



*Miracles in the Slums; Or, Thrilling
Stories of Those Rescued from the ...*

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*Yours & His
Seth C. Rees.*



Miracles in the Slums

OR

THRILLING STORIES

Of Those Rescued from the Cesspools of Iniquity, and Touching Incidents in the Lives of the Unfortunate

By **SETH COOK REES**

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"He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isaiah 61:1.

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“A SLUM FEAST.”

A FEW years ago my attention was called to Luke 14: 13, where Jesus was teaching the divine principles of New Testament salvation. Here I made the startling discovery that very few of us are practically “Bible Christians.” Many years ago I had covenanted to be a Bible Christian, and to walk in all the light received. This seemed to me like a new revelation. “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they can not recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”

Here I was convicted to practice, literally, the contents of this Scripture. Christmas was approaching. Chicago was spending fourteen million dollars for gifts alone, and everybody who could were making preparations for Christmas turkey dinners. I said to my family, we will not have turkey this Christmas, we will defer our dinner and spend Christmas in the slums. We announced that at twelve o'clock on Christmas

Day the Mission in the slums on lower State Street would be opened, and a free dinner would be furnished to all homeless men.

Long before twelve o'clock, the street was thronged. The bums, thugs, tramps, and red-nosed drunkards of every description, in tattered garments, rags, and vermin, waited in zero weather for the door to open. Many of them were college bred. Doctors, lawyers, merchants, mechanics, and some from the best of homes, and in fact they were there from almost every walk of life. When the door was opened, with uncovered heads they marched in as orderly as a congregation of Quakers or Presbyterians. When the Mission was filled to the utmost capacity, the doors were closed. When all were seated at the long, well-filled tables, they politely bowed their heads while we asked God's blessing upon the food.

While a dozen of our mission workers served them with hot coffee and a palatable dinner, we preached to them the gospel of Christ. Many were the touching and pathetic scenes as their eyes filled with tears on account of the kindness shown them by the Christian workers.

When all were satisfied, we were forced to turn them out in the cold, and filled the Mission a

second time with those who had stood out in the wintry blast. This was done a third, fourth, and fifth time. Each Mission full were prayed with, and preached to, and satisfied with the good things of the table.

Strong men as well as boys were seen choking with vivid recollections of their mothers and sisters, as our young women so freely served them. Many eyes were wet with tears at the remembrance of other Christmas days, their well-filled stockings in the “ old chimney corner,” and the sweet voices ringing out, “ I wish you a Merry Christmas.”

Most people say it is folly to feed such worthless wretches, but as a result of that one dinner, seven of those men were brought to God that day. That dinner proved a wonderful quickening to the spiritual life of the Mission, and a wonderful incentive to activity in service.

That dinner cost about thirty-five dollars out side of some donations of food. That was five dollars a head for the souls that were saved that day. You may say that a “ Bum ” is not worth five dollars, but if he should be standing inside the “ Gates of Pearl ” to greet us when we arrive in heaven, we will think then that he is worth it. It was the kindness that broke their hearts. They

were accustomed to everything else. You could not phase them with a policeman's club, or subdue them with a seven shooter, but kind words and deeds melted and conquered the most hardened hearts.

One of the men who was converted that day was an atheist, said he never had believed in God or religion, but when he saw the kindness shown to fallen men that day, he said there must be something in it, and sought and found God.

Beloved, those fellows do not need to be told about the "fall of man," "original sin," or an "endless hell," they have acres of hell in their own hearts. They need some one to love them, and tell them there is hope. Beloved, are you a Christian? Are you not a member of some orthodox church? Then who is invited when there is a feast in your home? Who is it that eats turkey with you at Thanksgiving and at Christmas time? Who is present at your birthday dinners and wedding anniversaries? Is it your children, and their children? Or your neighbors, who are as able to make a feast as yourselves?

When did the poor, the lame, and the outcasts of earth feast with you?

