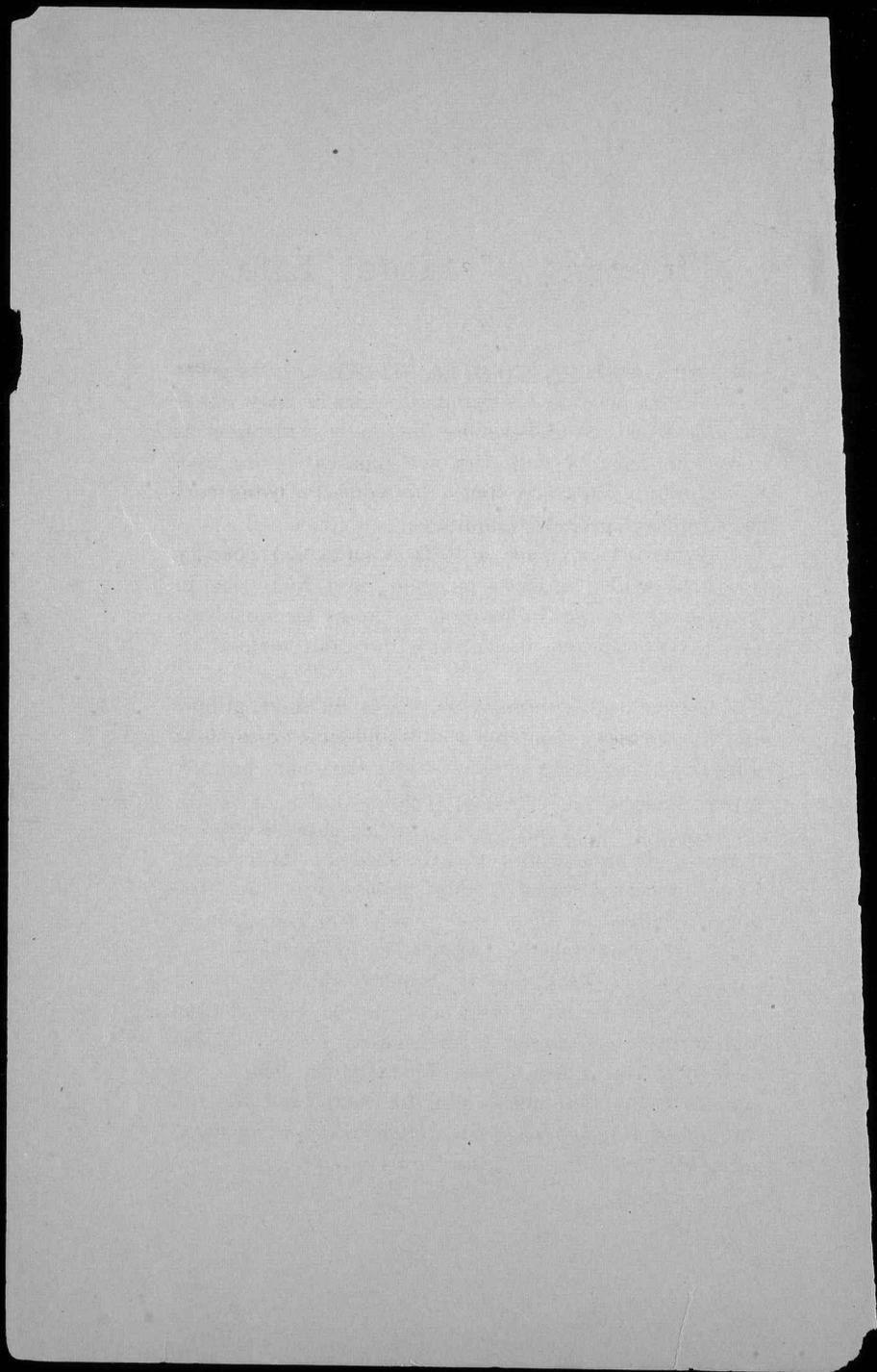
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P R E F A C E .

In proffering this glowing account of the charms of hotel life to the public, I do not claim that the subject is exhausted. There are many dark closets and crooked passages in the great hotels of the country and many tiny nooks in the smaller ones that would bear description, and repay the work of investigation. I am simply telling a few of the facts which every hotel proprietor knows and every observant boarder may learn for himself.

It is thought that a perusal of the book cannot fail to interest any person who has ever stopped at any hotel.



Horrors of Hotel Life.

Arriving at a hotel, travel-stained and weary, the guest is shown at once to his chamber, where he may either sleep or dress. Whichever he does he is confronted at once with dangers and dirt, not apparent to the eye, indeed, but a thousand times the worse for being concealed under apparent cleanliness.

Whether it be a palace on Fifth Avenue, or a country tavern to which he has come, the guest finds certain indispensable things in his room. Things he must use. Things that will come in contact with certain parts of his body.

There is a bed, with mattress, sheets, blankets, pillows and pillow-cases. There are towels and soap, an earthenware or china pitcher and bowl or a stationary basin, a drinking glass and a chamber vessel.

