

51141

THE STANDARD

EXTRA. No. 47.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT THE OFFICE OF THE STANDARD, 12 UNIVERSITY PLACE.

[Entered at the Post Office in New York as second class matter.]

Price 2 Cts.	NEW YORK, MAY 7, 1892.	\$1.00 a Year.
--------------	------------------------	----------------

Price of this number in quantities, 20 copies 10 Cts.; 100 copies 40 Cts.; 1,000 copies \$3.00

A SELF-MADE MAN.

W. E. PARSONS.

There was once a city which had a large and beautiful public park, where the people loved to assemble on warm summer afternoons to enjoy the shade of the trees, the freshness of the green grass, and the various social pleasures such a place affords.

Now, it was one year decreed by the city fathers that an addition should be made to the attractions of the park by providing a free concert on the Mall every Saturday afternoon during the warm season; and accordingly, a fine band-stand was erected, surrounded by rows of seats for the accommodation of the public. The first afternoon in June, the day the music was to begin, was bright, warm, and sunny, and as early as 3 o'clock, an hour before the time advertised for the opening piece by the band, the people began to assemble. Among the first to arrive was a large, burly individual, with a keen and practical eye but a rather shabby coat. His name was Sharp—Jack Sharp. Glancing about him at the brightly-painted band-stand and the rows of comfortable seats already filling with early-comers anxious to secure good quarters for themselves before the arrival of the crowd, and seeing one block or section of seats not yet occupied, he walked toward it, took from his pocket a bit of chalk, and marked in large letters at the end of each bench, "J. S." Then taking out a ball of twine he walked around the square of seats tying the cord to the end of each one, and so enclosed the whole in a manner not to be mistaken. This done, Mr. Sharp sat down in a shady corner of the first row of seats and waited. The people began to gather thick and fast and the seats to the right and left were filling. Now and then some one approached the enclosed square, looked at the cord and the chalk letters, and walked away. Empty seats to right and left began to be hard to find, and more and more individuals walked up to Mr. Sharp's phalanx, looked at it curiously and withdrew. Finally one with a spirit more enterprising than common boldly seated himself on the front row of seats.

"See here, what are you doing?" said Mr. Sharp.

"Taking a seat to hear the music," said the new-comer.

"Then you may get up and leave it," said Sharp. "These seats are mine."

"Yours; why are they yours?" said the invader. "I don't see why they are yours any more than mine."

"Don't you?" said Sharp; "then I'll show you. Because I got here

first. I took all the trouble to come earlier than any one else, and have sat here in the hot sun almost an hour keeping tramps off these seats and taking care of them generally. I'd like to know who they do belong to if they don't to me!"

"Well," said the man, seriously impressed, "you might let me sit here anyway; you can't use them all."

"Well," returned Sharp, "I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I didn't wear myself out taking care of these seats, and marking 'em and enclosing 'em for nothing. What'll you give me for one?"

"I'll give you ten cents," said the other.

"Ten cents?" said Sharp, contemptuously. "If you want a seat (with impressiveness) and want it enough to give a quarter for it, you can have it. I don't rent these seats for ten cents."

The man yielded, paid his twenty five cents, and took a seat.

Meanwhile the people were gathering faster and faster, seats were becoming fewer, and by that time the music began. Mr. Sharp was doing a brisk trade. Suddenly a thought struck him. "Dunderhead that I am," said he to himself, "to let these seats go so cheap. Why, if I wait awhile, these people will get so tired standing 'round, they would be glad to give double the money for a chance to sit down;" and to the next applicant for a seat he remarked: "Seats have gone up. They're fifty cents apiece."

A good deal of grumbling followed upon this and for a time the demand for seats fell off, but backs soon began to ache, the sun burned hotter, and the weary pleasure-seekers began, one by one, to find their comfort worth the advanced price. Jack Sharp felt encouraged; his spirits rose with the increasing weight of his pockets, and his fancy was stimulated anew. Glancing down the Mall, he observed approaching from the main entrance to the park a new and large addition to the crowd of music lovers, and, without hesitation, his ready tongue had announced "One dollar," and his ready hand rejected the half dollar offered by the latest applicant for a place.

"But you said fifty cents," protested this one, a tired woman, "and fifty cents is too much, but I'm worn out standing so long and I'll give it. But as for a dollar, the seat isn't worth it. It's an absurd price."

"Absurd price, is it?" responded the indignant proprietor. "Too much and not worth it! You don't know what you are talking about, madam. The more people there are for the seats the higher the price must go. It's according to the natural law of supply and demand. Do you see all those people coming up the Mall? They're going to make a demand for those seats that will make them worth any price. I'm sorry if you can't give a dollar, but there's no use quarrelling about the price, it's according to political economy—it must be so."

The new arrivals were now at hand, the traffic in seats went on for a short time briskly, and the industrious Mr. Sharp pocketed a good harvest of bills and silver dollars. Still a great many seats remained empty and the people stood about resigned, preparing to enjoy themselves as best they might. Meanwhile the sun blazed fiercer and fiercer, the breeze died down, and the enjoyment of the music was not unalloyed. Jack Sharp, however, leaned back in his shady corner and, through with his labors, prepared to give himself up to the pleasures of the hour. But, looking about at the groups of standing people, his heart suddenly smote him.