Ablutions come first. If the earthen china is cracked it is well to remember that high medical authority in France recently declared that disease-germs are frequently lodged in such cracks, and that contagion is conveyed by this means as often as by any other.

The soap is cheap, and if its materials were known would be thrown out of the window by the guest. Even high-tariff hotels cannot furnish costly soaps. It was used by the last guest to wash his body, his feet, or the syphilitic sore that marks him for death, and by him was laid back in the soap dish, wet and dirty with poison-germs the most virulent adhering to it.

That same guest used the towel. He does not carry a sponge when travelling, and he used one towel—the one you will wipe your face on—as a sponge to wash off the accumulations of a week's constant travel. Stained, soiled, poisoned with unmentionable contagion, he threw it on the floor, where it was kicked around and walked on last night. This morning the chambermaid found it there, and with it wiped the dust and tobacco-ashes off the table. Then she emptied the indispensable china vessels and wiped them with the same towel, beginning with the one least commonly talked about, and finishing with the tumbler. Then the towel was rushed through the laundry, half washed, half dried, smoothed out, and neatly folded, and placed again in the chamber for the next guest, who happens to be you.

These various uses of the towel are by no means all to which it is put. It not infrequently happens that the female guests of the hotel are away from home at critical periods with an inadequate supply of linen. The room towel is convenient and is worn. The chambermaid is tipped next day and takes it away privately, soaked with blood, and, it may be, other filth.

That chambermaid does not need this hint to use the same towel in the same way herself. Whatever vile uses are incidental to any piece of cloth, the room towel is put to. It is not infrequently thrown into the water-closet when its condition is too filthy for the servants to take it to the laundry. After a time the water-closet pipes are choked up, and the engineer is forced to clean them out. Towels and napkins are pulled up and—destroyed, you naturally suppose.

They are not destroyed. They are washed and used again as before. You will wipe your face and hands on one of them when you stop at a first-class hotel. The reader probably doubts that any hotel proprietor would do such a thing as this, but towels and napkins cost money. The old ones answer every purpose, and the guest never knows where they have been. He never will know, probably, although in the delicate membranes of the eye or the lip he may get, as hundreds have gotten, the infection of syphilis, that marks him for ever after, by using what he takes for a clean towel in a hotel.

THE CROCKERY.

The room tumbler deserves especial notice. It is never washed out with hot water, seldom wiped out with a clean cloth. It is used for any purpose that any guest may happen to elect. If he has occasion to use an injection it is the handiest receptacle from which he can fill his syringe, and the injection is not unlikely to drip back in part into the tumbler. If he is taking physic, he takes it from the room tumbler. If he is applying a lotion to a sore or an ulcer, he uses the room tumbler and one of the towels. If he is cleanly in his habits, he uses the tumbler in brushing his teeth. If he is thirsty he rings for ice-water, and very likely drinks from the same tumbler.

If it were washed daily in hot water, as your table-ware at home is washed, the different varieties of dirt and poison put into it at odd times would be, perhaps, removed, but it never leaves the room. If the chambermaid is more than usually particular about her work,

she rinses it with cold water occasionally, and wipes it out with a dirty towel, but as a rule she neglects even this ceremony.

Even the ice-pitcher is abused by some guests, and is allowed to stand by the hour on the floor in the halls until, according to the system of the hotel, the hall-boy carries it down-stairs. . It is liable to be used casually for a cuspidore by the malicious or ill-informed guest who is just leaving the house and has no further use for it himself. As this pitcher, however, is supposed to be washed sometimes, it is, perhaps, the least deadly of any of the bedroom appurtenances.

The wash-bowl and pitcher are never washed in hot water. If the chambermaid be a very careful one, she will rinse out the pitcher when the bottom of it gets too foul to escape notice, and will wipe it with the towel already described. The bowl is naturally rinsed oftener, and wiped out in a similar manner, but as a rule the pitcher is not entirely empty when the chambermaid goes her rounds. To throw out the water left over would be just so much additional labor for the poor, ignorant girl, whose sole ambition is to earn her eight dollars a month as easily as she can. She therefore leaves the stagnant water until the bottom of the pitcher is black with the accumulation of the dust of the room and of the casual filth that may drop in from time to time.

Better paid service and more of it, with careful supervision by the housekeeper, would obviate many of these evils; but as the hotel business is conducted, the servants are scarcely to be blamed for much that seems to

be their fault. Captured at Castle Garden, they go directly to the hotel, often with traces of infection acquired on the ship still clinging to them, and enter on their duties without training and with small ambitions. They sleep in enormous rooms, herded together almost like cattle. They have no bathing facilities, unless they pay for the use of a bath-room, which they cannot afford to do. Some among them are sure to have vermin, and all are likely to have it at any time, and are liable to leave undesirable bedfellows in any room they "do up."

THE BEDDING.

The beds in a hotel are, as a rule, very carefully watched for vermin, and are commonly free from this curse. There are, however, such possibilities hidden in them that the guest would scarcely trust himself in the room with one if he knew the truth.

The mattresses and pillows may be said to be safe enough as a rule, unless some one has happened to use them who was suffering from contagious disease. The records of the Board of Health in Philadelphia show that a guest in one of the first hotels in that city died in the hotel of yellow fever in 1876.

His room was fumigated and another guest put in the next day to sleep on the same bed. The case was never published, and the guests were not notified of what had happened. The house was full. It was at the time of the Centennial Exhibition, and rooms were too valuable to be kept empty.

This is not a solitary case. In almost every large hotel in the country there is boarding a physician. His practice is largely in the house. Illness is not uncom-

mon among the guests, and a considerable percentage of it is of a contagious nature. In travelling one is exposed more to contagion than at home, and the hotel is sure to get its quota of the infected.

This forms, in point of fact, the most serious peril to be encountered in a hotel. If the house is full, the case is concealed, the sick man removed, if possible, to the hospital, and another guest put in his room to sleep in his bed. The landlord doesn't want another case, of course; but the room is worth just so many dollars a week to him, and he will take chances, rather than to have it empty, at which the guest would be aghast if he knew of them.

The sheets and pillow-cases have been through the laundry, of course, and are, after a fashion, cleaned. Sometimes, too, they are dried. When they are not, the new guest lays the foundation of the rheumatism or sciatica that never leaves him afterwards.

But the blankets are never washed more than once or twice a year. They have been wrapped, it may be, around the body of the last guest, when he wanted a sweat in the course of his medical treatment. The preceding guest was drunk and slept in his clothes and boots on the same blankets; but whatever ill-treatment they have received by one and another, there is no change of blankets when a new guest comes.

Even when the landlord is conscientious, and does all he can to avoid the risks of contagion, he is powerless to detect the secret infections which thousands of men and women carry with them, scattering germs of disease and death on all they touch; and to have the blankets

purified, even by an ordinary washing, at every change of guests, would entail too much expense, even if the capitalist who runs the business would invest enough money to supply the house properly with blankets.

THE TABLE-NAPKIN.

The well-set tables in the dining-room of a first-class hotel, the moment before the signal is given for the opening of the door for the guests to enter, certainly present a very pretty sight. The snowy-white napkins, folded in many fantastic and graceful forms; the bright, gleaming silverware; the almost diamond brilliance of the glass; the delicate color effects given by the flowers here and there, the tinted wine glasses and the tall fruit laden epergnes—all these arranged with mathematical precision upon a field of spotless linen, at once charm the eye, and offer assurance that here at least cleanliness reigns supreme. Does it? Let us first consider the napkins a little, before giving our lips a preliminary wipe with them.

In the first place, let it be distinctly understood that no hotel-keeper who understands his business, and conducts it upon a practical system, ever permits a napkin to be discarded on account of its temporary employment for any other than a legitimate use, no matter to what horrors of filth it may have been exposed. Theoretically it can be perfectly cleansed by washing, and, practically, skilful laundrying will at least conceal its abominations. But is it really washed clean? We will see about that later. First let us get an idea of what uses may have been, and probably have been, found for any individual

napkin exposed upon the hotel table awaiting a guest's lips.

I have often found waiters using table linen as stockings. Not only is it a measure of economy for them to temporarily appropriate napkins for this purpose, but in Summer, linen napkins are cool and pleasant to the feet, and some waiters have, by long practice and ingenuity, developed a great deal of skill in putting them on as smoothly and neatly as if they were really woven or knit socks. To those who have any idea of the personal uncleanness universal among waiters, it will hardly be necessary to say that napkins so used for three or four days—especially in the Summer time—and then slipped in among the general "wash" to be relaundried for the table, could easily be distinguished in the dark from these that have escaped such treatment—by any strong-stomached person.

There is probably not a hotel in the country in which the "help's closet" is ever kept supplied with paper. But that occasions little or no inconvenience to the waiter. He has plenty of napkins at hand and prefers to use them, instead of paper. A napkin so used is, of course, thrown down into the closet, and the rush of water carries it into the trap. Down upon it come tumbling more napkins that have been put to the same use. Gradually the trap becomes so choked up that the water and feculent matter fill the basin of the closet and it overflows. Then there is complaint made that the help's closet is choked "again," and that the stench is filling the house. The plumber is sent for, or more likely the engineer of the house does the job, for it is well known

what will be discovered, and it is just as well not to let such facts get out any more than cannot be avoided. When the trap is opened, a dozen or perhaps a score of napkins will be dragged out, in a condition that may be left to the imagination. They are shown to the proprietor, who swears—as he always does upon such occasions—and offers a liberal reward, as usual, for the discovery of the filthy miscreants who have done the direfully dirty deed. Nobody is discovered, of course, and the napkins are sent to the laundry for washing and reissue to guests. They may go through one water by themselves, but then are thrown in with the other napkins, and if, in the rush and hurry of work, a few blotches and streaks of color are left on them, stiff starching and good smooth mangling will so hide those evidences as to make them pass for harmless stains from some sauce, or coffee or fruit.