"It is hot," said he to himself, "and those women and children do look very tired. What a pity they can't afford to have seats! I know what I'll do"—with a sudden inspiration. "There's a seat down there at the end

that I believe I'll let 'em have for nothing, turn about. It's right in the sun," he added, appeasing a frugal conscience, "and I don't believe anybody 'd hire it."

Sharp was a man of action, for his generous impulse was soon an accomplished fact. He even took the trouble to see that each occupant held the place but ten minutes, and that as many as possible enjoyed its advantages. Then, comfortably sitting down with a sense of perfect satisfaction at last, Mr. Sharp could give himself up with unmixed pleasure to a well earned repose and the enjoyment of the sweet strains from the band.

Among the occupants of some benches not far away from Mr. Sharp's square of seats sat a young man with clear, observant eyes, rather idly gazing about at the scene before him. Suddenly turning to a person sitting at his right, he said: "Look at all those people standing over there. They look fagged and warm; why don't they take seats?" Looking carelessly in the direction indicated, the man, one of years and experience, answered, "Why, there are not enough seats for them."

"Yes, there are," said the youth. "Look, there are plenty of them right there next to us—plenty of them. Why don't they take them?"

"O no, there are not," said the man of experience, "you are mistaken, there are not half enough. The seats will never go round. The trouble is there are too many people; they should not let so many in; the park is overcrowded."

"But," persisted the boy, "there are lots of seats at all events, and most of the people could sit down."

"Why, so they could, if they had the money to pay for them," said the elder, "but they haven't."

"Pay," returned the other, "why have they got to pay?"

The man of experience began to wax impatient. "O, because they are not theirs—because they belong to Mr. Sharp; they're his property. That is why!"

"Mr. Sharp, who is he?" said the youth.

"That fine-looking man in the front row, that's Mr. Sharp, the owner of the seats."

For a moment the youth was silent, but almost immediately a returning light came upon him, and he continued: "Well, if he does own them he can't possibly use them all, and he might let those people have them, if they haven't the money."

A look of intense disgust appeared upon the countenance of the man of experience. "Oh, I see," said he, "I see what you are driving at. You're one of those Communist fellows, that's what you are. You'd like to take all property and divide it up in equal bits and hand it around! But I can tell you this much. You'd no sooner get it divided and parcelled out than it would be back again, unequal as ever, and we'd be just where we were."

"No, I'm not," cried the youth with emphasis, "I'm not a Communist at all, and don't believe in anything of the kind. But I do think it is pretty stingy of that Sharp to keep all those seats to himself and let those tired people stand. It's mean and grasping, that's what it is."

"Now, see here," and the tone of the indignant elder grew sharper, "that's a little too much. It's outrageous! Mr. Sharp, I can tell you, is a highly benevolent, philanthropic man. He's doing what he can all the time for the good of other people. Do you see that seat at the end of the second row, with a ragged little boy sitting in it, well, Mr. Sharp gives that seat for nothing; for nothing, sir, to any one who needs it. It is a perpetual benefaction. What is more, he gives it his own personal super-

vision, and administers its affairs in the most just and impartial manner—opening it to every one who comes along without exception, and making no distinction as to age, sex or color. And this man is called stingy, grasping and mean. It's shameful, shocking."

The ardent youth felt subdued. The convincing nature of these remarks left him no arguments to offer, and, though still inwardly unconvinced, he could only say helplessly and with an air of depression: "Is that so? All the same, it does seem a pity that those poor, tired people have to stand, when the rest of us have good seats."

"That is very true," said the man of experience, "it is a pity, but that's the way it goes. Some have more than others. It always was so since the world began, and it always will be. It's the natural order, and it can't be helped."

Meanwhile the selections by the band had all been played, the shadows grew long upon the grass, and the masses of people were separating and moving towards the gates. Mr. Sharp was one of the first to rise, and with a comfortable sense of duty done and pockets well filled, he left the scene of his labors and was soon lost to view in the shifting crowd.

This, however, did not prove the end of this intelligent man's activity. He was not one to pause in well-doing and let the work of to-day excuse the idleness of to-morrow. No time was lost before his well-earned dollars were invested in a small speculation, and by measures in harmony with his initial efforts, and means always possible to the wide-awake and knowing, they increased and grew, till in time Mr. Sharp's name spread abroad and he waxed fat in the land.

Many years passed, and on another bright June afternoon, when the Park was gay with carriages and people were merry with the sound of music and the voices of children, a father and his son walking along the East Drive observed a dashing four-in-hand, driven by a distinguished looking gentleman of advancing years. "Look, father," said the boy, "who is that?" "That, my son," answered the father, "is the celebrated Mr. Sharp, one of our leading citizens. I am told that he began life as a poor boy, without a dollar in his pockets, and that by his own unaided efforts he has attained his great wealth and honored position in society. He is, in fact, my son, a fine example of what is possible to industry, integrity, and perseverance under the free and equal institutions of this great and glorious land."

THE STANDARD.

An independent paper issued every Wednesday. The accepted exponent of the Single Tax doctrine, and the only absolute Free Trade advocate having a general circulation throughout the United States.

Sample copy sent free on application.

Address

THE STANDARD,

42 University Place, New York.