Venereal and syphilitic diseases are very common among waiters. Low moral status, little or no education, small means, demoralizing habits of both physical and mental nastiness, and vile associations, all conduce to render them, as a class, peculiarly liable to such ailments. This is particularly true of waiters at seaside resorts and summer hotels, where perquisites and pilferings are unusually abundant and the opportunities for licentious relations with the lowest of the frail sex are extraordinarily great. What more handy and serviceable thing can the waiter have upon which to spread poultices, or in which to wrap up sores or conceal purulent discharges, than the ever ready and abundant napkin? Nothing—or, at least, nothing that is within his

reach ; and so the napkin finds another temporary use, in the intervals of its legitimate employment to wipe the lips of guests. But it comes back to the guests all the same.

There is a tradition that once, somewhere, a waiter after washing himself dried his hands and face upon something else than a napkin or his side-towel. If so, he was a solitary exception to the general rule. The napkin is the waiter's hobby. He resorts to it at all times, for all imaginable purposes and most assuredly depends upon its aid or that of his towel for plate-wiping, on the infrequent occasions of performing his ablutions. As a rule, rubbing off his perspiration with a napkin constitutes his "wash," but sometimes he goes further. He may have eczema, itch, syphilitic sores or any other unwholesome variegation upon his surface, but such trifles do not restrain him from wiping himself with a napkin that, after but a partial cleansing in the laundry, will reappear on the table for the use of guests.

Will the guests escape all those horrors who resolutely refrain from the use of napkins, or who, as some prudent persons do, supply themselves with paper napkins to be used but once and then thrown away? Not at all. The waiter, lounging in the dining-room waiting for orders, or passing between the dining-room and kitchen to fill orders, may be noticed scratching his head (and wiping the excess of pomatum and perspiration from his fingers upon a napkin) or scratching more concealed parts (and as usual wiping his fingers on the napkin) perhaps crushing, in a languid and indifferent manner,

some small stray insect brought away by his nails (always upon the napkin) — and then there are big chances that he will use that same napkin to polish the guest's plate, with an affectation of extra attention that he hopes may find its reward in coin. It not infrequently happens that waiters use napkins to wrap up portions of meat and game that they purpose either stealing and disposing of to persons outside the hotel, or, if they are serving in the rush and bustle of a seaside resort, supplying to guests for portions ordered, and appropriating the money paid for them, which, if the dishes had been served from the kitchen, the landlord would have had to be paid for. Such packages they hide between their jackets and shirts, or even under their shirts, until they can dispose of them, and when the napkins so employed are emptied, they are thrown into the pile of soiled linen for return to the laundry and so back to the table.

Napkins are used to wipe up all sorts of filth and nastinesses about the kitchen and dining-room, even—as I have known—to remove from the floor the filth deposited by a pet dog brought by a lady into the dining-room, and when put through the laundry they come back to the guests again.

Not alone do the male waiters, who serve in the dining-room, contribute to the general unspeakable defilement of the napkin, but the female help, the chambermaids and laundry-girls and scrub-women, do their full share to the same end. At more or less regularly recurring periods they find the napkins a great convenience, and each girl, or woman, is liable to use from four to twelve

of them each month. Many of the poor girls have the excuse of poverty, for very often they can get no more than \$6 or \$8 per month wages; but whether they can afford to supply their own towels or not, the chances are that they will use napkins if they can get hold of them—which there is hardly anything to prevent their doing. Fearing detection, they are accustomed to hide the foul napkins so used, in dark corners, under the edges of carpets and between or under mattresses in the servants' rooms. There the cloths lie, stewing, mildewing and rotting in their filth, until the stench from them assails the nostrils of the housekeeper during her monthly or semi-monthly tour of inspection in that part of the house. A general search is made, the loathsome napkins are dragged out to light and are sent to the laundry to be washed and served out for guests to wipe their lips upon. Of course, there is a row and threats are made of discharge, but the culprits are never discovered. And what is the use of sending away one lot of girls when the next ones engaged will do the same thing?

Not only the waiters and other servants are guilty of practices that make the napkin a thing of terror, but sometimes proprietors, or their principal aids in authority, demoralized by the contagious indifference to cleanliness all about them, seize upon the napkin as a ready convenience for the most repulsive temporary uses. I have known of napkins being—by orders—used to tie up and stop, for the time being, a large leak in a water-closet soil-pipe, and, when the plumber came and took them off, prior to repairing the leak, they were sent to the laundry to be washed with the rest. And I have no

reason to believe that the customs prevailing in that hotel were filthier than those in vogue in other hotels.

Even guests themselves occasionally employ napkins, at table, in a way fit to send a thrill of horror through any sensitive person who observes their proceedings. I have often seen men roll up the corners of napkins into sharp, slender little cones to poke in their ears with, and one uptown New York hotel, only a season ago, had to order out a guest who persisted in using his napkin, rolled up in that way, after dinner, to poke up into and clean his nostrils. He had to go. He was trenching upon one of the peculiar privileges of the waiter, who always uses a napkin when he has a catarrh. But that obnoxious guest enjoyed for three weeks that unique mode of titillating his nostrils before he was "bounced," for he was a good-paying guest, and it was only because other guests objected to him that he finally had to go.

THE LAUNDRY.

A few words now, before dismissing this branch of the subject, about the manner in which the laundry work is done, that it may be exactly understood how effective is the cleansing given to articles so befouled as napkins are. The successful hotel-keeper is the one who practices the closest economy in the conduct of his establishment, short of making it offensively apparent to his guests. The laundry is one of the places upon which the thrifty landlord ever keeps a watchful eye. Coal, to heat water and make steam, costs money; water, at least in the cities, where it is all measured by a meter, costs money; labor, to utilize the heat and the water, costs money.

In all three, the attainment of the maximum of results with the minimum of expenditures, is the ever present problem. So, the laundry is always run short-handed and the clothes are hurried through with little care to make them really clean. It is safe to say that not one napkin in twenty, no matter how foul it may be, receives any especial attention from the washerwoman. It may be supposed that the water in which these articles are washed is changed three or four times and is always scalding hot, but such suppositions are wholly erroneous. No such waste of water can be allowed. The same water is used over and over again until it is brown with filth and is never as hot as it should be, so that, instead of anything passed through it being cleansed, there is simply a sort of general average of dirtiness attained. In the extremest cases, such as those of napkins rescued from the closets or the female servants' rooms, the articles may receive an extra souse in hot water preliminarily, but that is only deemed necessary when they are much discolored. Starch and good ironing cover a multitude of sins, and the guest who carelessly unfolds his napkin and lays it across his knee or tucks it beneath his chin, unless he gives a critical examination to it, will have no reason to suspect the appalling uses to which it has been put, the frightful bath it has since had and the big chances he takes when he permits it to touch his lips.

THE SIDE-TOWEL.

Were the "side-towel" of the waiter confined to the ordinary uses of a towel, the ways in which that

functionary shares its employment with the guests of the house might well awaken interest and even some alarm in the minds of fastidious guests. But the plate from which the guest takes his food is wiped with that towel to remove the most noticeable defilement of grease, bits of soap, etc., left upon it after the careless washing it receives in the kitchen, and even if the plate should happen to have been washed clean, it gets the towel-wipe all the same, as a matter of habit. And the extra spoon the guest calls for is rubbed with that towel before he puts it in his mouth or his tea or coffee; and his change of knife and fork goes through the same treatment; and the roll that may have accidentally slipped from a plate to the floor, in a jostle between waiters, on the way from the kitchen, if it has fallen in so dirty a spot that the traces of its mal-adventure are clearly visible, is wiped clean with that same towel. So it is not altogether a matter of indifference to the guest that the catarrhal waiter absent-mindedly picks his nose and wipes his fingers on his side-towel, while awaiting the guest's orders, or furtively employs the same article to wipe the perspiration from the back of his greasy and grimy neck. Still, those may be mere inadvertencies, and the poor waiter, if he had thought about it, would not have been guilty of them—in public. The things about which complaint may justly be made, in connection with this article, are the habitual uses of conscious and deliberate uncleanness, to which it is put by waiters, regardless of the ends it has to serve in the dining-room. The side-towel is not only the waiter's badge by day, but generally his closest companion day and night. Being

longer than the napkin, it is not only put to all the uses found for the napkin, but to various others in addition. One of those that may be mentioned is a "belly-band." Frenchmen and Germans, especially those who have had some army service, have been taught the very sensible habit of wearing a broad bandage about the bowels. It is a good thing. The bandage should be of flannel, but flannel is expensive and the waiter without sufficient intelligence to understand why it should be flannel, and simply comprehending that something should be worn about there in addition to his ordinary clothing—pins on his side-towel. It is something, costs him nothing, and he wears it constantly, day and night, soaking up the perspiration and accumulating the effluvia from his uncleanly body, until its "offence is rank and smells to heaven." Then he takes the trouble to unpin it, throw it into the water to be carelessly soused there and sent out to rub guests' plates with—and puts on another. When the waiter nerves himself to the ordeal of a bath, he supplies himself with one or two side-towels for drying purposes; and if it happens to be at a seaside hotel that he is temporarily leading his brilliant existence, and he takes one of the female help in bathing with him at night—a very common practice—he takes along more towels for their mutual use. It is to be hoped that neither of them have any cutaneous or other diseases, the germs of which will be liable to cling to the side-towel and retain their vitality through lukewarm water. When the waiter goes to the water-closet during the day he scarcely ever washes his hands afterward, but contents

himself with giving his fingers a wipe on the side-towel that he then has in actual service, and with which he will probably be polishing a guest's plate within five minutes. Even persons who are not hypercritically fastidious will admit that this is not a pleasing reflection for the guest's contemplation, but unfortunately it is one which is in accord with the facts.

Enough has been said concerning the habitual employment of the napkin and the side-towel in hotels to at least suggest to the reader's mind the hideous possibilities involved in contact with either of those articles. But for a fear of passing the bounds of decent reserve and consideration for delicate stomachs, further details could be given that would sicken an intelligent turkey buzzard. Let those be left to the imagination, for it certainly cannot exceed the reality.

THE DISH-WASHING.

The reassuring delusion pervades the mind of the average hotel guest that the knife and fork and spoons he employs at table have, since their last preceding use by somebody else, been thoroughly washed in scalding hot water with soap, and carefully dried with clean towels. The extreme improbability of ever getting really clean towels about a hotel for any purpose will, no doubt, be sufficiently apparent to any intelligent mind after perusal of the preceding pages, so that need not be dwelt upon any further here. But a few words about the reality of the washing process, apart from that, will not be amiss. Scalding water is an unpleasant thing for women's fingers to dabble in for hours at a

time, and as hotel servants never consult the interests of guests before their own comfort, the water in which the silverware is washed in the kitchen will always be found lukewarm—barely hot enough to melt the grease sticking in lumps upon the knives and forks, to float it in a scum on the surface of the water, and redeposit in a film upon the articles taken out of the nasty bath. That water is but infrequently changed, hardly ever, indeed, until it becomes brown and of a gravy-like consistency. The formality of a rinsing of the articles supposed to be washed, in somewhat cleaner water, is sometimes indulged in, but not always. Then comes the drying, which is nothing more than a hasty clutch with a dirty towel in the dirty right hand at both ends of a bunch of knives, forks and spoons held in the left, to take off the dripping excess of water upon them. After that they are left standing in a hot place, where the rest of the liquid foulness upon them is dried, and so they are supposed to be cleansed. How far they are from being clean the guest may, in most cases, determine for himself. Let him run the point of a toothpick along the fine grooves of ornamental chasing on the forks and spoons, and he will plough out lumps of greasy, foul-smelling brown or greenish-black dirt. Let him run a fold of his napkin between the tines of his fork close down, and see what dirt comes off—enough to make smudges and streaks on the white cloth. Let him even hold up together the knife, fork and tablespoon, warming them a little in his hand, and if he has a good nose he will smell how foul they are.

The uncleanness that should be removed from these

table implements is not simply from contact with food or with the mucous membranes of the mouths of guests that may possibly be affected with scrofulous, cancerous or venereal sores. Careless servants are constantly flinging knives, forks and spoons into the swill-barrel, which is carried away daily by some fellow who runs a pig factory, and has a contract for the hotel's swill to feed his hogs upon. It is in the hog-trough or the mud of the pen that the tableware again comes to light. The pig-feeder gathers it up. Perhaps he is an honest fellow who would not appropriate it if he could; perhaps, too, prudential considerations not remotely dissociated from the fact that each article is deeply marked with the name of the hotel lowers the value of the property in his eyes; perhaps, also, he might not care to apply to his own use things that had gone through the swill-tub, the hog-trough and the pig-pen filth; at all events, he is most likely to send back to the hotel all the implements he picks up. They are then washed with the rest of the service in daily use, and just like the rest; dried like the rest, and served out to the guests. That waiters who wear low-cut shoes, as most of them do, have a *penchant* for using table-spoons as shoe-horns, to slide their heels into their shoes when the heel leather is torn or tight or softened down by perspiration, is a comparatively trivial consideration hardly worth mentioning.

THE DISH-WIPING.

Plates are customarily washed in just the same slovenly and filthy way that knives, forks and spoons are.

After going through a greasy bath of lukewarm water, they are carelessly wiped—merely sufficiently to take off most of the liquid clinging to them and frequently leaving upon them the marks of greasy thumbs (which the waiter is expected to wipe off and polish with his foul side-towel), after which they are set in big heaters, to be kept warm, and there the film of grease and glutinous dirt deposited on them is dried and hardened. Of course it does not stay there permanently. The hot gravies and sauces on the food served to the guests soften and absorb that incrustation and the guest swallows it. True, there isn't a great deal of it, but there is enough of it, such as it is. All that is to be condemned in the habitual washing of plates in hotels prevails to even a greater degree in the customary washing of cups and saucers. The cups are more difficult to wipe inside than are flat dinner-plates and consequently stand proportionately less chances of being wiped. As a rule, though they go through the same filthy and greasy sort of bath that the plates are subjected to, their insides are not wiped at all, and as they are dried in heaters like the plates, the scale of baked dirt incrusting their interiors is even thicker than that upon the plates. That explains the greasy scum that the guest often notices upon his cup of tea or coffee. He is likely to erroneously suppose it to belong to the beverage itself, but it does not. It is simply the foul matter dissolved from the cup by the hot liquid poured into it. The greasy and disgusting taste that he attributes to the poor quality of the tea or coffee employed is but the taste of foul dishwater or perhaps a souvenir of

the catarrhal waiter, who cannot—by those who know him—be expected to refrain from picking his nose.

The brightly sparkling goblets that do so much to set off the appearance of the table, whether filled with the generous glow of claret, radiating prismatic tints from an enclosed block of ice to which the sunlight lends a new glory, or simply in their own crystal beauty lighting up all about them, are at once more deceptive in their apparent clearness, and less likely to be suspected as to it, than anything else on the table. Glassware must be better washed and polished than crockery or silver, or the dirt left upon it will show readily, but, as anyone can prove to himself by experiment, a goblet may be polished so as to look brilliant and yet have enough of certain foulness left upon it to actually smell badly. This is particularly true of cut-glass goblets that have diamond-like exterior surfaces. They hide interior dirt much better than do perfectly smooth flint glass ones. But in both, the one point that is seldom thoroughly cleansed is the deep, small bottom of the inside. Half or two-thirds down the interior, as far as is quickly and handily reached with a towel, the glass may be polished brightly, but below that it seldom is. Does a glass require exaggerated care in cleansing, which holds nothing more than ice-water, or claret, or perhaps milk? Possibly not, if it never held anything else. But to what other uses are hotel goblets applied? Waiters customarily carry goblets to their rooms and there employ them in a variety of ways. They are much used in taking medicine, sometimes for internally administered drugs, often for the washes, lotions and other med-

icaments for the cure of cutaneous and private diseases which are prevalent among waiters. Napkins are steeped in the liquids they contain, instruments are charged from them and emptied into them, sore places are washed with curatives and, to be saving in the application, are allowed to drip into them. Worse than all this: the servants' rooms are rarely if ever supplied with chamber utensils of a very necessary kind, the regulation being that if the "help" wish to use anything of the sort during the night they must arise from their beds, dress and go to the help's closet, which is oftentimes half a block away from their sleeping-rooms. But they don't do anything of the kind if they can help it—not when they have goblets handy, anyway. The result is that the girl who cleans out these rooms twice or thrice a week, finds under the beds goblets full of urine. Of course there is a row, as there always is upon such occasions, and the air is thick with threats of discharges; but nobody is discharged, and the goblets, having been emptied, are sent down to the kitchen to be washed and placed on the table again. It scarcely seems likely that rinsing them in lukewarm water and polishing their outsides with a dirty towel that is probably laden with the germs of some disease will cleanse them so thoroughly that anybody would knowingly care to use them. The filthy practice that some guests have of using them as finger bowls, or rinsing their mouths with water and spitting the water so used back into the goblet, when they are about leaving the table, is another "respect that gives us pause" before making use of hotel goblets. People's mouths may be clean and healthy, but then again they

may not. There are such things as rotten teeth, putrid gums and corroding sores that eat away the tongue and tonsils.

THE COFFEE POT.

Coffee and tea pots are not open to so many grave suspicions, nor are they so mischievous as most of the other utensils and appliances of the kitchen and dining-room. Of course, they are seldom or never properly cleansed. That is not to be expected, but their constant flooding with the heated beverages they are made to contain has some effect in at least rinsing them out. One frequent practice in hotel pantries regarding them is, however, deserving of some reprehension. That is the careless leaving open of their covers. This allows flies and roaches, sometimes also mice, to enter, and, as such things are seldom noticed in the hurry of kitchen work, the tea or coffee is very likely to be made, poured out and drunk by the guests, without any discovery of these "small deer" being made until the tea leaves or coffee grounds are dumped out. The flavor of several gallons of tea or coffee is hardly likely to be very seriously affected by the boiling in them of a few spoonfuls of insects or an occasional poor little mouse, yet there really does not seem to be any good reason why such things should not be avoided.

The milk pitcher—natural associate of the tea and coffee pot—must not be passed by without a little consideration. It was an evil hour in which somebody, with wicked ingenuity, invented the little silver or pewter milk pitchers with narrow tops and broad bottoms, holding an indi-

vidual guest's allowance of lacteal fluid. People who very much wished to make them thoroughly clean would find it difficult to do so; how much chance is there then that they will be cleansed by servants who don't care a tinker's blessing whether they are clean or not. Their shape favors the accumulation of a deposit of souring and soon rancid milk around the edges of their bottoms inside and no care is taken to prevent or clear away that deposit. When they are empty and are required again, they are simply filled up anew. What odds does it make to the waiter that they are not washed? He knows that their contents will be poured out in a few minutes—or at least as much of them as can be poured out—before they have time to be soured by the dregs left in the little vessel. That is enough for him. He will not “be caught”—the one dread of his life. But the practice is a dirty one. Flies are very fond of depositing their eggs in that little lining of sour and putrefying milk—the big blue-bottle fly particularly so. These eggs hatch out and become maggots in an incredibly short space of time. Often have I, with a sharp-pointed stick, scooped out whole families of infinitesimal maggots from the inside of a milk pitcher. Whether these maggots may or may not do harm if taken alive into the human stomach, is a question that I am not going to discuss now. I simply care to remark that I don't think they are nice. That is all.

I might animadvert upon the mysterious and wonder-compelling fluid alleged to be milk, with which those pitchers are too often filled, but refrain from it lest I might in so doing cast some shadow of blame upon

landlords who are really innocent of intending or knowingly practicing any deception in the matter. Very often a landlord contracts with a scoundrel—who pretends to be a farmer, but probably feeds a lot of cows on distillery and brewery swill—for a season's or a year's milk, stipulating that it shall be of the best quality. But he cannot himself constantly watch the milk supply, nor can the steward, who is generally away making his purchases at the hour of its delivery. So the scoundrel, by some petty bribe, induces the "receiving clerk"—a poor devil on a microscopical salary—to accept and pass as good milk stuff that is either from swill-fed cows or that is a wholly manufactured article. These milkfiends have some sort of stuff—the component parts of which I do not know—that makes a fluid exactly resembling milk, but which, when dried on the bottom of a can, becomes as hard as cement. Under the circumstances, however, I don't think the landlord should be held responsible for that. I am particular about saying this because I am truly desirous that my exposure of existent facts about hotel life in America shall in no wise prejudice the popular mind against landlords themselves.

THE KITCHEN.

The kitchen offers too wide a field for full justice to be done to it within the limits I have prescribed for this brochure. At the same time, it is but fair to say that the grounds of complaint here are generally the results of mere carelessness, or lack of intelligent forethought, rather than willful filthiness, and that gross uncleanli-

ness of personal habits, born of innate putridity of soul, distinguishing the attendants in the dining-room and the chambers. Cooks are, as a rule, more cleanly and intelligent people than either waiters or chambermaids. Here also a closer watch is supposed to be kept by the steward, who is generally one of the most trustworthy and conscientious employés in a hotel. Here, too, the influence is naturally felt of the liberal policy which is, as a rule, adopted by American landlords in this particular department. It is by their tables that they most hope to popularize their hotels, and this is understood and sympathized with in the kitchen. Nevertheless, there are here, as throughout the whole establishment, such sins of omission and commission as should not be omitted from notice even in the briefest and most lenient mention. One thing liable to seriously affect the health of guests is neglect of the maintenance of the copper saucepans in proper condition. They should be thoroughly retinned once in every two or three months, at least. The acids used in culinary preparations speedily eat down to the copper and into it, forming verdigris that enters into all the food cooked in such vessels, and there is hardly a hotel in the land in which the copper saucepans are retinned oftener than once a year, if at all.

Another thing relates to the handling of meat. Meat is brought into the hotel in large pieces, quarters, sides and whole carcasses, and is chopped up on blocks in the kitchen or store-room and packed away in the ice-boxes upon a sheet thrown over the ice. Those sheets, which are changed only once or twice a week, become blood

soaked and often, notwithstanding the presence of the ice, fouled with corruption. Sometimes the blood with which they are saturated comes from the overheated veins of suffering animals that have been injured on the cars in transportation, or diseased beasts that the butcher has had to make haste to kill lest they should die without his aid. Such meat is exceedingly unhealthful, and the blood it contains is its worst and most dangerous portion, yet that blood is, by means of the ensanguined sheet, brought in contact with good meat. Perhaps the landlord would not knowingly, for sheer economy's sake, buy that bad meat; but there are other ways in which it might very easily get into his kitchen without his knowledge, and as I wish to be as gentle as possible with him I will suppose that he is innocent. It really does take a very close watch of every piece of meat that the butcher sends, especially when prices are high, to make sure that at least a part of the hotel's supply does not come from beeves that have had broken ribs, fractured legs, or other injuries, from neglect of which mortification has set in before death. The butcher can easily trim out the worst gangrened spots and make the meat look good to the eye. Whether cooking makes it fit for the stomach or not is a subject that need not be discussed.

The boards, chopping-blocks and cutting tables used in dividing the meat, both raw and cooked, are supposed to be scraped every day and washed with soda once a month. But the juices of the meat soak deep into the wood and putrefy there in the hot atmosphere of the kitchen, and especially in the summer-time and it is

impossible that some portions of that putridity should not attach to meats chopped upon it.

Made dishes, ragouts, stews and all that sort of thing, guests will do well to avoid always, as they are composed of odds and ends and trimmings of meat, fit only to be worked up in that way. The whole mess may be permeated with filth, corruption and disease, but the cook's artful high-seasoning conceals its real character. The French cook's complacent philosophy is "The meat may stink, but I can make a sauce that will stink much more."

One final paragraph and my exposé is done. It will be relative to the use of undrawn poultry in hotels. I am well aware that nearly all poulterers and some landlords affirm that poultry crammed with putrefying intestines full of fermenting, half-digested food is as good as any other, even better, and can be kept in presentable condition a longer time. They do not tell the truth. Drawn, cleaned poultry, properly prepared so as to exclude the air, will keep longer in good condition than that which is undrawn, and even when it taints, is not so foully offensive as that which is permeated with the gases from slimy and putrescent entrails. Cooks can cunningly employ, in fricasees and entrées, poultry that is too unutterably vile for any fixing up to render it presentable, roasted or boiled, and can conceal its offensiveness by certain preliminary treatment and by sauces and seasoning. That is done all the time in hotels; but how many of my readers are hungering for that sort of food.

W. W. W.

